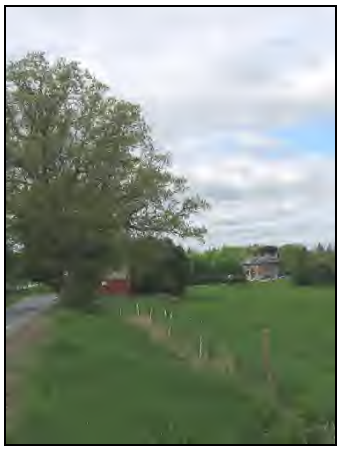
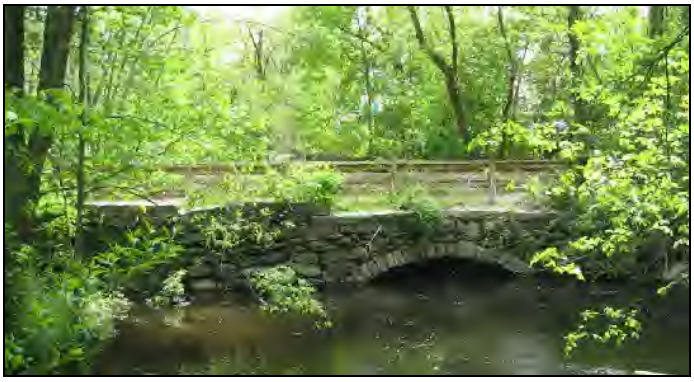
GRAFTON RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

BLACKSTONE VALLEY / QUINEBAUG-SHETUCKET LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM





Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor

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July 2007

Cover Photographs: South Street
Grafton State Hospital
Stone Arch Bridge, New England Village

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INTRODUCTION

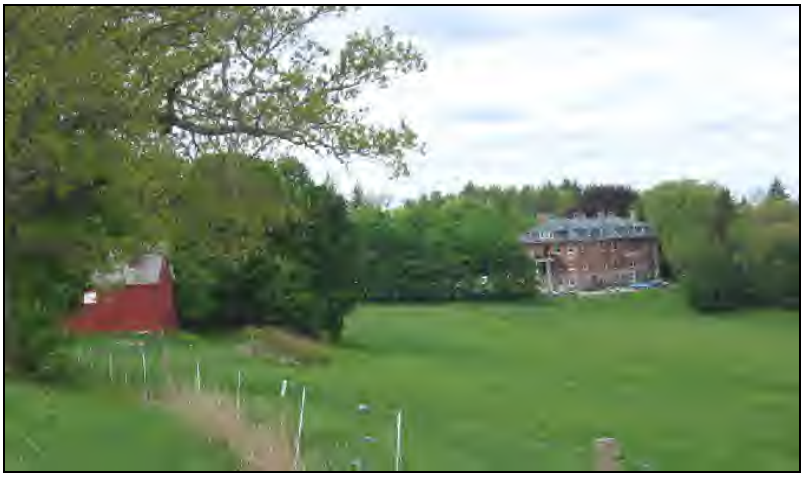
The 22 Massachusetts communities within the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BRV) and the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor (Q-S) are linked by a common heritage of agriculture and industry powered by the rivers and streams that dominate the landscape of south central Massachusetts. River Corridor towns extend from Mendon on the east to Brimfield on the west. While they range in size from the city of Worcester to the compact town of Hopedale, each is equally shaped by the interaction of nature and culture over time.

Heritage landscapes are special places created by human interaction with the natural environment that help define the character of a community and reflect its past. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the history of a community and provide a sense of place; they show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities. 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 the two National Heritage Corridors (BRV and Q-S) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program to communities in south central 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.

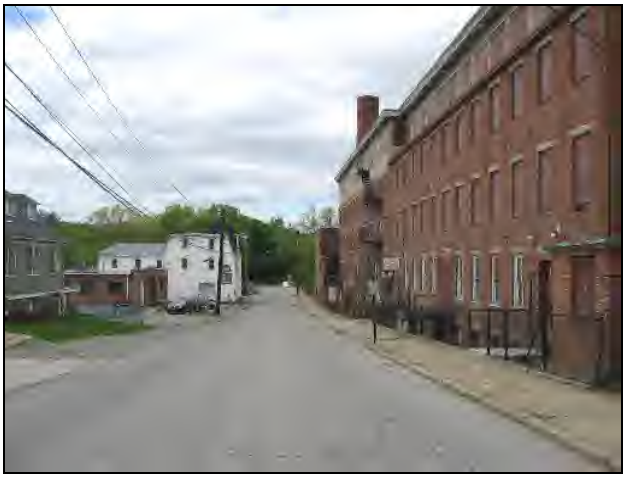
The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed in a pilot project conducted in southeast Massachusetts and refined in Essex County. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land*, which has provided guidance for the program since its inception. In summary, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-BRV/Q-S consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting during which residents and town officials identify and prioritize the landscapes that embody the community's character and its history. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, accompanied by interested community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community.

The final product for each community is this Reconnaissance Report. It outlines the community's landscape history; discusses broader land planning issues identified by the community; describes the priority heritage landscapes and issues associated with them; and concludes with preservation recommendations. Two appendices include a list of all of the heritage landscapes identified at the community meeting and a reference listing of land protection tools and procedures.



PART I

GRAFTON'S HERITAGE LANDSCAPES



GRAFTON'S LANDSCAPE THROUGH TIME

The Worcester County town of Grafton lies primarily within the Blackstone River drainage basin. The Quinsigamond River flows south through town to join the Blackstone in the village of Fisherville. East of the Quinsigamond, Miscoe Brook and smaller streams flow into the mill pond known as Silver Lake, and the West River flows out of the lake to join the Blackstone in Uxbridge. Grafton's soils range from sandy loam on its hills and the drumlins near Grafton Center, to rich deposits of gravelly loam in the river valleys. All are important agricultural soils, primarily useful for mowing, pasture and orchards. In the southeast corner, granite outcrops have been quarried. Grafton's border touches on Worcester in the northwest, and the town is otherwise bounded by Millbury, Sutton, Northbridge, Upton, Westborough and Shrewsbury. The town of Grafton was incorporated in 1735.

Precontact Native American settlements in the Grafton area included a Woodland village on Bummet Brook, while evidence of a number of seasonal hunting and fishing camps has been found along the Quinsigamond and Blackstone Rivers. The local transportation network likely included river travel on the south-flowing rivers and brooks, as well as a trail cutting across the area toward the southwest, later known as part of the Bay Path. In 1654 Hassanamesit, an important Christian Indian settlement, was established, with a population estimated at 12 families by the end of the Plantation Period (1620-1675). This group of Nipmuc people lived on dispersed farmsteads – in scattered dwellings within easy walk of each other – raising cattle and swine, growing corn and apples among other crops. European observers remarked on the abundance of natural fresh meadow and cultivable soil in the vicinity. The forced evacuation of Hassanamesit's Native Americans during King Philip's War put an end to the missionary village, but a number of Nipmuc resettled in Grafton by the early 18th century, under guardianship of the Commonwealth.

In 1728, the General Court permitted the four-mile tract of Nipmuc land to be subdivided into 40 equal shares, with shares assigned to each Nipmuc proprietor and the remainder sold to Anglo-Europeans. The town center was established in its present location, with a meetinghouse, cemetery, school and town pound. The Nipmuc proprietors gradually sold off their land holdings, but a strong Native American presence persisted in Grafton well into the 19th century and one parcel remains as Nipmuc land today, as the Hassanamisco Nipmuc Reservation.

During the Federal Period (1775-1830) Grafton Center developed at the crossroads of two important routes: the post road from Worcester to Providence, and the intersecting route from Connecticut to Boston (the old Bay Path). The Grafton Inn, still standing, was built to accommodate travelers along these roads in 1805. Industrial manufacturing began in the town at New England Village in North Grafton in 1826 with a mill and tenements on the Quinsigamond River, where it had been dammed to provide a water reserve for the Blackstone Canal that would open two years later. The canal was an important addition to the town, with three locks allowing river traffic to bypass falls and rapids, while two mills quickly harnessed the river's power in areas later known as Farnumsville and Saundersville. Nevertheless Grafton, like its neighbors at the time, still relied on agriculture for an economic base, especially cattle to provide not only meat, but also hides for a burgeoning leather tanning industry, and ultimately for the manufacture of boots and shoes.

Two railroads came through Grafton in the first half of the 19th century: the Boston and Worcester in 1831 with a station at New England Village, and the Providence and Worcester in 1847. The canal ceased operating in 1848. Grafton's population had increased dramatically by mid-century, almost tripling as manufacturing gained importance. Irish, Canadian, English and Scots immigrants settled in the town. Residential, institutional, and commercial development continued in Grafton Center while the industrial hubs also grew: in Saundersville, a village of about 50 workers' houses was built; in Fisherville and Farnumsville, tenements and single-family homes were constructed and the mills grew. The Washington Emery Company bought out two textile companies at New England Village in 1878, beginning the manufacture of abrasives that still continues today. A large proportion of the buildings in town constructed during this mid-century period of prosperity still exist.

In the late 19th century, the Grafton & Upton Railroad began service from North Grafton through Upton, connecting the industrial villages between Worcester and Milford, and by the turn of the century there was street car service along the Blackstone Valley. At the northeast edge of town the Worcester State Asylum built a facility which, in 1915, became Grafton State Hospital. The hospital was both one of the town's largest employers and one of its largest landowners. Agriculture maintained its hold; the number of farms grew as farmers refocused their efforts towards market gardening, orchards and poultry to provide food not only for its own resident population, but for the greater Worcester area.

World War I was a watershed for Grafton's economy and land use, as it was for neighboring towns. Streetcars were abandoned in favor of improved roads as the automobile rose in popularity. The old Providence Road became Route 122, from Worcester to Providence; a more easterly route became Route 140, and Route 30 was developed across the north end of town. Residential construction was focused in the villages of Farnumsville and Fisherville, although a cottage colony developed along the north shore of Lake Ripple. Expanded facilities were constructed at the Grafton State Hospital. Most of the mills managed to hang on during the Depression, but in 1929, the Farnumsville mills were forced to close. The Vanadium Wire Company bought the mill complex and produced cable wire for musical instruments and automobiles. Agriculture took on new importance as a major apple orchard expanded across Keith Hill and others echoed the trend elsewhere in town.

Mid-century changes included construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike across town, dividing the northern tier from the rest of the community, but also attracting new industry and development to the Maplewood section. Over the past two to three decades especially, major agricultural areas of Grafton have been transformed into residential neighborhoods, as the region's improved highway system and the extension of commuter rail service from Boston has facilitated commuting throughout the south central region. At least partially in response to these changes, Grafton has developed an active Land Trust (originally the Grafton Forest Association, established in 1958), established a Local Historic District (Grafton Common, 1981), and negotiated an exemplary adaptive reuse arrangement for the significant Grafton State Hospital lands. Nonetheless, a variety of factors, including intense residential development pressure, create significant land use planning challenges.

COMMUNITY-WIDE HERITAGE LANDSCAPE ISSUES

Concern for heritage landscapes is not new to Grafton. The town's Open Space Plan, updated in 2007, observes: "Open space, recreation, and the preservation of the natural features of the Town are of paramount concern to Grafton citizens." A comprehensive historic resource survey, completed in 1991, documented over 1100 structures and properties throughout town and included recommendations for future work.

Grafton's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by interested residents including many representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on March 21, 2007. During the meeting, residents compiled a lengthy list of the town's heritage landscapes, which is included as Appendix A of this report. As the comprehensive list was being created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and identify issues relating to its preservation.

Residents emphasized broad issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. These issues are town-wide concerns that are linked to a range or category of heritage landscapes, not just to a single place. In Grafton, three issues stand out.

Funding to Support the Protection of Historic Resources

Grafton, through the Grafton Land Trust, use of CPA money and development of creative funding partnerships, has found ways to acquire and/or protect a number of significant heritage landscapes and buildings in town. Money, however, continues to be an issue. Residents cited two areas of particular funding concern:

- Protection of agricultural lands: the town does not have the funding, or the ability to secure funding quickly enough, to prevent many farms from being sold and developed.

- Ongoing costs: the Town and the Land Trust have both considered purchasing a number of historic resources in the past, but have not done so out of concerns about long-term funding to cover ongoing maintenance costs.

Access to and Improvement of Quinsigamond and Blackstone Rivers

With the exception of a handful of small riverside parking spots, there is little opportunity for Grafton residents to gain access to the shores or streams of the town's two major rivers, which primarily flow through private property. Additional concerns include improvement of the water quality and wildlife habitat in these two rivers, which are still impacted by the run-off and dumping associated with a century of industrial activity along their banks.

Scenic Roads

Grafton has passed a Scenic Road Bylaw, and all or part of eight roads in town are specifically protected under the statute, including Adams, George Hill, Keith Hill, Meadowbrook, Merriam, Wesson, Willard, and the portion of Brigham Hill Road from Potter Hill to Deerholm Road. Residents commented, however, that the protective mechanism is observed according to the "letter of the law" only. An example was cited of

one scenic road that, although straight, included many “ups and downs” that the town intends to remove, citing safety concerns. The dilemma is that the Scenic Road Bylaw, as written, does not specifically include regrading among the regulated changes, although leveling the roadway will remove one of the significant features that make it scenic. In addition, meeting participants noted other town roads that should be covered by the bylaw, including Old Upton Road and Wheeler Road.

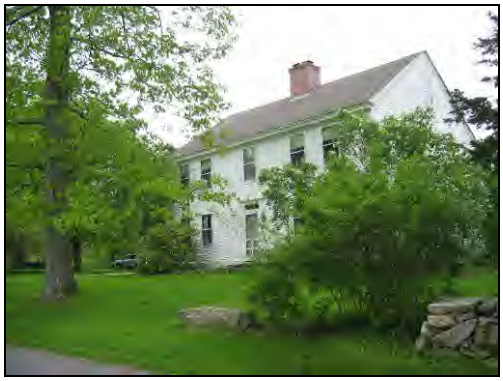
PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Based on information gathered at the community meeting, attendees identified a group of priority landscapes for the consulting team to focus on, through field survey, documentation and planning assessment. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued and contributes to community character. None of them has any permanent form of protection.

Grafton's priority landscapes are broad in scope. The smallest extends the length of a village street, while the largest occupies an entire corner of the town. Hillside farms and vistas are indicative of the town's hilltop settlement and strong agrarian roots, while a compact manufacturing neighborhood echoes Grafton's historic reliance on water-powered industry.

The landscapes which were given priority status by Grafton's community meeting represent a range of resource types. Each landscape is also representative of other, similar properties in the town and each demonstrates the multiple layers of significance that are common to most heritage landscapes.

Natural and cultural features, individual and civic histories, combine to present property owners and concerned citizens with a complex combination of present-day issues and opportunities. The descriptions and recommendations that follow are intended to be first steps and constructive examples for what needs to be an ongoing process: to identify what is valued and irreplaceable in the community, and develop strategies that will preserve and enhance Grafton's landscape heritage.



Merriam and Estabrook Road Farms

Description: The area of Grafton roughly bounded by Merriam Road on the south, Old Westboro Road to the west, the Mass Turnpike to the north, and the Great Meadow east of Adams Road, is a landscape of varied wildlife habitat and rich cultural history. It includes a steep, partially forested hillside north of Estabrook Avenue, a small drumlin at the intersection of Adams and Merriam Roads, gently sloping land east of North Street, and a sizeable wetland that drains into Miscoe Brook in the area historically known as the Great Meadow. This area is also included in the Miscoe-Warren-Whitehall Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Farm buildings associated with two centuries of settlement and land use in the area include colonial houses, nineteenth-century barns, and

a wide range of outbuildings, as well as the stonewalls, fencing and cart paths that outline and define the agrarian landscape.

Altogether, the priority landscape includes approximately 500 acres of open space, of which 102.4 is undeveloped, town-owned conservation land, while 406 acres belong to three families who have placed their land under Chapter 61A. The three farms include the Knowlton, Martin and Poler properties.

- The largest private holding is the Knowlton Farm, located on Estabrook Avenue and Old Westboro Road and bordered by the Mass Turnpike on the north. It totals 264.5 acres of which 85 – 90% is open land, currently hayed but worked as a dairy farm until approximately ten years ago. Approximately 50 acres along Adams Road, likely part of the historic farm holdings, has been sold and subdivided as a residential development. The property's use as a farm dates back to at least the 18th century, when the farmhouse that still stands on Estabrook Avenue was built. More recent agricultural activity is evidenced by the group of 20th century farm buildings across the street.

- The Martin Farm is composed of five relatively small parcels totaling 48 acres at the intersection of Merriam and Meadow Brook Roads, just south of Adams Road. Its centerpiece, not visible from the road, is a dramatic Contemporary house designed in 1953 by Doak Martin, which caused much discussion in town at the time of its construction. The property is of particular ecological significance because it abuts a 50 acre parcel of conservation land on Adams Road, as well as serving as a connection between that parcel and the 125-acre Great Meadow.

- The Poler Farm consists of 93.6 acres on Merriam Road. It is characterized by large hayfields bounded by stone walls. The owner has invested a great deal of effort in recent years clearing the walls of overgrowth, which has revealed the solidity and extent of the wall network. A recent breeding bird survey on the property underscored the ecological significance of the Poler Farm fields as increasingly rare grassland nesting habitat.

Background: The Knowlton farmhouse was built by Andrew Adams, one of Grafton's earliest proprietors, in 1742. The house is strategically located halfway between two old town ways: Adams and Old Westboro Roads. In keeping with colonial farm practice, the house was situated on the edge of land unsuited for cultivation – in this case, with its back to a steep hillside – so that good land would not be wasted. Estabrook Avenue, that passes in front of the house, may have initially been a cart path from the other Adams family holdings to Andrew Adams' homestead. The farm has been in the Estabrook-Knowlton family since just after the Civil War.

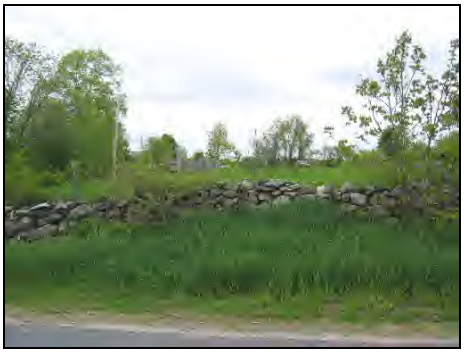
Issues:

- Lack of permanent protection in the form of Conservation or Agricultural Preservation Restrictions. While Chapter 61A is a good farming incentive, it does not provide permanent protection. Multiple approaches to farmland preservation need to be called upon.

- Owner intentions concerning disposition of property: each of the owners appears to have a somewhat different attitude toward their family's property and its

future. There are indications that the Knowlton Farms Trust is leaning toward sale of some or all of their acreage. The Martin family members are strong proponents of land conservation but are unlikely to retain all of their parcels. The younger generation of the Poler family is dispersed but appears to have strong connections to their homestead.

- Potential for loss of agricultural lands and vistas: large open fields – acreage that is still hayed or cultivated – is becoming very rare in Grafton.



Recommendations:

- Share the findings of this report with each of the farm owners. They should know that the land they care for is highly appreciated and valued by Grafton residents, and that it forms an important part of the region's ecology. –Both the agrarian landscape and its historic farm buildings are rare and valuable survivals.

- Provide each owner with information on Conservation Restrictions, Agricultural Preservation Restrictions, and Transfer of Development Rights, and discuss various options that might be available for them to put all or part of their property under permanent protection. (Part II of this report lays out several mechanisms that address agricultural preservation in particular.)

- The Historical Commission and Conservation Commission should develop a prioritized list of the land parcels included within this heritage landscape as an action guide for discussion and negotiation with owners, and for seeking funding. Factors to consider include ecological value, heritage value and likelihood of near-term disposition.

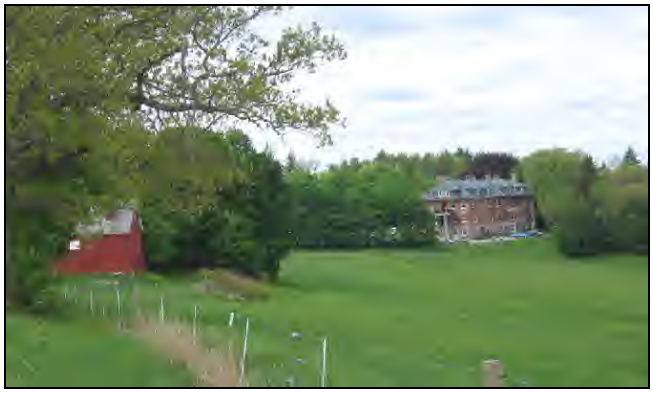
- Broaden the base of support for protection of this area by working with the Miscoe-Warren-Whitehall ACEC Stewardship Council.

Grafton State Hospital Campus

Description: The former Grafton State Hospital Campus includes several clusters of historic buildings on approximately 1,200 acres of rolling hillside. Located in Grafton and Shrewsbury, with a small portion in Westborough, the campus also straddles two watersheds: the Blackstone and the Sudbury-Assabet-Concord. The grounds include wooded areas, such as steep-sloped Green Hill in Shrewsbury, as well as open fields and wetlands. Approximately two-thirds of the campus lies in Grafton. The 1991 Grafton

historic resources survey summarized the valuable rural features of this unique landscape as follows:

> The scenic hilltop site of the former Grafton State Hospital and its accompanying rolling terrain at the northeast corner of Grafton is wooded over much of its acreage. At its eastern edge, however, is one of the most spectacular farmscapes in Grafton. Cornfields line the east side of upper Willard Street to the Westborough border and beyond, and mixed cultivation and meadow lands lie to the north, between Westborough Road and the Boston & Albany Railroad tracks. A well-preserved gable-end barn of ca. 1900-1915 stands close to Westborough Road at the edge of the fields. A large cow pasture, dotted with boulders and clumps of shade trees, is located along the slopes and valleys on the west side of Willard Street. Farther west, carved out of the woods at the swine area of Tufts Veterinary School, is another long corn field. [Grady 1990]



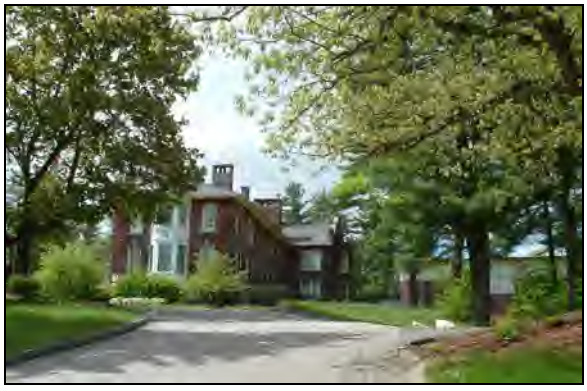
Within this context is the campus of the former Grafton State Hospital, a psychiatric facility developed in the early 20th century as a farm colony for the Worcester State Hospital. Three of the five original residential building complexes (originally called "colonies") survive essentially intact; two others have largely been demolished since the hospital closed in the 1970s. Their names evoke the rural setting: Pines, Elms, Oaks, Willows (demolished) and Maples (demolished). Though geographically separate from each other, the colonies share an architectural vocabulary, consisting of clusters of freestanding wood-frame and masonry buildings designed by the Worcester firm of Fuller & Delano and dating mainly from 1902 to 1916. Buildings for "quiet patients" were small, fieldstone and clapboard, Craftsman-style houses, while those for patients requiring more supervision were two-story red brick structures, with architectural detailing designed to minimize their massive scale. A handful of Classical Revival-style buildings were built near Westborough Road in the 1920s and 1930s and presently serve administrative functions.

These colonies and their component buildings are linked by tree-lined internal roadways, many with handsome acorn globe streetlights. This is the designed landscape core of the campus, originally described as "pleasure grounds" that include lawns, flower beds, specimen trees and walking paths. Around the periphery of the building complexes is the farm land – a broad vernacular landscape that is, in turn, framed by full growth

woodlands and natural wetland that serves both an ecological role and, historically, provided a social buffer from surrounding land uses.

The entire Grafton State Hospital campus is listed on the National Register.

Background: Grafton State Hospital was developed as a farm colony for the Worcester State Hospital, which had been built in that city's downtown in 1830 (since demolished). The Grafton campus was planned to serve two purposes: to accommodate an influx of patients who became wards of the state under a new statute passed in 1900, and to provide a therapeutic rural environment and healthy outdoor work for both male and female patients. In 1901, the Commonwealth purchased several historic farm properties in northeast Grafton and abutting land in Shrewsbury, including those of the Ashley and Sinclair families, Samuel Knowlton and Lyman Rice, totaling about 700 acres. The separate residential colonies were developed around the nuclei of these farmsteads, although pre-existing farm buildings are no longer standing. The fields themselves were reclaimed for productive use by the hospital over a number of years, especially in support of the Hospital's large dairy operation. The campus expanded with the state's purchase of an additional 500 acres before 1945.



Grafton State Hospital was decommissioned in the 1970s. In 1978 the historic core of the property, including 460 acres in Grafton that incorporated the Elms and Oaks colonies, was acquired by Tufts University as a campus for the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine. The Elms colony at the corner of Willard and Westborough Roads became the school's geographic focus. Since that time, Tufts has replaced a number of State Hospital buildings with modern construction including small- and large-animal hospitals and a Wildlife Medicine Building, while other buildings in the Elms complex have been reused, and large areas of fields and pasture have been retained as grazing land and corn fields that provide feed for livestock.

Tufts has received town approval for a plan to develop 106 acres at the west end of the hospital property as the Grafton Science Park, which will include the Tufts Regional Biosafety Laboratory and is scheduled to open in the spring of 2009. The town of Grafton created a Campus Development Overlay District to encourage this economic development in 1994 and approved Tufts' campus master plan in 1999. A subsequent Master Plan Update was completed in January 2007. The approved campus master plan permits up to 702,000 SF of new three-story buildings (there are currently no standing structures on the parcel). The master plan also allows flexibility in actual building and

building site areas. The town also partnered with Tufts in securing infrastructure grants for Phase I of the park.

Massachusetts has designated the Science Park as part of an Economic Target Area (that also includes Centech Park – see below) to encourage regional economic and job development. Subject to Town Meeting approval, a project demonstrating job creation is able to obtain expedited permitting and negotiated municipal tax rates, along with an expanded state investment tax credit.

The northeast corner of the State Hospital land, east of Pine Street, is still owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts through DCAM (Division of Capital Asset Management) and the Department of Youth Services. Twenty to thirty acres of this sizable parcel, once the Pines Colony, has been leased to the U.S. Department of Labor and developed as a regional Job Corps Center. A number of historic buildings have been rehabilitated to accommodate this residential job training program, which has had only informal interaction with the Town, primarily in the form of student job placement.

The former State Hospital land west of Pine Street has also seen significant adaptive reuse. A rail line owned by Conrail, formerly used solely for freight traffic, has been upgraded by the MBTA for commuter service, with new parking and a station north of Westborough Road. In the far northwest corner of the campus, 120 acres of land on the Grafton/Shrewsbury line were sold by DCAM in the early 1990s for development of Centech Park. Since that time, six of eight subdivided lots have been developed for general business and light manufacturing.

Issues:

The Grafton State Hospital Campus is, in many ways, a success story of adaptive reuse of a large and diverse heritage landscape. A major part of the campus is currently owned by the Tufts University Veterinary School and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Both entities have sensitively adapted some historic buildings for contemporary use, although some remain vacant and new facilities have also been constructed. The Job Corps has made the most of a range of available buildings including the hospital power plant, railroad station and infirmary among others, and consequently, the Pines Colony demonstrates a remarkable level of integrity. Tufts in particular has preserved the integrity and extended the working life of the farm fields that have defined this corner of Grafton since the 18th century.

Clearly, future use, attention to, and adaptation of the campus by Tufts and the Commonwealth will have a major impact on this large and significant Grafton landscape.

- The Town of Grafton has an established working relationship with Tufts, the largest landowner, and is knowledgeable about its campus master plan. Specific plans for the historic buildings and landscape are not entirely clear, however, although the university has indicated that it does intend to demolish one or more of the historic buildings at some future time.

- The Science Park being planned by Tufts has the potential to significantly change the landscape's character.

- The Town of Grafton does not have a working relationship with the Commonwealth's DYS or the federal Job Corps comparable to that which it maintains with Tufts, despite the fact that the Commonwealth still controls the future of a significant section – the Pines Colony – of the historic campus.

- Many of the vacant buildings do not appear to be fully secured and weather-tight.

Recommendations:

- Share the findings of this report with the Tufts School of Veterinary Medicine, with the public committee that serves as a liaison with Tufts University and with the Commonwealth's DCAM and DYS, as a reminder that the historical integrity of this landscape and its features are important to and valued by the citizens of Grafton.

- Maintain a close working relationship with Tufts, to gain a better understanding of future plans for the campus, particularly the planned Science Park.

- Closely review the Tufts Master Plan Update (January 2007) to evaluate the university's intentions concerning historic buildings and landscapes.

- Establish a working relationship with the Commonwealth's DYS and/or the federal Job Corps, in order to monitor site activity on, and better understand future plans for, this part of the campus.

- Consult with MHC to determine what current and future projects at the campus would require Massachusetts Historical Commission review, and work with Tufts and Job Corps to ensure that such review is completed.

- Urge Tufts and the appropriate State division to secure and weatherize all unused campus buildings immediately, in order to prevent further deterioration and keep options open for later reuse. Work with both entities to identify potential uses.

- Maintain clearing of open fields to stone wall lines, including brush cutting along pasture and hayfield walls, in order to preserve historic character of vistas.

- Maintain mature vegetative buffer zone between proposed Science Park and Westborough Road to protect rural landscape from incompatible office park landscape.

- As a state-numbered route, Westborough Road is not eligible for protection under the Scenic Road bylaw. The Town should consider adopting a Scenic Overlay District for this area, which would provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on Westborough Road.

- Discuss areas of mutual concern about State Hospital lands, including maintenance and preservation of the State Hospital Cemetery, with the Town of Shrewsbury.

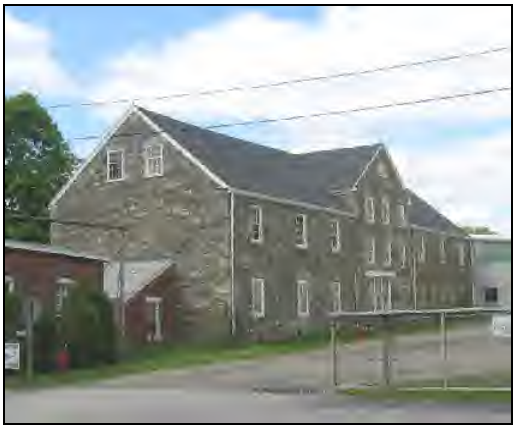
New England Village

Description: New England Village is a small neighborhood centered on an early 19th century factory complex on the Quinsigamond River, in the northwest corner of Grafton. The village is located north of Worcester Road (Route 122) and on both sides of North Main Street (Route 140). Key features of this industrial landscape include Hovey Pond, power source for the upper mill complex, of which one substantial rubblestone building with granite lintels remains and a second pond directly on North Main Street with a smaller, lower mill complex of which two original wood frame buildings remain. Originally textile mills, both upper and lower mills are now owned and operated by the Washington Mills Abrasive Company, a manufacturer of emery and other industrial abrasives.

Other resources within the village include a white clapboard church building with brick understory on North Main Street, presently in commercial use; a sizable village green (also known as Whitney Park) adjacent to the upper mill property; and, flanking the green, boarding houses or multi-family residences since converted to apartments. North Main Street and the roads that lead to it are lined predominantly with small, single-family homes of varying ages, although small businesses are also present. The Quinsigamond River flows under a stone arch bridge, part of a short abandoned piece of roadway that was once River Street, located between the upper mill and North Main Street. River, North Main, and Worcester Streets form a small triangle of heavily overgrown public land at this location.

The 1990 Grafton historic resources survey commented that New England Village as a whole, despite alterations, remains an important and substantially intact example of an early 19th century mill village. About the upper mill, the survey noted:

> In spite of considerable changes over time, including the loss of the main mill building and at least six wood-frame structures, the brick and stone buildings... are in a remarkable state of preservation for a factory that has functioned continuously since 1826. Included on the site is the oldest building [1826] of the town's five major early textile-mill complexes [and] the mill complex is still integrated with its associated village....



Commenting on other structures in the neighborhood, the survey notes that a number of wooden houses and stores associated with the lower mill are no longer extant, although a beautiful walled garden on North Main Street makes use of one of the building

foundations as its enclosure. The historic scale of the original buildings has been retained in more recent additions to both upper and lower mill complexes, and numerous mature trees surrounding the lower mill buildings and pond contribute further to the historic character of this landscape. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has confirmed that New England Village is National Register eligible.

Background: Manufacturing in North Grafton is directly attributable to the building of the Blackstone Canal. In 1824, the Blackstone Canal Company claimed reservoir rights and dammed Flint (now Hovey) Pond, significantly increasing its size and creating a major source of water power with falls totaling more than 50 feet over a short distance on the Quinsigamond River. A Boston investment group promptly took advantage of the opportunity to transform what had been a pre-industrial saw-, grist- and fulling-mill site into a substantial textile enterprise. By 1826 the New England Manufacturing Company had built at least three stone buildings for the mill operations, along with housing for workers. They laid out the perpendicular streets and rectangular common of a small mill village, and may have built the stone-arch bridge on River Street as well.

In a pattern common to the early New England textile business, the upper and lower mills changed hands a number of times over the next century, at times both upper and lower mills being owned by the same firm; at others by different manufacturers. Textiles also varied, from linen twine and high grade linen thread to cotton cloth. In 1878 the Washington Mills Emery Manufacturing Company purchased the lower mill and began production of industrial abrasives, while the upper mill continued textile production. The upper mills closed down in 1931. Much of its real estate was sold in 1935-36 and in 1937, when a major fire destroyed the main upper mill building, Washington Mills acquired that property as well, significantly expanding its business in Grafton.

The manufacturers of New England Village never undertook the type of major business expansion that, in other locations like Farnumsville, transformed mill villages with a new generation of construction and change. On the contrary, New England Village is in the rare situation of having retained a significant proportion of its original housing stock and civic/commercial structures. Many of them are covered by synthetic siding, or are now adjacent to individual 20th century buildings. But the scale, density, building forms and mix of commercial and residential uses remain.

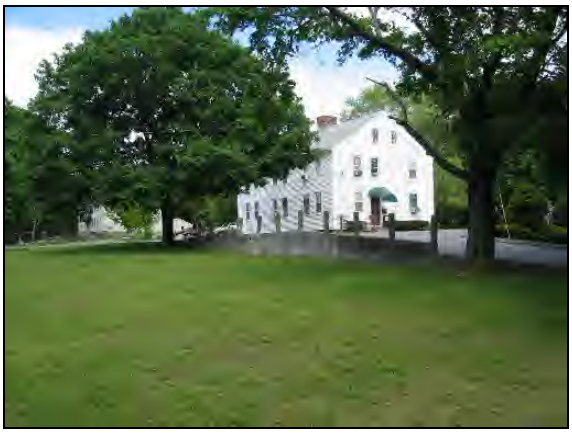
Issues:
New England Village was described by one resident as the “northern gateway to Grafton,” but a gateway that goes largely unnoticed and unappreciated by those who pass through it. Some part of the problem lies in the physical arrangement of its components: the village green and its flanking buildings are not visible from North Main Street, the main thoroughfare, since they are set behind other buildings and across a broad expanse of asphalt used for parking and truck turn-around by Washington Mills; much of the two-century-old mill is fronted by more modern buildings or, like the green, not immediately visible; the Quinsigamond River, except at the lower mill pond, is hidden by dense foliage. While the physical arrangement is a given, other issues identified by residents can be addressed. The issues include:

- Lack of permanent protection for the characteristic open spaces and historic buildings that make up the village, including both of the mill complexes.

- Lack of recognition / lack of visibility of this area as a cohesive historic village.

- Need for streetscape improvements to draw attention to the village and improve its image.

Recommendations:
Residents and supporters of New England Village would do well to read through the Urban River Visions materials generated for Farnumsville during the spring of 2007 (see Farnumsville, below), since many of the issues and recommendations are applicable here as well. New England Village has the great advantage of not needing to reestablish its mill as a focus of local activity. It is also a smaller and more cohesive village in which changes would be almost immediately noticeable and likely more easily manageable.



- Share this report with New England Village residents, and with the Washington Mills owner. It is important that they know that their properties are appreciated and valued by all Grafton residents.

- As an excellent example of a rural industrial settlement which retains a high level of integrity, New England Village appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register. Achieving this designation would "give the Village its due" and raise public awareness of its historic significance. The owner of Washington Mills has in the past expressed concern about listing, fearing it could limit his ability to upgrade his manufacturing facilities. The Town should work with the owner to explain that:
  - National Register listing in no way interferes with a property owner's right to alter, manage or sell the property. Only alterations that involve state or federal funds, or require a state or federal license or permit, require a review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.
  - As a National Register-eligible property, federal- or state-supported alterations to the mills already require such a review; actually being listed in the National Register would not bring any additional review.
  - If the mills were listed in the National Register, they would be eligible for federal and state historic rehabilitation tax credits.

- Give serious consideration to designating New England Village as a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District (NACD), as North Andover just did for Machine Shop Village, a district of varied architecture, residential and commercial buildings in that town. A NACD is a valuable preservation tool

for this area: it focuses on retaining a few key architectural elements, together with massing, scale, and setback, to preserve overall neighborhood character. See Part II of this report for further information on NACDs.

- Create a New England Village Heritage Landscape Committee to define priorities, with at least one member representing and knowledgeable about the village's history and development, and one representing Washington Mills, the village's largest landowner. Alternatively, the charge of this committee could be taken on by a task force of the town-wide Heritage Landscape Committee recommended in this report's concluding remarks.

- Develop design standards for streetscape improvements including:
  - Repair or stabilization of stone bridge on discontinued section of River Street.*
  - Clean-up and improvement of stone bridge triangle as a neighborhood "pocket park" This proposed use faces one problem, in that the north bank of the river, which affords the best view of the bridge, is privately owned, although there has been some indication that the owner might consider making access available.
  - Improved maintenance, planting, seeding of Whitney Park (the village green)
  - Planned, integrated signage to identify and characterize village features.
  - Reduction of pavement area adjacent to Whitney Park.

- Follow the planning phase with a public promotional "campaign" – a street fair, walking tour, neighborhood history brochure, school program.

- Work with the volunteer organization that is promoting a Grafton & Upton Rail Trail (see below). New England Village is a potential access point for the trail, and would make a good "place of interest" for those using the trail to visit.

Depot Street (Farnumsville)

Depot Street and its surrounding mill village of Farnumsville comprise one of Grafton's five National Register Districts, and significant features on both sides of Depot Street are included in the Blackstone Canal National Register District as well. Additionally, Farnumsville as a whole has been the focus of a number of planning exercises in the past few years, including a South Grafton Villages Master Plan adopted in July 2007 and a recent Urban River Visions initiative (2007) supported by the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs. While it would seem that the area has had significant planning attention, it is worthwhile to review the historical significance of the Depot Street area and take note of the range of its heritage features, so that they will be in the front of residents' minds as protection and revitalization efforts go forward.

Description: The section of Grafton that came to be known as Farnumsville is characterized by a broad eastward sweep of the Blackstone River a short way

* The Grafton Community Preservation Committee has approved funding to support this project; it is currently waiting for State approval for the Town to work on what is still designated a state roadway.

downstream from its junction with the Quinsigamond River. As the river returns to a southerly course, the flow of water against its east bank provides an excellent water power opportunity, which was exploited over a 150-year period by a succession of manufacturers who built and expanded a textile manufacturing complex between the river and Providence Road (Route 122), the main connector route between Grafton and communities to both north and south. Crossing the river is Depot Street, the more southerly of two historic routes that head westward from Providence Road. Depot Street bridges both the main river channel and what remains of the Blackstone Canal. As its name suggests, in the last century it connected the mill on the east bank with a rail depot on the west bank of the waterway.

Today, Depot Street gives little hint of the activity that once surrounded it. The east end of the road is industrial in appearance, with the minimally-occupied stone and brick Farnumsville Mill hugging the sidewalk on the north side. Along the south side of the street are a number of buildings originally associated with the mill. At the head of the street is the oldest commercial building in the district (c. 1830-1840), a two-story wood frame store with wrap-around columned porch. While these buildings are in varying states of repair, they can clearly be seen to be historic, and interesting in their variety. Approximately 500 feet to the west, Depot Street crosses the Blackstone, on a concrete bridge that is in need of repair.

The view upstream from the bridge is of an array of dams with a drawn-down mill pond above them. The dam section closest to the mill is a near-derelict wooden crib dam. There is ongoing discussion among property owner, conservation groups and other organizations about the relative merits of restoring or breaching this portion of the dam, which would determine the configuration, recreational uses, and ecological function of the mill pond and island above. The remaining stretch of dam, apparently constructed in the mid-19th century, consists of a stone and earth embankment with two later concrete spillways. This is the end of a diversion channel from the Blackstone Canal into the Farnumsville mill pond, returning water to the river above the milldam to provide additional power after the closing of the canal in 1848. The result of these impoundments is a rich area of wetland including floodplain, marsh, flowing water, and an isolated island of higher ground in the river. Downstream from the bridge the river narrows, and is bordered by new-growth wooded wetlands on both banks. A stretch south of the bridge along the west bank is owned by the Grafton Land Trust. The private owner of a parcel north of the bridge is considering the feasibility of making his land available for camping.

Beyond the wetland area west of the bridge, Depot Street is bordered by houses to its intersection with Ferry Street. The single-family buildings represent a range of dates and styles, from the 1840s (66 Depot St) to 1950 (127 Ferry St). The Depot – Ferry Street intersection is an area in transition. Nothing remains of the buildings associated with the depot, although the Providence and Worcester Railroad still runs trains on the nearby track.

The National Register nomination form for Farnumsville summarizes the significance of this district: "Today this largely residential district remains a well-preserved collection of mill structures, houses, stores, and public buildings which represent most of the major architectural styles of the 19th and early 20th centuries." To which should be added that Depot Street is the visual "thread" that ties together the industrial, commercial, residential and landscape history and potential of Farnumsville.

Background: According to tradition, Peter Farnum built a mill at this site as early as 1812, but nothing is known to survive of that early structure. A second Farnum mill building was constructed in 1827 as a woolen mill to manufacture satinet, a high quality smooth woolen fabric. This manufacturing enterprise was likely planned to take advantage of the new transportation route nearby: the Blackstone Canal opened in 1828 just across the river, an easier and less expensive way than carting on the Providence Road, to transport manufactured goods from rural Grafton to the commercial center of Providence, Rhode Island. Although Farnum's second – and a third – mill burned in the following decades, the site and its waterpower remained valuable.

In 1844 a brick, three-story industrial building on a stone foundation was constructed by a second generation of Farnums. This time the building contained 75 looms designed to weave cotton – the "fiber of choice" that was replacing wool throughout much of industrial New England. Shortly thereafter, the Blackstone Canal was rendered functionally obsolete by the advent of rail transportation. The Providence and Worcester Railroad laid track along much of the length of the canal, cutting through the towpath embankment in some places to level the route. The Farnumsville Cotton Mill benefited twice from the change: rail transport brought a depot to the village (and presumably inspired the present name of Depot Street), and the mill took over the canal's water rights, diverting the flow via a newly dug trench into the mill pond, thus redirecting the water power to the mill.

For the next 50 years the cotton weaving and dyeing industry prospered in Farnumsville. The mill complex expanded significantly, with numerous additions to the main building, as well as a series of adjunct buildings that ended up dominating the east end of Depot Street. These included a two-story wood frame stock house (c. 1870), a single-story "salt" or dye house (c. 1890), and two c. 1925 buildings: a clapboard community house and a brick garage. The last two are associated with the mill's final stage of textile production. Wuskanut Mill, Inc. took over the complex in 1922, shifting once again to woolen production. Wuskanut built its own machine shop to serve the mill, and added a fourth floor to the earliest section of the building. The mill continued to manufacture textiles until 1935 when, like many textile businesses in neighboring villages and towns, it closed in the face of economic depression and labor unrest. By mid-century the mill was running again, under the name of J. J. O'Donnell Woolens, Inc., but there was little additional development of the area following that time. In the subsequent decades the area bordering Depot Street has undergone primarily minor changes; buildings have been re-sided; and various sections of the mill itself continue to be leased to a number of small businesses.

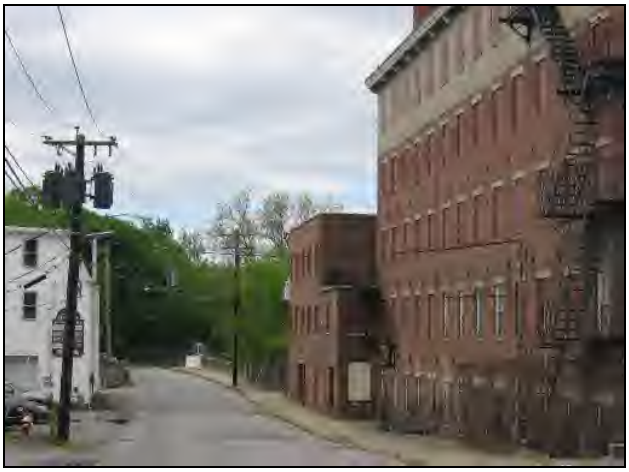
Issues:

- The challenges of industrial building adaptive reuse.
- Divergent views on protection and/or alteration of riverine environment.
- Lack of access to Blackstone River and its shores.
- Need to improve the aesthetic "public face" of Farnumsville to make it attractive as a residential neighborhood.
- Need to protect the mill village from development that is incompatible in scale or style with extant buildings.

The Urban River Visions charrette held in May 2007 summarized a shared "vision" and associated issues for Farnumsville, of which Depot Street is the focus:

The community's vision for the future is built on:

- *re-establishing the mill as an activity generator for the village,*
- *providing better access to and along the River,*
- *enhancing the identity of the village through streetscape improvements,*
- *ensuring that all new development respects the scale and character of the historic village environment.*



Recommendations:

- Share this report with Farnumsville residents, and Depot Street landowners in particular. It is important that they continue to be reminded that their properties are appreciated and valued by all Grafton residents.

- Give serious consideration to designating some or all of Farnumsville as a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District (NACD). A NACD is a valuable preservation tool for this area: it focuses on retaining a few key architectural elements, together with massing, scale, and setback, to preserve overall neighborhood character. The upper end of Depot Street and the stretch of Main Street from there to the new Fisherville Smart Growth District is the section of Farnumsville most likely to be impacted by the nearby development, and residents have expressed concern that the village character will be lost in the process. See Part II of this report for further information on NACDs.

In addition, this report endorses the Action Plan laid out during this spring's Urban River Visions process. Key actions from that Plan are bulleted below, with additional comments in italics.

- Establishment of a Farnumsville Public Spaces Committee to define priorities *with at least one member representing and knowledgeable about the village's history and development.*

- Establishment of an Adaptive Reuse Overlay District around the Farnumsville Mill, in order to encourage mixed residential and commercial uses for the buildings. *Neighborhood Business Zoning might be able to achieve similar results, with more application to other neighborhood buildings.*

- Development of design standards for streetscape improvements. *Look into Community Development Action Grants through the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development for planning and funding assistance.*

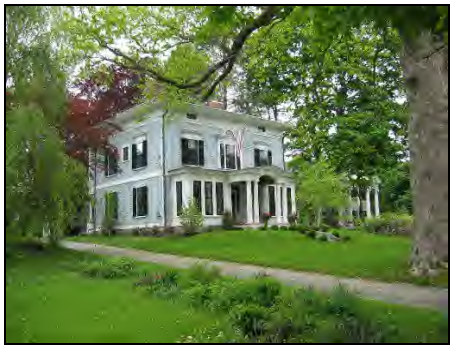
- Public engagement via a South Grafton Heritage Festival *(to raise awareness and pride in the area's rich industrial heritage)* and clean-up activities along the river *(to promote citizen stewardship by and for the neighborhood).*

- Development of an integrated South Grafton land-and-water trail system with interpretive signage *or other informational material that features both natural and cultural resources of the district. The Virtual Visitors Center website currently under development by the Hassanamesit Woods Committee could serve as a model for conveying information about Farnumsville and its heritage landscape.*

North Street and South Street

Description: North Street and South Street, as their names suggest, lead in opposite directions from Grafton Center's town common. They are residential streets lined predominantly with 19th century homes and outbuildings on large, landscaped lots, almost all of which are at least a half-acre in size, and many over an acre. The houses represent the spectrum of Grafton residents who built and worked in the village between the Federal Period and the Civil War, including business-owners' mansions, professional men's comfortable homes, and shoe shop workers' tenements, now private homes. South Street's landscape is fairly formal, characterized by designed and carefully tended lawns and gardens shaded by mature specimen trees including horse chestnut, beech, maple, cherry and sycamore. North Street, by contrast, presents a more casual streetscape, especially farther away from the Common where a few imposing mansions are mixed in with more modest houses, and evidence remains of the cultivated fields, as well as gardens, that were once associated with many North Street houses.

Background: The Grafton common area was set aside for public use at the time of the town's established in 1728, with a meetinghouse, cemetery, school and town pound all constructed soon after. The Old and Indian Cemetery and the town pound still exist between Oak Street and Providence Road at the foot of the hill that defined the town's center. North and South Streets comprised the early road extending along the top of the hill, and were apparently the earliest route through the center of town.



From colonial times through the mid-19th century, Grafton center was an important commercial, as well as civic center. The 1805 Grafton Inn served as a stagecoach stop on the route from Boston to Providence, and leather-working enterprises proliferated along North Street, as well as boot and shoe manufacturers. Houses, most constructed between 1800 and 1850, were set on generally small lots, especially close to the center, with some infilling taking place in the early 20th century. The Joseph Perry House, built in 1734 at 70 North Street, is the oldest remaining house on the street, and the 1835 George Clapp House at 44 North Street is listed on the National Register.

Much of South Street's development coincided with, and is reflective of, Grafton's early to mid-19th century prosperity. Large rectangular lots were laid out between the street and the Quinsigamond River that flowed along the base of the hill's west slope, and the town's manufacturers and professionals erected sizable homes on these west-side parcels. In contrast, the east side of the street is lined with smaller lots and more modest houses, almost all built between 1820 and 1850, although the Bond-Hastings House at 17 South dates to 1790.

Issues:

- North and South Streets currently have no protection, despite the fact that they contain historically significant buildings and important views, and share a common heritage with the Historic District that is adjacent to them.

- A number of vacant developable lots present a risk of residential development that is incompatible with present housing stock in the area. Construction of nonconforming houses within the recent past is evidence of development that is insensitive to the historic context of the neighborhood.

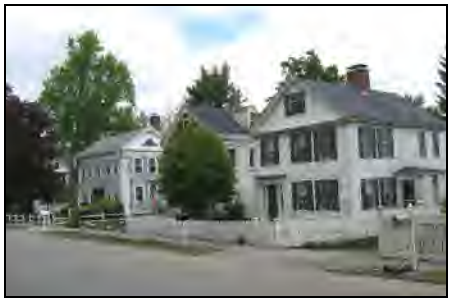
Recommendations:

- Consider expanding the Grafton Common Local Historic District, which currently includes just the common and the buildings that immediately surround it, to encompass other significant resources in the area, including the residences on North and South Streets.
  - Exact boundaries would need to be determined based on the historical significance and integrity of resources, using the existing MHC inventory forms as a starting point.

- Property owners may be concerned about how inclusion in a Local Historic District could affect their ability to alter their properties; expanding the district will require public outreach and education.
- Consult with the Massachusetts Historical Commission about the LHD process, boundary determinations and public outreach efforts.

- Include North Street and South Street as designated Scenic Roads under the town's Scenic Road Bylaw.

- Consider application of a Scenic Overlay District to these streets. This zoning overlay would provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads.

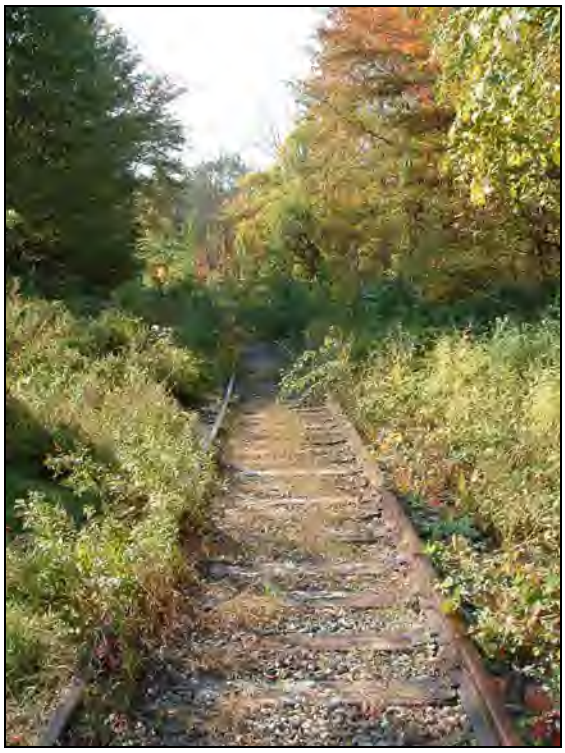


Grafton and Upton Railroad

Description: The Grafton and Upton Railroad is a 15.5-mile long industrial railroad that runs from Milford through Hopedale, Upton, West Upton and Grafton to North Grafton where it connects with a Conrail line to Worcester. About 7.5 miles of track exist in Grafton, most of which is unused and overgrown, although the G & U continues to use its northern terminal in North Grafton where it interchanges with Conrail. The rail bed itself is in fairly good condition, having been upgraded in the 1950s, and local snowmobilers are known to spend some time each winter cutting back underbrush along the corridor.

Creation of a recreational rail trail along the abandoned rail bed has been discussed by residents along the line since at least 1990, with depots in Grafton and Hopedale suggested as potential visitor centers. A circa 1940 concrete block building (presently unused), located a block south of Grafton Center on Route 140, across from the Grafton Historical Society building, has been proposed as the town's access point to the trail. The line could provide a cross-country alternative route for exploring a number of Grafton's heritage landscapes including New England Village, Grafton Common and Hassanamesit Woods, as well as providing a scenic link between Grafton and other historic Blackstone Valley towns.

The railroad is owned by a single Worcester family. The line is considered unique in that it has been operated and controlled by its original owners for almost 80 years, rather than being acquired by larger railroad interests. Efforts to contact the owner and negotiate acquisition for recreation use have so far been unsuccessful.



Background: The Grafton Center Railway was chartered in 1873 and opened in 1874 as a narrow gauge connection from the town common, through New England Village, to a junction with the Boston and Albany Railroad at North Grafton. The last narrow gauge train ran in 1887, and the line was rebuilt to standard gauge that same year. By 1890 the line had been extended to Milford, providing direct rail links to major industrial complexes in Hopedale, Upton and Milford. The Grafton and Upton was one of few railroads to switch from steam to electric operation in the early 20th century, before changing to diesel power. Its rail bed was completely reconstructed in the early 1950s.

Issues:

- Ownership and Trail Potential: The current owner of railroad has not been responsive to a number of overtures made by towns along the line that have indicated interest in developing a rail trail. The corridor cannot be reused for the benefit of the town and region, and will remain in an abandoned state, until the situation can be changed.

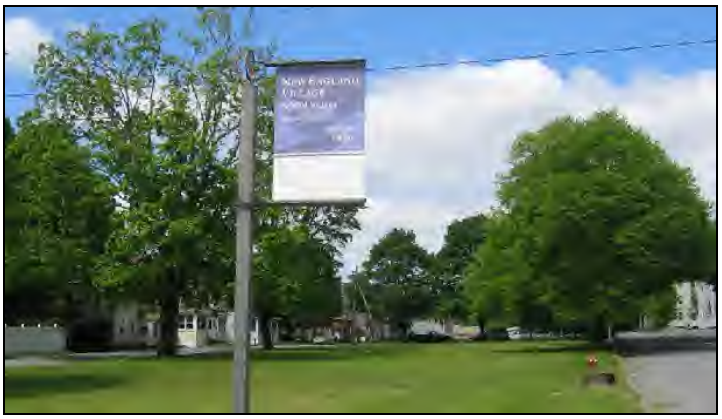
Recommendations:

- Work with the owner to find a mutually agreeable way to advance the process of making the rail line available for public recreational use.

- Work with other towns who have had success in moving forward similar initiatives, such as Milford, and with the other towns along the G & U line including Upton and Hopedale, who share an interest in rail trail development.

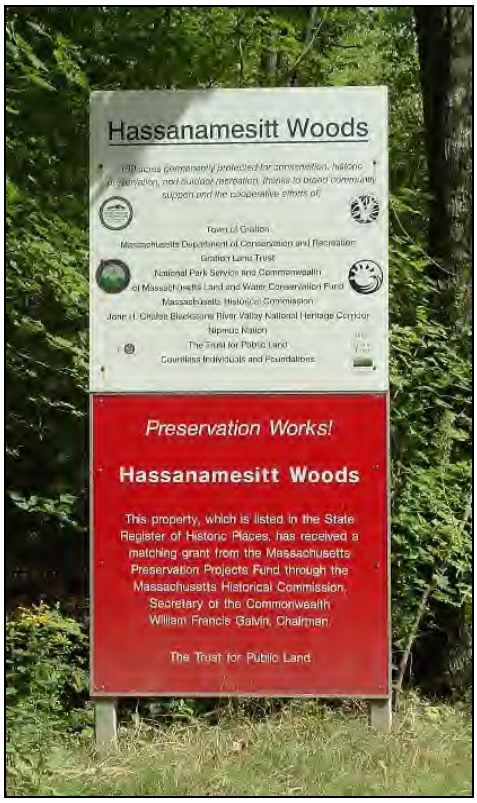
- Explore the potential reuse of the vacant depot building, which appears to be in good condition and is adjacent to public parking space as a useful visitor center/bike rental depot along the trail.

- Appendix B of this report includes information on a number of sources of technical assistance and grant funding for projects such as this, including the National Park Service Rivers and Trails program and DCR's Recreational Trails Grant Program.



PART II

BUILDING A HERITAGE LANDSCAPE TOOLKIT



EIGHT TOOLKIT BASICS

As our communities undergo rapid land use changes, heritage landscapes are particularly threatened because they are often taken for granted. There is a broad variety of resources that communities can call upon to protect these irreplaceable resources. Below is a checklist of the basics. Each is discussed in the sections that follow and in Appendix B.

1. Know the resources: Inventory
We cannot advocate for something until we clearly identify it – in this case, the physical characteristics and historical development of the town's historic and archeological resources. The necessary first step is to record information about the resources at the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: National Register Listing
The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Listing brings a number of benefits including recognition, consideration when federally- or state-funded projects may impact the resource, eligibility for tax credits, and qualification for certain grant programs.

3. Engage the public: 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.

4. Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning
It is important that Open Space Plans and Comprehensive or Master Plans 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.

5. Develop partnerships: The Power of 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.

6. Defend the resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms
Effective and innovative preservation tools exist in the legal and regulatory realm. These range from a wide array of zoning, bylaw and ordinance mechanisms, to incentive programs and owner-generated restrictions on land use.

7. Utilize the experts: 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, the Heritage Corridor and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

8. Pay the bill: Funding Preservation
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.

GRAFTON'S TOOLKIT – Current Status and Future Additions

What follows is a review of the tools that Grafton already has in place, as well as a number of additional tools that fall within some of the categories noted above. The tools already in place for Grafton provide a good foundation for heritage landscape preservation, but their efficacy as protection for the town's natural and cultural resources can be significantly improved by strengthening existing measures and putting others in place. Appendix B includes extended descriptions of preservation measures; the specific applications of those tools to Grafton's resources are described below. In addition, the appendix contains a full description of additional avenues and creative approaches that Grafton can consider in developing a multi-pronged strategy for preservation.

A tool that has been proven to be one of the single most valuable resources in protecting heritage landscapes has been the Community Preservation Act (CPA), adopted by the town in 2002. Grafton has been an excellent model for how a town's resources can be brought to bear on heritage landscape preservation through the program, most recently in its partnership funding for purchase of the Hassanamesit Woods property on Keith Hill, as well as numerous earlier purchases of significant parcels of conservation land.

These tools should be considered in combination with those recommendations made in Part I for Grafton's priority landscapes.

1. Know the resources: Inventory

Current: According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the town's inventory includes documentation for 1,166 buildings, structures, sites and landscapes throughout town. In addition, Grafton has documented 32 precontact Indian sites and 38 historic archaeological sites on MHC inventory forms.

Additions: The inventory process completed in 1991 for Grafton was a remarkably thorough and accurate survey of the town's historic assets. Numerous heritage landscapes were documented at the time, as well as buildings and streetscapes. The Historical Commission would do well to consult this townwide inventory whenever a particular property comes into question, making needed updates to the inventory forms at that time and filing them as updates with the MHC.

It is recommended that a similar, archaeological survey be completed for the community, especially considering the significance of the area to the history of the Nipmuc people. Known and potential precontact Native American and historic archaeological sites should be documented in the field for evidence of their cultural association and/or integrity. Funding assistance for this effort may be available from MHC Survey and Planning grants, and from local CPA money.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: State and National Register Listing

Current: Many of Grafton's inventoried resources are included in one of five National Register Districts in town:

- Grafton Common (1988)
- Blackstone Canal (1995)
- Farnumsville (1996)

- Fisherville (1996)
- Grafton State Hospital (1994)

In addition, four buildings are NR listed as individual properties:

- Ethan Allen House and Gunshop (1995)
- Grafton Inn (1980)
- Willard House and Clock Museum (1982)
- George Clapp House (1997)

All National Register listed properties and districts are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

There are three properties protected by a Preservation Restriction:

- Evangelical Congregational Church (1999)
- Hassanamesit Woods (2004)
- Grafton Public Library (2005)

and these are also listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

In addition to National Register designation, Grafton Common, including 23 properties, was established as a Local Historic District in 1981.

Additions: The Historical Commission should follow up on recommendations to pursue National Register listing for New England Village, which was written into the Action Plan of the 2001 Comprehensive Plan as a Phase One priority. The 2007 Open Space and Recreation Plan again recommended pursuing NR listing for New England Village and set a target date of 2009.

3. Engage the public: Outreach, Education and Interpretation

Current: The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor has published an excellent walking tour guide to Grafton Center that describes the history and significance of a number of central village sites, as well as providing brief historical background to the town as a whole. Corridor Rangers conduct occasional walking tours, known as "walkabouts", focused at present on the Farnumsville district, but also exploring other areas of the town including New England Village.

The Grafton Land Trust sponsors a host of recreational and educational activities to connect people to the Town's natural resources and uses these opportunities to promote the GLT's conservation mission. They also inform landowners about private conservation opportunities for their properties.

The Historical Commission has been actively involved in a number of heritage education initiatives, including administering a historic building plaques program. Best known of the initiatives is the third grade Grafton History Program, that combines the knowledge and manpower resources of Commission, Historical Society, Grafton teachers and the Willard House Museum to engage all third grade students in local history as part of their Massachusetts social studies curriculum. Students explore the Willard House Museum and historic sites around the town common; they participate in a "colonial day" at school, and Grafton's heritage sites are part of the cooperatively designed curriculum.

A recent initiative has been funded by a Massachusetts Turnpike "Take Time for History" grant. $30,000 in grant money will be used to supplement CPA funds for bridge work, streetscape improvements, signage and a driving map for a self-guided tour of North Grafton that focuses on New England Village, the State Hospital Campus, Willard House Museum and Grafton Common. This is planned as the first phase of an expanding promotion of Grafton's heritage landscapes to visitors and tourists.

Additions*:* The Open Space Plan recommends preparing a brochure and website listing of the Town's public open spaces and historic resources, in order to introduce new residents and visitors to Grafton's special places. It also recommends identifying through signage the location/access points for protected lands that are open to the public. Use of varied media to contact the public has been shown to increase and sustain public awareness.

The Historical Commission or Society is in a good position to coordinate a series of walking tours of Grafton heritage landscapes to inform people about their many interesting features and raise public awareness. This is an excellent way to familiarize the community with lesser-known places and engage them with the town's outdoor resources.

Preservation Mass, as the statewide preservation advocacy organization, is a source of support for advocacy. They have a program that annually identifies and publicizes the 10 Most Endangered historic resources in the Commonwealth, which is a good way to advocate for resources that are imminently threatened.

4. <u>Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning</u>

Current: Comprehensive Plan (2001) Many of Grafton's goals from its Comprehensive Plan address the needs of heritage landscapes. Its first goal is to Preserve Grafton's town character. Others include to permanently protect open space from development; permanently protect Grafton's natural resources and historic neighborhoods and structures; and a goal that specifically addresses the desire to preserve New England Village, Fisherville, Farnumsville and the Town Center.

The Land Management Plan of the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor was cited, and the importance of helping to achieve that plan's vision by continuing to work within the Town to preserve its natural, cultural and historic resources.

Many of the Plan's recommendations addressed bylaw and other regulatory mechanisms that create stronger provisions for open space, historic and agricultural preservation. The Plan called for evaluation of what is in place and how measures could be strengthened. The recently completed Open Space and Recreation Plan undertook to address these issues.

Many of the priority landscapes addressed in the present report were identified in the Comprehensive Plan as critically important to protect, through a variety of regulatory and non-regulatory measures.

Current: Open Space and Recreation Plan (2007) As the Comprehensive Plan did six years earlier, the Town's Open Space Plan again listed the priority landscapes assessed in this report as being of the utmost importance to the Town, describing them as distinctive special places, in need of protection.

The survey conducted in preparation for the Plan showed a high level of public support for heritage landscape protection. Rated as "important" include open spaces for conservation/passive recreation (75%); historical buildings and places (68%); and farmland preservation (67%).

The Open Space Action Plan includes sections on Acquisition, Regulations and Bylaws, Information Programs, and Management in addressing the needs of heritage landscapes.

Current: South Grafton Villages Master Plan (2007) This plan, just approved by the Board of Selectmen , examines and proposes improvements to the villages of Fisherville, Farnumsville and Saundersville. The current focus of action is the Smart Growth development of Fisherville (see under #6). The plan recommends evaluation of Neighborhood Business District zoning for the villages, as a means of encouraging adaptive reuse of buildings for mixed commercial and residential use.

Additions: Many of the Open Space Plan's recommendations are important measures to preserve community character and protect open space. They should be pursued.

5. Develop Partnerships: the Power of Collaboration

Current: The Town of Grafton has set an example of interdepartmental and inter-agency cooperation and communication, within a framework of challenging issues and limited manpower. Much of the preservation and conservation work in town is achieved by volunteer boards and committees, with the support and advice of municipal staff and Selectmen.

The Grafton Land Trust works in partnership with town officials including Conservation and Historical Commissions and others on conservation projects, and collaborates on local and regional open space planning efforts.

Additions: The Open Space Plan recommended maintaining partnerships with key open space allies, and listed DCR, the Trust for Public Land, and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission as key partners.

It is vital that there be strong links between community economic development, open space, and recreation agendas in order to successfully address Grafton's environmental and development challenges, including regular joint meetings of the town boards involved with land-based and cultural resource issues. This scheduled interaction will help to maintain communication, coordinate planning priorities, and advance programs that support and promote community character and heritage landscapes.

6. Defend the Resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms

Current Mechanisms

Flexible Development: For residential developments of over five lots, the town requires submission of both a conventional and flexible subdivision plan. It is up to the Planning Board to select which of the proposals best suits the location and its resources.

Limited Development: Grafton, as an informal mechanism and with the help of CPA funding, has purchased two large tracts of undeveloped land; subdivided a small portion of the parcel and resold that area for development; and retained the remainder of the parcel as protected open space.

40R Fisherville Smart Growth Overlay District: The district allows high density mixed use on the site of the old mill building in South Grafton's Fisherville while providing environmental enhancements and community access along the Blackstone River. The overlay was approved locally at the November 2006 Town Meeting, and approved by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development in July 2007.

Additional Mechanisms

The following strategies have consistently proven effective as basic preservation tools in communities throughout Massachusetts.

Demolition Delay Bylaw: This bylaw provides a time period during which towns explore alternatives to demolition of historic structures. The Grafton Historical Commission should work with MHC staff to develop a bylaw that would best suit Grafton's needs. They should also work with other town groups to promote the advantages of a demolition delay bylaw to the community. The most valuable aspect of this bylaw is that it creates space within which to have a conversation about how private and public needs can both be met in the service of preservation.

Many towns have found that a delay of one year is the most effective time frame within which to negotiate alternatives to demolition. Town bylaws most often apply to structures built over 50 years ago, in accordance with federal standards.

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NACD) further explained in Appendix B, are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. The Grafton Historical Commission should work with MHC staff to determine how an NACD can help to maintain the character of areas that have changed through time, but which retain a valued neighborhood "feel" that may be threatened by incompatible development, such as New England Village.

Local Historic Districts (LHD), further explained in Appendix B, are also local initiatives and the strongest form of protection to preserve special areas with distinctive buildings and places. Grafton is to be commended for having taken

this important step over 25 years ago to preserve the character and desirability of the Grafton Common Historic District. As the Town has recognized, local designation often protects private investment by enhancing property values. A system that provides property owners incentives can preserve important characteristics of a district while allowing options for how that can happen. The Grafton Common Local Historic District should be revisited to consider the expansion detailed above in the North and South Street priority landscape recommendations.

Additional mechanisms specific to Grafton's landscapes

The following recommendations, organized by the types of resources that Grafton has, are measures that should be considered to provide for or strengthen their protection.

Mill Villages and Industrial Structures

A defining characteristic of the Blackstone Valley and Grafton in particular are the mill villages that exhibit the vestiges of the transformative power of the industrial revolution in mills, dams, mill worker housing and transportation elements such as the associated rivers, canals and railroads or rail traces. Grafton exhibits that history particularly clearly in the villages of New England Village, Farnumsville, Fisherville, and Saundersville.

In the past, Grafton has discussed and framed out an Adaptive Reuse Bylaw that would apply to historic mill structures, but the bylaw has not met with town meeting approval.

The town is currently considering application of Neighborhood Business District Overlay zoning to Farnumsville, as a means of encouraging mixed commercial/retail/residential uses in the vicinity of Depot Street.

Agricultural Lands

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of the farming activities; otherwise, it simply is the preservation of land as open space. There are instances in which changing farming technology sometimes requires modifications to existing farm structures or the addition of new ones. It is important to know what the features of an agricultural setting are and which features the community treasures, in order to make a case for preservation of these settings.

Appendix B has a full list of regulatory tools that should be considered to protect agricultural land; the following highlights important measures to meet the needs of agricultural protection in Grafton.

1. Create an Agricultural Commission, a standing committee of town government created through vote at Town Meeting. This Commission would represent the farming community, promote agricultural-based economic opportunities, and work to protect and sustain agricultural businesses and farmland.

2. Prioritize parcels under Chapter 61A for future acquisition. Should the land owner choose to sell land recently withdrawn from Ch 61, the town has only 120 days to act on its right of first refusal. The need to pay fair market value, combined with the short time-frame in which to assemble needed funding, makes it difficult for the town to effectively act on this right.
3. Strengthen public-private partnerships to preserve farmland through purchase of APRs or CRs.
4. Continue to work in partnership with the Grafton Land Trust and other regional conservation organizations to raise funds to purchase development rights on farms or to assist a farmer in the restoration of historic farm buildings for which the owner would be required to donate a preservation restriction (PR).
5. Make information about the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources programs available to farmers, including the Farm Viability Enhancement Program (technical assistance, funding) and the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (supports best management practices for agricultural operations to mitigate impacts on natural resources).
6. Document farms that are considered critical to the character of Grafton's community using MHC survey forms.
7. Adopt a right-to-farm bylaw which allows farmers to carry on farming activities that may be considered a nuisance to neighbors. Refer to Smart Growth Toolkit at: http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/bylaws/Right-to-Farm-Bylaw.pdf
8. Explore Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), a partnership between a farm and a community of supporters. Community members cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest. This relationship guarantees farmers a reliable market, while assuring the members high quality produce, often below retail prices.

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Grafton residents and visitors alike and were listed as a heritage landscape theme during the public meeting. Roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel and safety requirements as the only considerations. Grafton has adopted the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) and designated roads for which there would be review and approval for the removal of trees and stone walls within the right-of-way. But in addition to roadway issues, much of what we value about scenic roads – the stone walls, views across open fields and the many scenic historic buildings – is not within the public right-of-way. The preservation and protection of scenic roads therefore requires more than one approach.

1. Complete an inventory with descriptions and photo documentation of each of the roads in Grafton considered to be scenic, including the character-defining features that should be retained.
2. Post attractive road signs that identify the scenic roads in town.
3. Coordinate procedures between Highway Department and Planning Board or Historical Commission.

4. Consider a Scenic Overlay District which may provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads or adopt flexible zoning standards to protect certain views. Such bylaws would apply to the landscapes bordering state numbered roadways, which would not be protected under the scenic roads designation, as well as to landscapes bordering town roads.
5. Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstruction, which address the scenic and historic characteristics while also addressing safety. This is an important public process in which the community may have to accept responsibility for certain costs to implement standards higher than those funded by Mass Highway Department. Such standards should have a section addressing the way in which the local Highway Department maintains roads; for example, requiring a public hearing if any new pavement width is to be added to a town road during reconstruction or repair. Policies can be adopted by local boards having jurisdiction over roads, or can be adopted at Town Meeting through a bylaw. In developing policies consider factors such as road width, clearing of shoulders, walking paths and posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.

7. Utilize the experts: Technical assistance

A list indicating the wide range of available governmental and non-profit sources of technical assistance can be found in Appendix B.

8. Pay the Bill: Funding Preservation

Passage of the CPA by the Town has provided a vital resource for Grafton to use on behalf of open space and historic preservation. Grafton has also been designated a Certified Local Government by the MHC. This provides greater access to MHC funding for the Town.

The Grafton Land Trust, as well as the Greater Worcester Land Trust and other organizations at the regional level, financially support heritage landscape preservation through direct purchase of land or the holding of conservation easements.

An extensive list of funding sources is included in Appendix B.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Grafton's residents have a strong sense of place, defined by the town's varied natural features and the historic land use patterns that grew out of them. Like most municipalities, Grafton is facing multiple pressures for change that will have permanent impact on land-based uses and natural resources, especially its remaining farming areas. Special places within the community that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change, especially due to intense residential development pressure.

The Grafton Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Grafton and in developing creative preservation strategies and partnerships. Grafton will have to determine the best ways and sequence in which to implement the recommendations discussed above. The town would do well to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in DCR's publication, *Reading the Land*.

Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will benefit from further documentation in accordance with MHC guidelines. The documentation in turn will provide an information base for the local publicity needed to build consensus and gather public support for landscape preservation. Implementing many of the recommendations in this report will require a concerted effort by and partnerships among municipal boards and agencies, local non-profit organizations, and regional and state agencies and commissions.

There are no quick fixes for the challenges of managing growth and funding preservation. Many of the recommended tasks and approaches will require cooperation and coordination among a number of municipal, regional and state partners to be successful. They will require time and a good dose of patience, as volunteer schedules, legislative procedures, and funding cycles try to mesh.

Circulating this Reconnaissance Report is an essential first step. The recommendations should be presented to the Board of Selectmen, who represented Grafton in its application to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program. Copies of the report should be available on the town's web site and distributed to town departments and boards, particularly Grafton's Historical Commission, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission and will also be useful for the Grafton Historical Society, neighborhood associations, the Grafton Land Trust, and other preservation organizations. Finally, a reference copy belongs in the town library. All of these circulation efforts will broaden citizen awareness, and result in increased interest and support for Grafton's heritage landscapes.

Finally, the project team suggests that the three following recommendations be top priorities for Grafton as the town continues working to protect the character of its community:

1. Develop a prioritized list of the town's Ch. 61A farmland, to facilitate planning.
2. Pursue National Register listing for New England Village.
3. Establish a Depot and Main Street Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District (NACD) in Farnumsville.

APPENDIX A

GRAFTON HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

This list was generated by local participants at the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting held in Grafton on March 21, 2007 and follow-up fieldwork on May 21, 2007. **There are undoubtedly other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the name and location of the resource are in the first; notes about the resource are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
CR = Conservation Restriction
LHD = Local Historic District
NRHD = National Register Historic District
PR = Preservation Restriction
NRI = National Register Individual Property

Bold = Priority Landscape

Summary of Priority Landscapes:
Merriam & Estabrook Road Farms
Grafton State Hospital Campus
New England Village
Depot Street (Farnumsville)
North Street and South Street
Grafton & Upton Railroad

Agriculture	
Merriam & Estabrook Road Farms	Knowlton, Martin and Poler Farms, contiguous parcels of agricultural and forest land, all under Ch. 61A, immediately upstream from Great Meadows; all now haying fields; Knowlton originally dairy.
Potter Hill Potter Hill Rd.	former farm with agricultural vista from top of hill
Creeper Hill Orchard Creeper Hill Rd.	1890; on Shrewsbury line; presently specializes in heirloom apple varieties.
Houlden Farm Old Westborough Road	Truck farm, corn, produce; agricultural open space, no buildings.
Blackberry Hill Farm	aka Quinsigamond Farm, Johnson Farm
Highfields Tree Farm Fay Mountain Rd.	Christmas Tree Farm
White Farm N. Brigham Hill Rd	hay fields
former Fiske Orchards Keith Hill	orchards developed 1880s – 1950s; once one of largest apple orchards in New England; lots fronting on Keith Hill Rd sold for residential development in mid-1950s; still remnant trees on every house lot and in Hassanamesit Woods
George Hill	entire west flank is historic agricultural area, much still open hay fields and pasture; includes original homestead (1828) of George Misco family, one of Grafton's Nipmuc proprietors.

Burial Grounds and Cemeteries	
theme: cemeteries	- Indian Burying Ground (Providence Rd., c. 1664) - Old and Indian Burying Ground (Oak St., 1731) - Farnumsville Cemetery (Providence Rd., 1812) - Riverside Cemetery (Millbury St., 1850) - Fairview Cemetery (Providence Rd., 1880) - Pine Grove Cemetery (Waterville St., 1846) - St. Philip's Cemetery (Millbury St., 1862)
Civic / Institutional	
Grafton State Hospital Campus	Former state hospital crossing border of Grafton and Shrewsbury – hospital buildings are now used as Tufts Veterinary School, Federal Job Corps campus. NRHD
Union Congregational Church 86 Main St.	essential element of Fisherville streetscape; built 1895; unaltered.
S. Grafton Community House	2 acres +/- behind building lead down to Blackstone River
Town Pound Providence Rd.	1736 adjacent to Old and Indian Cemetery on town land
Grafton Common	1728 - centerpiece of Grafton Common NRHD and LHD
Farnumsville Engine House 3 Main St.	1850; former fire house; originally located across the street
Commercial / Industrial	
Depot Street (Farnumsville)	including brick Waskanut Mill (aka Farnumsville Mill); railroad, river, canal and three bridges; part of Farnumsville NRHD (1996)
Hickey Leather Mill	brick mill building; sluiceway is located at outflow of Lake Ripple Brigham Hill Road
Ethan Allen Gun Shop 37 Waterville St.	at Pratt's Pond; heavily restored as private home; NRI 1995.
Miscellaneous	
Hennessey property Adams Rd.	vista; town-owned 100 acres, fields, some woodlands
Hassanamisco Reservation Brigham Hill Rd.	Reservation of the Hassanamisco Nipmuc people; 3+ acres field, woods and long house. Nipmuc title to property predates 1728.
Hassanamesit Woods off Keith Hill Rd.	200-acre town-owned parcel of wooded conservation land with trails, stone walls. CR, PR, 2004.
House Rock Fitzpatrick Rd.	located in wetlands area
Shelter Rock off North St.	John Eliot reputed to have taken shelter here when he first visited Hassanamesit.

Stone war memorials	Three monuments known as "The Eggs" located throughout town, on the Common, at Quinsigamond Corner, and in Saundersville.
Open Space/ Recreation/ Parks	
Silver Lake Upton Rd	dammed portion of Miscoe Brook, originally for iron works. Present location of town beach.
Blackstone River	Major waterway, flows south through western section of town. See under *Communitywide Heritage Landscape Issues* in report
Magill corn field Old Upton Rd.	Neighboring land owner purchased air rights over a portion of this field to preserve the view; was part of Goddard Farm.
Quinsigamond River	Tributary of Blackstone; important industrial history and natural resource. See under *Communitywide Heritage Landscape Issues* in report.
site of former high school Worcester St.	Town-owned, vacant, open space
Norcross Park North St.	site of former brick elementary school building; now active recreation parcel.
theme: ponds	- Fisherville Pond (1828) - Lake Ripple - Pratt's Pond (1833) - Hayes Pond - Hovey Pond (1825) - Windle Mill Pond (1880) - Cider Mill Pond (1840) - Grass Pond - Silver Lake (c. 1830) [Dates given for these ponds are from Grafton's Historic Resources Survey; they indicate impoundment of streams and rivers for industrial water reserves.]
Snow Marsh	Quinsigamond River below Wheeler Rd.
Great Meadow	on Miscoe Brook; 110 acres wetlands
Nelson Park Nelson St.	Former private estate given to town as a library and park in 1934
Residential	
North Street and South Street	primarily 19th century residences, mature street trees, fenced yards. Streets abut but are not included within NRHD or LHD.
Fisherville	Historic brick mill burned 1999; worker housing 1835-1912. NRHD
Robinson property Old Upton Rd.	Privately owned farmland including hay fields and woodlands with historic residential components on Keith Hill – about 100 acres.
Saundersville	mill village centered on mill established 1835.
Oak Street	residential landscape - is integral part of Grafton Center's historic image
Millbury Street	residential landscape – is integral part of Grafton Center's historic image
Providence Rd.	Buildings located on former Goddard Farm, west of road in flood plain
Brigham Hill Farm 128 Brigham Hill Rd.	includes 1815 Peter Williams house
Foxfields Brigham Hill Rd	farm/estate

Sherman - Stone House 110 Brigham Hill Rd.	House apparently dates to 1760, barn in back is 1820
Joseph Merriam Homestead 1 George Hill Rd.	Well preserved 1729 house with stone central chimney and high-style Federal entryway on 31.5 acres of woods and fields at corner of Merriam Rd.
Joseph Batcheller House 61 Old Upton Road	Ca. 1756 saltbox farmhouse at end of long, stone wall lined drive, with 6 acres of fields and woods.
Pease Estate Old Upton at Keith Hill	Presently a horse farm. Includes old one-room school building.
Willard House & Clock Museum 11 Willard St.	house built 1718; clock shop from 1766. NRI 1982.
employee houses	neighborhood of Wyman-Gordon plant; after 1930.
Airport Park Bedford Dr.	c. 1925 housing development surrounding ball fields
Kendall Estate 44 Old Upton Rd.	1890s, including farm; now Silver Spruce Montessori School
Transportation	
Grafton & Upton Railroad	rail bed with track, privately owned; proposed as site of loop off the Blackstone River Bikeway
Stone Arch Bridge River St (discontinued)	Located in New England Village; built c. 1826; plans underway for preservation and adaptive reuse of site
Baptist Bridge Pleasant St.	1800; over Quinsigamond River where Pullard joins Pleasant St.
theme: scenic roads	See under *critical concerns* in report - 8 designated scenic roads - several others, including Old Upton Rd. and Wheeler Rd., should be considered for designation
Pleasant St. Bridge	as it goes over the Blackstone Canal.
Blackstone Canal	remnant at Fisherville “absolutely gorgeous”
Village	
New England Village	Located in North Grafton; includes Whitney Park (the village green); Washington upper and lower mills; multi-family housing; Hovey Pond; stone arch bridge; 2 churches.

APPENDIX B

GUIDE TO PRESERVATION AND PLANNING TOOLS FOR HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Preservation planning is a four-step process: **identification, evaluation, education** and **protection**. Within the realm of protection, there is a vast array of tools that communities can call upon and that are most effective when used in combination with one another. Stewardship of these resources involves education and community support, planning with a clear set of goals, and regulatory mechanisms.

Three useful documents to consult when planning preservation strategies are:

- Department of Conservation and Recreation, *Reading the Land*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Survey Manual*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*

The following eight sections – based on the Toolkit Basics – detail the resources and strategies available for heritage landscape preservation—from documentation and evaluation, to public education, to regulating activities and finding the revenue necessary to fund the effort.

1. KNOW THE RESOURCES: INVENTORY

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 the historical development.

Survey methodology has advanced since the early work of the 1980s. If a community had survey work done during that time period, it is time for an inventory update, looking at resources in a more comprehensive and connected way than may have been done at that time. Even if survey work is more recent, there may be a need to document more resources throughout the community.

Using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology:

a. Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not thoroughly researched, beginning with heritage landscapes.

b. Document unprotected resources first, beginning with the most threatened resources.

c. Make sure to document secondary features on rural and residential properties, such as outbuildings, stone walls and landscape elements.

d. Record a wide range of historic resources including landscape features and industrial resources.

e. Conduct a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey to identify patterns of prehistoric and historic occupation and to identify known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. Known and potential precontact and historic archaeological sites should be professionally field-checked to evaluate cultural associations and integrity. A professional archaeologist is one who meets the professional

qualifications (950 CMR 70.01) outlined in the State Archaeologist Permit Regulations (950 CMR 70.00).

NOTE: The Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth contains sensitive information about archaeological sites. The inventory is confidential; it is not a public record (G.L. c. 9, ss. 26A (1)). Care should be taken to keep archaeological site information in a secure location with restricted access. Refer to the MHC article "Community-Wide Archaeological Surveys" which appeared in Preservation Advocate, Fall 2005, and which can be found at the following MHC link: http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/pafall05.pdf.

2. GAIN RECOGNITION FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANCE: NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

Survey work includes evaluation of whether resources meet the qualifications for National Register listing. This will provide new information about the eligibility of properties. Using the information generated in the survey work and the accompanying National Register evaluations, expand your town's National Register program.

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

3. ENGAGE THE PUBLIC: OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

The best stewards and advocates for heritage landscape protection are members of the community. There are many ways to communicate the importance of these special places to the public, and to connect their preservation with the shared values and goals that community members have already expressed in various planning documents and forums.

Think creatively about how to educate the community about the values and threats to heritage landscapes, and how each town resident benefits from these special places. Use a combination of strategies to get the word out about heritage landscapes and preservation of community character, including:

- **Festivals and Tours** – Tours are a great way to draw attention to the history around us, and to engage more people in caring for it. Consider hosting a Heritage Celebration Day including tours and family-friendly activities, or plan a celebration around a particular place or area on a meaningful date. Make sure events are well publicized.

- **Signage and Banners** – Signs are a very effective way to announce special historic sites and districts. Banners can also bring attention to the significance of an area and make a celebratory statement about its contribution to the town.

- **Written Materials** – Clear, concise and engaging written material with engaging illustrations is a reliable way to relay information about community character and heritage landscapes. Make use of fact sheets and flyers to get the word out on particular issues such as a town ordinance that protects heritage landscapes, a threat that needs to be addressed, or an upcoming event.

- **School Curricula** – Start teaching at a young age. Children are very receptive to engaging stories, and there are no better stories to excite childrens' imaginations and build pride of place than stories of their town's past and present. Teachers have an opportunity to connect history

with environmental issues through classroom study, hands-on history projects, and field exploration of a town's heritage landscapes. Subsequently, students have an opportunity to teach their parents that preservation is everybody's business.

- **Lectures and Workshops** – Use these forums to raise awareness, educate at a deeper level about the community's history and its resources, and broaden the base of interest.

- **Website** – Keep Historical Commission and local historical organizations' entries on the town's website current, and include information about issues, proposals for preservation strategies, and upcoming events.

- **Press Releases** – Use all avenues including press releases to keep the public informed when a meeting or event is about to occur. Work with local reporters to develop special interest articles that highlight landscape resources.

Remember that bringing an issue or a heritage landscape to people's attention once will have only short-term effect. Outreach, education and interpretation must be ongoing concerns that involve preservation and conservation interests, teachers and community organizations in repeated projects to attract and engage the general public.

4. THINK IN CONTEXT: COMPREHENSIVE AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING

Communities use a variety of planning exercises and documents to define their goals and vision of the future, address community-wide issues, and recommend measures to respond to them. There are state mandates for towns to prepare Comprehensive or Master Plans and Open Space and Recreation Plans.

- Comprehensive or Master Plans provide an important frame of reference for land use decisions, and incorporate all of a community's issues including economic development, housing and transportation into an integrated plan. Heritage landscapes need to be seen through the lenses of community character, historic preservation, environmental health, and economic viability and growth. Their future and the values they contribute should be addressed within these multiple perspectives, not solely as historical assets of the community.
- Like Comprehensive Plans, Open Space Plans look holistically at the community—its history, demographics and growth patterns, and current conditions—to make recommendations that protect open space and natural resources for ecological health and public benefits. The Heritage Landscape Inventory Program provides a framework for looking at these important resources, and this new understanding should be incorporated into Open Space Plans.

5. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS: THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Because heritage landscapes encompass such a broad range of resources and issues—from preservation of town centers, scenic roads and river corridors to promotion of smart growth and economic development – stewardship of these resources involves many interests in a community. It is essential that there be good communication between the many departments and committees that address issues related to heritage landscapes. Collaboration between public and private partners is also an essential element in a successful preservation strategy. National Heritage Corridor personnel are helpful guides to partnership opportunities for projects you may have in mind.

- Broaden the base. Preservation, particularly preservation of landscapes, is not just for the Historical Commission. It is important that the cause not be marginalized by those who view preservation as opposed to progress, or to personal interests. A look at DCR's *Reading the Land* shows the range of organizations and viewpoints that value heritage landscapes.

- Nurture public-private partnerships. Friends groups, neighborhood associations, and local land trusts all have important roles to play to spread the word, and to expand the capacity of the public sector to care for heritage landscapes.

- Take advantage of forums created to share issues and ideas. For instance, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources offers a "cluster" format for monthly discussion and information exchange meetings among area farmers.

- Share resources across communities. Towns that lack funding for a town planner position, for instance, have found that "sharing" a planner with another community can be quite effective.

6. DEFEND THE RESOURCES; LAWS, BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS

A wide range of laws, bylaws and regulations is available to protect heritage landscapes. Following are brief descriptions of some of the most widely used and/or most effective of these tools, arranged alphabetically.

Adaptive Reuse Overlay District
An Adaptive Reuse Overlay District is superimposed on one or more established zoning districts in order to permit incentive-based reuses of existing built properties. These districts can be created to allow for the adaptive reuse of properties of a certain kind, or within a specified area within a community. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements.

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR)
This program, managed by the Department of Agricultural Resources, offers to pay farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of farmland located on prime agricultural soils, in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability. This program is different from the *Chapter 61* program, which provides tax incentives for short term restrictions.

Community Preservation Act
The Community Preservation Act is statewide enabling legislation that allows communities to assemble funds for historic preservation, open space protection and affordable housing through a local property tax surcharge (up to 3%, with some allowable exemptions) and state matching funds. These funds can support a wide variety of activities, including inventory and documentation of historic resources, restoration and acquisition.

Conservation Restrictions (CR)
A permanent deed restriction between a landowner and a holder - usually a public agency or a private land trust; whereby the grantor agrees to limit the use of his/her property for the purpose of protecting certain conservation values in exchange for tax benefits. EOEEA's Division of Conservation Services provides assistance to landowners, municipalities, and land trusts regarding conservation restrictions and has produced *The Massachusetts Conservation Restriction Handbook* as a guide to drafting conservation restrictions.

Corridor Protection Overlay District
A Corridor Protection Overlay District is intended to promote appropriate development within a given corridor, serving to protect natural (and sometimes cultural) resources. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements. The Corridor Protection Overlay District can be used cooperatively by adjoining communities to help maintain continuous protection across town lines.

Demolition Delay Bylaw
With a Demolition Delay Bylaw, requests for a permit to demolish a historic building must first be reviewed and approved by the local historical commission. Demolition Delay Bylaws are either list-based (applying only to a specific list of buildings that have been previously identified), age based (applying to all buildings that are older than a certain age – typically 50 years), or categorical (applying only to resources that meet a specific criteria, such as having been documented on Massachusetts Historical Commission forms). If the historical commission does not approve of the demolition and deems a structure significant, it can impose a delay period, during which time the property owner is encouraged to explore alternatives to demolition. Delay periods of 6 months are common, although communities are increasingly adopting delay periods of up to one year.

Design Review
Design Review is a non-regulatory process that is undertaken by a town appointed Design Review Board. The board reviews the design of new construction and additions – typically those taking place in already built-up areas. Recommendations are made to the planning board to help preserve appropriate building patterns and architectural styles, with the goal of maintaining the overall character of a given area. Design Review Boards often limit their review to exterior architectural features, site design and signage.

Downtown Revitalization Zoning
Downtown Revitalization Zoning seeks to encourage businesses to locate in downtowns. Zoning of this nature is typically written to be attractive to businesses of a certain kind that would work well within the given infrastructure and transportation needs, but can also incorporate some of the same elements as Village Center Zoning (see below), such as encouraging mixed use development at a pedestrian-friendly scale, with minimal setbacks and offsite parking.

Flexible Development Zoning
Flexible Development Zoning allows for greater flexibility and creativity when subdividing land, to conform and work with the natural and cultural resources of a site and minimize alteration or damage to these resources, rather than follow standard requirements of subdivision regulations. While this does not prevent land from being subdivided, it does allow for the protection of some features, serves to preserve some undeveloped land, and promotes better overall site planning.

Local Historic Districts (LHD)
LHDs recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and their settings are preserved. They offer the strongest form of protection available for historic resources. LHDs are administered by a Local Historic District Commission (distinct from the community's Local Historical Commission), which reviews proposed exterior changes to buildings within the district. The kinds of changes that are reviewed vary according to the terms of the local bylaw.

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NCD)
Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (sometimes known as Neighborhood Conservation Districts) are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of the neighborhood are important. They are less restrictive than Local Historic Districts in

that they focus on a few key architectural elements and massing, scale, and setback in an effort to embrace overall neighborhood character. As in Local Historic Districts, changes are reviewed by a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District Commission.

Open Space Zoning
Open Space Zoning – also known as Cluster Development Bylaw, Open Space Communities Zoning, Open Space Development Overlay District, Open Space Preservation Subdivision, or Open Space Residential Development – allows greater density than would otherwise be permitted on a parcel, in an effort to preserve open space. Typically, construction is limited to half of the parcel, while the remaining land is permanently protected under a conservation restriction.

Rate of Development Bylaw
A town may slow the rate of its growth within reasonable time limits to allow the community to engage in planning and preparation for growth. This measure must be used for the purpose of conducting studies and planning for rational development, and not for restraining the rate of growth for a period of unlimited duration.

Right to Farm Bylaw
A Right to Farm Bylaw asserts the rights of farmers to pursue agricultural activities, provides community support for farming activities and requires dispute resolution so that abutters cannot make nuisance claims. Agricultural landscapes are widely considered to be significant heritage landscapes for which there is constant concern of potential development. This bylaw serves to help active farmers remain just that - active.

Scenic Overlay District Zoning
Scenic Overlay District Zoning protects scenic vistas by providing for a no-disturb buffer on private lands, thereby helping to maintain specific viewpoints. This type of zoning is more far-reaching than a Scenic Roads Bylaw (see below) and may be applied to numbered routes.

Scenic Roads Bylaw
The Scenic Roads Bylaw requires that a public hearing be held prior to the removal of any trees or stone walls that fall within the public right of way on a designated scenic road. Depending on how it is written, the bylaw may apply to a predetermined list of roads or encompass all roads in a community (other than numbered routes). The bylaw applies whenever there is any public or private impact to trees or stone walls within the right of way, including activities such as road widening, utility company work or creating private driveways.

Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw
Scenic Vista Protection Bylaws require additional design criteria for any proposals for new construction in areas that are determined by the town to be a scenic vista. Vistas may encompass natural, cultural and historic features.

Shade Tree Act
The Shade Tree Act is a part of MGL Chapter 87, which defines all trees within the public way as public shade trees. The municipal Tree Warden is responsible for the care, maintenance and protection of all public shade trees (except those along state highways). Trimming or removal of any public shade trees greater than 1.5” in diameter requires a public hearing. Chapter 87 applies to all communities; however, some communities have adopted their own Shade Tree Act Bylaws that provide stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 87.

Site Plan Review

Site Plan Review provides the planning board (and other boards and committees, depending how the bylaw is written) with an opportunity to consider a variety of community concerns – such as impacts to vehicular circulation, scenic vistas, topography and natural resources – during the permit process. Boards may comment on site plans and request changes to the design. Site Plan Review is typically limited to large scale projects and tied to the special permit process.

Smart Growth Zoning – Chapter 40R
Smart Growth Zoning (Chapter 40R) provides financial rewards to communities that adopt special overlay zoning districts allowing as-of-right high density residential development in areas near transit stations, areas of concentrated development, or areas that are suitable for residential or mixed use development. Such zoning can help direct compact growth to areas that are already developed – such as historic village centers – thereby discouraging growth in less suitable areas.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)
TDR is a regulatory technique that allows a landowner to separate building or development rights from the property and sell them, receiving compensation for preserving land and allowing for the development to occur in areas selected for higher density projects. In essence, development rights are "transferred" from one district (the "sending district") to another (the "receiving district"). As a result, development densities are shifted within the community to achieve both open space preservation and economic goals without changing overall development potential.

Village Center Zoning
The goal of Village Center Zoning is to meet the needs of a small-scale, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area by encouraging compact development. New construction is required to be built at a scale that is compatible with the neighborhood and to have a reduced (or no) setback from the street. Parking may be directed to discourage large lots in front of buildings. Village Center Zoning shares many similarities with Traditional Neighborhood Development, and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

Wetlands Protection Act and Bylaws
The Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40) protects wetlands by requiring a careful review by local conservation commissions of proposed work that may alter wetlands. The law also protects floodplains, riverfront areas, land under water bodies, waterways, salt ponds, fish runs and the ocean. Communities may also adopt their own Wetlands Protection Bylaw, providing stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 131.

7. UTILIZE THE EXPERTS: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Beyond DCR and the Heritage Corridor, technical assistance is available from many governmental and non-profit sources, most often free of charge to municipalities and non-profit organizations.

- American Farmland Trust: Clearinghouse of information supporting farmland protection and stewardship.
- Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission: The regional planning agency charged with assisting communities with local planning efforts in this region.
- Citizen Planner Training Collaborative: Provides local planning and zoning officials with training opportunities and online information; they also hold an annual conference to support land use planning.

- Green Valley Institute: Provides technical assistance about land use planning to communities within the Quinebaug and Shetucket Heritage Corridor. Web site and publications contain information of use to communities throughout the region.
- Massachusetts Historical Commission: Provides technical assistance as well as grants to municipalities and nonprofits for preservation planning and restoration projects.
- New England Small Farm Institute: A non-profit dedicated to providing technical assistance, information and training to farmers.
- The Trustees of Reservations: Offers conservation and landscape protection workshops, publications and connections through the **Putnam Conservation Institute.** The Trustees also manages a unique **Conservation Buyer Program** that links interested sellers with conservation-minded buyers and assists with establishing permanent property protection mechanisms.
- Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is the state agency dedicated to supporting the agricultural activities in the state through special initiatives, programs and technical assistance.
- The Trust for Public Land is a national non-profit that assists municipalities with land conservation efforts.
- University of Massachusetts Extension
- DCR's Lakes and Ponds Program works with local groups and municipalities to protect, manage and restore these valuable aquatic resources. They provide technical assistance to communities and citizen groups, help to monitor water quality at various public beaches to ensure public safety, and provide educational materials to the public about a range of lake issues.
- Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions has recently launched a new website that includes helpful information both for communities with Agricultural Commissions and for those learning more about forming one.
- UMASS extension (NREC) – (Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation) can provide assistance on issues related to land and water resource protection, smart growth/sustainability measures and forestry and farming management,

8. PAY THE BILL: FUNDING PRESERVATION

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing strategies to protect heritage landscapes. There are local, state, regional, national and non-profit funding programs and resources that can assist communities in preservation and land conservation-related issues. The availability of such assistance varies from year to year and private property is not always eligible for funding. Examples include:

Local Funding Assistance

- Towns that have adopted the **Community Preservation Act (CPA)** find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects. While tricky to pass in lean economic times, the number and types of projects that are benefiting across the Commonwealth makes the CPA worthy of consideration. Such projects include MHC inventory, National Register nominations, cemetery preservation, open space acquisition and preservation and restoration of public buildings. The CPA (M.G.L. Chapter 44B) establishes a mechanism by which cities and towns can develop a fund dedicated to historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. Local funds are collected through a 0.5% to 3% surcharge on each annual real estate tax bill. At the state level, the Commonwealth has established a dedicated fund which is used to match the municipality's collections under the CPA. The amount of the surcharge is determined by ballot vote at a local election.

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

- Municipalities can establish **land acquisition funds**, increasing their revenue from sources such as an annual fixed line item in the municipal budget; income from forestry, farming and leasing of town-owned land; gifts and bequests; grants and foundation funding; and passage of the CPA, detailed above.

State Funding Assistance

Funding for a variety of preservation projects, primarily for municipalities and non-profit, is available through the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), the EOEEA Division of Conservation Services (DCS), the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and other state agencies. Further information on these programs is available on the agency websites.

- MHC **Survey and Planning Grants** support survey, National Register and a wide variety of preservation planning projects.

- The **Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF),** administered through the MHC, funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.

- Towns that have a local historic district bylaw may apply for **Certified Local Government (CLG)** status which is granted by the National Park Service (NPS) through the MHC. At least 10% of the MHC's yearly federal funding allocation is distributed to CLG communities through Survey and Planning matching grants. To become a CLG, the town completes an application; after being accepted as a CLG, it files a report yearly on the status of applications, meetings, and decisions; in return the town may apply for the matching grant funding that the MHC awards competitively to CLGs annually. Presently 18 cities and towns in Massachusetts are CLGs. **NOTE:** CLG status is dependent in part on a municipality having at least one Local Historical District as evidence of the community's commitment to historic preservation.

Open Space Plans, with a requirement of updating the plan every five years, make a community eligible for **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) grants** and technical assistance programs through the Department of Conservation Services.

- The **Massachusetts Self-Help Program** of DCS assists local conservation commissions in acquiring land for the purposes of natural and cultural resource protection and passive outdoor recreation.

- The **Massachusetts Urban Self-Help Program,** another DCS initiative, is geared toward assisting towns and cities in acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes.

- DCS **Conservation Partnership Grants** assist non-profits in acquiring interests in land for conservation or recreation, and have also been used in the past to help protect active agricultural lands.

- The **Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund**, distributed through the DCS, can support heritage landscape protection by providing up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition or renovation of park, recreation or conservation areas. Municipalities, special districts and state agencies are eligible to apply.

The **Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)** administers a variety of grant programs that can help with heritage landscape preservation:

- **Urban and Community Forestry** grants fund projects which will result in sustained improvements in local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry management.

- The **Recreational Trails Grant** Program provides funding on a reimbursement basis for a variety of recreational trail protection, construction, and stewardship projects.

The **Department of Agricultural Resources** **Farm Viability Enhancement Program** works with farmers to develop sound business plans and funding assistance to implement them.

Regional and Non-Profit Funding Assistance

- The **John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission's Heritage Partnership Program** supports projects in corridor towns that further the Corridor goals of historic preservation, community revitalization, ecological restoration, land use planning, riverway development and educating people about the Valley's heritage. Communities and organizations located within the Corridor are eligible to receive funding, subject to availability.

- **Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers National Heritage Corridor** provides mini-grants to member towns, supporting preservation of heritage landscapes including projects involving sustainable agriculture, river clean-ups, open space planning and natural resource conservation.

- The **Greater Worcester Community Foundation** provides grants to non-profit organizations for community enhancements.

- **The Trust for Public Land** (TPL) is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands and other natural places. TPL helps communities identify and prioritize lands to be protected; secure financing for conservation; and structure, negotiate and complete land transactions. TPL's New England Office recently launched the **Worcester County Conservation Initiative**, to accelerate the pace of land conservation in central Massachusetts by helping communities plan and finance conservation projects.

- The **National Trust for Historic Preservation** offers a variety of financial assistance programs. Based on the availability of funding, the National Trust awards more than $2 million in grants and loans each year for preservation projects nationwide.

- The **Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC)** does not administer grants, but can work with communities to write grants or help them find funding.

Federal Funding Assistance

- The **Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program** of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has protected 85 farms to date in Massachusetts on 6,335 acres with matching funds. Eligible organizations are federally recognized Indian tribes, states, local government, and non-governmental organizations. They are required to provide 50-50 matching funds for purchase of conservation easements in land with prime, productive soils that are subject to a pending offer, for the purpose of limiting conversion to non-agricultural uses of the land.

- All of the communities within the Blackstone Heritage Corridor have been designated **Preserve America** communities, making them eligible to receive technical assistance and matching grants related to heritage tourism. Eligible grant activities include research, documentation (e.g., historic resource surveys and National Register nominations), interpretation and education (e.g., signage, exhibits and itineraries), planning, marketing and training. (Communities within the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor may want to pursue Preserve America designation in order to take advantage of these funding opportunities.)

- The National Park Service's **Rivers & Trails Program** provides technical assistance to community groups and government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. The program does not offer grants, but can provide staff to help identify needs, assist partners in navigating the planning process, and help with organizational development and capacity building. The program can serve as a catalyst for successful trail development and conservation efforts.

GRAFTON
HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

Priority Landscapes

1. New England Village
2. Grafton and Upton Railroad
3. North and South Streets
4. Depot Street (Farnumsville)
5. Merriam and Estabrook Farms
6. Grafton State Hospital

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NOTE RE BOUNDARIES: Priority Landscape outlines are not legal parcel boundaries; they indicate local focus of concern. All other GIS data were obtained from MassGIS and may not include 2007 updates.

N

- Priority Landscape
- Linear Priority Landscape
- State Register of Historic Places
- State Register of Historic Districts
- Major Road
- Road
- Conservation Restriction
- Agricultural Preservation Restriction
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts Land
- Non-Profit
- Municipal
- Conservation Organization

dcr Massachusetts

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