

NEWBURY RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

ESSEX COUNTY LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Essex National Heritage Commission

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INTRODUCTION

Essex County is known for its unusually rich and varied landscapes, which are represented in each of its 34 municipalities. Heritage landscapes are places that are created by human interaction with the natural environment. They are dynamic and evolving; they reflect the history of the community and provide a sense of place; they show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns; and they often have scenic qualities. This wealth of landscapes is central to each community's character; yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first steps towards their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by the community – a favorite local farm, a distinctive neighborhood or mill village, a unique natural feature, an inland river corridor or the rocky coast. To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program (HLI) to communities in Essex County. The primary goal of the program is to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. The focus is on landscapes that have not been identified in previous survey efforts in a given community. Another important goal of the program is to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed in a Pilot Project conducted in southeast Massachusetts. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land* which has provided guidance for the program in Essex County. In short, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-ENHC consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting at which interested residents and town officials offer community input by identifying potential heritage landscapes. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, usually accompanied by other community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community. The final product is the Reconnaissance Report, prepared for each participating community. It outlines the history of the community; identifies the resources and documentation that provide background information; provides a short description of the priority heritage landscapes visited; discusses planning issues identified by the community; and concludes with a brief discussion of survey and planning recommendations. A list of all of the heritage landscapes identified by the community is included in the Appendix.

NEWBURY HISTORY

Newbury's distinctive rural inland, riverine and coastal landscape features were instrumental in shaping the history of the community from the earliest Native American use of the land to the present day.

Although there are no confirmed Native American sites in Newbury, there were presumed settlements on the Artichoke River near its confluence with the Merrimack River and on the Parker River where it flows into the Ipswich River. European settlement of the area occurred in 1634. By the early 1700s the town was dispersed into five parishes of which only the First Parish and Byfield Parish remain as part of Newbury. The first meetinghouse was constructed in 1635, and was replaced a number of times over the next two centuries, until one built in 1806 burned in 1868. The meetinghouse built after that date on High Road remains the First Parish Church today.

Agriculture was the mainstay of the early economic base with thousands of acres cleared for the raising of hay for grazing animals. Water sources also sustained grist and saw mills, fulling mills, and tanneries, which continued to be an important part of the economy through the early 20th century. In the late 18th century, Byfield Village emerged as a mill village with a factory producing machine made nails, a snuff factory, a chaise maker and some small ship building on the Parker River. By the mid 1800s the Byfield Woolen Company was well established and the Byfield Snuff Company was growing with three mill sites. Minor shoe industry up to the mid 19th century also contributed to the local economy. In the 1870s silver and gold were discovered and mined for a short period.

The major north-south routes were High Road (Rt. 1A) and the Bay Road, the latter was laid out in 1639 in the general area of the present-day Middle Road and Boston Street. In the 18th century, Scotland Road became an important east-west route, however it was not well maintained until the mid to late 20th century. The Newburyport Turnpike (Rt. 1) was laid out in 1804 connecting these northern communities to Boston. Two railroad lines, one built in 1840 and the other in 1851, passed through Newbury and Byfield. In 1853 the toll for animals passing over Thurlow's Bridge over the Parker River was removed. The street railway connected villages with nearby towns for a brief time beginning in 1891. The most significant transportation change in the 20th century was the opening of Rt. 95 in the 1950s providing faster access to and from Newbury.

The population in the 1700s rose to over 3,000 persons; however this number included those living in part of the town that was annexed to Newburyport in 1851. Thus population figures of Newbury are not relevant until after that annexation at which time the population dropped to 1,485 in 1855 and 1,430 in 1870. From the last quarter of the 19th century through the mid-20th century, growth was steady. In the last part of the 20th century the population nearly tripled from about 2,500 residents in 1960 to about 6,500 in 2000. Today the town is divided into three villages each with its own distinct character: Byfield, Plum Island and Old Town.

RESOURCES AND DOCUMENTATION

Inventory of Historic Assets

The Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets is a statewide list that identifies significant historic resources throughout the Commonwealth. In order to be included in the inventory, a property must be documented on an MHC inventory form, which is then entered into the MHC database. This searchable database, known as MACRIS, is now available online at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc>.

According to the MHC, Newbury's inventory documents 147 resources that date from 1652 to 1984. Most of the documentation was completed in 1967 and in 1975 when SPNEA (now known as Historic New England) documented the area around the Upper Green and along High Road; the 1975 forms have historical and architectural descriptions that are more thorough than most written at that time.

State and National Registers of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that have been determined significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Newbury's National Register (NR) program began in 1968 with the listing of the Spencer-Peirce-Little House as a National Historic Landmark (NHL). Individual listings include the Tristram Coffin House (also part of a district nomination), the Hale-Boynton House and two properties listed through the 1990 First Period Thematic Nomination: the Abraham Adams House and the James Noyes House. The Newbury Historic District, located at High Road and Green Street was listed in 1976. All National Register properties also are listed in the State Register of Historic Places. Also listed in the State Register are those properties protected by a preservation restriction, drawn up in accordance with MGL Chapter 183, Sections 31-33. A preservation restriction runs with the deed and is one of the strongest preservation strategies available. All properties that have preservation restrictions filed under the state statute are automatically listed in the State Register. Four Newbury properties fall into this category of which two were already listed: Short House (in the NR district) and Spencer-Peirce-Little House (an NHL). The other two properties for which there are preservation restrictions protecting them in perpetuity are Ferry House (PR - 1976) and Seddon Tavern (PR - 1986).

Planning Documents

The *Newbury Master Plan*, last completed in 1980, presently is being updated using the Executive Order 418 state funding and methodology. The Master Plan Study Committee has held a number of forums and is mapping Newbury's historic resources and heritage landscapes for the Plan. The targeted completion date is June 2005.

The *Newbury Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP)* is dated 2000, with a final draft adopted in 2001. The OSRP describes the character of Newbury's landscape and water sources. It also has an extensive list of protected and unprotected open space including farmland, forests and wetlands with examples of private and public ownership.

Planning Bylaws and Other Tools

When subdividing a property into more than four lots, an applicant must seek a special permit under Newbury's Cluster Development Bylaw; however once the special permit has been granted the applicant may decide to build a traditional subdivision. The purpose is to encourage developers to use the Cluster Bylaw in order to preserve open space and minimize infrastructure. Most applicants choose to build the cluster development.

In 2000, Newbury participated in mapping workshops to designate Route 1A as a Massachusetts Scenic Byway, which was affirmed by the State Legislature and signed by the Governor in November 2003. Six communities, Newburyport, Newbury, Rowley, Ipswich, Essex and Gloucester, participated and in February 2005 with the assistance of the Essex National Heritage Commission have applied to the National Scenic Byways Program for funding to develop a scenic byways management plan.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

The Newbury Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by about 11 residents, some representing town boards and local non-profit organizations, was held on August 25, 2004. During the meeting residents compiled a lengthy list of Newbury's heritage landscapes, which appears in the Appendix. Once the comprehensive list was created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and the issues relating to its preservation. Based on the information gathered, community members selected a group of high priority heritage landscapes to be visited by the consulting team during the fieldwork. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued, contributes to community character, and is not permanently protected or preserved.

The following text describes the priority heritage landscapes that are the focus of the reconnaissance work in Newbury. In most instances intensive survey work will be needed to fully document the physical characteristics and the historical development of the landscape. The priority heritage landscapes, which are listed in alphabetical order, represent a range of scales, from a single cemetery or rock to a river or village center.

Byfield

The village of Byfield is in the western most part of Newbury at the intersection of Central and Main Streets and along Church and Lunt Streets. It is west of Rt. 95 which slices through the western part of Newbury separating the village of Byfield from the outlying parts of Byfield, Byfield Parish and the rest of the

town. Byfield Parish, which was established in ca. 1702, at the intersection of Elm Street and Central Street, is separate from this village center.

Byfield Village was the industrial core of the area due to its location at the headwaters of the Parker River. The river, a dam and fish ladder, mill buildings and some mill housing remain to tell of this 19th century history. Presently the village of Byfield is a civic center with several municipal buildings, some converted to other civic uses and some continuing to serve as home to branches of municipal government.

The Parker River runs under Main Street south of the village crossroads. One of the most intact properties in the village and on the Parker River is the Pearson Snuff Mill on Main Street. This ca. 1830 mill site was converted to a snuff mill by the Pearson family in ca. 1860. The complex comprises the 18th century Georgian house, an 1880s mill building, 20th century concrete buildings, and remnants of the dam and raceway that once powered the mill. Some of the other resources in the village include 19th century mill workers' housing, a blacksmith shop at 43 Main Street (now a private residence) and evidence of a mill site with raceway on River Street.

Common Pasture

The agricultural landscape making up Common Pasture is framed by Scotland Road in Newbury and Hale Street in Newburyport and extends westerly to West Newbury. This area was identified as an important regional landscape in the 1982 Department of Environmental Management's (DEM – now DCR) *Massachusetts Landscape Inventory* and also identified by Newburyport in this Heritage Landscape Inventory project. It is a critical area, which is vulnerable today as noted by those parts that already have been developed for industrial purposes. One of the more prominent farms is Colby Farm, some of which is in Chapter 61A (Agriculture). Located on the north side of Scotland Road, Colby Farm is accessed by a long lane that leads back to a cluster of farm buildings and a farmstand all surrounded by the pastoral agricultural landscape. Across Scotland Road is the Blackwell property which already is slated for development. Several other parcels of farmland contribute to this rich heritage landscape. Common Pasture is part of the Little River drainage area with environmentally important wetlands and habitats for migratory birds. Preservation Massachusetts listed Common Pasture on its 2004 list of Ten Most Endangered Resources.

Glacial Erratics such as Great Rock

Erratics are glacially deposited rock formations that often serve as local landmarks and sometimes have names. Newbury has several prominent erratics including Great Rock at the border of Newbury and West Newbury on Main Street. It is an enormous rock, perhaps 20 feet high and a girth of about 40 feet, that takes up most of the space on a triangular wooded spot on the west side of the road just south of the intersection of Main Street with South Street in West Newbury. Other glacial erratics that serve as local landmarks are Devil's Pulpit, and Gerrishes Rock.

Governor Dummer Academy

Founded in 1763 in accordance with the will of William Dummer (Governor of the colony in the 1720s), the Academy is on part of the 3,000-acre farm that had belonged to the first Richard Dummer in 1632. The campus of Governor Dummer Academy is in South Byfield, west of the Newburyport Turnpike (Rt. 1) at the intersection of Middle Road and Elm Street. The northern boundary is the Parker River, a scenic and varied habitat which is a natural laboratory for science classes. The Academy owns much of the salt marsh along the Parker River on both sides of Middle Road. Several of the older buildings line Middle Road while newer facilities have been built on loop roads east of Middle Road. A wooded area of 65 to 70 acres on the south side of Elm Street is the site of some late 20th century buildings – faculty housing and some dorms along Old Road, which is a loop road. The campus arrangement is informal blending old with new and the river and saltmarsh landscape with a more formalized pattern of paths and roadways connecting the buildings of this educational institution.

The Academy owns two large properties abutting Rt. 1; the Old Newbury Golf Club and Morgan Castle. The club is a links-style course that was laid out in ca. 1911. Morgan Castle is unusual architecturally. The vertical board wood frame cottage with a castellated tower is sited with fine views of the Parker River and its abutting marsh land. The Castle is surrounded by a designed garden. The ca. 1920 castle was constructed for Christiania Morgan who was a mystic and a disciple of Carl Jung. The Academy recently purchased a property on the north side of the Parker River to provide a buffer, in part in response to the school's concerns about the impact of nearby housing developments which results in increased traffic.



Lower Green

The Lower Green is part of Old Town and is the quintessential 18th century green, which was the original center of the town and was eclipsed by a new village center at Upper Green. High Road connects the two centers. Lower Green is located at the intersection of High Road and Newman Road and has a number of historic buildings surrounding the Green. The Seddon Tavern is a reconstruction of the 17th century tavern which was in such disrepair that it had to

be rebuilt almost in its entirety. A nearby neighbor, Mrs. Florence Evans Bushee purchased the tavern and had it rebuilt. Historic New England/SPNEA holds a preservation restriction on the reconstructed structure which now is in private ownership. The First Burial Ground is nearby, north of Newman Road and accessed from High Road.

Parker River

The Parker River courses through Newbury in a west-to-east direction joining with Plum Island Sound which leads south along Plum Island to the Atlantic Ocean. There are at least five crossings with views of the river, marshland and some mill remnants on the western end of the river. The Parker River is tidal throughout most of the town and becomes fresh water at the Central Street crossing in Byfield where mills were located. The western end of the river flows from West Newbury and Georgetown into Newbury under River, West and Main Streets at Byfield Village. Mills were established at these locations and remnants of dams with falls, mill races, fish ladders and mill structures are evidence of the industrial history along the banks of the Parker River. (See Byfield Village description.) On its easterly route the Parker River then flows under Larkin Road to Central Street which is the end of mill remnants because the river becomes tidal at that point. From the Central Street bridge one can see the winding river as it approaches the falls as well as the stone side walls of a mill race that once led to a mill on the northern bank of the Parker River at this point. On the eastern side of Central Street, the river, which becomes tidal, wends its way through the rich marsh land between Orchard Street and Elm Street. Broad views of the river and marshland from Middle Road (the next crossing) and the Newburyport Turnpike (Rt. 1) enrich the experience of this area. The salt marshes on both sides of the river are open and provide a rich habitat for animal and plant life. The river then passes through two wildlife areas: Kent Island and the Mill River Wildlife Management areas. As the Little River merges with the Parker River, it flows through Old Town just south of Lower Green. The High Road crossing provides fine views of more salt marsh; however the river frontage in this area is relatively high and susceptible to development. Cottage Road leads to the river's edge at the First Settlers' Landing, an area that is vulnerable to development as well. These views of the river, its banks and abutting marshland are critical parts of Newbury's community character and its rich heritage landscape.

Plum Island

Plum Island stretches the full north-south length of Newbury and is shared by Newburyport to the north and Rowley and Ipswich to the south. It has a nine-mile barrier beach with only limited public access points along the Northern and Southern Boulevards running the length of Plum Island. The Atlantic Ocean meets the beach on the east side. Sand dunes separate the beach front from the salt marshes on the back side of Plum Island which faces Plum Island Sound. The northern end of Plum Island accessed by the Plum Island Turnpike is a densely populated neighborhood with early to mid 20th century summer cottages that are rapidly being converted to year-round housing. There is no distinction between the residential part of Newbury and Newburyport on Plum Island and

the two communities are working together to bring water and sewer to the neighborhood while adopting zoning that will protect the present level of density. The southern part of the island is the Parker River National Wildlife Heritage Reservation. Both the northern residential part of the island and the southern Wildlife Reservation are highly sensitive areas which deserve critical attention to the effects of development.

South Byfield Cemetery

The oldest part of the South Byfield Parish Cemetery is in Newbury on the north side of Elm Street at the Georgetown border. Also referred to as the Old Burial Ground, it is bounded by a dry laid stone wall. Within the cemetery are stones of marble and slate and a couple of obelisks. There is a substantial tree cover throughout the burial ground. A newer section is across the street. The inactive part of the cemetery is not well maintained. The meetinghouse at this location generally was referred to as Byfield Parish. The historic meetinghouse, adjacent to this older part of the burying ground, was converted to a residence and a new church building was constructed over the line in Georgetown.

PLANNING

Preservation Strategies

The town has begun a master planning process and currently is discussing the historic and cultural resources of the town from a master plan perspective. Six farms in Newbury are protected by agricultural preservation restrictions (APR).

Planning Issues

In addition to the priority landscapes listed in the previous section, residents identified general issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. Each of the critical planning issues affects at least one of the priority landscapes. These issues are arranged in alphabetical order. Community members also expressed interest in learning about preservation tools and strategies that have been effective in other Massachusetts communities and in identifying sources for preservation funding.

Development along Parker River

The biggest change in the community is the sprawl that comes with improved transportation. Although Rt. 95 has been in place for 50 years, it is only recently that people are willing to commute to towns like Newbury, which are far north of Boston. In addition the negative impacts of some types of development along the Parker River include increased density, loss of views and additional pollution potential. The development pressures on Central Street, Larkin Road and Main Street in Byfield, each which cross the Parker River, are ongoing.

On the east side of town, Cottage Road leads to the Parker River and the site of the First Settlers' Landing, now a public boat landing. In the 19th century, the

land at this point along the river was owned by the Bartons and Humphreys, who leased the land to individuals who built cottages. Later the land was sold to the building owners. Now these small cottages are threatened by demolition or expansion beyond the limits of what the area can handle visually and environmentally. Other areas of development pressures are the backlands along High Road (Rt 1A) which are being developed and compromising views of the marshes from the road.



Historical Interpretation of Sites

Evidence of the industrial and transportation history on the Parker River, which courses through the entire town of Newbury west to east, is disappearing with each new development or with each storm. Yet, it is this industrial history that is the very essence of the town but is unknown to so many. Mills, raceways and dams along the Parker River are evidence of why people settled here. And prior to English settlement and the development of mills on the river, the Parker River had been traveled by Native Americans. The Historical Commission is interested in identifying ways in which to interpret this history so that the evidence remains as part of the heritage landscape.

Regional Landscapes

Common Pasture is a regional landscape whose future depends in part on zoning and other incentives that may occur in Newburyport and West Newbury, as well as Newbury. Plum Island is another significant regional landscape that is highly sensitive and fragile. Although a Plum Island Overlay District has been adopted by both Newbury and Newburyport to address growth that may occur from the water and sewer project on Plum Island, many are concerned about the potential changes in density caused by additions and new construction. The beaches on Plum Island that are state park land also are of extreme importance and there is concern about the negative impact caused by overuse for recreation.

Scenic Roads

Nearly all of Newbury's winding roads have important scenic qualities that are irreplaceable once removed. High Road (Rt. 1A) is part of a Massachusetts Scenic Byway. Middle Road, part of the Old Bay Road, passes by a farm and a former cider mill, an enormous barn and an early town hall moved here in order to save it and now used to store hay. Middle Road then passes through salt marshes, crosses the Parker River by way of Thurlow's Bridge and ends at Governor Dummer Academy. Newman Road is lined with stone walls and farms. White's Bridge carries Newman Road over the Little River. The stone wall lining parts of Orchard Street is in fine condition especially in front of the Longfellow House. Great Meadow Farm, which is town-owned, is on Orchard Street. In some places where the land is high, the views overlooking the marshes are breath-taking, such as on Pine Island Road and Plum Island Turnpike. Stone walls, mileage markers, other carved stones, glacial erratics, farms, marshland, rivers and mill remnants all contribute to the scenic quality of Newbury's roads.

PLANNING RECOMMENDATIONS

Preservation planning is a three step process involving identification, evaluation and protection. Four useful documents to consult before beginning to implement preservation strategies are the Massachusetts Historical Commission's *Survey Manual* and *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*; the Department of Conservation and Recreation's *Reading the Land*; and the Essex National Heritage Commission's *Essex National Heritage Area Plan*. Each publication provides necessary information for the identification, evaluation and preservation of the rich cultural heritage of a community. General recommendations are listed first, followed by more specific recommendations.

Each community will have to determine the best way to implement the recommendations discussed below. One approach that might help Newbury begin the process is to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in *Reading the Land*.

General Recommendations

Recommendations that apply to a broad range of resources are discussed below. These general recommendations are listed in the order in which they are most logically addressed when applying the three step preservation planning process as described above. Thus the goal will be to (1) identify, (2) evaluate and (3) protect.

Inventory of Heritage Landscapes and Other Historic Assets

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and the historical development. New procedures that are more comprehensive and link

properties in a more coherent way than in the past may enhance Newbury's survey that was completed 30 to 35 years ago. Thus, using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology, record Newbury's heritage landscapes beginning with the priority landscapes listed in this report:

- Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not sufficiently documented, beginning with heritage landscapes such as Common Pasture farms, village centers and Cottage Road to First Landing.
- Document unprotected resources first, beginning with threatened areas.
- Make sure to document secondary features on residential properties, such as outbuildings, garages, stone walls.
- Record histories for the First Period dwellings – the 1985 documentation focuses on structural analysis only.

National Register Program

Survey work will require National Register evaluation. This will provide new information about the eligibility of properties. Thus using the information generated in the survey work and National Register evaluation, establish Newbury's National Register program:

- Develop a National Register listing plan, taking into consideration a property's integrity and vulnerability. Properties that are in need of recognition in order to advance preservation strategies should be given priority.
- Consider potential district National Register nominations for Byfield, Byfield Snuff Mill, Byfield Parish, Governor Dummer Academy and Lower Green.

Agricultural Landscapes

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

- Establish an agricultural commission to advocate and promote farming.
- Adopt a right-to-farm bylaw which allows farmers to carry on farming activities that may be considered a nuisance to neighbors.

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- Amend the cluster bylaw to require a buffer between development and farmland.
 - Raise funds to purchase development rights on farms or to assist farmers in the restoration of historic farm buildings for which the farmer would be required to donate a preservation restriction (PR).
 - Continue public-private partnerships to preserve farmland through purchase or conservation restrictions (CR) or agricultural preservation restrictions (APR).

Burial Grounds and Cemeteries

Newbury has several burial grounds, of which the best known are, First Parish, First Settlers Burial Ground and South Byfield Parish Cemetery. Newbury's burial grounds have not been documented. The DCR publication *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries* provides guidance on developing preservation plans for burial grounds including identification and evaluation of the resources as well as preservation strategies. Using this guide Newbury should:

- Prepare survey forms for all burial grounds and cemeteries that have been in use for more than 50 years.
- Develop a preservation and management plan for each cemetery taking into consideration repair of stone markers, stone walls and stone fencing related to cemeteries, repair of iron work, removal of invasive growth, on-going maintenance of plant material. Share this material with the crews that take care of routine maintenance of these properties.
- Advise owners of cemeteries that are not under town jurisdiction about preservation and management plans.

Development along River Frontage

The primary issue is preserving historic and archaeological resources along the river and maintaining views of the river and marshland. While much of the land is partially protected by conservation regulations, there are many areas along the banks of rivers that are potentially developable.

- Document aspects of the heritage landscape, including buildings, structures and archaeological resources on MHC inventory forms.
- Identify areas where river frontage is buildable, particularly those areas with fine scenic views that are critical to community character.
- Review zoning to assure dimensional regulations that are of a domestic scale.

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- Develop design standards that require maintenance of some views when new construction is allowed on river frontage.

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Newbury residents and visitors alike. Yet roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel requirements as the only consideration. Under the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) Newbury could adopt a scenic roads bylaw that would address the removal of trees and stone walls that are within the right-of-way. Yet, in addition to roadway issues, much of what we value about scenic roads - the stone walls, views across open fields - is not within the public right-of-way. The preservation and protection of scenic roads therefore requires more than one approach.

- Complete an inventory with descriptions and photo documentation of each of the roads in Newbury.
- Adopt a scenic roads bylaw consistent with MGL Chapter 40-15C and designate certain roads as scenic roads. Potential candidates for such designation include Boston Road, Central Street, Hay Street, Middle Road and Orchard Street. Numbered routes cannot be scenic roads under Chapter 40-15C. Include in bylaw design criteria to be considered when approving removal of trees and stone walls. Add other design criteria such as a provision allowing only one driveway cut per property on scenic roads unless frontage is over a certain length (to accommodate for large farms that may have a house driveway and a farmyard driveway). Coordinate procedures between Highway Department and Planning Board. Address the unique quality of mileage markers and other important artifacts such as Witch's Stone.
- Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstructions, which address the scenic and historic characteristics while also addressing safety. This is an important public process in which the town may have to accept responsibility for certain costs to implement standards that are not acceptable to projects funded by Mass. Highway Department. Such standards should have a section addressing the way in which the local Highway Department maintains roads, for example requiring a public hearing if any additional pavement is to be added to a town road during reconstruction or repair. Policies can be adopted by local boards having jurisdiction over roads, or can be adopted at Town Meeting through a bylaw. In developing policies consider factors such as road width, clearing of shoulders, the use of berms, walking paths, posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.
- Consider a scenic overlay district which may provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads or adopt flexible

zoning standards to protect certain views. Such bylaws could be written to apply to the numbered routes also, which are not protected under the Scenic Roads Bylaw.

- Develop management policies with protection for the mile markers and other unique carved stones in Newbury that may be vulnerable in road expansion projects.

Village Character

Nearly all preservation strategies address village or neighborhood character in some manner. As described above, thorough documentation on MHC inventory forms is an important first step in the preservation planning process, followed by National Register listing where appropriate. Three preservation tools that may be particularly applicable to Newbury's historic neighborhoods are demolition delay, local historic district designation (MGL Chapter 40C) and neighborhood conservation district designation. A demolition delay bylaw provides a time period in which the town can consider alternatives to demolition. Both types of districts recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. Each type of district is a local initiative, adopted by a 2/3 vote of Town Meeting, and administered by a district commission, appointed by the Selectmen. Local historic districting is the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources, while neighborhood conservation districts are less restrictive but still embrace neighborhood character.

- Adopt a demolition delay bylaw to apply to all properties that are 50 years old or more and to give the Historical Commission authority to invoke a delay of demolition of up to one year. Publication of demolition requests reminds residents of historic resources and reinforces their value; therefore include an abutter notification requirement in the bylaw.
- Be sure to widely publicize all demolition requests so that residents are aware of potential demolitions.
- Adopt a local historic district bylaw and define districts for Upper Green and Lower Green.
- Adopt a neighborhood conservation bylaw and define a district for Cottage Road area to address scale of additions and new construction in relation to the lots and the river. The same may apply to Byfield Village.

Funding of Preservation Projects

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing preservation strategies. In recent years, the ENHC has maintained a small grants program for Essex County communities. In addition, both the MHC and the

DCR have had funding programs to assist communities in preservation related issues including:

- Survey and Planning Grants administered by the MHC support survey, National Register and preservation planning work.
- The Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF) administered by the MHC funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.
- The Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program (HLPGP) administered by DCR funds planning, rehabilitation, education and stewardship projects focused on historic landscapes, including cemeteries.

Funding for these programs varies from year to year. When planning Newbury's heritage landscape inventory program, contact relevant agencies to determine whether funding currently is available.

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

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

Specific Recommendations

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

Governor Dummer Academy

The Academy developed a Master Plan in 2003 which lays out a five-year plan. Nearby parcels have been purchased such as 110 acres on the Parker River and another 60 to 80 acres on the south side of Elm Street. New construction guidelines are to be consistent with farm scale of school. The historic resources at the Academy convey the school's history.

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- Document all aspects of this heritage landscape on MHC inventory forms.
 - Maintain and strengthen partnership between Academy and town to preserve rich heritage.
 - Consider Academy's master plan in town's master planning project and encourage similar goals and strategies.

Great Rock

Great Rock and other glacial erratics may be secure in their present locations; however they may suffer from lack of appreciation due to lack of awareness. On the other hand mile markers and other carved stones are highly vulnerable and should be considered priorities during development and road projects.

- Identify key features on MHC inventory forms.
- Develop brochure or treasure hunt telling about Great Rock and other features including mileage markers, carved stones, and glacial erratics. This could make a nice student project or even an Eagle Scout project.

CONCLUSION

The Newbury Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Newbury and in beginning to think about preservation strategies. However, it is only the first step in the planning process. Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will typically need further documentation on MHC inventory forms. The documentation in turn can be used in publicity efforts to build consensus and gather public support for their preservation. Implementation of recommendations will require a concerted effort of and partnerships with municipal boards and agencies, local non-profits, and state agencies and commissions.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to town land use boards and commissions will assist in making this one of the planning documents that guides Newbury in preserving important features of the community's character. The tasks that are recommended will require cooperation and coordination among boards and commissions, particularly Newbury's Historical Commission, the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission. It also is advisable to present this information to the Board of Selectmen, the applicant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory Program on behalf of the town. Finally distribution of the Report to the Historical Society, the Parker River Watershed Association, neighborhood associations and any other preservation-minded organizations will broaden the audience and garner interest and support for Newbury's heritage landscapes.

APPENDIX: HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY

This list is a summary of all landscapes discussed at the Heritage Landscape Identification Meeting held in Newbury on August 25 and the follow-up fieldwork on September 28, 2004. This is a working list and can be updated by the community. **There may be other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** Landscapes are grouped by type. The chart has two columns – the name of the resource and the location are in the first and notes about the resource are in the second. Abbreviations used are listed below.

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

Agriculture	
Chick Farm 34 Newman Road	Inactive farm now, much of which was developed into housing.
Common Pasture * Scotland Road	Part in Newburyport and in West Newbury. Identified in 1982 DEM scenic landscape inventory. Farms and open space off Scotland Road. Important area which is vulnerable. Colby Farm (APR on 52 acres used to produce forage), Blackwell property across from Colby which already is slated for development – in the appeals stage now.
Great Meadow Farm Orchard Street	Town owned since 1985. Now just hayed, archaeological potential, open space, runs to Parker River where fishing for striped bass which were sent to market in NY, winter fishing during the Depression. Across from Martin Burns Wildlife Management Area.
Little Farm Green Street	On the stretch of Green Street between Boston Road and Hay Street. Reported to be the 2 nd oldest continuing running farm in the same family in the US – George Little settled on this land in the 1600s.
Middle Road Farms Middle Road	Littlefield Farm – beautiful barns, house, Old Town House moved here and used as barn, later as house.
Newman Road Farm Newman Road	Known as Old Town Hill. Owned by TTOR. Salt marsh, tidal creeks, glacial drumlin (the Hill), terraced orchards. Next to Chick family farm and used by same family for six generations.
Route 1 Farms Route 1	Lawrence Brown – between Hay Street and Boston Road, “Hay for Sale” large barn and farmhouse, Marshfield (owned by Marine Biological Labs) some of land sold to Essex Sportsman Association, Littlefield (active).
Spencer-Peirce-Little Farm 5 Little’s Lane	APR on 191 of the 199 acres. Producing vegetables, flowers, and hay. Owned by Historic New England (SPNEA). Ca. 1690 manor house and farm buildings make up this rich landscape.
Tendercrop Farm High Rd & Hay St.	APR on about 10 acres. Farmstand selling vegetables and flowers grown on the farm.

Burial Grounds and Cemeteries	
<i>Evergreen Cemetery</i> Cottage Road	3.51 acres in Old Town. 1786. Still active.
<i>First Parish Burial Ground</i> High Road	3 acres. At Upper Green and Newbury's municipal center.
<i>First Settlers Burial Ground</i> Emery St.	Lower Green, privately held, markers are concern of Historical Commission, various markers commemorating historical events. Privately maintained by descendants, mowed. Not very many headstones and no records of who is buried here.
<i>Newbury Neck Cemetery</i> Newbury Neck Rd.	Off Rt. 1A and south of Parker River. Ownership is unclear.
<i>Rogers Lane</i>	Small family cemetery in Byfield at end of lane.
<i>South Byfield Cemetery *</i> Elm St.	In Byfield Parish. Also referred to as Old Burial Ground. At Georgetown line. On both sides of road with part of both sections in Georgetown as well. Slate stones in need of upkeep. Legal status unknown, ash and maple trees, associated with old Byfield Parish Church (partly in Georgetown) which was sold into private ownership and new modern church constructed.
Industrial	
<i>Central Street Falls Area</i>	Byfield was the site of woolen mills and later snuff mills.
<i>Dummer Falls Area</i>	At South Byfield.
<i>Ice Ponds</i>	Quill's, Johnson's, Church's, Martin's.
<i>Mills on Parker River</i>	Mill sites are known on river at Central Street near Orchard Street which was called "Little Italy" for the immigrants who came to work in the mills. At this site the river is tidal on the north side of Central St. and fresh water on the south side. At Larkin Road over the Parker there are mill foundations and an alewife run. Fish ladders and dams maintained for fishery. Little or no archaeology has been done at these various mill sites.
<i>Pearson Snuff Mill</i> 42 Main Street	Outstanding property with main house and a collection of shingled buildings of two and three stories, a dam and falls on the River.
<i>Pine Island Mill</i> End of Pine Island Rd.	Where Pine Island Creek, which is a tidal creek, came close to Pine Island. A grain mill.

<i>River Street Mill Sites</i>	Mill foundations with sluice, gates. Was a sawmill which has been converted to a private home at #20 River St. The rail-trail crosses near George Burgess' house after which there are falls and a fish ladder.
<i>Silver Mine</i>	Also known as Chipmunk Mine
Institutions	
<i>Adelynrood Episcopal Retreat Center</i> Elm Street	Abuts Governor Dummer, Shingle Style house with additions and surrounding estate, given by Mrs. Ambrose to the Society of the Companions of the Holy Cross, a Philadelphia based Episcopalian order.
<i>Byfield Female Seminary</i>	1807, became military academy, now privately owned – established by Mary Lyon before she went on to found Mt. Holyoke.
<i>Churches</i>	First Parish, Methodist, So. Byfield Parish.
<i>Governor Dummer Academy *</i> One Elm Street	Oldest boarding school in US – 1763. Master Plan 2003 – 5 year plan. Present buildings mostly Colonial Revival, new buildings designed using a farm scale. Was the first cattle farm in Newbury. Own Morgan Tower built on the Parker River by Crystiania Morgan who was a follower of Carl Jung. Other buildings are Mansion House, Little Red Schoolhouse – reconstructed on original site of first Governor Dummer building. Own golf course (see below).
<i>Old Newbury Golf Club</i> Newburyport Tpke	Links style course, 1911 or 1913, owned by Governor Dummer – has covenants preventing development but could be converted to playing fields.
Natural Features	
<i>Clam Beds</i>	Part of the estuary in tidal creeks and flats.
<i>Devil's Den</i>	Private property, limestone caves. Native American artifacts.
<i>Devil's Pulpit</i>	A large rock across the street from Devil's Den on town owned land. Threatened by overgrowth, not visible from the road.
<i>Glacial Erratic Features</i>	Great Rock on Main Street at West Newbury border, enormous rock on wooded triangle. Gerrish Rock (Great Meadows), Balancing Rock. Witch Stone at 17 Coleman Road, Witch Stone Farm – used to be three in town – other two now at Smithsonian. They are documented in See <i>Stories Carved in Stone</i> by Mary and James Gage and <i>Sermons in Stone</i> illustrated by David Howell.
<i>Little River</i>	NW of Parker River. Tidal river on which there was a mill.

<i>Parker River</i>	Flows through southern part of town into Plum Island Sound, fish ladders, tide gates, salt marshes, meadows, boatyards, mill sites, bridges, losing water in the upper stretches. A major alewife study is under way. Historical water way with biological importance. Mill sites on River at Central and Orchard Streets where the river is tidal on the northeast side of road and fresh water on the southwest side.
<i>Pine Island Creek</i>	Pine Island at the end of Pine Island Rd., mill history and salt marsh.
<i>Plum Island Beach</i>	Plum Island – early 20 th century cottages on the northern end and a long stretch of beach front running most of the north-south length of Newbury. Plum Island National Wildlife Reservation is accessed by Northern and Southern Blvd. State owned and maintained. Parking areas with access to some parts of beach. Some town parking and beach areas also.
<i>Plum Island Sound</i>	Back (west) side of Plum Island.
<i>Salt Marsh</i>	A critical piece of the estuary. Marsh views. Newbury has 20% of the 25,000-acre Great Marsh which extends from New Hampshire to Gloucester.
Open Space / Parks	
<i>Crane Pond Wildlife Management Area</i>	292 acres of which part in West Newbury - in western end of Newbury between Forest St. and Moody St.
<i>F. William/Henry Gray Reserve</i>	Hunting, boating, walking and hiking, skiing.
<i>Lower Green and Upper Green</i>	Old Town and Newbury Village - open spaces, commons, pond at Upper Green
<i>Martin Burns Wildlife Mgmt Area</i> Orchard St.	1,462 acres. West side of Orchard St. marshes and river crossing.
<i>Old Town Hill Reservation</i>	497 acres, TTOR, view of three states from top.
<i>Parker River National Wildlife Refuge</i>	4,662 acre refuge, owned by U S Fish & Wildlife, includes river, tributaries, tidal marshes, part of Plum Island. Established in 1942, three miles of public beaches.
<i>Town Forest</i>	Benign neglect, used to be maintained by the Boy Scouts.
<i>William Forward Wildlife Management Area</i>	1,294 acres. RR passes through, some research into lands use of early 19 th c. has been done. In early 1920s acquired by Marquand family who owns Curzon Mill in Newburyport.

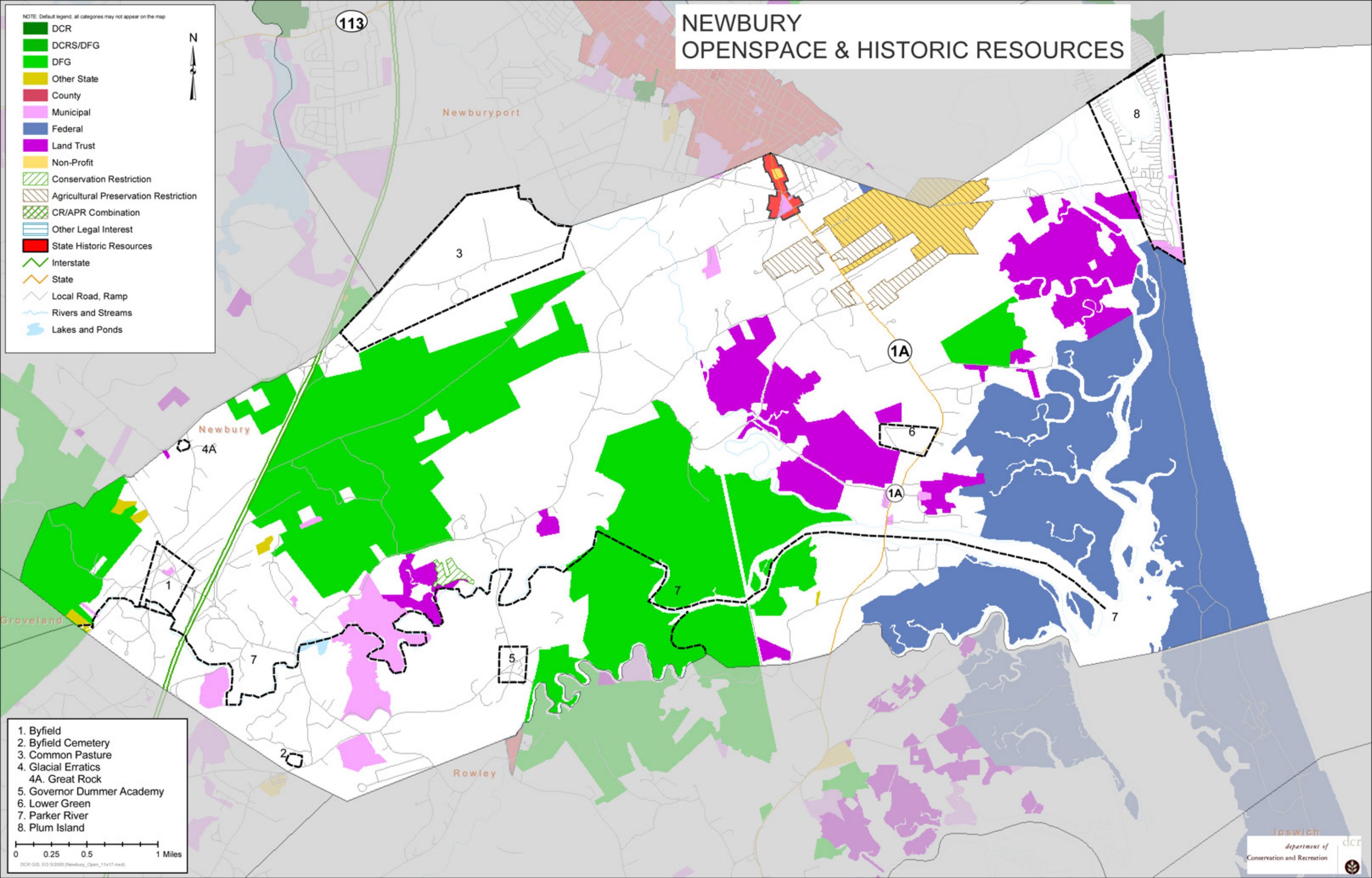
Residential (Villages, Estates)	
<i>Byfield *</i>	Byfield school (yellow Colonial Revival building) on Lunt St. and town hall complex has been converted to Arts Center. Town Hall was a Grange Hall taken over by town, now a Performance Center. Fire House (7 Central St.) to be moved within village center – owned by Volunteer Fire Department. Legion Park is opposite PO, industrial history. Newbury Library is new construction on Lunt St. At 43 Main Street was a blacksmith shop with mills behind on the Parker River. Riverview Farm, Anne Pearson’s property, an old snuff mill, is a flat open meadow (associated with Pearson’s Snuff Mill). Fatherland Farms and recreation fields extending to river – an area that represents the largest population change – three farms from time of 1 st settlers – then cattle farm which required workers so farmers brought in – then part of Dummer Property (stone walls).
<i>Byfield Parish</i>	Once part of Georgetown and Rowley and maintains connections to those communities. On Elm Street at #167 is old Minister’s house, next door is house that was First Female Seminary run by Mary Lyon (founder of Mount Holyoke).
<i>Newbury Village</i>	NR. Newbury Historic District including properties on High Road and Green Street. Upper Green, government center and school.
<i>Old Town</i>	Lower Green is the site of Seddon Tavern which is a reproduction of the earlier tavern with a PR which substantially restricts what can be done with property.
<i>Plumbush</i>	Small settlement of former hunting blinds and cabins on the north side of Plum Island Turnpike where road crosses marshland before reaching Plum Island. Small buildings have been expanded into larger year-round dwellings.
<i>Plum Island</i>	Recreational areas, 20 th c. cottages, boulevard to town parking lot, Bennet Hill = a landmark, one area subject of many paintings. Plum Island Water and Sewer project is underway following years of negotiations. Plum Island Overlay District was adopted by Newburyport and Newbury to protect against increased development that could be the result of water and sewer project.
<i>South Byfield</i>	Governor Dummer at Middle and Elm streets, Caldwell House was the site of South Byfield Post Office, eventually merged with Byfield PO, rural setting. Caldwell property is being developed with a 55+ community. House to be restored and sold with PR which will apply to the interior as well as exterior.
Transportation Bridges, Landings, Roads	
<i>Bay Road System</i>	Bay Circuit – Old road from Quebec to Boston, predecessor to turnpike.
<i>Landing Site on Parker River</i>	Site of 1 st settlers landing at the end of Cottage Road – now a public boat landing. The land leading down to the landing once was Humphries land, which was leased to individuals who built cottages – later the land was sold to building owners. Most are small cottages with one larger Victorian house.

<i>Milestones</i>	There used to be seven milestones in Newbury, only five are known. Some of elaborate carving: examples are 35 mile marker – corner of Middle St. and Boston St. 30 mile marker – Boston St. Date from early 1700s and marked route of Old Bay Road through Newbury. Question of ownership and responsibility.
<i>Knight's Crossing</i>	Railroad crossing of Hay Street. Named for the tending crosser. Was the site of a mill and store.
<i>Plum Island Airport</i>	Historic New England (SPNEA) owned. 33.8 acres at the edge of Spencer-Peirce-Little Farm. NR eligible as a site of aviation experimentation in 1910 by partners W. Starling Burgess of Marblehead and Augustus Herring who moved their operations to this site in 1910. Tested a rear engine biplane here. Well documented in 2000 by Pauline Chase Harrell.
<i>Railroad Corridor</i>	From Newburyport to Martin Burns in Newbury – through Byfield to Georgetown. Leased to Mass Electric.
<i>Rt. 1 & 1A vistas</i>	Views across salt marshes and sweeping open meadows. Historic properties on sides of roads.
<i>Scenic Roads *</i>	High Rd. (State Scenic Byway); Middle Rd. (farm with cider mill owned by Jean Littlefield, with large barn and early town hall behind barn – all used for hay storage, Thurlow's Bridge, Governor Dummer Academy); Little's Lane (stone walls); Newman Rd. (stone walls and farms, White's Bridge crossing Little River); Orchard St. (was part of High Rd. coming from Ipswich, #168 is called Longfellow House where he lived for a short time, beautiful wall along especially in front of 164 Orchard, 153 Orchard is the main house of Great Meadow Farm which is town-owned. Land is high with fine views overlooking marshes); Pine Island Rd.; Plum Island Turnpike.
<i>Thurlow's Bridge</i>	At Governor Dummer Academy. Was a toll bridge – a fare paid when taking animals across. The toll was abandoned in 1853. Stone abutments date to 1858 and the steel stringers to 1934. Was determined ineligible for NR listing in the 1990s.
<i>Trolley lines</i> Middle Road	Evidence of tracks when pavement on Middle Rd. wears down.

NEWBURY OPENSOURCE & HISTORIC RESOURCES

NOTE: Default legend, all categories may not appear on the map

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



- 1. Byfield
- 2. Byfield Cemetery
- 3. Common Pasture
- 4. Glacial Erratics
- 4A. Great Rock
- 5. Governor Dummer Academy
- 6. Lower Green
- 7. Parker River
- 8. Plum Island

