



# TERRAFIRMA

PUTTING HISTORIC LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION ON SOLID GROUND

*“It seemed a road for the  
pilgrim to enter upon who would  
climb to the gates of heaven.”*

HENRY DAVID THOREAU ON CLIMBING  
MOUNT GREYLOCK, 1849

3  
IDENTIFYING AND PROTECTING  
HISTORIC ROADS

IDENTIFYING HISTORIC ROADS  
AND ROAD FEATURES

THREATS TO HISTORIC ROADS

PROTECTIONS – TOOLS FOR  
PRESERVING HISTORIC ROADS

HISTORIC ROAD RESOURCES



**H**istoric roads in Massachusetts guide us through our history and help us to experience those places that make this state unique. Through their names, roads can give us clues into earlier Native American routes. Where a community's oldest houses are concentrated along certain streets we can identify colonial settlement patterns. Adjacent trees and stone walls may delineate abandoned agricultural fields and indicate past land uses, while highly designed highways, parkways, and boulevards represent advances in transportation and urban planning. It is through their history and evolution into current-day uses as part of larger transportation networks that our historic roads became an important element of the overall landscape of a community, one that binds together disparate historical elements of a place and whose care is often taken for granted.

As historic roads must accommodate changes in use and technology, they are vulnerable to "improvements" such as widening, straightening, removal of roadside trees, and the addition of signage and aboveground utilities. In a single project or through the accretion of smaller changes over time, our historic roads can easily lose their character and historic features. What makes a road special may not lie exclusively in the immediate roadway, but in the setting and community through which it travels. Therefore, it is not simply threats to the road itself that should concern us when preserving a historic or scenic road, but its setting as well. This includes not only the immediate areas adjacent to the road like the sidewalks, buildings, and trees, but also the larger community and countryside. Changes seemingly far removed from the road, like new zoning laws or increased development, can dramatically affect historic road character. Historic road protection is therefore closely aligned with larger efforts to preserve community character and enhance quality of life.

Although much of the public appreciates those elements that make historic roads special, they are largely unaware of the tools and resources available to protect them. This bulletin is the latest effort in the growing national movement to raise awareness of how to identify, care for, and treat historic roads both in Massachusetts and throughout the country. For more comprehensive information on each topic found here, including definitions, methodologies, or guidelines, please refer to the "Historic Road Resources" on the final page.

Terra Firma is a publication of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), Executive Office of Environmental Affairs (EOEA).

Mitt Romney, Governor

Kerry Healey, Lt. Governor

Stephen R. Pritchard, Secretary, EOEA

Stephen H. Burrington, Commissioner, DCR

Patrice Kish, Director, Office of Cultural Resources, DCR

Author: Shaun Provencher

Guest Editor: Thomas M. Paine ASLA, Brown, Richardson & Rowe, Inc., Landscape Architects and Planners, Boston, MA

Funding provided by DCR's Historic Parkways Initiative



*The historic parkway system of greater Boston was begun in 1893 and is considered to be the first regional parkway system in the country. Today, these groundbreaking roads still tie the city together with a system of green, tree-lined corridors used by pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile traffic (Mystic Valley Parkway, Medford, 1897).*

## IDENTIFYING HISTORIC ROADS AND ROAD FEATURES

The types of historic roads in your community can range from turn-of-the-century recreational routes like the parkway system of greater Boston (see Historic Parkways Preservation sidebar); to rural roads running through scenic areas such as Route 6A on Cape Cod; to streets passing through town and village centers lined with commercial buildings like Concord, Northampton, or Stockbridge, and any number of iterations in between. In order to determine which roads in a municipality are historic, the first step may be to complete a comprehensive historic road inventory and assessment. However, it should not be assumed that a community-wide inventory and assessment has already been done if a historic district(s) or road-oriented bylaw already exists in the municipality.

Through this process, not only can the types of historic roads be articulated, but also those characteristic features that make the road unique. Help with the process of identification is available through a number of sources including: *Terra Firma Technical Bulletin #1: An Introduction to Historic Landscape Preservation*, the first bulletin in this series published by the Historic Landscape Preservation Initiative of the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Further, the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) has developed the *Historic Properties Survey Manual* (see “Historic Road Resources” on the final page for contact information).

*Roads no longer lead to places;  
they are places.*

J.B Jackson, *A Sense of Place, a Sense of Time*



The following overview of character-defining features can be used as a general guide for assessing historic roads.

**SETTING** A road does not exist in a vacuum; it may run through sparsely populated rural scenic areas in private ownership, through a state park, along the shoreline and rivers, or through densely developed urban, residential, or commercial areas. The setting through which the road travels makes up much of the “feel” of the route. Are buildings sited immediately adjacent to the roadway or sidewalk, or are they set back? Is the surrounding area open agricultural land, dense forest, a riverway, a village center, a historic mill town or a congested urban area? (See historic cover photo of a road setting near Mount Greylock, ca. 1906, courtesy of Historic New England)

**1. ALIGNMENT** Alignment refers to how a road moves through the landscape. Does it curve horizontally or progress in a straight line; does it climb and descend hills or travel over a flat plane? Does it have sharp turns or graceful curves? How does it respond

to irregularities in the terrain? (Photo: Nonantum Road, Charles River Reservation, ca. 1920)

**2. WIDTH** How wide are the travel lanes, the paved surface, the shoulders, the clear zone (an open area free of obstructions along the road), and the right of way? The difference in character between a twenty-foot-wide two-lane country road without shoulders or clear zone and a forty-eight-foot-wide four-lane engineered parkway tells much about the intended and past uses of a road. (Photo: Pittsfield)

**3. SURFACE MATERIALS** The mundane topic of road surface material is one of the most important for defining the character of a road. Generally, heavily used routes are paved with a number of bituminous surfaces or concrete, while those with a lower volume are surfaced with dirt or gravel. Other materials such as cobblestone, brick, and macadam may also be found. (Photo: Brimfield)





4

**4. EDGES** Those features that define the edges of roads such as curbing, shoulders, guardrails or guardwalls, sidewalks, parallel pathways, stone walls and wood fences contribute much to the distinctive character of a historic road. Among other materials that can line road edges, curbs can be made of cast concrete or blocks of granite; shoulders can be grassy, ornamentally planted, or hard-surfaced; guardrails can be timber or steel and guardwalls can be stone masonry or concrete; sidewalks can be concrete, brick, granite slabs, or paving stones; parallel pedestrian ways can be dirt or paved; walls can be fieldstone or split quarry stone; and fences can be wood or metal. (Photo: Tolland)

**5. VEGETATION** Street trees along outside road edges and medians, and planted as allées are not the only types of character-defining vegetation associated with historic roads; ornamental planting beds at intersections and rotaries, as well as surrounding forests and adjacent slope re-vegetation may also be part of the historic use and design of a road and its setting. (Photo: Chesterfield)

**6. SIGNAGE** Signage provides information to the traveler about the road itself and other practical matters regarding travel and the surrounding communities. Design and placement can have significant impacts on the historic character of the road. (Photo: Newbury)



5

**7. LIGHTING / STREET FURNITURE** The presence (or absence) of features such as lights, period benches, and parking meters are clues into past road uses and design. They also provide much of the detailing elements of urban and village center historic roads. As is the case for signage, incremental changes to lighting and street furniture can have a significant impact on historic road character. (Photo: Middlesex Fells Parkway, ca. 1905)

**8. DRAINAGE FEATURES** Often overlooked as historic and character-defining, road drainage features such as masonry culvert headwalls, rock-lined swales, or granite inlets provide information into design and engineering standards of a period. (Photo: Pittsfield)

**9. RETAINING WALLS** Historic roads may contain retaining walls and other structures that support and stabilize the road and the slopes above or below it. Usually built with local stone, these structures vary in size and character and are often significant features of roads that travel through varied topography. (Photo: Millis)

**10. BRIDGES** Bridges carry roads over water, other roads, and railroads, and may contribute significantly to historic road character. Constructed of stone, brick, wood, or steel, bridges may be significant as historic examples of early engineering or highway design. (Photo: Hamilton)

## HISTORIC PARKWAYS PRESERVATION

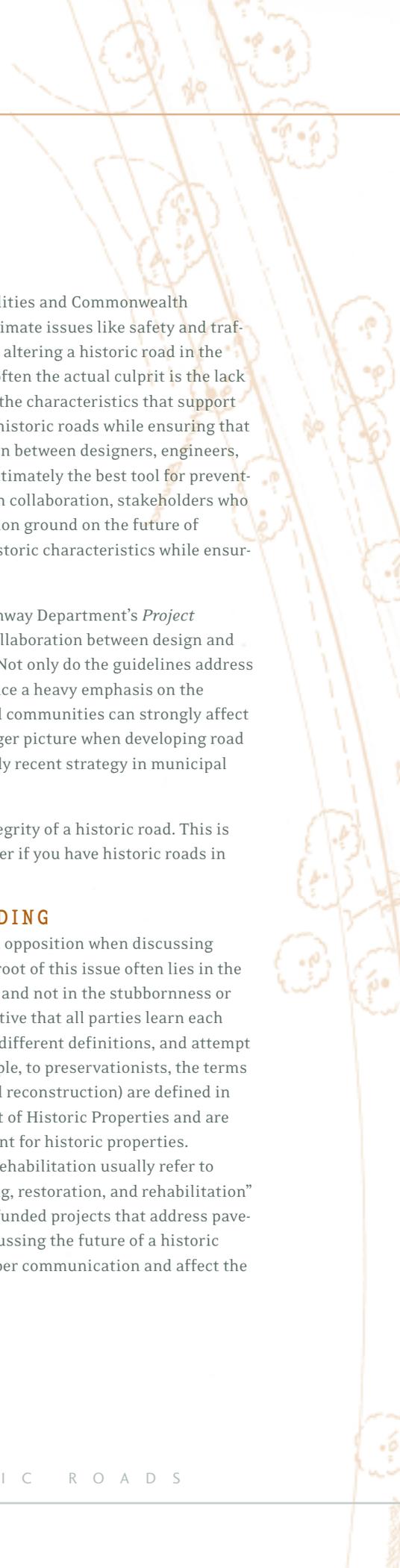
With their origin in the grand urban improvement efforts of the late nineteenth century, the Massachusetts parkways continued to be developed into the early 1950s as part of an effort to improve the quality of life and recreational opportunities of people throughout the state. These corridors remain largely intact today as access roads, connectors, and recreational routes that provide access to urban areas and reservation lands alike. In 2001 the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs launched the Historic Parkway Initiative (HPI), an interagency effort to develop an integrated, collaborative planning approach in the development of safe and historically appropriate protection and management policies for the state's historic parkways. In 2002, the HPI partnered with MIT, the City of Cambridge, and NSTAR to develop the Memorial Drive Demonstration Project with the aim of preserving and adapting a nineteenth century parkway to the demands of the present day. The following year, the HPI produced the Mount Greylock Historic Parkway Rehabilitation Project in partnership with various state agencies as well as the Berkshire Regional Planning Committee and the Mount Greylock Advisory Council. This effort aimed to restore the grandeur of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC)-era road, while providing a safe route of travel for car, pedestrians, and bicycles alike. The HPI has recently developed treatment guidelines for the parkway system as a whole.



9



10



## TORT LIABILITY

Tort liability is often the primary reason why alterations to historic roads in the name of safety inaccurately and mistakenly overshadow efforts to preserve their historic character and integrity. In legal terms, tort refers to when an injury is sustained due to negligence on behalf of the managing agency or design professional; and liability refers to the responsibility of the managing agency to make restitution for damages. In many cases, the fear of tort liability unnecessarily overshadows context and feature-sensitive design, resulting in the alteration or complete loss of historic road character. Although the goal of ensuring road safety is often viewed as being at odds with the goal of preserving historic road character, the two are not mutually exclusive. A design in which safety is ensured and historic character is retained can be achieved if all stakeholders agree on a rationale and participate fully in the design process. Throughout this collaboration, it is very important that all rationale and design decisions be well reasoned and comprehensively documented.

## THREATS TO HISTORIC ROADS

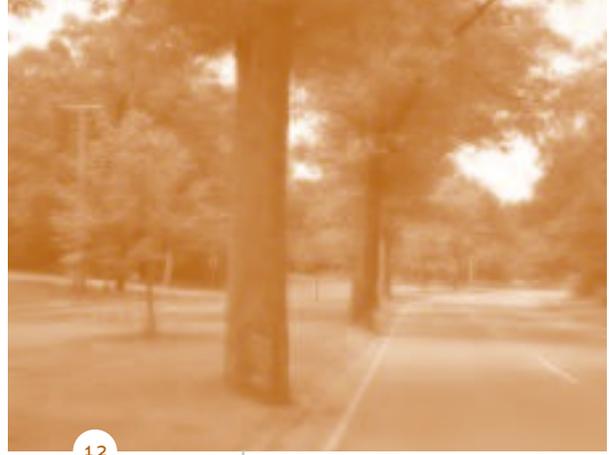
Roads are, by nature, functional structures that municipalities and Commonwealth agencies are under constant pressure to modernize. Legitimate issues like safety and traffic volume are most often cited as the primary reasons for altering a historic road in the name of modernization (see Tort Liability sidebar); more often the actual culprit is the lack of information concerning the historic status of the road, the characteristics that support this determination, and the attainable goal of preserving historic roads while ensuring that safety guidelines are followed. Consequently, collaboration between designers, engineers, planners, historic commissions, and preservationists is ultimately the best tool for preventing the degradation or loss of historic roads. Through such collaboration, stakeholders who are initially on opposing sides of the issue may find common ground on the future of historic roads by identifying methods to preserve their historic characteristics while ensuring public safety.

A major milestone in this effort is the Massachusetts Highway Department's *Project Development and Design Guide* (2006), which promotes collaboration between design and preservation professionals in road development projects. Not only do the guidelines address issues directly associated with road features, they also place a heavy emphasis on the setting and how changes in the surrounding corridors and communities can strongly affect the character of a road. This process of addressing the larger picture when developing road projects is known as "context sensitive design"—a relatively recent strategy in municipal transportation planning.

The following is a selection of the major threats to the integrity of a historic road. This is not a comprehensive list, but the primary issues to consider if you have historic roads in your community.

### LACK OF AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING

Engineers and local stakeholders often find themselves in opposition when discussing options for the alteration of a historic road. However, the root of this issue often lies in the reluctance to learn the language of the other's profession, and not in the stubbornness or ignorance (real or perceived) of the other side. It is imperative that all parties learn each other's vocabulary, which often uses the same words with different definitions, and attempt to develop a common language for their project. For example, to preservationists, the terms restoration and rehabilitation (as well as preservation and reconstruction) are defined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and are exclusively concerned with outlining the levels of treatment for historic properties. For traffic and civil engineers, the terms restoration and rehabilitation usually refer to roadway improvement projects (also known as "resurfacing, restoration, and rehabilitation" or 3R projects) which are associated solely with federally-funded projects that address pavement condition and minor road modifications. When discussing the future of a historic road, not being clear with vocabulary can needlessly hamper communication and affect the outcome of the project.



## INAPPROPRIATE ZONING – ALTERING THE SETTING

Land use and development density in the communities surrounding a historic road are rarely the same as during construction. While commercial development is most often cited as the primary culprit, residential subdivision and the re-zoning of abandoned agricultural lands are other processes that can alter the historic setting of a road.

## TRANSPORTATION DEMANDS

As population and traffic demands grow, the pressure to increase capacity and speed on historic roads, often the result of traffic mitigation for adjacent development, is greatly increased. Without adequate protections in place, historic roads may be subject to reconstruction efforts that do not consider the road's place in the context of the larger community. This may result in significant changes to the character of the road including:

**Realignment** Altering a road's original vertical and horizontal placement on the underlying topography is often done to increase traffic flow, safety, and speed in reaction to increased population and road use. The subsequent road alterations like straightening curved segments, widening curves, adding lanes, or leveling steep grades all have the potential to destroy the historic integrity of a road.

**Widening** With zoning-oriented origins similar to realignment, expanding lane, shoulder, or clear zone widths not only affects the character of the road itself, but may have significant effects on the road corridor as a whole. Road widening projects are often accompanied by a larger clear zone to accommodate increased traffic and higher design speeds.

**Impacts to Trees and Stone Walls** Altering or removing trees or stone walls during road widening, clear zone expansion, or adjacent development can significantly change these highly characteristic elements of many Massachusetts roads. In some communities, walls and trees within the public right of way may be protected by a local bylaw under the Scenic Roads Act (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 15C).

**11.** *Altering the Setting – The addition of this apartment complex along the Olmsted-designed Jamaica Way in Boston has drastically changed the setting of the historic parkway.*

**12.** *Widening – The Truman Parkway in Hyde Park has been widened to the edges of the adjacent tree trunks, endangering the health of the trees through root compaction and automobile impacts.*



## INAPPROPRIATE TREATMENT

Joined with the pressure to increase capacity and speed is the need to update those design characteristics of a road that are most easily lost.

**Resurfacing** Resurfacing raises a number of issues for historic roads that may not be immediately apparent. Obvious changes such as converting the surface from dirt to pavement can heavily alter historic road character. However, more subtle changes in the color of asphalt, the size of the aggregate, and the additional height accumulated if underlying layers are not removed, can also have significant impacts on historic integrity.

**Threats to Roadside Plantings** Trees associated with a historic road are threatened by inappropriate pruning practices, root compression, automobile exhaust, public utility placement, deicing chemicals, and other issues associated with automobile impacts. Proper planning for and care by a certified arborist can reduce or eliminate many of these issues. In addition, historic planting beds and groundcovers associated with historic roads, particularly designed routes, can also be easily affected by any number of road alterations. For more information about caring for mature trees, see *Terra Firma Technical Bulletin #2: Caring for Mature Trees in Historic Landscapes*.



13

13. *Small-scale Features* – Additions of signage, lights, striping, and other small-scale features over time have heavily impacted the visual character of the Revere Beach Parkway.

14. *Drainage Features* – Deferred maintenance combined with surface runoff has caused this culvert on Wickett Pond Road in Wendell to fill with debris.

15. *Overgrowth* – Along the Truman Parkway in Hyde Park, heavy overgrowth along the edges has impacted the visual character of the road and the usefulness of the sidewalk.

**Guardrails and Guardwalls** Historic guardrails and guardwalls are often heavily altered, removed, or replaced to accommodate current design standards. The result is usually a far more intrusive rail or wall style than is necessary to ensure public safety.

**Small-scale Features** The steady and unnoticed accretion of small-scale features can ultimately cause a historic road to lose integrity. The addition of inappropriate utilities, lighting, signage, parking meters, curbing, and other features without proper design and review can clutter and overwhelm a road with non-historic material.

## DEFERRED MAINTENANCE

Faced with declining condition and rising maintenance costs, road managers and municipalities are often forced to cancel or defer essential maintenance on historic roads. The result can be the unintentional loss of significant characteristics or even complete loss of portions of the road itself.

**Drainage Features** The swales, drains, and culverts associated with roads are often neglected and quickly become clogged by overgrowth and filled with debris. The resulting drainage problems may both pose a safety hazard for passing motorists, and result in the loss of historic features or the road itself becoming undermined.



14



15

**Overgrowth** Trees, brush, shrubs, and grass left unattended may not only create safety issues from decreased sightlines, but may also affect the physical stability of road features. If allowed to grow unchecked, vegetation alongside historic roads will take over the clear zone and shoulders. Furthermore, vegetation will grow in joints and cracks in the pavement, curb, sidewalks and walls, breaking apart the road and roadside features, thereby exposing them to further water and frost damage. Allowing roadside vegetation to grow unchecked also results in the loss of informal views and designed vistas to the surrounding setting.

**Surface Patching** The high costs of road paving projects often result in road surface patching with inappropriate materials. Broken pavement may be filled with quick-setting concrete and asphalt mixes whose quality and color often detract from the historic character of the road.

## PROTECTIONS – TOOLS FOR PRESERVING HISTORIC ROADS

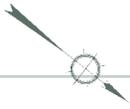
Once historic roads in a municipality have been assessed, inventoried, and the threats to them have been identified, how can they be protected? There are a number of methods, both procedural and legal, that can be implemented in Massachusetts. Ultimately, using a number of these methods in tandem will likely be the appropriate methodology, but increased awareness, self-education, and developing a common language is always the initial step.

**State Historic District/National Register Listing** Listing within a local historic district on the State Register of Historic Places (administered by the MHC) provides some protection from adverse effects by state-involved projects and when available, provides some property owners the opportunity to apply for matching state grants. State listing also aids in implementing future preservation mechanisms such as zoning bylaws, and other legal mechanisms listed below. Listing a road, either individually or as part of a district on the National Register of Historic Places (administered by the Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places) does not guarantee protection, but does provide a comprehensive assessment of the road history, characteristics, and significance, as well as provide limited protection from adverse effects by state or federal projects. In either case, the process of inventory and documentation should be carried out by a historian or other qualified preservation professional.

**Scenic Byways Program** The National Scenic Byways Program (administered by the Federal Highway Administration) links road preservation with community economic development through tourism. In order to qualify for state and federal funds under this program, roads must be first designated as State Scenic Byways. Currently, there are five State Scenic Byways in Massachusetts: the Mount Greylock Scenic Byway, the Mohawk Trail Scenic Byway, the Jacob's Ladder Trail (Route 20), the Connecticut River Scenic Farm Byway, and the Old King's Highway (Route 6A).

## SUCCESS STORIES: SCENIC ROADS ACT

(Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 15C) If a municipality passes a bylaw in accordance with the Scenic Roads Act, the cutting or removal of trees, or the altering or removal of stone walls within a road right of way, requires prior written consent of the planning board, selectmen, or the city council. Since its inception in 1973, at least 113 Massachusetts towns have passed scenic roads bylaws with various stipulations uniquely tailored to the needs of the municipality. In Barnstable, the bylaw protects 14 scenic roads when trees over four inches in diameter will be cut, or when more than 15 feet of wall will be destroyed. The burden of proof lies on the landowner to prove that the impacts are necessary for reasons of safety, and trees and walls on private land are not protected. In Wellesley, any length of stone wall and trees over four inches in diameter are protected along its six scenic roads. However, the town found early on that most of these features sat outside of the road right of way and established a "scenic road layout" that identifies those trees and walls on private land that require protection. With the exception of state numbered routes, all roads in Royalston are designated as scenic roads, helping to preserve the setting of almost every route in the municipality.



## SUCCESS STORIES: CORRIDOR OVERLAY PROTECTION BYLAWS

In 1994, Brewster enacted a corridor overlay protection district bylaw aimed at the “ability of the corridors to serve as cultural assets for the residents and visitors of the Town of Brewster”. Designed to manage change along historic roads, corridor overlay protection districts, like Brewster’s, can regulate such things as new construction, changes in land use, trip reduction efforts, curb cuts and driveway access, parking, and landscaping along designated roads. A number of similar bylaws have been passed throughout the state, such as the Route 146 Overlay District in Sutton, the Route 2A Overlay District in Lunenburg, and the Highway Corridor Overlay District in Millbury.

**Scenic Roads Act** Under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40, Section 15C, any city or town in the Commonwealth can designate a road in that municipality as scenic, other than a state highway or a numbered route, if the length of the numbered route is contained within the municipality boundaries and no part of the route is owned or maintained by the Commonwealth. With a scenic roads bylaw in place, the “cutting or removal of trees, or the tearing down or destruction of stone walls, or portions thereof” that lie within the road right-of-way without prior consent of the planning board is forbidden. (See Success Stories on previous page)

**Corridor Protection Bylaws** This type of bylaw may be specifically geared to protect any number of historic and scenic corridor management issues such as: minimal driveways, lack of commercial development, architectural character, building setbacks, and roadside vegetation. To date, at least nine municipalities have enacted Corridor Protection Bylaws. (See Success Stories)

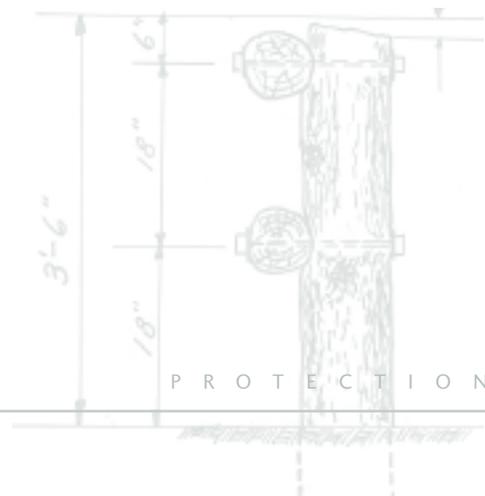
**Community Preservation Act** The Community Preservation Act (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 44B, Section 5) helps municipalities preserve historic sites and open space as well as create affordable housing and recreational facilities. Although few communities have used this act specifically for roads preservation, it has been extensively used to protect the open, rural, or historic setting of numerous roads in the state (see Success Stories).

**Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)** MEPA (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30, Section 61) office review is required for projects that are likely to negatively affect historic and scenic roads listed in a State Historic District. Under MEPA regulations (301 CMR 11.00), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) may be required for road projects that go beyond certain length and widening thresholds.

**Wetlands Protection Act (WPA)** Under WPA (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 131, Section 40), no person shall “remove, fill, dredge or alter” land (including historic roads) bordering water resources within the state (such as rivers, streams or ponds) “or any land under said waters or any land subject to tidal action, coastal storm flowage, or flooding, other than in the course of maintaining, repairing or replacing, but not substantially changing or enlarging, an existing and lawfully located structure or facility used in the service of the public and used to provide electric, gas, water, telephone, telegraph and other telecommunication services,” without first filing a Notice of Intent

16. The narrow edges along this section of Winthrop Street in Provincetown create a close relationship between the road and the adjacent cemetery.

17. A historic image (ca. 1910) of the Middlesex Fells Parkway north of Boston shows the parallel road surfaces, medians, walkways and regularly planted trees that collectively create a finely designed historic road.



*“A road is itself a kind of sentence, or story.*

*A real place, it’s also a metaphor for time,*

*for future becoming present and then past, for passage.”*

Rebecca Solnit, *Savage Dreams: A Journey Into the Hidden Wars of the American West*

with the local Conservation Commission, receiving an Order of Conditions from the Conservation Commission, and complying with that Order after all appeal periods have elapsed. Under the WPA, the local conservation commission is tasked with determining what projects are subject to the provisions of the Wetlands Protection Act, and enforcing the Act.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Law** Massachusetts General Law Chapter 90E, Section 2A, requires the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Highway Department to “make all reasonable provisions for the accommodation of bicycle and pedestrian traffic in the planning, design, and construction, reconstruction or maintenance of any project undertaken by the department.”

**Antiquities Act** (Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 9, Sections 26 through 27C) The Antiquities Act requires state agencies to notify the MHC about projects they plan to undertake, license or fund. The MHC then determines whether the project will have “any adverse effect” on a district, site, building, or structure included in the State Register of Historic Places. If an adverse effect is found, then the public and the local historic commission are involved to develop project alternatives that would minimize the adverse effect.

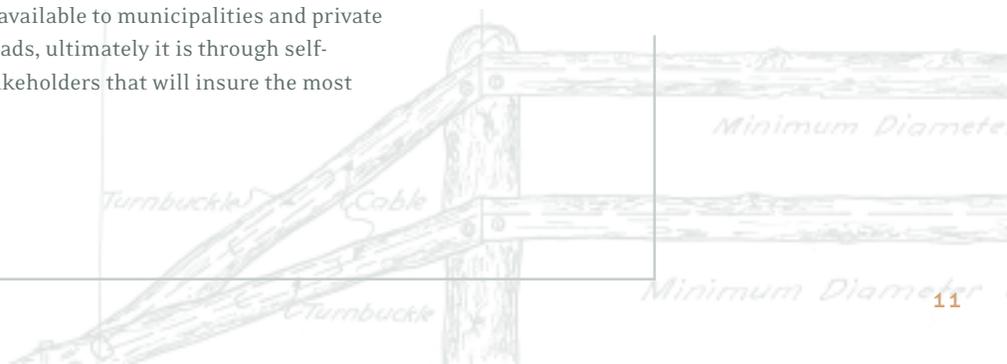
**Massachusetts Highway Department - Project Development and Design Guide** Released in January of 2006, the updated Massachusetts Highway Department design guide takes on an increasingly flexible and accommodating approach to roadway design in the state. The updated guidelines focus on context-sensitive design options that tailor the design process to the local setting, and include the assurance that “transportation facilities fit their physical setting and preserve scenic, historic, aesthetic, community, and environmental resources to the extent possible.”

**Additional Protections** Although designed for purposes other than protecting historic roads, a number of other legal means are available in Massachusetts for protecting their setting and surrounding land uses. A road’s setting can be preserved through scenic vista protection bylaws, scenic overlay districts, and great estates bylaws; while surrounding land uses can be protected through agricultural preservation zoning, village center zoning, and downtown revitalization zoning, as well as easements and conservation restrictions.

While any number of the above legal recourses is available to municipalities and private organizations interested in preserving historic roads, ultimately it is through self-education and communication between all the stakeholders that will insure the most successful historic road preservation projects.

## SUCCESS STORIES: COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT

(Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44B) The Community Preservation Act was passed in 2000 and funds open space preservation, historic preservation, and low/moderate housing efforts within a municipality through a 3% surcharge on real estate taxes. At least 10% of the funds raised annually must go to each of the three categories. The act is implemented locally and all decisions are made locally, although a major incentive is the matching funds provided by the state. The Community Preservation Act can be used as a tool to directly or indirectly preserve the character of a historic road. In 2003, Dartmouth received a grant to preserve a portion of the old King’s Highway, a colonial-era route that ran from Plymouth to Newport. Numerous grants have been allocated through the Community Preservation Act to purchase open space, forest, and conservation restrictions along historic roads throughout the state.



## HISTORIC ROAD RESOURCES

### GENERAL

Bay State Roads – Massachusetts Local  
Technical Assistance Program  
413-545-5403  
[www.ecs.umass.edu/baystate\\_roads/index.htm](http://www.ecs.umass.edu/baystate_roads/index.htm)

Community Preservation Act  
617-367-8998  
[www.communitypreservation.org/index.cfm](http://www.communitypreservation.org/index.cfm)

Federal Highway Administration – Historic Preservation  
and Archeology Program  
202-366-2060  
[www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/histpres/index.asp](http://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/histpres/index.asp)

Historic Landscape Preservation Initiative  
617-626-1250  
[www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/histland.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/histland.htm)

*Historic Parkways of Massachusetts*  
617-626-1250  
[www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/publications.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/publications.htm)

Historic Roads – Center for Preservation  
Education and Planning  
202-686-2860  
[www.historicroads.org/](http://www.historicroads.org/)

*Landscape Lines #16 – Historic Roads*  
1-866-512-1800  
[bookstore.gpo.gov/](http://bookstore.gpo.gov/)

National Scenic Byways Program  
1-800-429-9297  
[www.byways.org/](http://www.byways.org/)

National Trust for Historic Preservation  
– Transportation Issues and Initiatives  
1-800-944-6847  
[www.nationaltrust.org/issues/transportation/design\\_guidelines.html](http://www.nationaltrust.org/issues/transportation/design_guidelines.html)

*Take Back Your Streets: How to Protect Communities  
From Asphalt and Traffic*  
617-350-0990 (Conservation Law Foundation)  
[www.clf.org](http://www.clf.org)

*The Path to Protecting Country Roads* (Dawson 2006)  
413-268-8219 (Highland Communities Initiative)  
[http://hci.thetrustees.org/pages/1600\\_training\\_materials.cfm](http://hci.thetrustees.org/pages/1600_training_materials.cfm)

*There's a Difference!* (Massachusetts Historical Commission)  
617-727-8470  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/difference.pdf](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/difference.pdf)

### DESIGN AND DESIGN ALTERNATIVES

Context Sensitive Solutions – Online Resource Center  
212-620-5660  
[www.contextsensitivesolutions.org/](http://www.contextsensitivesolutions.org/)

Federal Highway Administration – Context Sensitive  
Solutions  
202-366-8792  
[www.fhwa.dot.gov/csd/](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/csd/)

Federal Highway Administration – Turner-Fairbank  
Highway Research Center  
202-493-3022  
[www.tfhrc.gov/](http://www.tfhrc.gov/)

Franklin Regional Council of Governments  
– Design Alternatives for Rural Roads  
413-774-3167  
[www.frcog.org/planpub.html](http://www.frcog.org/planpub.html)

Massachusetts Highway Department – Project Development  
and Design Guide (2006)  
[www.vhb.com/mhdGuide/mhd\\_GuideBook.asp](http://www.vhb.com/mhdGuide/mhd_GuideBook.asp)

### LAWS AND REGULATIONS

Citizen Planner Training Collaborative  
508-754-3068  
[www.umass.edu/masscptc/examplebylaws.html](http://www.umass.edu/masscptc/examplebylaws.html)

Community Preservation Act – full legal text  
[www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/gl-44b-toc.htm](http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/gl-44b-toc.htm)

Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Office  
617-626-1020  
[www.mass.gov/envir/mepa/](http://www.mass.gov/envir/mepa/)

*Preservation Through Bylaws and Ordinances* (Skelly 2003)  
617-727-8470 (Massachusetts Historical Commission)

Scenic Road Bylaws – full legal text  
[www.state.ma.us/legis/laws/mgl/40-15c.htm](http://www.state.ma.us/legis/laws/mgl/40-15c.htm)

Scenic Roads Designations – full legal text  
[www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/40-15c.htm](http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/40-15c.htm)

Wetlands Protection Act – full legal text  
[www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/131-40.htm](http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/mgl/131-40.htm)

Wetlands Protection Act – overview  
617-626-1200 (Massachusetts Office of  
Coastal Zone Management)  
[www.mass.gov/czm/envpermitmaprotectionact.htm](http://www.mass.gov/czm/envpermitmaprotectionact.htm)

