



Leverett Reconnaissance Report

Connecticut River Valley Reconnaissance Survey

Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory
Program



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Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

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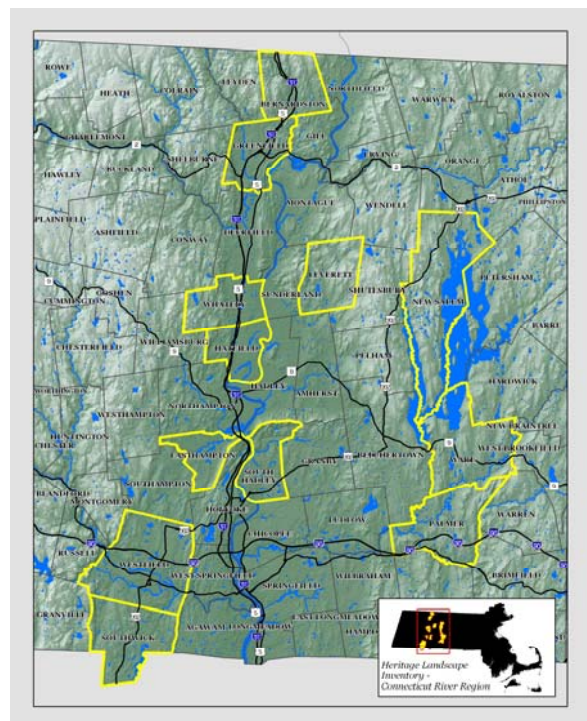
INTRODUCTION

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

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

The communities within the Connecticut River Valley region of Massachusetts are diverse in their settlement patterns and economic histories.

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



Connecticut River Valley Heritage Landscape Inventory project area

Methodology

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

PART I: HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

LOCAL HISTORY

The Town of Leverett is one of the southernmost towns of Franklin County, located west of Shutesbury and Wendell, east of Sunderland, south of Montague, and north of Amherst. Leverett was originally part of Sunderland (named Swampfield at that time), but in 1774, Leverett successfully petitioned the colony for separation from Sunderland and was named for John Leverett, an early Governor of Massachusetts, who stood strongly against religious persecution and British rule.

The town topography is made up of moderate to rugged uplands arising from the eastern side of the Connecticut River Valley, with the highest elevation of 1,260 feet at Brushy Mountain, located in the east-central part of town. The northern part of Leverett drains into the Sawmill River, which flows northwest into the Connecticut River, and central and southern Leverett drain into either Long Plain Brook or Roaring Brook. The town's only fresh water body is Leverett Pond, located in the south-central part of town, which probably served as a prime spot for native fishing and hunting. It was also an important water source that influenced colonial settlement patterns and supported the first village in town, Leverett Center.

Colonial settlement was limited, with most occurring in the mid 18th century, much of it the result of the expansion of Sunderland into parts of Long Plain and Leverett Center. The Town's

first meeting house was completed in Leverett Center in 1776. Late colonial settlement occurred in North Leverett, the site of a small community of Baptists, as a result of expansion from Montague.

Agriculture was a primary occupation of colonial residents focused around the Leverett Pond area and elsewhere through town, although good soil for agriculture was limited. However, the elevations of the Sawmill River and Roaring Brook supplied power that was utilized to establish early industrial villages that provided a substantial contribution to the economic livelihood of Leverett. In the 19th century, factories, mills and shops along the Sawmill River in the north and along Roaring Brook in the east supplemented self-sufficient farms in producing the goods, tools and services needed in the area. Mills and factories in Leverett included grist mills, fulling mills, sawmills, blacksmiths, machine shops, scythe factories, box shops, a tannery and stills. Remains of dams and foundations of these early enterprises remain today. The 19th century saw the development of charcoal production in kilns. There are remnants of these kilns on Brushy Mountain and the last intact kiln in town remains along the Sawmill River. General stores were operated in each of the four community centers, with the Watson General Store in Moores Corner the largest in the county.

At the turn of the 20th century, life changed in Leverett with the arrival of the railroad, electricity and the automobile. World War I followed and jobs in cities, military service, and ease of transportation made self-sufficiency unnecessary and impractical. The large, historic homes increasingly housed an aging population. The end of World War II brought an influx of returning veterans, drawn to the area by the expansion of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. The number of students and faculty increased, which resulted in population growth in Leverett as many large, old houses were both available and affordable.

Today, Leverett has a large percentage of at-home workers compared with other Franklin County towns¹, but most of Leverett's residents commute out of town for work. The neighboring town of Amherst serves as an employment center for Leverett, with many residents employed by the University of Massachusetts, Amherst². There is a limited employment base within town: the largest employer located within Leverett is the Town itself, with both municipal and school employees. In addition, Leverett has a few other visible businesses and organizations that have employees or volunteers, including the Village Coop store, the Leverett Crafts and Arts Center, the Post Office, and Dakin Animal Shelter.

¹ According to 2000 Census data, 11% of Leverett workers worked at home, more than twice the rate of Franklin County (5.1%) for that year, and this amount is expected to have increased since 2000.

² According to 2000 U.S. Census data, there was a higher percentage of town workers in Leverett than other Franklin County towns that were in all of the following categories: "Government Workers"; "Educational, Health, and Social Services" sector; and the "Professional Services" sector.

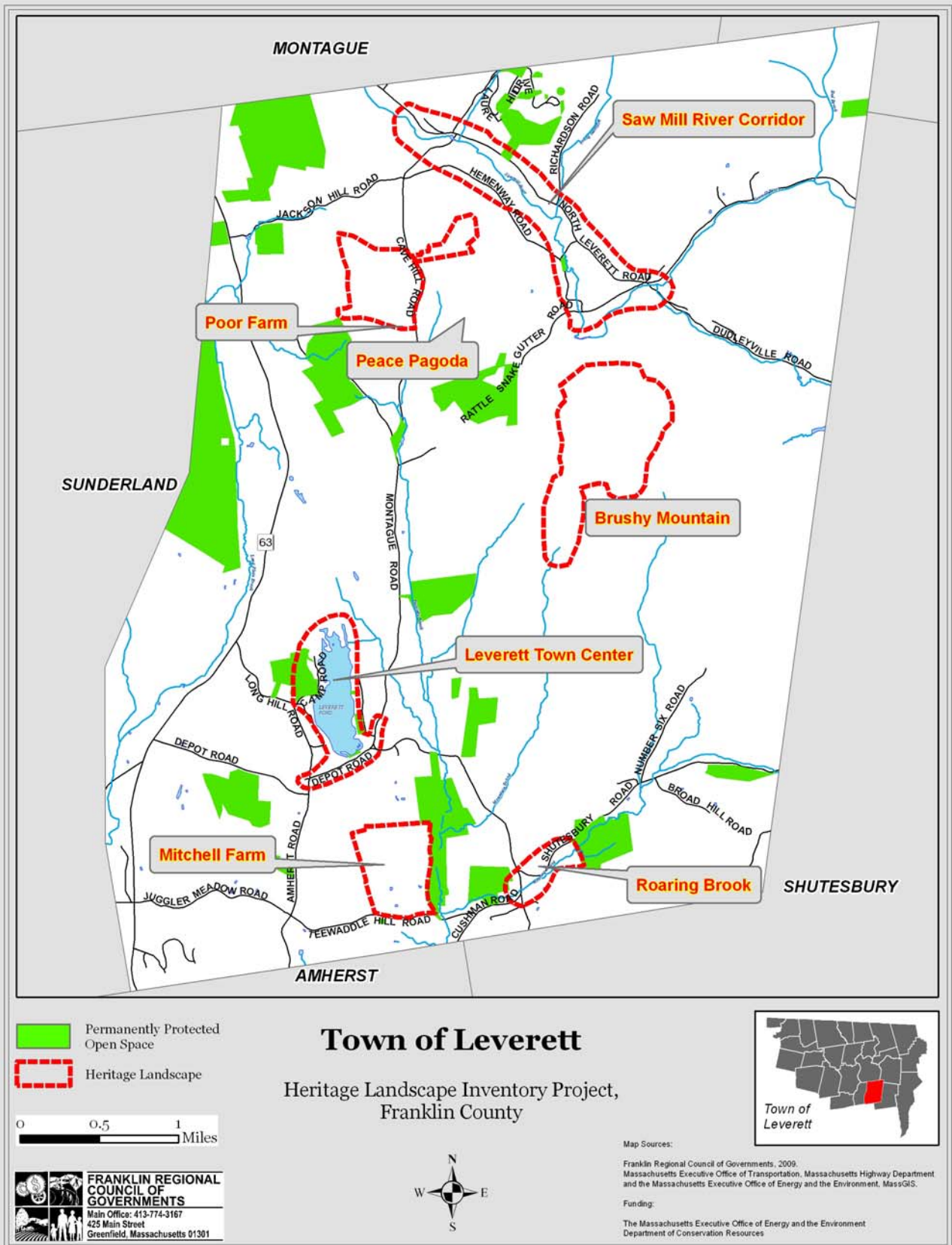
Although its population has continued to increase over the past few decades, Leverett remains a quiet, rural town that is primarily residential. The population density is roughly 75 people per square mile.³ The town has large areas of forested land and approximately 16 percent of the land in town is permanently protected from development⁴. Leverett Center still contains some 18th and many earlier 19th century structures. However, the community is experiencing growth pressure and the adoption of strategies and tools for heritage landscape preservation will help to maintain the rural character while accommodating new development.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

In the public identification meeting held at Town Hall on November 20, 2008, participants identified landscapes within Leverett that define the heritage of the community. These heritage landscapes provide a cross section of the types of landscapes that contributed to the historical development of the town and together tell the story of Leverett's past. Meeting attendees then voted to identify 6 Priority Heritage Landscapes for the focus of this project. The following text describes the unique value that each of these landscapes provides to the community and a set of recommendations for its preservation and protection. The recommendations are meant as a starting point for discussion among community members - it is up to town staff, boards and residents to decide which tools and techniques will fit with community goals and then work towards their implementation. The Priority Heritage Landscapes for Leverett are the **Leverett Town Center, Sawmill River Corridor, Peace Pagoda and Poor Farm, Roaring Brook Corridor, Mitchell Farm and Brushy Mountain archaeological sites.**

³ According to MassGIS 1999 land use data.

⁴ Community Development Plan, 2005 Table 1-1 states that 1,105 acres were permanently protected out of a total of 7,034 acres in Town, or 15.7%.



Leverett Town Center

Leverett Center covers a two-mile stretch from the junction of Amherst and Depot Roads on the southern end to the public safety complex at 95 Montague Road on the northern end. This area, located on the southern end of Leverett Pond, has historically been the core of the town's civic and cultural activities. The Town Center was established in 1774, six months after the town's separation from Sunderland, and the meetinghouse (the site of which is now the First Congregational Church of Leverett) was completed by 1776. Specific sites and buildings within the Center that were identified in the local identification meeting include Town Hall, the Congregational Church, the Post Office, the Field Library, historic homes, the Leverett Crafts and Arts /Box Shop building, and Leverett Pond. Collectively, these civic, institutional, residential and natural resources form the heritage landscape of Leverett Center.



Leverett Town Hall



First Congregational Church

Leverett Town Hall

The Town Hall was built in 1845 as a one story building. In 1896, the ladies of the Congregational Church across the street raised funds to elevate the building and provide a new first floor to serve as a kitchen and dining room for church and community functions. In 1930, a two-story addition was added to the east end, providing a meeting room downstairs and a stage upstairs. Over the years, the building has served as a focal point for community life in Leverett Center, including use for town meetings, town offices, church suppers, and social programs of the Grange. Currently, the kitchen is used once a week for the Senior Lunch Club.

First Congregational Church

The First Congregational Church, located at 4 Montague Road, was built in 1838 by Josiah Pomeroy on the site of the town's original Meeting House. The church is an example of a New England Greek Revival/Gothic Revival country church, with an 1839 Cabotville bell in the

tower. In 1982, a ramp was added to make it handicap accessible. In 1784, the first minister, Reverend Henry Williams, was persuaded to come to Leverett with compensation that included moving expenses, the house at 14 Montague Road, a barn and 100 acres. Reverend Williams remained minister for 27 years and was the first of 28 ministers to serve the church. As with many area churches, maintaining membership has been a challenge, but the congregation now has a full-time minister and is maintaining the building. The First Congregational Church of Leverett owns and maintains the Edna Emerson Memorial Garden, on property (known as the "King Lot") donated to the church by Dorothy King. The garden was designed by Michael Mazur, of EarthWorks in Leverett, and dedicated in 2004 in honor and memory of Edna Heintzman Emerson (April 16, 1902 -- January 18, 2003), who left a substantial bequest to the church.

Post Office

Located next to Town Hall is the Leverett Post Office, which in 1855 moved from a private residence into an adjacent two-story general store. The store burned in 1931 and was replaced by the current building. In 1972 the general store was converted into an apartment and in 1984 the building was again remodeled. This time the apartment was removed and since then the post office has occupied the entire structure. It was a gas station for a period of time when the general store was in operation. The building is currently in private ownership, and is leased to the U.S. Postal Service.

Bradford M. Field Memorial Library

The Bradford M. Field Memorial Library, at 1 Shutesbury Road, was given to the Town by Elizabeth Judson Field in 1916, in memory of her father, Bradford M. Field, who was the Leverett Center postmaster from 1863 to 1913. This town library replaced libraries that had been kept in private homes since 1891. Historic artifacts from the Field family and other Leverett families have been housed in the building for many years, including paper memorabilia and books on the second floor and tools and larger items in the basement. This building served as the public library for the town until 2002 when the current Leverett Library was built on Montague Road.

The building is still owned by the Town but is being utilized as the Leverett Family Museum. In 2008, Leverett passed a Town Meeting warrant to sell the building to a non-profit organization within the next two years. The Leverett Historical Society has expressed interest in purchasing the building to continue its use as a historic museum. The building is in good condition, with some maintenance issues typical of a building of this age.

Leverett Crafts and Arts /The Box Shop

The Leverett Crafts and Arts building is located next to Town Hall at 13 Montague Road. The building is often referred to as "The Box Shop" because it was the site of the Beaman and

Marvel Box Shop, built in 1903, which replaced the original 1875 Frary and Gates Box Shop, which had burned down. Locked-corner wooden boxes were manufactured in this building and used for shipping a variety of items throughout the U.S. until the early 1930's, when the invention and widespread use of cardboard put the facility out of production. Many of the Beaman and Marvel Box Shop's 50 employees resided in homes along Montague Road.

The building was used as a poultry house in the 1940's, and then in 1964 was purchased by Joseph Barnes, a skilled metal worker and sculptor, for use as a crafts center. Mr. Barnes' vision was that the center would be a place where arts and crafts could be taught in the traditional Master and Apprentice style, to preserve and pass on crafts and "skills currently disappearing from American life", such as blacksmithing, pottery and woodcarving. However, shortly after he purchased the property, Mr. Barnes passed away without realizing his dream. Fortunately, about 50 community volunteers came together to complete his vision by rehabilitating the building, salvaging windows from a dormitory at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst and constructing separate rooms for use as studios. The Center was originally called "Leverett Craftsmen and Artists", which has since been shortened to "Leverett Crafts and Arts" (LCA). LCA is managed by a non-profit organization with a Board and members that currently maintain the property and building, and, in recent years, have restored its finances. The Leverett Crafts and Arts property is sited on 3 ½ acres. The building houses 20 studios rented by local craftspeople and an art gallery that is open to the public. The building is in fair condition although there are maintenance needs which the Board is seeking to address through available funding opportunities.



Leverett Crafts and Arts Center/The Box Shop

Leverett Pond

Leverett Pond is the town's largest body of water, covering 75 acres, and is about a half-mile long. Its location influenced the settlement of Leverett Center and was an important water source, both for drinking water for local homes and buildings as well as to produce ice for use in nearby homes and the Leverett Box Shop. Land surrounding the pond has historically been used

for agriculture due to its fertile soil from the rich bottomland. A dam exists and the remainder of a mill foundation on the northeast end of the pond is still visible off of Montague Road.



Leverett Pond in Leverett Town

Leverett Pond is currently enjoyed by town residents for recreational purposes including fishing, boating, skating, swimming and wildlife observation. Stewardship is carried out by both a Town-appointed pond committee as well as the Friends of the Leverett Pond Association, a non-profit organization that

has produced a management plan for the pond to care for this valuable natural resource. The primary objective of this management plan is maintaining the existing diversity and various habitat types, with a minimum of disturbance, while still providing for recreational access and use by residents. The plan includes sections on water quality, biological resources, soils, and lake and watershed planning issues including the long-term management of invasive species. The plan recommends the construction of a boardwalk and trails for recreational access and benches for wildlife viewing.

Historic homes in Leverett center include the Josiah Dewey House (1807) at 1 Montague Road; the Samuel Bartlett House (1816) at 5 Montague Road; the Rev. Henry Williams House (1760) at 14 Montague Road; the Elijah Graves House (1848) at 31 Montague Road; and the Dr. Silas Ball House (1784) at 36 Montague Road. The Field Tavern at 137 Depot Road was built in 1802 and used as a tavern until 1830. Since then it has been used as a home for 6 generations of the Fields family. The Tavern was the meeting place for the Selectmen in early days of town government. Other historic buildings in Leverett Center include the Old Parsonage (1799) at 142 Depot Rd., the Solomon Gould House (1790) at 146 Depot Road, and the Town Pound (1822) at 80 Montague Road. Leverett Center has recently been listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This designation is honorary in nature and does not provide any protective measures for the historic resources within the district, but does reflect the importance of the Town Center as a Priority Heritage Landscape.

Opportunities:

- The Town has provided an opportunity to continue to utilize the Bradford M. Field Memorial Library by passing a Town Meeting warrant to sell the building to a non-profit organization that will maintain its historic collection.
- Leverett Center has recently been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, recognition of the historic value of the 18th and 19th century structures within this area, which provide a classic example of early New England settlement patterns. The National Register designation makes the municipal and non-profit owned structures eligible to apply for Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) grants.
- Many historic artifacts and a tremendous amount of historic knowledge that town residents hold about the history of Leverett Center could be documented and shared with the public through the continued use of the Bradford M. Field Memorial Library as a historic museum.
- Leverett Pond provides natural water quality protection and ecological benefits and potential recreational opportunities for town residents.
- Stewardship for Leverett Pond is provided by two groups, the Leverett Pond Committee as well as the Friends of Leverett Pond Association.

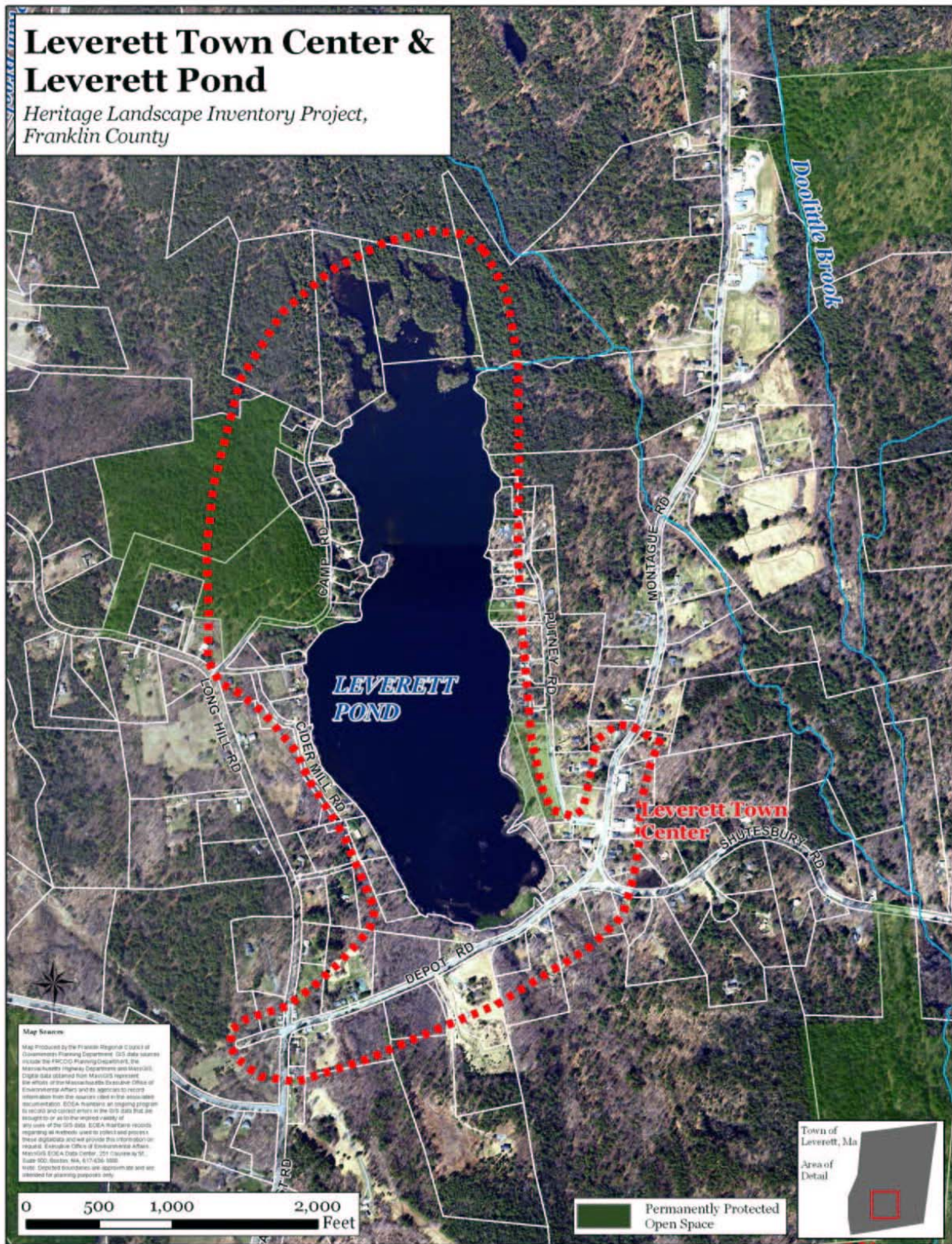
Issues:

- Public access for boating and fishing is limited at Leverett Pond.
- Invasive non-native species are an issue at Leverett Pond, which may somewhat restrict public access and use over time.
- Many historical artifacts representing the history of Leverett Center are kept in private residences, not currently accessible to the public.
- Few of the historic properties in Leverett Center are currently protected and some of the historic structures are in poor condition and require maintenance.

Recommendations:

1. The Town should support the Friends of Leverett Pond in its effort to implement the recommendations of the Leverett Pond Management Plan, and provide some funding support to improve public access by building an accessible dock and a connected walking path around the pond, including benches for wildlife viewing. CPA funds are a potential source of funds for this effort.
2. The Friends of Leverett Pond Association should continue monitoring invasive plants at Leverett Pond to assess the situation over time and suggest improvements and possible solutions to keep the pond usable for recreational purposes.

3. The Town could consider providing nonmotorized boats, such as canoes and kayaks, in a locked storage on site at Leverett Pond, to be available for use by town residents that sign a waiver of liability by the Town. By keeping boats in one location, this would minimize disruption of the area surrounding the pond, and encourage recreational usage by all town residents.
4. Support the Leverett Historic Society in the purchase and utilization of the Field Library as a historic museum to be open to the public to display historic artifacts and educate residents about the history of Leverett.
5. The Town should consider establishing a Local Historic District Study Committee to explore designating Leverett Center as a Local Historic District, the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources. This designation, adopted by a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting, would preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places and would be administered by a district commission appointed by the Board of Selectmen.
6. Utilize Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding to preserve the historic municipal and non-profit structures. CPA funds can be used as a match for other grant programs, such as MHC's Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund.
7. Consider Low Impact Development (LID) techniques as part of Town subdivision regulations or a stormwater bylaw to increase stormwater protection around Leverett Pond. LID techniques use careful site design and decentralized stormwater management to improve water quality and create more attractive development while reducing the environmental footprint of new growth. (For more information on LID strategies see <http://www.mapc.org/LID.html>, which includes a link to a Low Impact Development Toolkit).



Sawmill River Corridor

The Sawmill River Valley runs from east to west in the northern half of Leverett, through the villages of Moores Corner, North Leverett and into Montague. The corridor was the site of significant historical industrial activity that occurred on mill sites located along the river. The steep hillsides and stony soil did not suit agriculture, but the river's drop in elevation of about 300 feet in this area provided water power for the development of dams and mills that were constructed beginning in 1716. Industrial activity occurred in sawmills, gristmills, blacksmith shops, and later in coke kilns for the production of charcoal.

Historic homes along the Sawmill River, many of which were built in the 1790's and early 1800's, exhibit the settlement patterns of the region, with residential properties located nearby the industrial resources that supported them. The Glazier House remains on the corner of Coke Kiln Road and North Leverett Road, one of the oldest houses in North Leverett. "The Bucket Shop", and "The Pail Shop", former industrial properties with existing water wheel remnants, are both in private ownership and have been restored for residential purposes. The foundation of the Graves blacksmith shop that was powered by a canal that still exists on North Leverett Road and the historic Graves House across the street are examples of early 19th century architecture.



Watson's Mill at Moores Corner

Moores Corner (also known as Moore's Corner)

Moore's, or Moores⁵ Corner, located at the intersection of North Leverett Road and Dudleyville Road, was once a hub of activity. Watson's Mill was once the site of a sawmill, and a second building was added for use as a gristmill. The original waterwheel has been removed from the property, but the stone structures for the original dam and remnants of the mechanical workings

⁵ Both Moore's and Moores are used by town residents and historians, with different views over whether or not the area is named after one or more local Moore families. For the purposes of consistency throughout this report, Moores will be used, with the understanding that it can be referred to both ways.

of the mills still exist. The gristmill building, as well as the adjacent structure which was a village blacksmith shop, are in private ownership and have been well-maintained. The Moores Corner Schoolhouse once served as the one-room schoolhouse for the village as well as a meeting place for the Universalist Church and a community center. It is located on North Leverett Road, across the street from Watson's Grist Mill and blacksmith shop, and has been maintained by the non-profit Leverett Historical Society since 1968. The building was recently restored with help from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds and the original bell was put back up in the tower. It is currently used as an historic museum. The Moores Corner Schoolhouse has been well-maintained and serves as a scenic reminder of the history of the Sawmill River Corridor.

The Village Coop, a cooperative store and community gathering place, is constructed on the foundation of what was once the Dexter Moore barn. Just down the road on Rattlesnake Gutter Road is the Moores Corner Cemetery, which is maintained by the North Leverett Association. The land was once part of the Wedge Farm and was deeded to the town in 1824 by Asa Moore. It is the burial site of many of the northern part of town's industrial leaders, such as members of the Moore, Watson and Bourne families. On the corner of Rattlesnake Gutter Road and Old Mill Yard Road are visible remnants of another large mill and lumber yard, historically known as the Asa Moore Mill, that was used at various times as a sawmill, a gristmill and a turning mill.



Coke Kiln

The one surviving Coke kiln in Leverett that remains intact is located on Hemenway Road. The kiln was used for the production of charcoal by the Howard family for 80 years and is now owned by Elliot Sherman. Charcoal was produced in Leverett and sold to several markets including restaurants,

Coke Kiln on Hemenway Road in North Leverett

blacksmiths, and producers of gas masks during World War II. It is estimated that 90 cords of

wood were used in each burn for charcoal production. The need for so much wood stimulated the local forest economy. The kiln was taken out of service in 1965 when awareness of environmental and health issues associated with the smoke produced by the burning of charcoal negatively affected the industry. While it is currently intact, it has maintenance needs to prevent it from collapsing, as has happened to other kilns in town.

North Leverett Sawmill

The 250 year-old North Leverett Sawmill, historically known as the Joseph Slarrow and Associates Sawmill, is located on Sawmill River on the corner of North Leverett Road and Cave Hill Road and is an important historic and scenic heritage landscape in Leverett. The privately-owned mill has had 11 owners since the mid-1700's including Major Richard Montague, and the Watson and Glazier families.



North Leverett Sawmill

The mill is currently being restored with the help of owner's funds, Leverett Historical Society donations, and Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds to repair the roof, the interior floor, and the exterior of the structure. A preservation restriction has been put on the mill building. The landowners have plans to use the building for educational purposes. The interior of the building will not be open to the

public, but there are plans to use existing sawmill equipment to show the operation of a historic mill to tour groups, with the downstairs used for office space. The community has come together to restore this beautiful historic building, which is an important reminder of North Leverett's industrial heritage and provides a beautiful scenic view from both North Leverett Road and Cave Hill Road. A National Register nomination is currently in process to recognize the significance of this resource to the community.

Opportunities:

- The community is lucky to have visibly intact mill and dam structures which reflect the industrial history of the Sawmill River Corridor and provide excellent interpretive opportunities.
- Many local and area residents utilize the protected Rattlesnake Gutter Road area for active recreation such as hiking and cross country skiing, passing by the Moores Corner Cemetery and Asa Moore mill ruins without knowing the history of the area.
- The North Leverett Sawmill is being restored with the help of CPA funds and has a preservation restriction on it.
- The North Leverett Sawmill still houses equipment in the interior of the structure that has historic and educational value. There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the landowner and the Leverett Historical Society regarding educational opportunities.

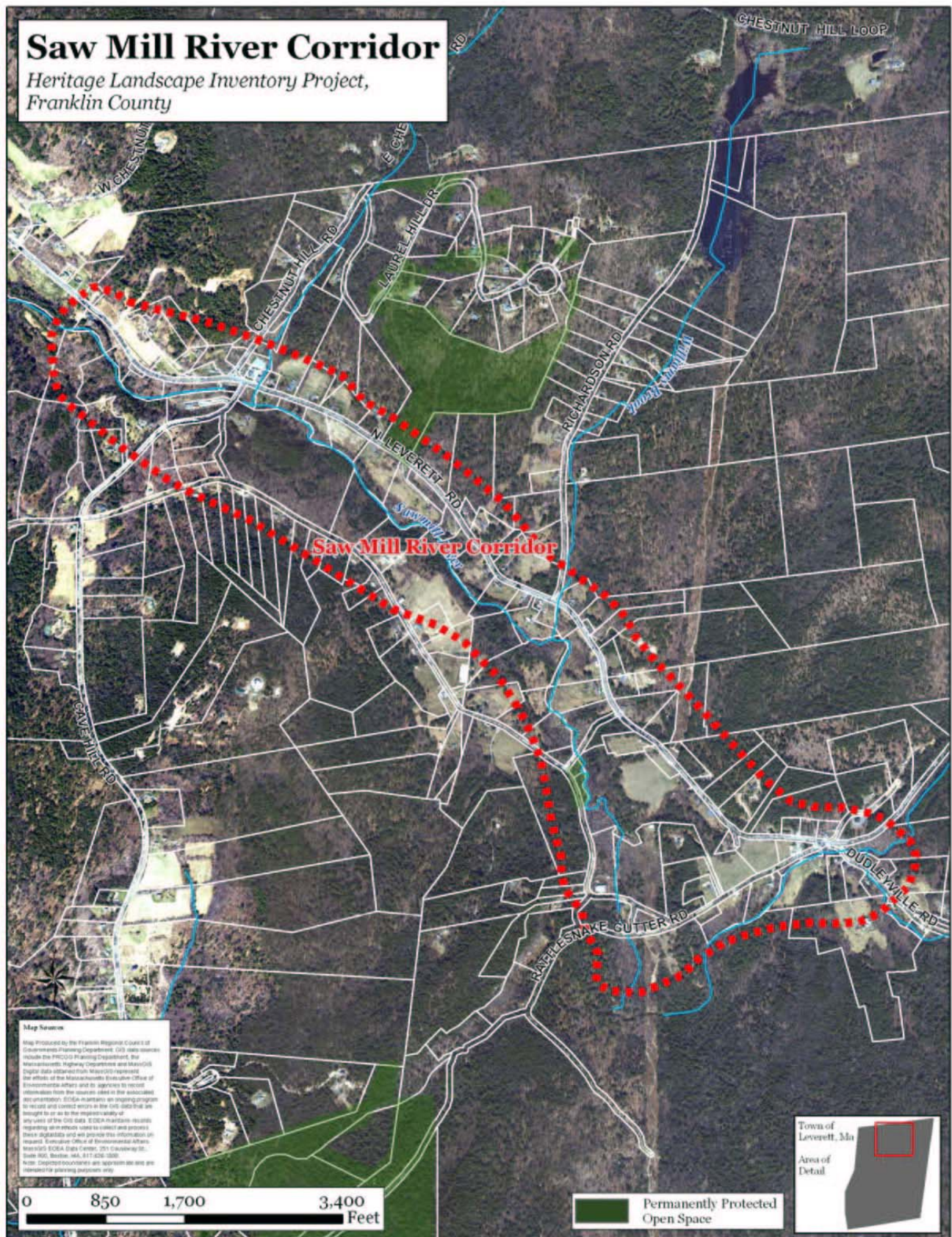
- The Moores Corner village serves as a scenic reminder of the industrial and civic activity that took place on these well-maintained sites.
- Leverett has a coke kiln that is currently still intact.

Issues:

- Mill ruins and historic homes along the Sawmill River are located on private property which limits maintenance and interpretive options unless public/private partnerships are established.
- The cost of maintaining and/or renovating old mill sites can be high and these mill sites are no longer providing revenue through use.
- The surviving coke kiln in town is in private ownership and needs maintenance for its preservation.

Recommendations:

1. The Historical Commission should consider placing interpretive signage at the cemetery on Rattlesnake Gutter Road to inform visitors of the town residents that are buried there as well as at the bridge to tell the history of the mill ruins.
2. The Historical Society or Historical Commission should consider the creation of a driving pamphlet or brochure with a map that discusses the industrial heritage of North Leverett and allows for visual access to various sites. An audio or video oral history with interviews of town residents knowledgeable about the history of North Leverett would be another way to preserve valuable history of the area and could be used in conjunction with the brochure.
3. Investigate the potential of renovating one of the old mills to produce hydro power as a clean energy source for the town.
4. The Leverett Historical Society could work with landowners of the North Leverett Sawmill to provide historical/educational information (through a brochure, video, etc.) to help pursue and expand appropriate educational opportunities.
5. The Leverett Historical Commission and Leverett Historical Society should work together to pursue National Register District designation for Moores Corner in North Leverett.
6. The Town should work with the landowner that owns the last surviving charcoal kiln to pursue maintenance and preservation strategies including funding for maintenance as well as the consideration of a preservation restriction on the kiln.



Peace Pagoda and Poor Farm

The Peace Pagoda site is located across the street from the site of the original Town Poor Farm at the top of Cave Hill Road in northern Leverett. These properties were both recognized as Priority Heritage Landscapes by community residents in the identification meeting. While the Peace Pagoda is of more recent origin, this combined area is of significance to the Town due to its cultural significance over time and today.

Peace Pagoda

In 1984, this 32-acre property on Cave Hill Road was purchased by the Nipponzan Myohoji order to establish a peace pagoda (or stupa) as well as a residence for monks and nuns to live in. The site was chosen as a place of solitude that would be close enough to the populated Amherst area to encourage visits by the public. The main temple, the first one in North America built by this order, was built by young Americans led by Japanese nuns and monks of the Nipponzan Myohoji order and was completed in 1985, the same year that the founder passed away. In 1987, another temple on the site burned, but the landscape was transformed into a Japanese garden and pond designed by a 94-year old Japanese landscape architect. A second structure is in the process of being constructed primarily through volunteer efforts which will serve as both a second temple and a new residence for the monks and nuns that live on site. The current residence, located along the path up to the main temple, is to be made available for overnight guests.

What was once a logging road takes visitors uphill for a 10-minute walk past Cambodian temples under separate ownership on the adjacent property. At the top of the path, the magnificent temple suddenly comes into view. The exterior walls of the domed structure are only 5” thick, and the chamber above the dome houses holy relics of the Buddha and scriptures of spiritual value. Four separate sculptures built into the exterior of the dome were handmade by Sri Lankan artisans, and tell the story of the life of the Buddha and his attainment of enlightenment. According to Sister Claire, one of the nuns that has lived on the site since its inception, the lotus petals and elephants etched into tiles around the main structure represent everyone’s life and intention for good.



New England Peace Pagoda

The New England Peace Pagoda in Leverett has been designated a “Living Treasure”, a designation in Japan that recognizes important artistic and spiritual places. Owners of the Peace Pagoda have plans to increase outreach to schools and the community to facilitate access to the

site and educate visitors of the significance of the temple and the site. There is a trail system through the woods on the property that is open to the public.

The Poor Farm

Land that was once the site of the Poor Farm house is located on the west side of Cave Hill Road, across from the Peace Pagoda property. Nearby parcels were used as farmland by the Poor Farm. The Poor Farm Movement in New England began in the 1820's as an American reform movement to replace the English system of auctioning off the poor, recognizing that the Town had a responsibility to help care for those residents who were not able to take care of themselves.



Site of Town Poor Farm on Cave Hill Road

The Town of Leverett bought the land from Kellogg Graves in 1866, which included 100 acres, barns and a two-story farmhouse that was to serve as the residence for town indigents. The land was to be a working farm, with residents to work the land. A warden was hired to live on the property and oversee the farm operations. However, as was found with other Poor Farms in New England, revenue generated from the property was not enough to cover the expenses of the operation, as many

of the residents were physically unable to work. The house burned in 1889 and was not rebuilt, so the Town went back to a modified system of auctioning off the poor. Selectmen were responsible for finding homes for these residents and paid other homeowners in town to care for them. This was not typical, since the Poor Farm Movement continued in other New England towns until after World War II.

There are still open fields, but no other known remnants of the original Poor Farm in Leverett. There is a sign at the private residence now at 53 Cave Hill Road, at a reconstructed well on the property of the original farmhouse, stating that this was the site of the Town Poor Farm.

Opportunities:

- The location of the Poor Farm and Peace Pagoda near Rattlesnake Gutter Road provides an opportunity for linkage of recreational trails with willing landowners. Current efforts by town residents and a local land trust to create recreational trails from Rattlesnake Gutter Road may provide an opportunity to connect trails to the Peace Pagoda site and possibly the Poor Farm site as well, if landowners are willing to provide public access.

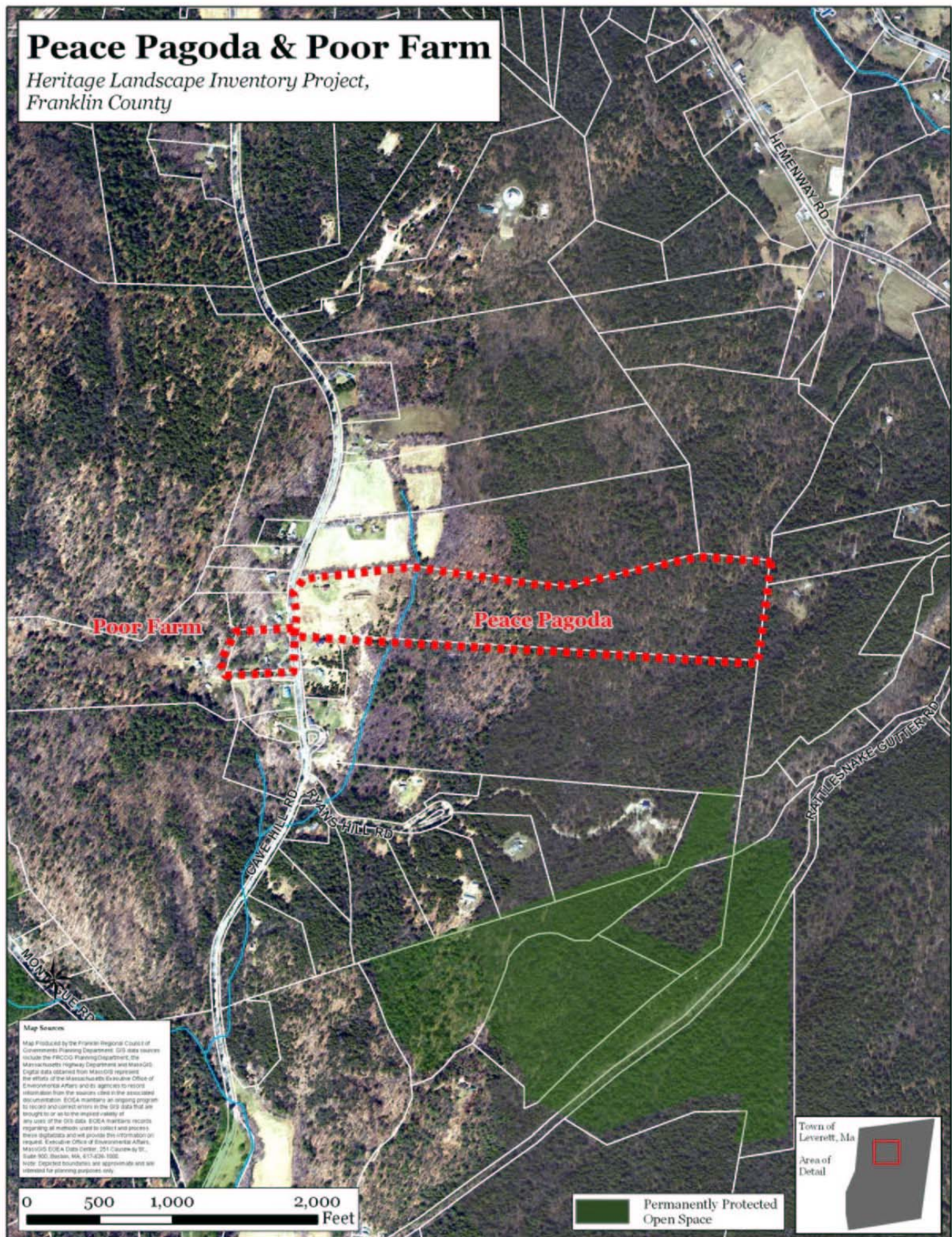
- The spiritual and scenic significance of the temple and surrounding site is a unique opportunity to educate residents and school children about Buddhism and Japanese culture.
- Volunteer opportunities exist at the site for area schools and/or community groups to assist with ongoing renovation and maintenance efforts for existing structures while gaining exposure to and education about the spiritual significance of the site.
- The history of the Poor Farm is an interesting example of the Poor Farm Movement in New England and an opportunity exists to inform residents of this part of Leverett's history.

Issues:

- The buildings on the site of the Peace Pagoda are primarily constructed and maintained by volunteer efforts, with limited financial resources.
- The Peace Pagoda site does not have permanent protection in place on the land or buildings.
- The Poor Farm does not have any structures remaining to represent its history.
- The Poor Farm is in private ownership and not accessible to the public.
- The history of the Poor Farm is relatively unknown to town residents.

Recommendations:

1. Owners of the Peace Pagoda should consider working with a local land trust to pursue putting a conservation easement on the property to ensure long-term protection and sustainability of the land.
2. Landowners of the Poor Farm site could consider a conservation easement to protect the land that was once associated with Poor Farm activities, and possibly allow some public access to the site.
3. The Rattlesnake Gutter Trust could work with private landowners, the Town, owners of the Peace Pagoda and owners of the Poor Farm site to pursue the development of connective trails that link Rattlesnake Gutter, the Peace Pagoda property and Poor Farm for public recreational use. Volunteers from the land trust and/or the community may be interested in helping to create and maintain these trails.
4. The Town could explore the possibility of establishing an interpretive sign and/or a brochure to inform residents of the Poor Farm history.
5. The Peace Pagoda could consider working with the Franklin County Chamber of Commerce or other cultural tourism organizations to increase public awareness of the significance of the site and to expand volunteers for specific events and projects.



Roaring Brook Corridor

The Roaring Brook Corridor in East Leverett includes the brook and surrounding land from the intersection of Still Corner Road and Cushman Road north along Roaring Brook to the southern boundary of town-owned conservation land. This area is also referred to as “Still Corner” because there were once gin and brandy stills located on Still Corner Road and Cushman Road. Roaring Brook parallels Shutesbury Road until just north of Miller’s Road where it heads northeast.



Mill site on Roaring Brook

The Roaring Brook Corridor was a very active industrial village in the 1800’s. Many different products were manufactured in Leverett in 1838 including textiles (wool, fulled cloth, satinet, and flannel), scythes, shoes and boots, palm leaf hats, brooms, lumber and secondary wood products (turnings, pails, sash and doors). High levels of production of various goods in Leverett in 1838 illustrate the strong economic impact of industrial activity in Leverett at

this time (see Appendix D “Town of Leverett, MA Levels of Production in 1838”). Many visible remnants of its successful industrial history still exist, with a concentration of stonework showing the sites of 6 dams and about 10 mill sites all within less than a one-mile stretch of the river.

The dramatic change in elevation along this stretch that produced the water power to run these industries is still apparent. Mills and factories along the brook included box shops, grist mills, sawmills, wool and fulling mills, and a blacksmith shop (see Appendix B for drawn map of historic mills in the Roaring Brook Corridor). A turbine and dam foundation remain at the mill closest to Cushman Road that was a “Turnings Mill”, used to produce round wood on a lathe for specialized wood products such as spokes and furniture. The blacksmith shop and the wool mill at the intersection of Miller’s Road are now private residences and have been very well-maintained. A large tannery was located upstream, which tanned about 1,600 hides per year. The tannery shared a pond, dam and canal with a blacksmith shop on the opposite bank. The large stone foundation of the tannery is still intact along with remains of the dam, canal and pond that were constructed to power it.



Ebenezer Nutting House on south end of Roaring Brook Corridor

Historic homes are also visible along the river, showing how the mills influenced settlement patterns. The Ebenezer Nutting House, built in 1806, is located on Still Corner Road at the south end of the corridor. The second floor of the house was once used to produce cards for carding wool. On the corner of Shutesbury Road and Cushman Road there is an old one-room schoolhouse, and what was once a boarding house for mill

workers, which are both now private residences. Well-maintained historic homes are also located along Shutesbury Road in close proximity to the mills. What was once a bustling hub of industrial activity in East Leverett is a quiet, rural residential neighborhood today.

Opportunities:

- The Roaring Brook Corridor provides stunning views of the falling water of the brook as one walks along its edge and it increases in elevation.
- Many stone foundations of mills, dams and structures still exist within the corridor, representing the industrial heritage of East Leverett.
- The Leverett Historical Commission is developing an Industrial Leverett brochure to inform town residents and visitors of the town's industrial past.
- The property that includes many of the dams on the southern portion of the Roaring Brook is currently on the market. This may give the Town the opportunity to use CPA funds to purchase a portion of this property along the river or to work with the new landowners to place a conservation restriction on the property along the river, which might allow public access.

Issues:

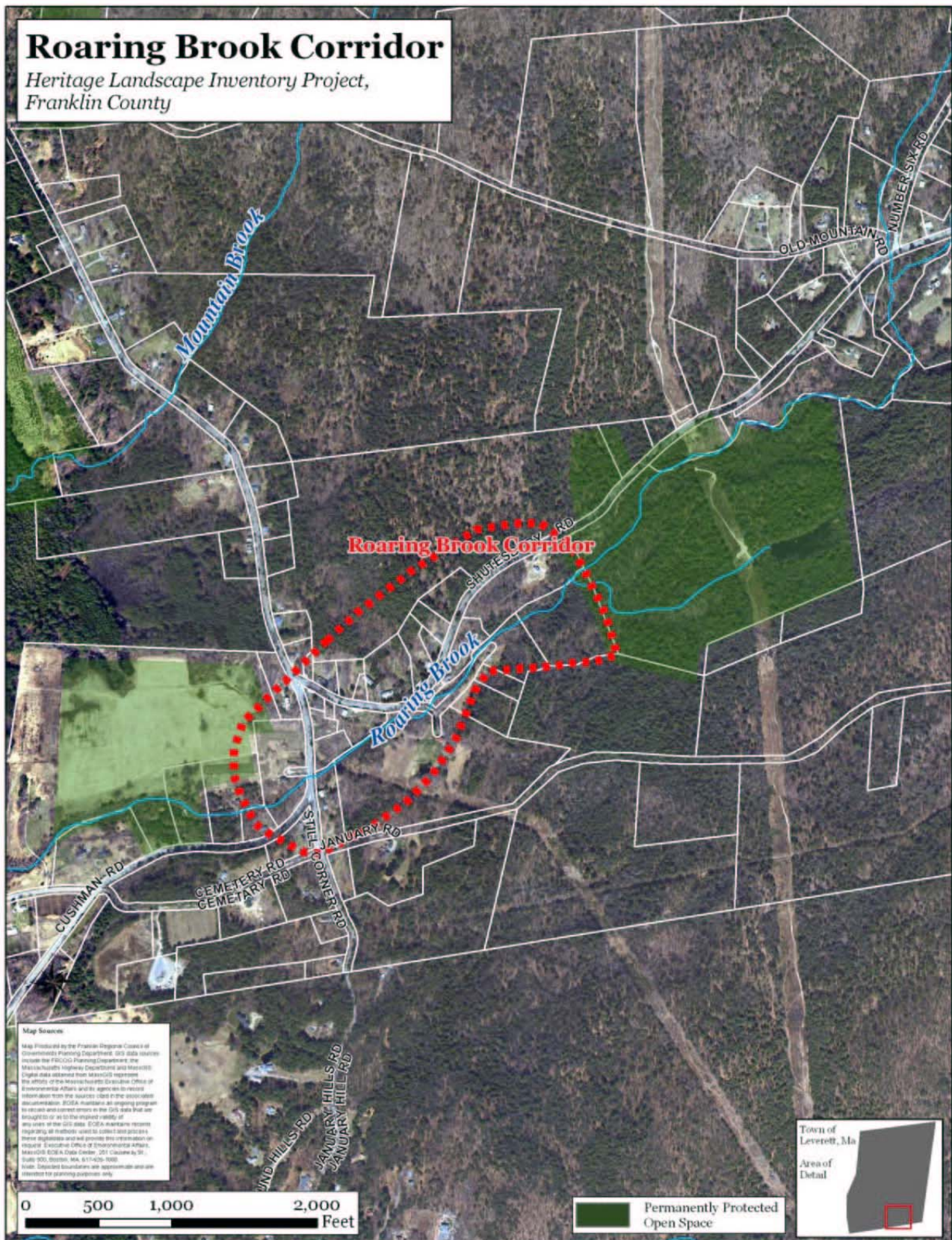
- The brook and mill sites are not easily viewed from Cushman Road or Shutesbury Road.
- Property along Roaring Brook Corridor that contains many resources is in private ownership, not publicly accessible and is currently on the market, so future plans for this property are uncertain.
- Most area residents are not aware of the Roaring Brook Corridor or its industrial history.
- Due to the drop in elevation, there are public safety issues that need to be addressed if public access is to be developed, including railings and walkways.

Recommendations:

1. The Historic Commission should continue development of an “Industrial Leverett” brochure about the industrial history of the Roaring Brook Corridor to inform residents and visitors about the historical significance of this area.
2. The Town should consider purchasing the land along the southern portion of the Roaring Brook, possibly tapping into CPA funds, in order to ensure its future stewardship. The Town could reach out to nearby vocational schools or other community groups to see if they are willing to provide volunteer efforts to reduce the cost of necessary public safety improvements if they acquire the land and want to provide safe access.
3. If the Town is not interested or able to purchase the property, new landowners should work with a local land trust to consider the following two options to protect their land: a) placing their property under the state Chapter 61B program as a temporary protection option for the land to receive tax benefits or b) placing a conservation restriction (CR) on their land. A CR is a permanent deed restriction between a landowner and a holder - usually a public agency or a private land trust - whereby the grantor agrees to limit the use of his/her property for the purpose of protecting certain conservation values in exchange for tax benefits, and could provide for public access to a portion of the property. Land trusts are non-profit organizations dedicated to protecting open space that acquire land outright or hold conservation restrictions that were either purchased from or donated by the landowner. Land trusts that work in the area include the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, the Kestrel Trust, and the Franklin Land Trust.
4. The Town should consider conducting an archaeology survey and/or prepare an archaeology plan for the foundations of the old mills within the Roaring Brook Corridor. An important first step in the protection of archaeological sites is conducting a professional reconnaissance survey of resources along the Roaring Brook Corridor. Protection of archaeological sites can occur through a number of different strategies and mechanisms. An archaeological resource protection plan would recommend steps for preservation.



Wool Mill site on Roaring Brook



Mitchell Farm

Mitchell Farm consists of 152 acres and is located at 72 Teawaddle Hill Road in south central Leverett. Current farm operations include the production of hay, maple syrup and cattle. This family farm has been recognized by town residents as important to the Town as an Agricultural Heritage Landscape for multiple values including its contribution to the local economy, its historic and current significance as a working agricultural landscape, its provision of wildlife habitat, as well as the scenic view that it provides to residents and visitors traveling down Teawaddle Hill Road. The property is in private ownership by a family trust and is temporarily protected under both the state Chapter 61 and Chapter 61A programs. Chapter 61A requires towns to reduce assessments on farm property in return for the landowners keeping their land in active agricultural production and Chapter 61 does the same for forested land. Development pressure is a threat to this property if family members are not able to continue agricultural production on the property in the future.



Mitchell Farm land



Barn at Mitchell Farm

Opportunities:

- Farmland is temporarily protected under Chapter 61 and Chapter 61A programs, giving the Town of Leverett the right of first refusal if the property is to be converted to a different use.
- Mitchell Farm provides many benefits to the community as an active farm, including economic impacts on the local and regional economy, scenic views and the provision of wildlife habitat.
- The location of the farm is adjacent to the East Leverett Meadow, an area noted as a heritage landscape by community residents, which provides contiguous open space.

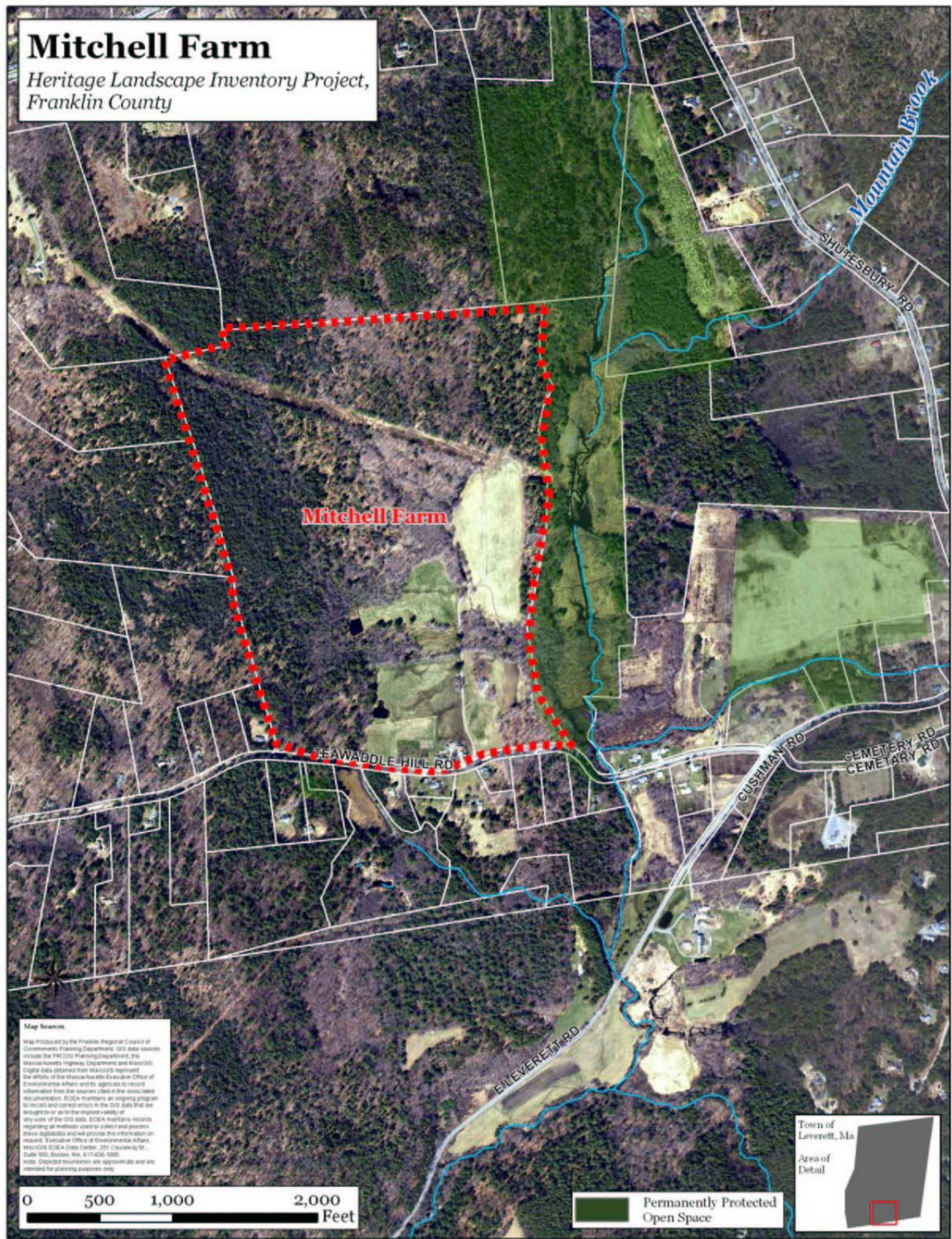
Issues:

- Development pressure is a threat to this property if family members are not able to continue agricultural production on the property in the future.

- Long-term sustainability of many small family farms is a challenge with rising production costs and maintenance needs for farm infrastructure and equipment.
- This farm is a significant resource to the town, and the community is concerned about keeping it in agricultural use in the future.

Recommendations:

1. It is recommended that landowners apply to the Farm Viability Enhancement Program under the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources. This program seeks to improve the economic viability and environmental integrity of participating farms through the development and implementation of farm viability plans. The program offers farmers environmental, technical and business planning assistance to expand, upgrade and modernize their existing operations. Capital for the implementation of the improvements recommended in the viability plan is available in exchange for an agricultural covenant on the farm property for a fixed term of five or ten years.
2. If this property comes on the market in the future to be sold for residential, commercial or industrial purposes, the Town will have the right of first refusal option on the land because the land is enrolled in the Chapter 61 program. This provision provides the town with the opportunity to match a fair market value offer for the property or to transfer the right to a public agency or conservation organization in order to protect this property. If this occurs, it is recommended that the Town consider exercising its right or transferring the right to a local land trust or the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources in order to place an APR or conservation restriction on the property.
3. It is recommended that landowners work with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources or the Franklin Land Trust to consider placing an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) on the property to permanently protect the land, and help keep the land in agricultural use in the future. An APR is a voluntary program which is intended to offer a non-development alternative to farmers and other owners of "prime" and "state important" agricultural land who are faced with a decision regarding future use and disposition of their farms. Towards this end, the program offers to pay farmland owners the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of their farmland in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability.



Brushy Mountain Archaeological Sites

Brushy Mountain is a large geographic area that is currently owned primarily by one private landowner, a local forest products company. Currently a primarily wooded area, there are several archaeological resources primarily located along the old Brushy Mountain Road bed and within the northeast section of the mountain. These resources serve as significant remnants of activity that took place at this area over time. Stone foundations and cellar holes of barns and homes from the late eighteenth through the mid-nineteenth century are located alongside the bed of Brushy Mountain Road in a concentrated area near the top of the mountain. These include remnants of the homes of Jonathan Glazier, Mason Pike, Aaron Pike and Joshua Hemenway. Other stone features are found in this area as well. This area was identified by the community as a special place in Leverett, in part because the archaeological resources and features represent broad patterns of history and the cultural significance of this area.



Stone structure within Brushy Mountain

Opportunities:

- Community members have identified this area on the northeast side of Brushy Mountain as special and important by identifying it as a Priority Heritage Landscape in Leverett based on its cultural value.
- The landowner has been sensitive to the historical and cultural significance of the area and is considering placing a conservation restriction on land within Brushy Mountain, which would offer long-term protection of the land from

development, and an opportunity for the landowner to officially prohibit uses which might conflict with the preservation of this area.

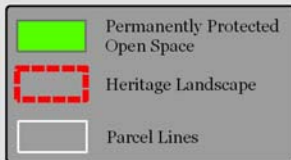
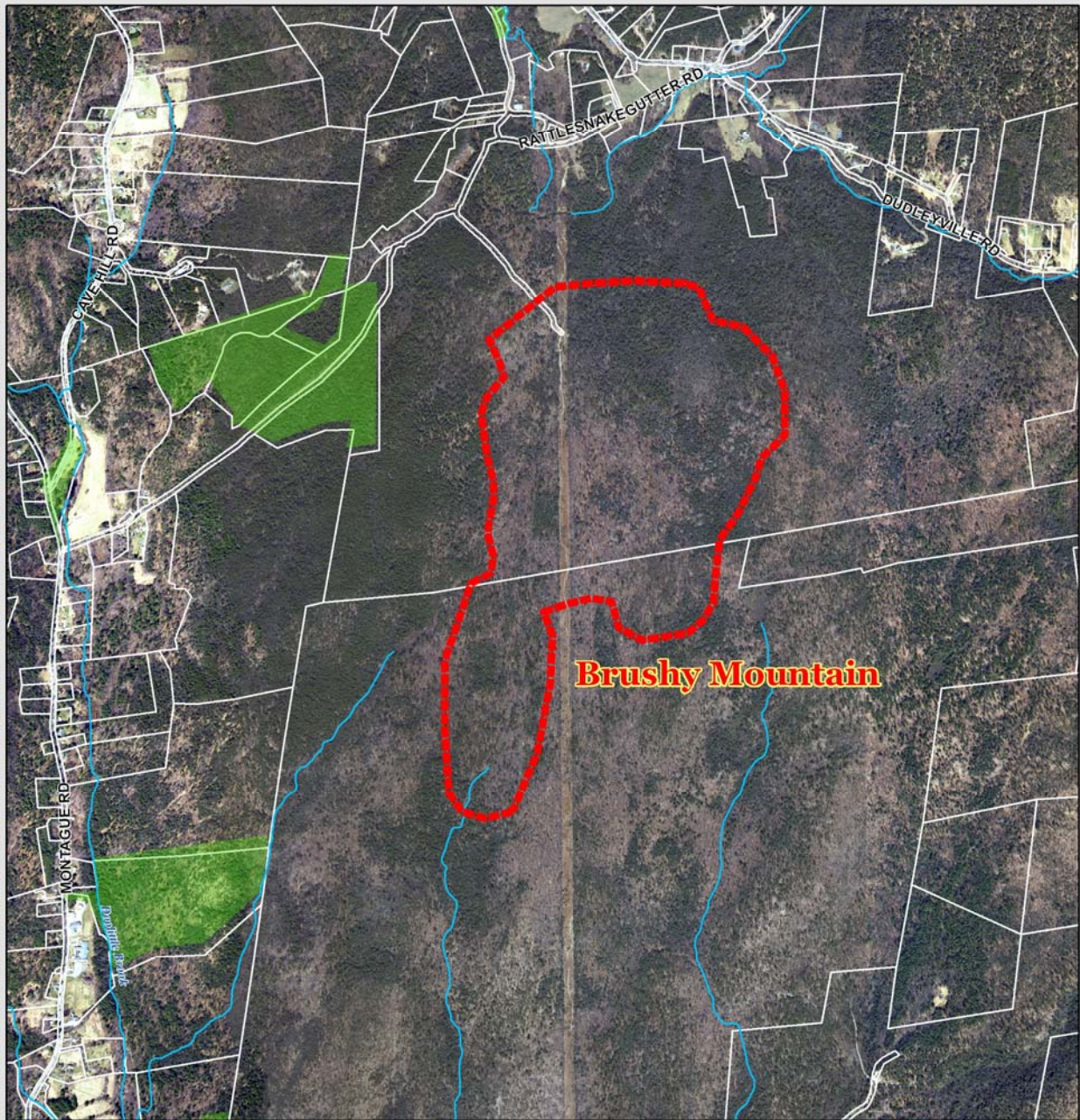
Issues:

- Brushy Mountain is in private ownership and stewardship responsibilities for the archaeological sites are the responsibility of the landowner. The land is utilized for timber harvesting, but there is currently an informal agreement that harvesting will take place outside of a buffer around archaeological sites.
- The landowner currently allows public access on Brushy Mountain and is considering heritage tourism options appropriate for the area. However, there is some concern about how continued public access and recreational use of the area might impact the cultural resources of the area.

- Native Americans are interested in the area for its historical and cultural significance, and therefore the area should be given respect by all people.

Recommendations:

1. Landowner should consider having a professional archaeological reconnaissance survey conducted of the Brushy Mountain area for the development of an archaeological resource protection plan. This plan would document known archaeological resources and recommend steps for their preservation. The plan would also identify areas of high archaeological sensitivity and specify measures to take when working near these areas, so as to not disturb known or potential archaeological sites.
2. Landowners should continue to pursue placing a Conservation Restriction on Brushy Mountain. A Conservation Restriction (CR) is a legal agreement between a landowner and a conservation organization that permanently or for a stated period limits specified uses and development of the property to protect its natural and scenic features. The provisions of conservation restrictions will vary from situation to situation. Usually, the restriction prohibits development of the land on which a CR has been placed in perpetuity. However, some uses of the property, such as timber harvesting, are frequently permitted where they are consistent with the objectives of the parties. The sites with archaeological features on Brushy Mountain, including an appropriate buffer, could be specified as areas to be protected within the CR. A CR is considered a permanent form of protection for the land in that it is recorded like a deed that transfers to future owners of the property.
3. Another option that landowners may want to consider is to explore the possibility of a Preservation Restriction (PR) on certain and specific locations on the property to help protect the archaeological resources. A PR is a legal agreement between a property owner and a qualified restriction holding organization to assure continued preservation of resources for a term of years or in perpetuity. A PR restricts future changes in appearance or use through a deed restriction which transfers to future owners of the property. The strongest form of protection for the property and the natural and cultural resources that it contains would be to place both a conservation restriction and preservation restrictions on the property.
4. The town should familiarize itself with DCR's publication *Terra Firma # 5, Stones That Speak: Forgotten Features of the Landscape*, which is available as a pdf on their website <http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/Inventoryprog.htm>

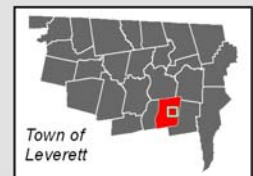


0 1,100 2,200 Feet



Brushy Mountain

Town of Leverett, Massachusetts,
Heritage Landscape Inventory Project,
Franklin County



Map Sources:

Franklin Regional Council of Governments, 2009.
Massachusetts Executive Office of Transportation, Massachusetts Highway Department
and the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and the Environment, MassGIS.

Funding:

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

PART II: PLANNING FOR HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

As our communities undergo rapid land use changes, heritage landscapes are particularly threatened because they are often taken for granted. There is a broad variety of resources that communities can call upon to protect these irreplaceable landscapes. See the Community Planning Checklist in this section for a review of the tools that Leverett already has in place, tools that are currently in process, as well as recommended actions for the future. The measures already in place for Leverett provide a strong foundation for heritage landscape preservation. Additional measures that have been identified in Part I specifically for Leverett's Priority Heritage Landscapes in combination with some additional community strategies in the following text will aid in the development of a holistic preservation planning strategy. Terra Firma #7 - Taking Action: A Toolkit for Protecting Community Character (2009) should be referred to for a more complete description of available planning tools and preservation measures as the Town moves forward to implement recommended actions.

INVENTORY AND DOCUMENTATION

1. Massachusetts Historical Commission Records

We cannot advocate for something until we clearly identify it, which in this case are the physical characteristics and historical development of the town's historic and archeological resources. The necessary first step is to record information about the resources at the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The MHC's 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 the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), is now available online at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc>

Current Listings: Leverett's MHC inventory documents 191 cultural resources from the mid-18th century to the 20th century, ranging from homes to civic buildings to mills. Many Priority Heritage Landscapes identified by the community are on this list, including the Leverett Center National Register District and many surrounding buildings and sites including the Field Tavern, the Beaman and Marvel Box Shop, the First Congregational Church of Leverett, the Town Hall, the U.S. Post Office, the Emerson Memorial Stone Garden, the Bradford M. Field Memorial Library, and the Town Pound. Many historic homes in Leverett Center are also on the MHC listing including the Josiah Dewey House, the Reverend Henry Williams House, and the Elijah Graves House as well as many others on Montague Road, and the First Congregational Church Parsonage and Solomon Gould House on Depot Road.

Moore's Corner Cemetery, Moore's Corner, and homes located in the Moore's Corner area within the Sawmill River Corridor Priority Heritage Landscape area are also listed on the MHC Inventory including the Leverett District #9 Schoolhouse, John Wesley Watson Grist Mill, John Wesley Watson House, Colister Leonard House, John Hunt House, and Newel Hunt House.

Many mills and historic homes in the Sawmill River Corridor Priority Heritage Landscape are also recognized on the MHC Listing such as the Joseph Slarrow and Associates Sawmill (North Leverett Sawmill), the Stephen Graves Pail Shop, the Stephen Graves House, the Daniel Graves Jr. House, the Old Bucket Shop, the Moore's Corner Cemetery and Rattlesnake Gutter Tomb, the Howard Family Charcoal Kiln and the Richard Montague House, among many others.

In East Leverett, three homes on Still Corner Road are listed on the MHC Inventory: The Paris Childs House (1790), the George Moore House (1845) and the Sarah Boynton House (1806).

Recommendations: A comprehensive survey should be completed for historic mill sites within the community. Funding assistance for this effort may be available from the MHC Survey and Planning grants, as well as from Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding. The Leverett Historical Commission should assess the MHC listings to determine if there are significant cultural resources not included. It is recommended that the inventory be updated to include properties built up to the year 1967. Converting listings to digital form is also recommended. Residences that were once the wool mill and the blacksmith shop at the intersection of Roaring Brook and Miller's Road are examples of historic resources that could be considered by the Leverett Historical Commission as a possibility for the MHC listing.

2. National and State Register Listing

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) 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. Listing brings a number of benefits including recognition, consideration when federally-or state-funded projects may impact the resource, eligibility for tax credits, and qualification for certain grant programs. Resources on the National Register are automatically added to the State Register of Historic Places.

Current Listings: The Leverett Center Historic District was listed with the National Register of Historic Places in December of 2008 and extends for approximately 2 miles in a north-south direction along Depot and Montague Roads, from 111 Amherst Road and 94 Depot Road (at Four Corners) to 95 Montague Road (including the school and new safety complex). The district includes 46 contributing properties and 51 non-contributing properties for a total of 467 acres. An application is currently under review for the Joseph Slarrow and Associates Sawmill (North Leverett Sawmill) as an individual listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Recommended Listings:

The Leverett Historical Commission (LHC) should consider working with MHC to place the Glazier House on the corner of Coke Kiln Road and North Leverett Road, one of the oldest houses in Leverett, on the National Register of Historic Places. The Town should consider nominating Moores Corner a to the National Register as a district, with boundaries to be determined by the LHC and consider a Local Historic District for Leverett Center.

3. Heritage Landscape Inventory List from Local Identification Meeting

Each town involved in the Connecticut River Valley Heritage Landscape Inventory held a local identification meeting to solicit input from a range of community members to identify potential heritage landscapes throughout the town. The lists were prioritized by the community, with help from the consultants, to create a list of six Priority areas, which were described in Part I of this report. The complete list of the 42 heritage landscapes identified at the meeting is included as Appendix A of this report and provides a sound resource list for future documentation activities and potential funding opportunities.

Leverett's meeting was held on November 20, 2008, with 27 community members present. The historic, vernacular, ethnographic and/or designed landscapes of the town were grouped into the following categories:

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

TOWNWIDE PLANNING AND ZONING TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

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

The following Community Planning Checklist provides an overview of planning and zoning that currently exists within the Town of Leverett, zoning changes currently underway, and recommendations for further actions.

COMMUNITY PLANNING CHECKLIST TOWN OF LEVERETT

SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED	BUILDING BLOCK	NOTES (Zoning Bylaw Section)
	Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND)	
	Transit Oriented Development (TOD)	
	Mixed Use Village Districts	
	Planned Unit Development (PUD)	
	Adaptive Reuse and Infill Development	
	Tax Incentive Programs and Business Improvement Districts	
✓	Open Space Residential Development	Flexible Development Bylaw *
✓	Accessory Apartments	
	Inclusionary Zoning	
✓	Home Based Business Bylaw	
	Brownfields Inventory	
	Brownfields Redevelopment Projects	
	Transfer of Development Rights	
✓	Agricultural Commissions	
✓	Right to Farm Bylaws	
✓	River Protection Overlay District	Stream and Lake Protection District
✓	Community Preservation Act	Adopted in 2002
✓	Scenic Upland Overlay District	Upper Elevation Site Plan Review
✓	Bike and Pedestrian Features	Extensive network of off-road walking and bicycling facilities (incl. Rattlesnake Gutter Rd.)
	Traffic Calming Measures	
✓	Water Supply Protection District	Aquifer Protection District
	Low Impact Development	
	Stormwater and Erosion Control Bylaw	
	Stormwater Utilities	
✓	Commercial Site Plan Review	All nonresidential or nonagricultural construction**
✓	Residential Site Plan Review	Flexible Developments and duplexes**
	Commercial Performance Standards	
	Urban Growth Boundaries / Limits of Sewer and Water Extensions	
	Green Building Standards	
✓	Municipally Owned Renewable Energy	Town Library (2003) has geo-thermal heating.
✓	Other Energy Efficiency Measures	ESCO Contract
	Smart Growth Zoning Districts (Ch. 40R)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Intergovernmental Compact	Pioneer Valley Clean Energy Plan MOA; police and fire mutual aid agreements
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic District (Local or National)	1 National District in place; 1 Individual Listing in process
✱	Demolition Delay Bylaw	
✓	Scenic Road Bylaw	Covers all public roads except Rte. 63
	Downtown Revitalization District	
✓ <input type="checkbox"/>	Phased Growth Bylaw	Rate of Development Bylaw (***, Subdivision Phasing
	Back Lot Development with Open Space Set-Aside	

SUCCESSFULLY IMPLEMENTED	BUILDING BLOCK	NOTES (Zoning Bylaw Section)
✓	Flag Lots	Rear Lots
✓	Flood Plain Overlay District	Flood Hazard District
✓	Other Overlay Districts	Rattlesnake Gutter Overlay District
✱	Wetlands Protection Bylaw	

*The Town of Leverett adopted extensive changes to its Zoning Bylaws at its Annual Town Meeting in April 2008 in part to update the Flexible Development section. The changes include switching from a Special Permit to a Site Plan Review process, allowing private individuals to retain ownership of the “Protected Open Space”, and to provide a density bonus where at least 10% of the dwelling units are affordable and count towards the requirements of Chapter 40B.

** Zoning Bylaws revisions passed at Annual Town Meeting in April 2008 updated the Site Plan Review section to clarify the application procedures and decision process of the Planning Board.

***The Rate of Development Bylaw began on January 1, 2003 and was originally planned to sunset in 5 years. The 2008 Zoning Bylaw update included extending the time frame an additional 3 years.

Town Planning Documents:

- Town of Leverett Community Development Plan (2004)
- Leverett Open Space and Recreation Plan (2005)

1. Comprehensive, Open Space and other Planning Documents

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

Current Plans: Leverett completed a Community Development Plan in 2004, which includes sections on open space and natural resources, housing, economic development and transportation. As part of this planning process public forums were held to learn what residents considered to be the Town’s primary assets and issues. From these forums and community feedback, the following vision was established for the Town: preserving Leverett’s beautiful rural, community character and unique neighborhoods; managing land use and population growth to protect the Town’s natural, historic, and scenic assets, and enhance people’s enjoyment of these resources; encouraging diverse housing opportunities for residents, including senior housing, cluster development, and accessory apartments, which can help improve housing affordability while also preserving open space and Leverett’s rural character; encouraging small-scale economic development to increase services for residents and enhance the character of the Town Center and neighborhood centers; managing the property tax rate and reducing the financial burden of increased taxes to seniors and residents with limited income; and fostering the participation of diverse interests in town affairs, and encouraging activities to strengthen the sense of community identity.

Leverett completed an Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) in 2004 that builds on the *Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Master Plan* that was released by the Town in 1990. To complete the OSRP, the Leverett Conservation Commission mailed surveys to residents and conducted a public meeting to solicit public opinion in four broad categories: (1) preserve the rural character of the town; (2) protect and preserve natural resources; (3) improve public education concerning open space; and (4) provide wider recreational uses of the town's natural resources. The 2004 *Leverett Open Space and Recreation Plan* summarizes the information about the natural and cultural resources of the town, reviews the concerns and desires of citizens who responded during the planning process, and outlines specific objectives for each of the four main goals along with a five-year action plan outlining steps for accomplishing these objectives.

Recommended Plans: Comprehensive or Master Plans provide an important frame of reference for land use decisions, and incorporate all of the community's issues including economic development, housing and transportation into an integrated plan. Heritage Landscapes need to be considered as the town uses these plans to move forward with implementation efforts related to community character, historic preservation, environmental health, and economic viability and growth. Their future and the values they contribute should be addressed within these multiple perspectives, not solely as historical assets of the community. It is recommended that Leverett undertake the completion of a Master Plan.

2. Zoning Bylaws and Ordinances

Current Zoning Bylaws and Ordinances: Revisions to Leverett's zoning bylaws were approved by Town Meeting in April of 2008. Objectives of the Planning Board in making these changes include: protect the rural character of Leverett, promote better designed development that will help protect water quality and natural resources, encourage the provision of affordable housing, support working forests and farms, and avoid impacting Approval Not Required (ANR) lots. Bylaw revisions specify the five following districts within the Town: General Business, Commercial, Residential/Village, Rural Residential, and Rural Outlying Residential. The new Rural Outlying Residential district has a minimum lot size of 200,000 square feet (approximately 4.6 acres) and 400 feet of frontage. Within this district, developers must submit a "Flexible Development Plan" for subdivisions (not ANR lots) under a Site Review process, unless they are using the existing Alternative Procedures Plan under Leverett's Subdivision Regulations for small scale subdivisions (3 to 6 lots). The minimum lot sizes and frontage requirements for Flexible Developments are reduced to 60,000 square feet (approximately 1.4 acres) and 200 feet respectively for single family homes and at least 50% of the parcel must be permanently protected for purposes such as forestry, farming, passive recreation, water quality protection, or provision of wildlife habitat. This new approach should greatly assist in the preservation of heritage landscapes.

Additional overlay districts exist within the Town including a Stream and Lake Protection District, a Flood Hazard District, an Aquifer Protection District. There is also an Upper Elevation Site Plan Review process in place. The Town designated all public roads, except Route 63, as scenic roads under authority of the Massachusetts Scenic Roads Act, General Laws Chapter 40, Section 15C.

Recommended Bylaws:

Demolition Delay Bylaw - It is recommended that the Town and its Historic Commission work with the MHC to develop a Demolition Delay Bylaw that would suit the town. The Town could work with municipal boards and residents to publicize the advantages of a Demolition Delay Bylaw to the community. Demolition Delay bylaws provide a time period in which towns can consider alternatives to demolition of historic buildings and structures. The most common delay of demolition is six months; however many communities are finding that a one-year delay is more effective. A demolition delay bylaw requires a majority vote of Town Meeting. This historic preservation tool will be invaluable throughout the town to protect historic resources in Leverett Center, the Sawmill River Corridor and the Roaring Brook Corridor Priority Heritage Landscapes including 18th century mill sites, historic homes and general historic character.

Local Historic District – The town should establish a Local Historic District Study Committee to explore designating Leverett Center as a local historic district, the strongest form of protection for the preservation of historic resources. This designation, adopted by a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting, would preserve and protect the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places and would be administered by a local district commission appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The committee may also decide to explore local historic district designations for other areas within town.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Outreach, Education and Interpretation

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

Collaboration

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

Technical Assistance

Regulations and creative solutions for heritage landscapes are constantly changing and emerging. Public and private agencies offer technical assistance with the many issues to be addressed, including Department of Conservation and Recreation, Massachusetts Historic Commission, and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments.

Funding Opportunities

Funding rarely comes from a single source, more often depending on collaborative underwriting by private, municipal, and regional sources. Each town also has a variety of funding sources that are locally-based and sometimes site-specific. As a CPA community, these funds are a valuable resource for Leverett for many of the recommendations within this report.

CONCLUSION

The Heritage Landscape Reconnaissance Report for Leverett provides an initial preservation-planning document that identifies Priority Heritage Landscapes and discusses strategies for their long-term protection. Leverett contains a rich diversity of heritage landscape types ranging from the historic town center to mill sites and family farms. These landscapes reflect the strong history and character of the community and are tangible pieces of the Leverett story.

This report provides a starting point for preservation strategies but the heritage landscapes identified, especially the Priority Heritage Landscapes, will need additional research and documentation including the preparation of additional MHC inventory forms and survey work. The information provided and further research will allow for better consensus building and the support of the broader community in order to successfully implement the recommendations for these landscapes. Ultimately, implementation of the recommendations will likely require a collaboration of local boards and commissions, regional and state agencies and non-profit entities.

Many in Leverett are already moving forward with a variety of initiatives and projects that advance the celebration and preservation of its heritage landscapes. Leverett completed a Community Development Plan in 2004, which includes sections on open space and natural resources, housing, economic development and transportation and identifies a vision for the Town based on community feedback. The Conservation Commission also completed an updated Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2004 based on community input about natural and cultural resources of the town. The Community Preservation Act (CPA) was adopted in 2002, creating a local funding source that can be used to help preserve open space and historic sites.

Distribution of this Reconnaissance Report to various municipal boards and commissions involved in making land use decisions will assist Leverett with an overall strategy for the

preservation of its community's character. The breadth of action steps outlined in this document will require a cooperative effort and a variety of local groups to take the lead on implementation. Some recommendations for heritage landscape preservation within this report are customized for particular Priority Heritage Landscapes and others address townwide planning and preservation techniques that will strengthen the efforts that the Town already has accomplished. This report should be used in conjunction with Terra Firma #7 - Taking Action: A Toolkit for Protecting Community Character (2009), which provides more detail about specific tools available.

The top 3 recommendations for the town to focus on in the short-term are: 1) Town and Leverett Historical Commission work with the Massachusetts Historical Commission to develop a Demolition Delay Bylaw that would suit the town; 2) landowners work with the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources or the Franklin Land Trust to consider placing an Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) on the Mitchell Farm property to permanently protect the land, and help keep the land in agricultural use in the future; 3) The Leverett Historical Commission and Leverett Historical Society should work together to Pursue National Register District designation for Moores Corner in North Leverett.

Dissemination of information about the community's heritage landscape resources to the general public is also an important tool for increasing awareness and support for protection of these landscapes. This report provides an important step for Leverett's preservation planning program and can provide the foundation for future historic preservation, conservation and recreation planning activities. The commitment of the citizens of Leverett to their heritage is apparent in the historic landscape character and fabric that makes Leverett the beautiful and peaceful place it is.

RESOURCES:

A History of Leverett Massachusetts 1774 – 1974. Leverett Bicentennial Committee, 1974.

Community Preservation Coalition. <http://www.communitypreservation.com>

Heritage Landscape Inventory Program. Department of Conservation and Recreation.
<http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/histland/Inventoryprog.htm>

Reading the Land: Massachusetts Heritage Landscapes: A Guide to Identification and Protection. Department of Conservation and Recreation, 2004.

Translations: The First Chapter of the Heritage Landscape Inventory Program.
Department of Conservation and Recreation, 2008.

Terra Firma: Putting Historic Preservation on Solid Ground, Taking Action: A Toolkit for Protection Community Character. Department of Conservation and Recreation, 2008.

Leverett Massachusetts Historical Center Historical and Architectural Tour, 2004.

Management Plan for Leverett Pond, Friends of Leverett Pond Association.
<http://www.unix.oit.umass.edu/~jmfield/index.htm>

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS).
<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc>

Massachusetts Department of Agriculture. <http://www.mass.gov/agr/programs/index.htm>

Massachusetts Historic Commission Reconnaissance Survey. Town Report, Leverett, 1982.

National Register of Historic Places (National Park Service).
<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/research/nris.htm>

Town of Leverett Community Development Plan, 2004.

Town of Leverett Open Space and Recreation Plan, 2004.

Town of Leverett, Massachusetts Levels of Production in 1838 as reported in Conditions and Products of Industry in Massachusetts by Bigelow.

APPENDIX A: LEVERETT HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Note: Landscapes marked with an asterisk (*) have been designated “Priority Heritage Landscapes” by the town.

LANDSCAPE NAME	NOTES
Agricultural	
<i>Farms on both sides of Long Plain</i>	Route 63
<i>*Mitchell Farm</i>	Teawaddle Hill Road
<i>Barns and Outbuildings</i>	Throughout town
Archaeological	
<i>*Brushy Mountain</i>	Stone features and potential archaeological sites
Cemetery	
<i>Toby Cemetery</i>	
<i>Depot Road Cemetery</i>	Depot Road
<i>Marvel Cemetery</i>	Jackson Hill Road
<i>Jackson Hill Road Cemetery</i>	Oldest cemetery in town
<i>Mount Hope Cemetery</i>	Chestnut Hill Road
<i>Skerry Road Cemetery</i>	Skerry Road
Civic	
<i>*Town Center</i>	National Register Historic District (Dec 2008)
<i>*Leverett Pond and Dam</i>	Located in Leverett Center; cared for by the Friends of the Leverett Pond and town-appointed Pond Committee; also Natural Resources
<i>*Leverett Crafts and Arts</i>	The Beaman Marvel Boxshop building; also Commercial
<i>*Town Hall</i>	
<i>*Congregational Church</i>	
<i>*Historic homes</i>	Also Residential
<i>*Bradford M. Field Library</i>	Currently town-owned
Commercial	
<i>Field Family Sugar House</i>	Agricultural heritage landscape
<i>Leverett Coop</i>	Former foundation of Dexter Moore barn
Historical	
<i>Rat Hollow Road</i>	
<i>Still on Still Corner Road</i>	
<i>Town Pound</i>	Town Center

<i>*Poor Farm</i>	Top of Cave Hill Road; across from Peace Pagoda
Industrial	
<i>*East Leverett Mill Sites/Roaring Brook Corridor</i>	Mills, housing, schoolhouse
<i>Charcoal Kilns</i>	North Leverett (one remaining intact within Sawmill River Corridor Priority Heritage Landscape)
<i>*Sawmill River Corridor</i>	Mill sites, dams
<i>*Rattlesnake Gutter bridge and mill site</i>	
<i>*Moore's Corner Cemetery</i>	Rattlesnake Gutter Road (part of Sawmill Corridor Priority Heritage Landscape); also Cemetery
<i>*Moore's Corner Schoolhouse</i>	North Leverett Road; Owned by the Leverett Historical Society; also Institutional
Institutional	
<i>*Peace Pagoda</i>	Japanese temple on Cave Hill Road
Natural Resources	
<i>Rattlesnake Gutter</i>	Road and surrounding area protected by Rattlesnake Gutter Trust
<i>East Leverett Meadow</i>	Teawaddle Hill Road – Cushman Road; partially owned by Rattlesnake Gutter Trust
<i>View of Bull Hill from Amherst Road</i>	
<i>State Forest</i>	Mount Tobey off of Route 63
<i>Maple Trees on Amherst Road</i>	Trees may be in the right-of way and scenic roads bylaw would apply
Open Space/Recreational	
<i>Robert Frost Trail</i>	47 mile multi-town hiking trail, a portion of which goes through south Leverett
<i>Recreational trails within Brushy Mountain</i>	
Residential	
<i>Graves Family homes</i>	North Leverett - historic
<i>Glazier House</i>	North Leverett Road - historic
<i>Field Tavern</i>	Part of Leverett Center
<i>Richard Montague House & Tavern</i>	Hemenway Road and Cave Hill Road
Transportation	
<i>Dirt roads</i>	Throughout town
<i>Local scenic roads</i>	With stone walls, trees; all in town except for Rt. 63 which is covered by the scenic roads bylaw
<i>Lancaster Cart Road</i>	Scenic views

APPENDIX B: ROARING BROOK CORRIDOR

