

Chapter Nine

Cultural and Historic Resources

Introduction

The rich history of the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission region goes as far back as the 17th century. From barns, farmlands and meandering stone walls, to bridges, dams, and massive millworks, the area's history is captured in those remnants. Through preservation we can tell stories of the past while ensuring resources are available for the future.

The SNHPC region's history can be generally described in terms of economic pursuits. In the 18th century, the region's residents pursued farming, fishing, and timber trades. The Merrimack River provided rich farmlands along its banks, a plentiful fishery, and access to the ocean and European markets for timber.

The SNHPC region's towns were all first settled in the early to mid-18th century. As settlements spread outwards from the Seacoast, tensions between early settlers and Native Americans increased and a number of wars broke out. The towns that were settled before 1740 experienced the violence associated with displacing the Native Americans. These towns included Londonderry, Chester, Manchester, Raymond, and Bedford.

The Town of Londonderry was first settled as Nutfield, in 1719 by Scottish-Irish immigrants. This original land grant included present-day Derry, parts of Windham, Manchester, Salem, and Hudson. The town was re-named Londonderry in 1722 and incorporated in 1740. In 1827, the Town of Derry was incorporated and separated from Londonderry.

The Town of Chester, incorporated in 1722, was one of the earliest settlement grants to accommodate Seacoast area growth. Auburn, Candia, and Hooksett, part of the original Chester land grant, were eventually cleaved off to form the towns we know today. Auburn was first settled in 1734 and incorporated in 1845. Candia was first settled in 1748 and incorporated in 1763. Hooksett was the first settled in 1749 and was not incorporated until 1822, despite having been called Hooksett for the previous 50 years.

The land area that became the City of Manchester was originally granted by Massachusetts in 1722 and encompassed land granted by New Hampshire to the towns of Chester and Londonderry in the same year. This happened often until King George settled the boundary dispute between Massachusetts and New Hampshire in 1740. Called Harrytown, Old Harrytown, and Tyngstown, it was incorporated in 1751 as the town of Derryfield. In 1810, it was renamed Manchester and was incorporated as a city in 1846.

The Town of Raymond was first settled in 1725 as a parish of Chester. It was called Freetown initially and was incorporated in 1764. The Town of Bedford was first granted in 1730 to soldiers who fought against the Narragansett Indians in Rhode Island. Originally called Narragansett No. 5, it was incorporated in 1750 as Bedford.

The Town of New Boston was first settled in 1742 and was called Lanestown. It was re-granted in 1748 to families from Londonderry, and was incorporated in 1763. The Town of Goffstown was originally established as Narragansett No. 4 by Massachusetts. It was re-granted in 1748 by New Hampshire, re-named Goffstown, and incorporated in 1761. The Town of Weare was granted to soldiers of the Canadian wars in 1735 by Massachusetts and called Beverly-Canada. The town has also been known as Halestown, Robiestown, and Wearestown. It was incorporated as Weare in 1764. The Town of Deerfield was first settled in 1756 as a parish of Nottingham. Despite being one of the last towns to be settled, it was incorporated in 1766 prior to other towns.

Due to the North-South flow of the major rivers in the state, communication with Boston was more likely and easier than with Portsmouth, the provincial capital. This familiarity caused New Hampshire to play an important role in the events of the Revolutionary War and the subsequent formation of the new Republic. Troops from New Hampshire fought in the Battles of Bunker Hill and Lexington and Concord. New Hampshire was also the first to draft a state constitution, instruct their delegates to vote for independence at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia, and the ninth and deciding state to ratify the new U.S. constitution in 1788.

The 19th century brought a transition to textile manufacturing and the boom of the mill towns. Situated along the Merrimack River, the SNHPC region, particularly Manchester, was an international center for mill technology. The rise of manufacturing and westward national expansion resulted in a decline in farming pursuits in New Hampshire during this time. The textile boom brought in an influx of immigrants to the Manchester area. By the beginning of the 20th century, the percentage of foreign-born residents in New Hampshire was higher than the national average, a fact that remains true today.

New Hampshire was a dominant player in the manufacturing trade at the beginning of the 20th century, but at the end of World War I, New Hampshire's hegemony of the textile mill industry began to decline and continued through the depression of the 1930s. Manufacturing pursuits shifted to shoes and electronics, while smaller towns took advantage of the New Hampshire scenery and began to promote themselves as tourist destinations. The mid-20th century saw continuing declines in economic growth, but by the 1960s efforts to attract businesses, combined with the urban sprawl of Boston, transitioned New Hampshire into one of the fastest growing states in the Northeast.¹

Preserving this historic legacy can be a challenge amid current and projected population and economic growth trends in Southern New Hampshire. Local communities can work together with regional, state and federal agencies to accomplish successful preservation. The establishment of a historical society, historic district commission, or heritage commission is an important first step in the preservation process which Manchester and all of the towns have done. Once established, these committees can serve as advisors for planning boards and can help facilitate the listing of properties on various national and

¹ www.nh.gov/markers/brief.html

state registers. These registers raise awareness of the importance and value of historic preservation and can foster civic pride.

Overall Goal

Actively preserve the region's historic and cultural resources so that we keep our local history alive and our communities can retain their historic and cultural qualities.

Public Survey Results

The Cultural and Historic Resources Survey was designed to gauge the effectiveness of cultural and historic preservation efforts and to offer potential solutions moving forward. Thirty-four respondents replied to the 12-question survey, posted on the SNHPC website between September 7, 2009 and November 6, 2010. Most SNHPC region communities participated in the survey, with Weare and Derry supporting the highest participation rates (comprising 32 percent of the survey sample). The communities of Auburn, Goffstown and New Boston did not participate.

- Locally, many respondents indicated that historic societies and heritage commissions had been formed in their communities and that historic preservation and outreach efforts were a significant local priority.
- However, a number of respondents indicated that they were unfamiliar with what historic preservation guidelines, ordinances, and outreach efforts (if any) their communities had enacted.
- Thirty-nine percent of those surveyed indicated that they believed their towns would take advantage of the National Historic Landscapes Initiative as part of their conservation plans, sixteen percent felt that their town would not, while forty-five percent expressed that they were unsure.
- 57 percent indicated that they were unsure if their town had completed a Historic Resources Inventory (17 percent said that they had, while 27 percent said they had not).
- Out of those preservation programs that received comments the Manchester Historic Association received some good marks (3 rating on a scale of 5) as well as the state's Land Community Heritage & Investment Program (2.84 rating).
- Gaining merit for the effectiveness of institutional measures to preserve historic structures, Historic District Overlay Zoning received the highest marks (3.3 rating), followed by Historic Preservation Easements (2.75 rating) and then Discretionary Preservation Easements/ Barn Preservation (2.53 rating).
- Among community preservation efforts, nearly 90 percent of those surveyed indicated that their town had formed a historic society, while 62 percent agreed that they had established a Heritage Commission. Forty-two percent pointed to

the establishment of a Historic District Commission in their communities while only eight percent noted the institution of a Certified Local Government Program.

- Responses to identify preservation tools already in place in their communities included; Adaptive re-use of historic structures (46 percent), consideration of historic districts (50 percent), National Register of Historic Places (55 percent), NH Register of Historic Places (64 percent), and the State Historic Markers Program (37 percent).
- Forty-six percent indicated that their towns had established design guidelines to assist in preserving historical character.
- A significant majority of respondents (approximately 62 percent) indicated they were unsure if their community had initiated a Historic Preservation Plan or become a Certified Local Government under the State Historic Preservation Office.

Historic Preservation Tools

"Preservation saves energy by taking advantage of the nonrecoverable energy embodied in an existing building and extending the use of it²"

The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission region is a rich and vibrant repository of cultural and historic resources. Many of these sites are being preserved and have designation from the local to the national level. Still, there are still many more cultural landmarks that the communities would like to see preserved.

To be successful, Historic preservation planning must be proactive in its preservation goals. There are a number of tools available to help communities with preservation efforts. These include, but are not limited to, landmark designation, zoning regulations, easements, grants, loans, and tax credits.

Historic Resources Survey and Inventory

The most important historic preservation-planning tool is the historic resources survey and inventory. Less than 25 percent of New Hampshire's communities have completed this step. The SNHPC has compiled a 'wish list' of properties in the region that are historically and culturally significant to its member communities as part of the 2004 New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services' Regional Environmental Planning Program. This list of Local Resource Protection Priorities, while providing a starting point, is by no means all-inclusive and cannot substitute for a detailed inventory. At the same time, in some cases, it is too inclusive and cannot substitute for a prioritized survey of the most important or endangered sites. A town-wide comprehensive survey and inventory can accomplish both of these aims. Once compiled, such a list can guide future planning decisions and provide a starting point for historical societies and heritage

² - Assessing the energy conservation benefits of historic preservation: Methods and Examples, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.

commissions in nominating decisions for the National and State Registers of Historic Places.

Historic District Overlay Zoning

Historic zoning or historic district overlay zoning is a tool for preservation. Typically, this type of zoning is a layer that is applied over the existing zoning regulations in designated historic districts. The heritage commission, historic district commission or a design review board reviews building permits and demolition requests within the district. In some cases, the heritage commission or historic district commission may only review demolition requests; while an independent design review board reviews permits. In either case, the efforts of the preservation groups and the zoning board need to be coordinated for best results, otherwise, problems can arise without coordination. For instance, zoning in historic districts could be incompatible with current uses, or there could be density, lot size, or off-street parking issues.

To determine the need for historic zoning overlays or revised zoning ordinances, communities should map historic districts, properties and landmarks, along with the boundaries of existing zoning ordinances to determine potential conflicts and areas of compatibility. Additionally, historic zoning ordinances may allow historic properties special exceptions for uses typically not permitted by the general zoning ordinance. One example is to allow historic residences, which can be large and expensive to maintain, to be used as office space or multi-family housing. Another consideration is the use of existing mill buildings for residential or commercial purposes. By providing for mixed uses in historical districts, communities can facilitate revitalization.

Another zoning tool is transfer of development rights (TDR). TDRs allow the development rights for low-density historic buildings, or the “air” above a historic building or site where zoning allows for more stories to be sold or transferred to another location where higher-density development is allowed or desired. Density bonuses can also be utilized to preserve open space with archeological potential.

Conditional zoning is a preservation tool in which zoning change requests are granted only if certain conditions are met. The conditions might be preservation of open space or built structures, among others. These zoning tools require a willingness to cooperate between zoning boards and preservation groups and knowledge of zoning regulations, potential historic and archeological areas in need of preservation, and development objectives.

Historic Preservation Easements

Historic preservation easements allow a property owner to grant a portion of the rights of the property to a group that commits to preservation. The property owner retains the right to sell the property, however all subsequent property owners forever relinquish the development, demolition, alteration, or other rights waived as part of the easement. Historic preservation is not inexpensive. Easements provide property owners with a mutually beneficial alternative. Not only does the property owner retain ownership, along with any potential financial benefits, but there is also the possibility of a federal tax

deduction. These benefits are balanced by the knowledge that the owner has contributed to the preservation of a historic or culturally significant place.

Owners can claim a federal tax deduction of the value of the easement up to 30 percent of their adjusted gross income. The balance of the easement tax benefit can be carried forward up to five years. The value of the easement, as determined by an appraiser, is typically the difference between the appraised fair market value of the property and the value with the easement in effect.

Properties must meet certain qualifications set by the IRS in order to qualify for tax benefits. To be eligible, properties must be on the National Register of Historic Places or be located within a historic district and certified by the U.S. Department of the Interior as historically significant to the district.³ Certification must come prior to the easement, or before the owner files a tax return for the year the easement was granted. Additionally, qualified properties must be accessible to the public. Depending on the nature of the site, this could mean as few as a couple of hours or days per year, or even the ability to view the site from a distance.

Historic preservation easements generally prohibit the destruction or alteration of the property without review and approval by the easement holder. Development and subdivision restrictions are also common. Additionally, some easements require the owner to maintain or restore the property to certain conditions. Historic preservation easements provide ownership of the property, thereby alleviating the financial burden of maintaining the property alone.

As of 2010, there were four organizations that provided historic preservation easements in New Hampshire. These include: the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, the Manchester Historic Association, the New Hampshire Land & Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), and the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance.⁴

Discretionary Preservation Easements

The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR) has recently been focusing on barn preservation. NHDHR, in conjunction with the New Hampshire Historic Agricultural Structures Advisory Committee, began a barn survey project in 1999. The survey attempts to catalog all existing barn structures in the state to assist in grant determinations and technical assistance.

New Hampshire state law also provides for the preservation of barns through RSA 79-D. This law allows municipalities to provide tax breaks to barn owners that meet certain requirements. The owners' barns must provide a public benefit with the preservation of their barn and agree to maintain the barn or structures throughout the minimum 10-year discretionary preservation easement. The barn owners are granted tax relief, enabling

³ For a description of historically important land areas, as defined by the IRS visit www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/easement.htm

⁴ For the full report, listing organizations by state visit <http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/download/easements.pdf>

them to repair and maintain their barns. The easement also provides that the town will not increase the assessed value after the repair work has been completed and tax relief can be equivalent to a 25 to 75 percent reduction of the structure's full-assessed value. To qualify as a "historic agricultural structure," the structures, including the land it was built on must be or have been used for agricultural purposes and also be at least 75 years old.⁵

Local Actions to Encourage Historic Preservation Efforts

There are different levels of local organization that can encourage historic preservation. The most basic level is the formation of a historical society. Historical societies can be organized by historic preservation minded individuals or the towns. It is important to note that historical societies can be formed with no affiliation with the municipality. New Hampshire RSA 673:4 and 673:4a allows communities to form historic district commissions (HDC) and heritage commissions (HC). Once formed, communities can vote to allow historic district commissions to take on the duties and responsibilities of a heritage commission and vice versa. Historic district commissions are concerned solely with historic districts. HDCs can regulate the appearance within a designated historic district, such as review building permits, site plan review applications, and demolition requests. Heritage commissions are non-regulatory bodies that focus on the entire town. The purpose of heritage commissions is to identify, preserve, protect, and enhance the historic character of the municipality. Considered the 'town's preservation experts,' heritage commissions are empowered to do surveys and advise planning boards on preservation issues.

According to RSA 674:45, historic districts are designed to showcase the cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history of an area, while conserving property values, fostering civic beauty, and strengthening the local economy.⁶ Historic district commissions can assist local planning boards with technical and historic advice. The citizens of the municipality generally formulate the powers and responsibilities of historic district commissions. Thus, citizens should not fear that a historic district commission would impart severe rules or restrictions. The only requirement that historic district commissions must complete is a local historic resources survey. The following municipalities have historic district zoning: Bedford, Goffstown, Londonderry, Manchester, Raymond, and Weare. Communities that have established historic district or heritage commissions, a historic district ordinance, and have completed the local historic resources survey can then apply for Certified Local Government status.

The designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) can provide additional preservation funding and resource opportunities for communities. In order to be granted CLG status, municipalities must meet specific state and federal standards. These standards pertain to the entire community, not only a historic district. Once certified, communities are members of a network made up of the National Division of Historic

⁵ For more information on New Hampshire's barn preservation efforts, visit the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources at www.nh.gov/nhdhr

⁶ New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources, "What are Historic Districts Good for, Anyway?" 2003.

Resources and other CLGs. Additionally, there are federal matching grant funding opportunities reserved exclusively for CLGs. Currently, two communities in the region – Derry and Goffstown – are certified local governments.

**Table 9.1
Local Historic Preservation Organizations
in the Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission Region**

Municipality	Historical Society	Heritage Commission	Historic District Commission	Certified Local Government Program
Auburn	X		X	
Bedford	X		X	
Candia	X	X		
Chester	X	X	X	
Deerfield		X		
Derry	X	X		X
Goffstown	X	X	X	X
Hooksett	X	X		
Londonderry		X	X	
Manchester	X	X		
New Boston	X			
Raymond	X	X	X	
Weare	X			

Source: SNHPC

Types of Preservation

There are a number of state and federal programs that provide designations, which can assist in preservation efforts. Such designations can also make communities more attractive to businesses and tourists, providing an economic boost to the area. It is important to note that a designation does not guarantee permanent preservation of a site, but most citizens and communities would rather maintain the designation, rather than allow such a site to be lost.

The National Register of Historic Places

When individuals think about historic designations, the National Register of Historic Places is perhaps the most commonly known. The National Register is maintained by the National Park Service and contains over 80,000 listings. Listings on the National Register are eligible for special federal tax benefits, preservation assistance, and acknowledgement that the property has national, state or community significance. Properties must meet certain criteria to be considered for designation. Essentially, properties are generally at least 50 years old and are associated with significant events or people in the past, or exhibit distinctive characteristics of a historical time period or architectural style. National Register designation does not, however, equal preservation. Properties on the list can be privately owned, and the designation does not limit the

owner's right to change or demolish the property. The National Park Service has created a publication that guides communities through the application process; communities considering nominating properties for National Register designation should consult this document.⁷



The Robert Frost Farm, National Historic Site, Derry, NH

There are fifty-three properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the SNHPC region. These properties represent a diverse mix of structure types, including town halls, churches, cemeteries, factories, and homesteads. Also represented are historic districts, schoolhouses, and public buildings. Communities with properties listed on the Register include: Bedford, Chester, Deerfield, Derry, Goffstown, Hooksett, Londonderry, Manchester, Raymond, and Weare.

The New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places

Properties listed on the State Register of Historic Places are eligible for the same types of benefits as the National Register, only the source of the funding, planning assistance, and tax benefits are at the state level, rather than federal. The criteria for properties to be considered for inclusion on the State Register are also similar to the National Register. In general, properties must be at least 50 years old and must tell a historically significant story. Eligible property types include buildings; districts; sites – such as parade grounds or a village green; landscapes; structures – such as stonewalls or bridges; and objects. The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources offers guidance to communities that desire to apply to the State Register.⁸ Currently, there are ten properties from six towns in the region listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

The New Hampshire Barn Survey

The New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources has been administering a barn survey, in an attempt to identify and record the locations of historically significant barns in the State. As previously stated, the first step for any large-scale preservation effort is the completion of a survey of the historic resources. The completion of a town-wide barn survey can help both town and state preservation efforts. Deerfield conducted such a survey from November 2000 through July 2002. Chester and Hooksett completed a town-wide barn survey for each town. New Boston has compiled an informal survey of town barns, chicken houses, school houses and old mills as well.

⁷ Visit www.cr.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb39/

⁸ Visit www.nhdr.gov for more information.

National Historic Landmarks

National Historic Landmarks are places that have meaning for all Americans. They are designated by the Secretary of the Interior and nominated by the National Park Service. Landmarks can be buildings, districts (villages or communities), sites without built structures, uninhabited structures, or objects. There are fewer than 2,500 designated landmarks nationally and only about 20-25 new landmarks are designated per year. To be designated a National Historic Landmark, areas must be associated with historic events, people or ideals, be prime examples of design or construction, or exhibit a way of life. New Hampshire is home to 22 National Historic Landmarks. Two of these are in the SNHPC region – the Robert Frost Homestead and the Matthew Thornton House – both of which are in Derry.

New Hampshire Heritage Landmarks

Pursuant to RSA 227-C:25, all National Historic Landmarks owned by the state, as of July 1, 1993, were designated New Hampshire heritage landmarks. The program is not active, but the Robert Frost Homestead in Derry qualifies under this designation.



The John Stark House, Manchester, NH

State Historic Markers Program

The New Hampshire Historical Markers Program commemorates New

Hampshire's places, people, or events of historical significance. The New Hampshire Division of Historic Resources, with the help of the New Hampshire Department of Transportation, administers the program. Marker requests can be made by communities, organizations, or individuals and must be accompanied by accurate documentation including footnotes, a bibliography, copies of supporting research and a petition signed by at least twenty citizens.

The SNHPC region is home to 16 historic markers in ten of the 13 towns in the region. These markers commemorate people, places, and events such as an early clockmaker, poets, war heroes, early settlers and settlements, engineering works, manufacturing buildings, cemeteries, and landscapes.⁹

Preserve America

Created by the White House and led by Laura Bush, Preserve America Communities are recognized for celebrating their heritage. Designated communities are allowed to display the Preserve America logo, are included in the Preserve America directory, and receive a Preserve America Community road sign. Additionally, some communities are eligible to receive funding to support planning, development, implementation or enhancement of heritage programs. To date, more than 800 communities have been designated Preserve

⁹ Visit www.state.nh.us/markers/ for the complete list of state markers.

America Communities. More than triple the number since 2003. The towns of Hooksett, Portsmouth and Keene represent New Hampshire.¹⁰

Historic Landscapes

The National Historic Landscape Initiative is not a list of designated properties, but rather a resource for the preservation of landscapes. It provides publications, workshops, technical assistance and national policy direction. Landscapes are an essential part of how New Englanders identify with the region and the image of the New England village would be incomplete without landscapes. By protecting landscapes, communities can provide enjoyment for their citizens and an improved quality of life. Landscapes are more than just open space; they include residential sidewalks, lawns, and trees, as well as agricultural fields, forests, and stones. Currently no towns in the region have preserved historic landscapes, but historic landscape preservation is a method that can work well in concert with existing open space conservation efforts in the region.

Historic American Buildings Survey

The Historic American Buildings Survey is a program that works toward preservation through documentation. The program documents important architectural sites throughout the U.S. Begun in the 1930s, it was originally performed by professional architects. Today, college students complete the fieldwork and documentation during the summer months.

Currently, there are 30 buildings in Manchester listed on the survey. These include residential homes, commercial and industrial buildings, bridges, and even portions of the Manchester Airport.

National Underground Railroad Program

The National Underground Railroad Program is a National Park Service project to record and map the locations of the highly secretive network of stations providing safe haven on the road to freedom in the North or Canada. Locations that are part of the network can display the network logo, receive technical assistance and participate in program workshops. Many communities in New Hampshire contain properties with a folklore connection to the Underground Railroad. The Moses Sawyer Homestead is one of four known stops in Weare along the Underground Railroad. The Network provides an opportunity for local historical societies or heritage commissions to preserve these traditional stories, while garnering national recognition as important historic places. Sites are not limited to buildings or 'stations' but can also be river crossings, routes, or hiding places.¹¹

Scenic Byways Program

There are currently two National Scenic Byways in New Hampshire and 14 State Scenic Byways. A scenic byway is a designation that showcases the state's most beautiful vistas and landscapes. There are three state scenic byways in the region. The Amoskeag

¹⁰ State of New Hampshire, Department of Cultural Resources, Division of Historical Resources, "The Old Stone Wall," Volume XIV, Number 1, (Fall 2005).

¹¹ For more information on the National Underground Railroad Network, visit www.cr.nps.gov/ugrr.

Millyard Scenic and Cultural Byway in Manchester is only one mile long, but historic and cultural attractions are abundant along its route. Londonderry's Apple Way is ten miles long and provides visitors with a snapshot of Londonderry's agricultural history.

The General John Stark Scenic Byway, designated in 2008, is the region's newest Byway. This Byway loops through the towns of Dunbarton (part of the Central NH Regional Planning Commission), Goffstown, New Boston and Weare. This 34 mile loop showcases the many historical features that date back to the Revolutionary War and Industrial Revolution. It is named for General John Stark, who coined the State's motto "Live free or Die", because of the many features that related to him and the Stark family such as the Molly Stark Cannon in New Boston.

New Hampshire RSAs 231:157 and 231:158 allow towns to make scenic road designations.¹² Any town road, other than a Class I or II highway, can be designated a scenic road by petition of 10 or more people. A local scenic road designation can be useful for the protection of natural landscapes, since roadway repair or maintenance cannot disturb or harm trees or stone walls without written consent of the responsible board.



Molly Stark Cannon, New Boston

Archaeological sites and programs

There has been human habitation in New Hampshire for at least the past 10,000 years. Our knowledge of settlements and archaeological sites is limited, however, because most of the State has not been fully explored. This explains why a map of archaeological sites cannot be produced. The New Hampshire State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program (NH SCRAP) is hesitant to describe known archaeological sites on a map because people have a tendency to assume that blank space on a map equates to the absence of archaeological significance. This is not the case in New Hampshire; the blank space simply means it has not been explored yet.

There are a few generalizations about potential archeological sites that communities can use to determine preservation efforts. Generally, SCRAP has found that sites tend to be within 300 feet of rivers or other water bodies. Areas near a waterfall or rapids pose a good chance of hosting former settlements. Certain soil types, such as well-drained alluvial soils are also indicators. Settlements have also been known to occur on high ground near wetlands or swamps because these areas provided good resources for hunters and gatherers. A slope grade of 20 percent or greater could rule out a site, since steep slopes are not attractive for habitation. These environmental guidelines are imprecise indicators of settlement because the environmental landscape of the State has changed

¹² For the locations of the National and State scenic byways in New Hampshire, visit www.byways.org/browse/states/NH/.

many times over the last 10,000 years. Unfortunately, there is no predictable model to determine settlement areas in New Hampshire.

The New Hampshire Main Street Program

The New Hampshire Main Street Program is designed to improve the economic vitality of a downtown center, while supporting historic preservation. The program is open to all New Hampshire towns and cities, and provides at least three years of technical support to participants, which are competitively selected. A successful Main Street Program requires both public and private cooperation, and relies on four principles to accomplish revitalization, these are: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring. Participants in the program need to understand that results are incremental. The focus is limited to central business districts; however, an economically vibrant downtown can impact the overall vitality of the town. Currently, Goffstown is a member of the New Hampshire Main Street Program.¹³

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines outline locally acceptable site and architectural design and can be formulated to identify desirable community characteristics. They focus on the aesthetic and promote new development and substantial improvements to existing structures that is harmonious with the surrounding area, town center, or historic district. The guidelines can specify locally desired architectural styles, construction materials, building scale, window and door design, sign size and design, awnings and canopies, lighting fixtures, landscaping, fencing, and screening methods.

In the SNHPC region Derry, Chester, Goffstown, Hooksett, Londonderry and Manchester have established design guidelines to ensure that future growth and development in their historic centers is compatible with its surroundings. These guidelines are typically incorporated within the communities' Site Plan Review or Land Use Development Regulations. Within the SNHPC region, these regulations range from providing a general clause requiring the preservation and protection of historic features to location specific guidelines for new development.

Future Preservation Efforts

Clearly, the largest impediment to historic preservation is financing. Most people would agree that the preservation of their town or region's historic and cultural resources is desirable and important. There are many funding programs to assist historic preservation efforts.

The National Trust provides both grants and loans to non-profit organizations and public agencies. Some of the grants require that the property be designated a National Historic Landmark to qualify. Grant opportunities range from \$500 to \$10,000 and the money typically must be used for professional advice, public outreach, educational materials, preservation planning and land-use planning.¹⁴

¹³ For more information on the New Hampshire Main Street Program, visit www.nhcdfa.org/mainstreet.html.

¹⁴ Visit the National Trust at www.nationaltrust.org for more information.

The New Hampshire Preservation Alliance sponsors a Historic Barn Assessment Grant Program. This program provides matching grants of \$250 to \$400 to barn owners for the hiring of a barn assessment consultant, who will determine the required steps to stabilize, repair, and reuse the barn.¹⁵

Another local resource is the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP). This organization provides matching grants to NH communities and non-profit organizations for the preservation of local natural, cultural, and historic resources. Currently, five municipalities in the SNHPC region – Bedford, Derry, Hooksett, Londonderry, and Manchester – have taken advantage of this program, with grants ranging from \$109,000 to \$300,000. Unfortunately, the State has reduced the allocated budget for LCHIP by 85 percent; meaning that over the next two years, only three percent of approved projects will be financed through the organization.¹⁶

The Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program allows a 20 percent tax credit for the preservation of historic buildings. The tax credit is only available for income-producing structures, not individual private residences. To qualify for the tax credit, the structure has to be listed, or at least be eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as an individual structure or as part of a historic district. The structure must meet the ten Standards for Rehabilitation, set by the Secretary of the Interior and the rehabilitation efforts must be substantial. This means that the cost of the rehabilitation must exceed the pre-rehabilitation value of the structure. The National Park Service, along with the Internal Revenue Service and State Historic Preservation Offices, administer the tax credit.¹⁷

With the exception of Bedford and Londonderry, all communities in the SNHPC region have ten percent or more of their homes built prior to 1940. This indicates there is great preservation potential. While not all of these structures should be preserved, the general age of the building stock is illustrative of patterns or clusters of development within historic neighborhoods. These areas could potentially be analyzed and grouped as historic districts in the future.

A review of municipal master plans indicates little preservation work has occurred in the SNHPC region. While most communities recognize the importance of maintaining their historic character, there are few goals or objectives established to ensure that this character is not lost. At best, existing efforts include some sort of inventory or zoning ordinances. While every town in the region has important historic or cultural resources to protect, the towns are at different stages in effecting preservation. Some examples of identified future preservation goals in the towns' master plans include:

- Establish a Heritage Commission, Historic District Commission or Historical Society

¹⁵ Visit www.nhpreservation.org/html/gettomgstarted.htm for more information.

¹⁶ Visit www.lchip.org for more information.

¹⁷ For more information visit www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/

- Designate historic areas as historic districts
- Establish zoning and land use regulations that recognize the value of historic resources and strive to preserve those features
- Organize public group walks through local historic districts
- Prepare educational brochures about the local historic district, town center or areas of historic pride and importance
- Prepare informational materials or a website to promote local resource management and protection
- Incorporate historic landmarks and cultural resources into school field trips and curriculum
- Promote private voluntary preservation
- Develop cohesive town centers within the historic setting
- Promote town center development consistent with historic character

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services during 1998 and 1999 contracted SNHPC, along with the other regional planning commissions, to collaborate with representatives of the member communities to identify and map Local Resource Protection Priorities (LRPP). This data was then reviewed and updated in 2004 and 2011. These mapped priorities are unprotected natural and cultural resources that communities would be interested in preserving. The project's intent was to gain an understanding of local priorities for two purposes – to assist the LCHIP program to identify projects to fund and to assist planners, regional planning commissions, and state agencies in their planning efforts.

Within the SNHPC region there are 256 cultural and historic features identified in the most recent LRPP as future preservation priorities by 12 of the 13 communities; Deerfield did not participate in the LRPP effort. Features listed include historic homes, barns and farms, mills, cemeteries, schools, stores and taverns, and many other sites unique to the region's communities. Six of the cultural features identified in the original 1998-99 listing were removed from the LRPP in 2004 due to successful preservation efforts. Of those, three were added to the National Register of Historic Places, two were protected through new private development that included preservation of the historic structures, and the Town of Chester protected the last through outright purchase. No properties were removed from the list due to new development that negatively impacted the historic feature or for demolition. By comparison, 22 of the natural features identified in 1998-99 were preserved as of 2004 and removed from the list and another five natural features were removed due to recent growth and development.

Table 9.2
Local Resource Protection Priorities in
The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission Region

Municipality	Cultural Resources	Cultural and Natural Resources
Auburn	23	0
Bedford	10	0
Candia	13	0
Chester	1	1
Deerfield	N/A	N/A
Derry	27	0
Goffstown	12	1
Hooksett	71	4
Londonderry	50	6
Manchester	5	3
New Boston	1	2
Raymond	0	0
Weare	24	2
SNHPC Region	237	19

Source: SNHPC

Conclusion

The Southern New Hampshire Planning Commission region’s history spans centuries and encompasses many facets. From agricultural legacies seen in the region’s farms and orchards to manufacturing traditions evidenced in the many mills and dams, the region is home to a variety of potential preservation gems. The towns in the region recognize the importance of preserving the historic character of the region, but this is not enough. To transition from the goal of preservation to the execution of preservation, towns should organize a Historic District Commission or a Heritage Commission. Once established, these organizations can utilize the tools for preservation, such as the historic resources survey and inventory, historic district overlay zoning, various preservation easements, grants and loans.

Towns that have created a Historic District Commission or Heritage Commission, and have utilized the various preservation tools, may find it easier to apply for a variety of state and federal designations outlined previously in the types of preservation. By garnering various designations, communities can showcase their unique heritage. Such designations can provide education – not only to visitors of the sites, but also to their own citizens on the value of preservation, thereby encouraging future preservation efforts. Historic and cultural resources can attract visitors, which can add dollars to the community’s economy.

Despite the advantages of designation, it is important to realize that sites are still vulnerable to loss. Timing is critical in terms of historic preservation. Rapid increases in population and the accompanying developmental pressures on our historic and cultural resources continue to put properties and districts at risk. Communities should educate themselves and their citizenry about the advantages and disadvantages of historic preservation and implement the types that are most suited to their historic resources.