

HISTORIC RESOURCES



Concord Street Then



Concord Street Now

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I. Introduction

R SA 674:2, Master Plan; Purpose and Description, states that a land use section shall be based on a study of population, economic activity, and natural, historic, and cultural resources. In addition, there may be a “section which identifies cultural and historic resources and protects them for rehabilitation or preservation from the impact of other land use tools such as land use regulations, housing, or transportation.” The purpose of this chapter is to develop this section of the Master Plan.

Subcommittee Mission and Relevance

The Historic Resources Subcommittee (HRS) considered the charge from the Selectmen and the Master Plan Steering Committee, the “Vision” statement and other sections of the Master Plan, and RSA Section 674:2 [Title LXIV Planning and Zoning - Chapter 674 - Local Land Use Planning and Regulatory Powers]. The HRS proceeded to identify items relating to the mission given to the Subcommittee, and the relevance of information found elsewhere in the Master Plan that should be considered for cross-referencing purposes. The HRS then utilized these items (which are spelled out in Appendix A) as its guide for this chapter - a chapter designed to:

- aid the Planning Board in designing ordinances and reviewing proposed plans;
- craft a Vision statement;
- identify significant historic resources in the Town; and
- recommend strategies to protect these resources for rehabilitation or preservation.

The Subcommittee found its review of RSA 674:2 helpful in understanding the overall purpose of a Master Plan, and where the analysis of historic resources fits into that larger plan. In addition, the HRS reviewed each chapter of the Master Plan, and was able to identify statements and references throughout that apply to historic resources. In Chapter 2, Vision Statements, for example, virtually every topic area addressed made a reference either to Peterborough’s historic character or to the “look and feel” of Peterborough – which is clearly influenced by its historic character.

II. Questions and Answers

How to grasp the cultural and historic fabric¹ of Peterborough?

You could walk the streets of the town and the surrounding country roads, admire the architecture of historic buildings, and enjoy the farmlands, streetscapes, and mountain vistas. You could visit the Peterborough Historical Society and the Town House to view artifacts, scan maps and historic records, and investigate backgrounds of neighborhoods. Or you might want to start by visiting the library on the corner of Concord and Main Streets.

And then there is the cultural life of Peterborough, ranging from dance to opera to live theater, popular and classical music presentations, renowned speaker forums, children in the arts programs, art galleries and museums, the MacDowell Colony - perhaps the world's leading gathering place for artists - all set in venues that make Peterborough so distinctive.

Why are our historic fabric and its preservation important to the community?

Historic preservation is important to the community because it allows the community to prosper without losing the elements or fabric that makes our community special. Economic viability has been a challenge since the days of first settlement. Our community has met this challenge by using the natural resources and beauty of the area coupled with the independent thinking and creative talents of our citizens.

What elements of our historic fabric and heritage do we want to recognize and preserve?

We wish to preserve the natural beauty and resources that inspired us, along with the pieces of the built environment that serve as reminders of how we as a community survived challenges and prospered.

The sign "A Good Town to Live In" graces the roads that enter our community. Words similar to those were said by Emily, a character in one of the world's most famous plays, "Our Town."

Audiences around the world have watched life unfold in Thornton Wilder's "Our Town" - a play that can be related to Peterborough - a play that Wilder partly wrote while at Peterborough's renowned MacDowell Colony set aside in 1907 for artists of all types, artists such as Leonard Bernstein and Aaron Copland.

In his Pulitzer-prize-winning work Wilder describes life in Grover's Corners, New Hampshire at the beginning of the twentieth century. As seen by Emily, "Grover's Corners isn't a very important place when you think of all New Hampshire; but I think it's a very nice town."

¹ In architectural terms, "historic fabric" means the components of an old building that give it its historic quality. Fabric is also defined as an underlying structure. In this instance, we apply the same construct to the town, meaning that Peterborough's cultural and historic fabric is composed of many things; culturally, this could be artifacts as well as programs; and historically, we mean not just buildings, but also neighborhoods, viewsheds, roads, bridges and dams.

What has the community done previously to preserve and protect its historic fabric?

The community began to preserve and protect its European settlement history by celebrating the first 100 years of the Town's existence in a Centennial celebration in 1839. The celebration included documenting recollections from elder citizens and the collecting of records from the first settlement times. This centennial led to the private production of a Town History by Albert Smith in 1876. The celebrations have continued every 50 years since. For the 200-year celebration the Town commissioned George Abbot Morison to write a town history, which was published in 1954. For the 250th celebration, the Historical Society commissioned a history "Our Changing Town: 1939 - 1989". The celebration itself was undertaken by the Town. Some specific efforts/activities are described below:

*"The Pack-Monadnocks
clothe the morn,
In radiant beauty still;
And Nubanusit's toiling wave
Still turns the busy mill."* -
Excerpt from poem written by
N.H. Morison for
Peterborough's 1889
sesquicentennial celebration.

- The Peterborough Historical Society was formed in 1902. It began collecting and preserving the history of Peterborough at that time, and the inventory has been ongoing since then. The Society contracted for the town's first architectural survey done by Professor William Morgan in 1972.
- Community support enabled the Unitarian Church to be restored in time for its 1976 sesquicentennial. The Church was refurbished through a community wide effort and is now on the National Register of Historic Places, as are All Saints Church, the Town House, the Post Office, and MacDowell Colony.
- The Town chose adaptive use of the Sage "Carpenter Gothic" house on Concord Street to benefit the Library and preserve the house as part of the community's fabric.
- The Baptist Church, after a devastating fire in 2000, was preserved for adaptive use through community support and the efforts of a community group known as Downtown 2000. That it continues to anchor a part of Main Street demonstrates the versatility of the community's historic fabric. Perhaps most important, the building shows how local people can rally to rescue a structure and use creative historic preservation to maintain the desirability and to enhance the economic vitality of the community.
- Public-private partnerships have helped to protect the town's physical environment as witnessed in the development of Depot Square.
- Public recognition of historic places was growing. The Peterborough Academy (G.A.R. Hall) building which had seen service to the community as a veteran's hall was returned to youth service through the efforts of the Town's Heritage Commission to find a suitable tenant who would serve the community and ensure the historic integrity of the building.

*"When one livelihood has
been cut off, Peterborough
people has been
sufficiently adaptable to
turn their hands to some
other means of making a
living."*

*"It is important, in order
that Peterborough be as
prosperous in 1939 as she
was in 1889, that she
attract carefully selected,
prosperous, promising
industries."*

Both quotes are from a
commemorative pamphlet
for the 250th celebration in
1939.

Other preservation efforts that range from programs to physical construction are summarized below:

- Morison History Book Chapter on old houses
- DAR plaque about the Bell Factory and Putnam Park plaque
- Will Morgan and Jonathan Strong Survey
- Historic Survey for the Historic District Commission
- Cultural Heritage includes physical environment- public private partnerships
- Acknowledgement that Historic Farms in their settings was important--LCIP purchase of Fremont land
- Designation of Scenic Roads
- Re-use and renovation of Noone's, Needham, and Union Mills
- Phil Herr "Getting the Town We Want"- the first acknowledgment that the Downtown was important.
- The creation of Downtown 2000
- Replanting historic tree lined streets
- Overseeing bridge railing replacement
- Evans Flat/Gridley Inventory
- Evans Flat Road Inventory
- Grove Street Inventory
- Now seeing the importance of Heritage Tourism
- Downtown Walking Tour
- Eligibility for National Registry Designation:
 - South Peterborough Village and Farm Historic Inventory
 - Old Street Road Historic Area

What is currently being done to preserve and protect the Town's historic fabric?

The Town now has a Heritage Commission that is involved in many activities that focus on the strengths of the community to keep the town viable – for example, inventories of Grove Street and Evans Flat, historic viewsheds, and roads - the arteries of our town's circulatory system. Buildings continue to be considered for adaptive use - examples in West Peterborough being the Union Mill along with the Governor Steele property, known as the Salzburg Inn. The Goyette Museum is being adapted to private family use. In addition, community park expansions and the Common Pathway project – which builds on the old railroad bed - also reflect the growing awareness of our community's historic fabric.

III. Peterborough's Historic Fabric

Peterborough is a place of both natural and manmade beauty that has economically transformed itself from subsistence farming to mill work, dairy, sheep, and poultry industries, and then to a modern commercial, industrial, arts and culturally-oriented undertakings. Its historic fabric is woven from the physical characteristics of the land and the spirit of the people as seen in the places and institutions they have created. This historic fabric reflects the needs and visions of those who have lived, worked and played here over the centuries.

The Native Americans

Native peoples settled this area of the Contoocook and Nubanusit Rivers many centuries before the Europeans discovered it. They used the rivers for transportation and food. The land was home to game and to the fruits of the forests and fields. They used the land but did little to change it from its natural form. The Native Americans were more gatherers than farmers because the short growing season limited farming. Fishing was abundant especially in the natural falls areas. In winter they moved to more sheltered areas east of Temple Mountain or south into Massachusetts for the warmer climate and the society of larger tribal gatherings.

Early European Settlement

The first settlers came to Peterborough in 1739 - more than 100 years later than many other parts of New England. The first permanent settlement of Peterborough was around 1749. The Town has chosen to use the earlier date of 1739 as the one to celebrate since the time of the 1839 Centennial.

The Proprietors of Peterborough – the men who received the original land grant from the King of England – were Massachusetts land speculators who originally had no intention of moving here. But as earlier settlements in Massachusetts became saturated with descendants and new settlers from Europe, they looked to adjacent regions to expand into. They proceeded to entice Scotch-Irish immigrants, among many other hearty souls, to settle this frontier region.

Danger existed in this wilderness - but not just the danger inherent in the felling of hundreds of trees, moving of rocks and the building of homesteads on wild lands. Indeed, one of the Proprietors' main goals was to populate the frontier to protect the settlements in Massachusetts from Indian attack. There were real fears about Indians who had allied themselves with the French against New Englanders during a war that began in 1754 and ended nine years later. Stories of surprise attacks and massacres of farmers and their families were commonly told. However, early residents of Peterborough never directly experienced any problems from the Indians.

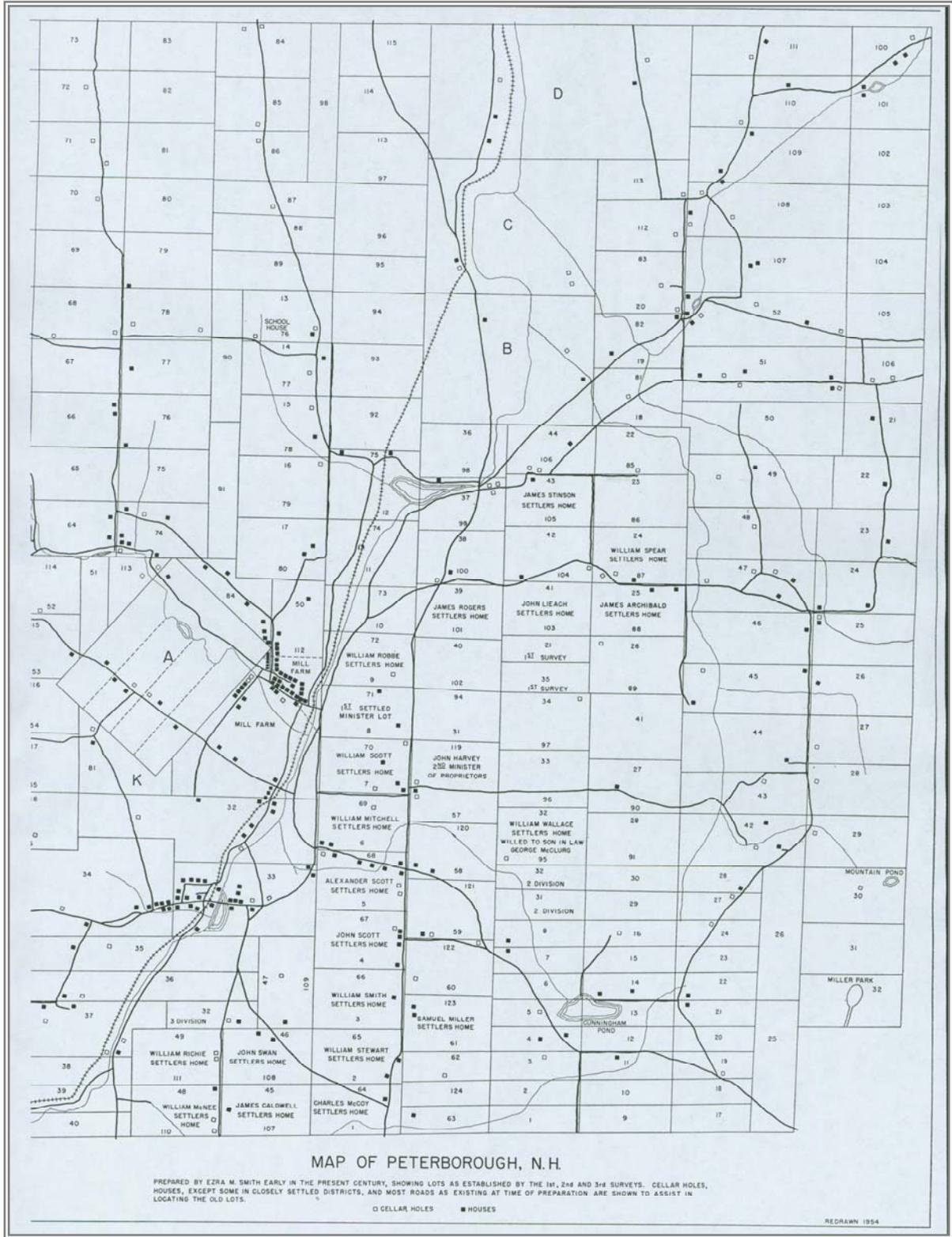
Settlement Patterns

The proprietors divided the town into lots of approximately 100 acres each, establishing rules and stipulations on sale of properties. Fifty acres were given initially and the second 50 were granted if, within 3 years, they succeeded in opening up the first 50 and complied with other rules. Their grant required them to build a road to the meetinghouse. Other roads were the responsibility of all settlers and required able-bodied men to do their fair share of road building or pay a fine for failing to do so. Such rules gave early order to the Peterborough community. The map on the following page illustrates the original divisions.

*"I dwell in a lonely house I know
That vanished many summers ago,
And left no trace but the cellar walls,
And a cellar in which the daylight falls
The woods come back to the mowing field...
The footpath to the well is healed." – From
"Ghost House" by Robert Frost*

PETERBOROUGH MASTER PLAN

Figure #1:
Wilder Survey



According to the book on early roads in Peterborough by Richard Sanderson, the first road built in Peterborough, known as the Street Road (now Old Street Road), was an extension of a road put through from Townsend to New Ipswich and Sharon.

The original proprietors were eager to get settlers in the new town.... “The road almost exactly splits the town down the middle...running on a vertical line between lots. It was desirable to make roads between lots rather than directly through someone’s farm, although that was not always possible.”²

For more than half a century Old Street Road was the center of town, spiritually, commercially and socially. The meetinghouse* on the ridge above the old cemetery served as the house of worship as well as the place where town government functioned and where farmers would gather after Sunday worship. The first store was built on this road, as was the first tavern³.

Since all the original settlers were farmers, the early lots sold were on high ground with good soil and defensible positions. The early settlers were mainly subsistence farmers. Life hung by a very fragile thread, with the threat of starvation, disease and warfare. The area’s bounteous nature, however, sustained them. The soil was perfect for grazing sheep and hosted the growth of flax, which provided the fiber for linen that eventually succeeded as Peterborough’s cash crop.

Around 1800 the center of activity in Peterborough shifted from Old Street Road down to the current center of town, at the confluence of the Contoocook and Nubanusit Rivers. “In the early 19th century agriculture was in economic decline, largely because cheaper produce was arriving from larger farms” out West while “farms here were becoming ‘played out’.”⁴ Fortunately, this was occurring at a time of rapid development of textile mills in New England.

For years many lots were not settled due to the rugged or swampy terrain, undesirable for farming or other productive use. Some properties, however, were well suited for harnessing waterpower. Peterborough’s fast moving rivers and waterfalls were the stimulus to entrepreneurs who built water-powered

*** Brief History of the Town House and Town Meetings:**

This first Meeting House was built in 1752. A new Meeting House was built in 1785, not far from the location of the first Meeting House. This house of worship was also used for the annual Town Meetings. This building was never heated, and was apparently not satisfactory to the residents, and was eventually abandoned sometime after 1825. For the next several years, until a new Town House was built on Concord Street, Town Meetings were held in Wilson’s Tavern and Samuel Smith’s Counting House. This Town House was also considered inadequate, and a new Town House was built in 1862 on the site of the current Town House (corner of Grove and Main Streets). This building served as the Town House until it was irreparably damaged by fire in 1916. A new Town House was built on the same site in 1918, and has served as the seat of local government ever since. The building was extensively renovated and remodeled in 1995.

Since the incorporation of the town in 1760, Town Meeting has been held every year. All town business voted on by the residents has been duly recorded, preserved and archived. These records are on file at the Peterborough Historical Society.

Reference: History of Peterborough New Hampshire, Volume One; George Abbot Morison; 1954.

² Richard Sanderson, The Early Roads of Peterborough, p.7.

³ “The Development of Peterborough’s Roads,” Essay by Richard Sanderson, p. 1.

⁴ Ibid.

factories for the manufacture of threads and woven fabrics, while others established the fundamental town businesses: supply stores, inns, livery, and blacksmith shop.

Among the first mills in town was Samuel Mitchell’s grist mill on the Nubanusit River at the intersection of today’s Main and Elm Streets. Thomas Morison had a sawmill on the Contoocook near today’s old bridge at Noone’s Falls. These were important early businesses in Peterborough. Mills built along the Nubanusit between Grove and Elm Streets led to the building of homes and mill houses downtown, where no one had lived previously. At this time Winter Street and Factory Street were built. The Bell Factory, the second cotton mill in New England and the first in New Hampshire, was built on River Street in 1810.

“The convergence of High, Main, Union and Vine Streets is a place that has appeared so many hundreds of thousands of times in dreams of mine.” – Leonard Bernstein as quoted in the 18 October 1990 Peterborough Transcript.

Then, in 1813, the Phoenix Factory was built on the present-day site of the Guernsey Professional Building – at the same time as a mill for carding wool in South Peterborough at Noone’s Falls was built. In the same year the North Cotton Factory was built in North Village, where later the Wilder Thermometer Factory would be located. West Peterborough was virtually uninhabited until the Union Mill and related housing were built around it in 1824.



1914 Postcard depicting the intersection of which Bernstein speaks.

The construction of all these factories in such a short time and their new demand for workers had a profound effect on the town. In fact, much of what the town looks like today was established in that quarter century. At one time there were 13 mill sites on the Contoocook and Nubanusit Rivers. (See the following page for a photo-collage of some of these mills.)

National Involvement

Despite their mistrust of the Old World form of government, the settlers did fight in the King’s army during the French and Indian Wars, losing more citizens per capita than in any subsequent conflict. When the Revolution came they also served from the early battle at Bunker Hill through the years to victory. Peterborough’s Old Street Road Cemetery is the final resting place of most of our Revolutionary War veterans including William Diamond, the drummer boy of Lexington, who chose to move to Peterborough in 1795 and establish his family here among our hills.

However, when the nation was formed and the Constitution was sent to New Hampshire for ratification, Peterborough’s representatives voted against it because they felt that it gave too much power to a central government. They held firm to two-year terms for representatives and governor and for a large state legislature called the General Court. The government was to be accountable to the electorate – a sympathy that continues to exist here in the 21st century.

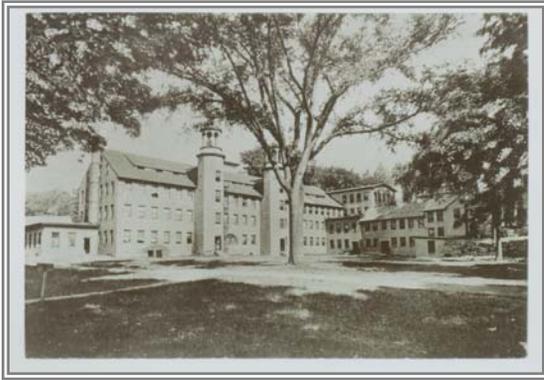
EARLY MILLS OF PETERBOROUGH



Needham Basket Company when on Elm Street



Needham Basket Company when Downtown



Phoenix Factory



Noone's Falls



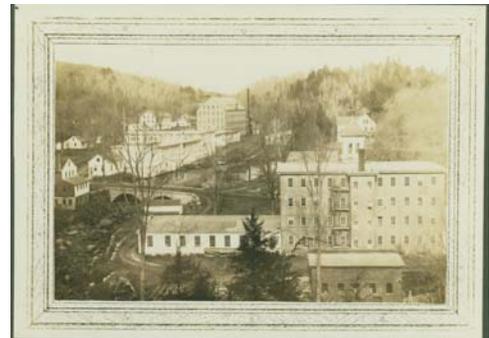
Verney Mill



Wilder Thermometer



Union Mill



Union Mill with Associated Housing

The citizens of Peterborough next defended the Nation in the War of 1812. Peterborough's most noted contributor to the war effort was her native son, James Miller (1776-1858) the Hero of Lundy's Lane. When asked to take this critical position he is quoted as saying, "I'll try, Sir". His heroism and success is remembered today by Miller State Park, New Hampshire's oldest state park, which overlooks the town he fought to preserve. Nathaniel Hawthorne, in the introduction to The Scarlet Letter, described Miller as "New England's most distinguished soldier".

In the 1850s, when many in the nation rallied to abolish slavery, a number of Peterborough residents took action into their own hands. Churches were opened to abolitionist speakers such as Frederick Douglass. Local homes formed a link to the Underground Railroad. Some residents moved to Kansas to try to make it a Free State. Once the Civil War began, many men from town fought to save the Union and to end slavery. The statue in front of the old GAR Hall on Grove Street was erected to commemorate them.

In the eighteenth century slavery had actually been practiced in Peterborough. Primarily the slaves were servants in homes of the more affluent. Most were educated and raised as members of the family but they were indeed slaves for life unless freed or bought out of that existence. Town histories only mention one slave in any detail, Baker Moore, a man who charmed the townspeople with the music of his fiddle and the intrigue of his stories. Baker said he met the Devil twice in Peterborough and lived to tell the tale.

Over the years the nation has continued to call on this community to send its sons and daughters to defend the nation in wars as soldiers, sailors, pilots, doctors, nurses, Red Cross volunteers, and civilian defense workers. Peterborough's most distinguished military native son is Four Star General I.D. White, who served in World War II, Korea and Viet Nam. I.D. was a descendant of John White, early settler and soldier in the Revolution. I. D.'s father, a veteran of the Civil War, was a General in the New Hampshire Militia, now the National Guard. General Daniel Mansfield White was the citizen soldier who served the Nation when called and served his community as a respected lawyer in times of peace.

Economic Challenge and Response

Independent thinking has always been an important character trait of the people of our community. From the very first days of settlement, the motivation to solve the challenges of making a life here has been a part of Peterborough's historic fabric. Peterborough has benefited from the forethought of community-minded citizens as told below. Personal actions and fortunes can no longer make all of the great steps in getting the town that we want but we can learn from their stories and respect their efforts by creating and following such tools as this Master Plan.

From its earliest days, the pattern was set of townspeople who would step forward to create whatever was necessary to allow the town to remain viable and to prosper. The first large-scale factories were financed by local farmers who mortgaged their property to invest in them. Their plan was to provide a market for local farm products as well as a source of employment for family members and townspeople, who were being lured away by the promise of more bountiful lands in the West. Peterborough did, in fact, manage to hold its

population intact, even as neighboring town populations dwindled until they almost ceased to exist.

Throughout the 1800's and 1900's new companies were encouraged to locate here through creative tax incentives granted by the town. These companies produced a variety of textiles, wooden products such as shoe pegs and clothes pins, baskets, pianos, piano stools, lead pipes, and thermometers. The most unusual of all, however, was the business of the American Guernsey Cattle Club. These were the record keepers and promoters of this brown and white, fat-rich milk-producing breed of cattle. Peterborough became known around the world due to this business that came to town in 1894 and existed in the heart of our community until 1982. The American Guernsey Cattle Club played a major role in preserving the "look and feel" of Peterborough, providing a consistent transition from an agricultural and mill-based economy to office and technology

Agriculture moved beyond the Guernsey with 20th century ideas. The poultry industry was made more successful by the work of Ned Larrabee, who developed the New Hampshire Red breed of chicken. The Peterborough Post Office came alive with the peeps of Reds being sent far and wide. Larrabee entered the modern food production business by producing frozen chicken pies at the Larrabee farm. Blueberries were cultivated in area fields by Bill Glazier who processed the berries at his High St. home before shipping them off to some of the finest restaurants in Boston.

Upland Farms and the Four Winds Farm began the tradition of apple production in Peterborough. Seeking to develop apples that would withstand the shipping requirements of the modern markets and meet the challenges of the shrinking agricultural labor force, Upland Farms employed Jamaicans as seasonal workers to pick the apples. Many of these workers returned annually and became known in the community. Local agriculture, although smaller than before, is still a part of the Town's fabric as evidenced in Rosaly's organic farm, the town's community garden and the summer farmers' market.

Twentieth century entrepreneurs introduced ball bearings, specialty retailing, and software creation to the list of innovative businesses in the community. At Bleak House, the 200-year-old mansion on the corner of Pine Street and Route 101, the first issue of BYTE magazine appeared in September 1975. It quickly became the leading publication in the field of computers. Other publications followed, transforming Peterborough into one of the world's major centers for high-tech publications. The Peterborough Post Office had already responded to the Guernsey requirements for special mailing services, and this had a ripple effect in Peterborough's burgeoning publishing industry.



To meet the financial needs of the community, locally owned and managed banks were formed as early as 1854. A Cooperative Bank was formed in 1920 to satisfy the need for housing loans. Other locally owned banks such as the First National Bank and the Savings Bank met the needs of commercial and consumer clients in town and in the region.

Residents continued to muster public and private solutions to economic problems. They formed a Board of Trade in 1904 and a Chamber of Commerce in 1973 to foster business opportunities. A Rotary Club was founded in 1925 to promote good business ethics and community service. The Peterborough Industrial Development Corporation was created at the town meeting of 1956 as a way to create desirable growth and to protect the natural beauty of the area. This was a local solution and rebirth of earlier efforts made by the citizens to keep Peterborough prosperous and desirable. These efforts continue to the present day, reflected in the approval at Town Meeting 2005 of funding for a Business Development Officer.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Economic vitality and growth depend upon an adequate infrastructure. The first road to Peterborough came from the south, through New Ipswich, eventually linking to Concord and ultimately to Boston, Massachusetts. As new settlers came to Peterborough and surrounding towns, more roads were built, in all directions. Local people didn't travel out of town very often, but the roads facilitated commerce, as it was important that goods were transported in and out of town. Through these various efforts, Peterborough evolved into a regional commercial hub.

Transportation was improved when the Monadnock Railroad established a route into Peterborough in 1871. Permitting a railroad in town took 20 years of debate, court proceedings and guarantees from the Town for funds valued at 5% of the town valuation in 1867. The railroad opened the "world" to the people of Peterborough, allowing excursions to the seaside and to neighboring towns. Goods could now come and go from Peterborough at a reasonable rate, thus making local goods competitive.



Postcard Depicting Train Station

Passenger train service ended in 1953 but freight service continued until 1969. The last train to Peterborough was a runaway set of boxcars that traveled from Jaffrey to downtown Peterborough on October 29, 1969. The abandoned tracks were listed as unsafe but the cars reached speeds of 60 miles an hour as they traveled into town, stopping only when they hit the School District Offices on Main Street in the Old Centertown building.

In 1917 the New Hampshire Highway Department laid out Routes 101 and 202 so that they would cross in Peterborough, making the town one of the few in New Hampshire to have major trunk lines cross. This was seen as a great benefit to the town at that time. Up until 1958, Route 101 traveled right up Main Street, through the center of town. That year the current bypass was created and part of the Contoocook River was rechanneled.

The creation of town utilities was important to the community. As early as 1895 a water department was chartered. Village residents could then obtain drinking water delivered through a wooden pipe system. The Water Department grew as needs arose but the problem

of what to do with wastewater was not addressed by the Town until the late 1950s. In the past, the rivers that supplied power for industry were also the sewers for our wastewater. Textile dyes that entered the rivers colored the waters, along with any swimmers, fish or wild life with glorious hues. Summer odors were hard to bear, but by 1972 the first municipal sewer system was built, inspired by the Peterborough Industrial Development Corporation, who felt it was necessary if the town was to continue to prosper.

Architecture and Town Design

Much of the planning and redesign of the town came about through the efforts of established families and newcomers. The Smiths and Morisons, whose ancestors had been original settlers, went elsewhere to make their fortunes, then returned to Peterborough around the turn of the 20th century to help in rebuilding the town. The Adams, Bass, and Clement families related to the first founders reestablished themselves in Peterborough, contributing their efforts in various ways.

“Old buildings are not ours. They belong to those who built them and partly to those who follow.” - John Ruskin

During the 19th century the Bullfinch style Unitarian Church, the Granite Block, and the Baptist Church appeared on Main Street, as well as the old Tavern and the Town Hall that have since disappeared. [Refer to Appendix #B for a description of architectural periods.] Several architectural gems appeared thanks to the efforts of Peterborough’s civic-minded women – women like Mary Cheney Schofield (1868-1943), Clara Foster Bass (1844-1933), and Mary Morison (1851-1917). Mrs. Schofield commissioned Ralph Adams Cram, a noted church architect, to design the All Saints’ Episcopal Church. The church is a transitional Gothic style with interior décor provided by Mrs. Schofield.



The Tavern on Main Street

Peterborough also received the attention of nationally known landscape architects, like Thomas Platt and Fletcher Steele, who were also hired by Mrs. Schofield. Mrs. Bass had the foresight to encourage the hiring of Boston architect Benjamin F. W. Russell to design the Town House. Russell was a summer resident of Peterborough who also designed the Peterborough Historical Society Building and 20 Grove Street. Russell’s red brick Colonial Revival buildings transformed Grove Street with culture and refinement, inspiring subsequent building in Peterborough.



Grove Street

Townpeople and newcomers have paid close attention to the sustainability of structures - of ways to add new interpretations to the use of land and old buildings. 20 Grove Street, for example, was once the second home of the American Guernsey Cattle Club before it became the first site of New Hampshire Ball Bearings. The Club later moved to a massive brick building located on Main Street.

The volunteer Fire Department and other community members established the Aquarius Fire Museum on Summer Street in the building that had been a school house, and more recently the former home of the Dyer Brown family.

Community Services

To address the quality of life, residents founded the Peterborough Hospital in 1918. Robert Parmalee donated his residence for this purpose, with a condition attached that required funds to be raised that would support the hospital for five years. In response to this offer, 251 citizens pledged \$10,000 a year for five years.

This locally-managed and supported hospital provided the basis for ensuring that those who live in the area have access to quality medical services. The hospital was supplemented by the Visiting Nurse Association, which was established in 1906.



Monadnock Community Hospital

Elder care was first addressed by the Peterborough Home for the Aged which, through community support, became the Scott-Farrar Home and guided the way for other nursing and retirement homes.

The Recreation Department has been formally in existence in Peterborough since Adele Adams's 1914 gift to the Town of land for a playground. From this first gift the recreation program has grown to include people of all ages.

On the private side of recreation came the efforts of the citizens both permanent and summer to improve recreational opportunities through the forming of a Golf Club in 1899. Golf was played on a rough course on a part of the Thomas Morison farm in South Peterborough. Edward MacDowell gave the present Golf Club site on High Street in 1901 on which Mrs. Schofield donated the original clubhouse. Over the years the Club has provided a place for social activities such as dances and banquets. For the more adventurous, the Club was the site of the town's Toboggan run in the 1930's and the privately run Whit's Ski Tow which closed in 1968 due to failing health and age of its owner, Howard Whitcomb.

The latest addition to recreation for the community has come from the Thomas and Marshall families' gift of a swimming beach and access to Cunningham Pond. Both families were summer residents who made the town their home. Organizations such as the Peterborough Fly Fisherman's Club and the Peterborough Sportsmen's Club promote recreational pursuits of hunting and fishing, with safety classes and youth programs. The clubs have or once had properties that provide areas for pursuing these sports and in turn protect the environment.



Cunningham Pond

This civic-minded approach to town improvement continued into the mid and late 20th century. Major A. Erland and Hazel Goyette were instrumental in the management of Noone Mills and of local banks; they created the Goyette Museum of Americana in the old basket factory on Elm Street; and they were great supporters of the Monadnock Region Association, which was formed with 23 towns to promote the economic, social and recreational activities of the region.



Goyette Museum

And, following Major Goyette’s death, Mrs. Goyette made a generous bequest to the Town that established the Goyette Memorial Fund.

Conservation

The conservation of the natural beauty and resources of Peterborough has had both public and private champions. In 1931 Isabel Adams Casalis gave land to the Town that became Casalis State Forest. This land gift came as a result and complement to Miller State Park. Mrs. Casalis supported forest and wildlife preservation, and with an eye for the future, she proposed that the land be returned to the natural state of the time of first settlement. The site has grown through gifts from Peterborough families such as the Basses, Goyettes and Cheneys, and through efforts of organizations like the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Shieling Forest was gifted to the State of New Hampshire in 1980 by author and Peterborough resident Elizabeth Yates McGreal. The gift is an enduring example of the fabric that sets Peterborough apart. Mrs. McGreal deeded Shieling to the state not only as conservation land, but also with the agreement that her forest and barn be maintained for educational functions addressing proper forest management practices.



Stone walls, a beloved icon of New England's heritage, weave their way over Peterborough's landscape, offering opportunities to study where Peterborough’s citizens have cultivated their crops and pastured their sheep and cows. Many of the miles of stone walls we marvel over today were built during our region's "Sheep Craze" that took place during the first half of the 19th century, a time when sheep farming dominated our agricultural efforts and resulted in the establishment of the various wool processing enterprises along our rivers and streams.

The people’s enthusiasm for conservation led to the town forming a Conservation Commission in 1966. The Commission has always been a tenacious champion of land management and acquisition, using such tools as the Master Plans and “A Natural Resources Plan for Peterborough New Hampshire” by John Lord, Jr. Today’s Town now has a collection of conservation tools that are available to help implement the Master Plan.

Housing

The Town of Peterborough has addressed housing its population in various and unique ways. Housing has traditionally been a private matter. Families in need of more housing divided up farms and lived more closely together. Industries provided housing for families of skilled workers. There were also mill-owned boarding houses for single workers or married workers whose families lived elsewhere, some as far away as Canada. When the mills ceased to operate, the housing was sold to private individuals. The South Village is an example of this, as it was “owned” by Noone Mill until the housing was privatized in the 1960’s. Publicly-provided housing had early forms, such as the teachers being boarded out as part of the payment of the school tax. Destitute people lived and worked, if able, at the Poor Farm in South Peterborough, which operated from 1837 to 1881. Prior to this more humane solution, indebted residents were auctioned off as indentured servants.

Twentieth century solutions for housing followed the mill housing example. The Home for Nurses was provided by the Hospital at 32 Concord Street and later at 31 Pine Street; transportation to and from this home and the train station was provided for the nurses who came from out of town. Mrs. Schofield provided a home for teachers at “the Manse” on Main Street. The town’s elderly were taken in at the Home for the Aged on Vine Street in 1909 and then in the Scott-Farrar Home. Now there are a variety of housing options in Peterborough, from single-family homes to apartments and condominiums, as well as several retirement homes. (The issue of home ownership is addressed in the Housing Chapter.)

Education and the Arts

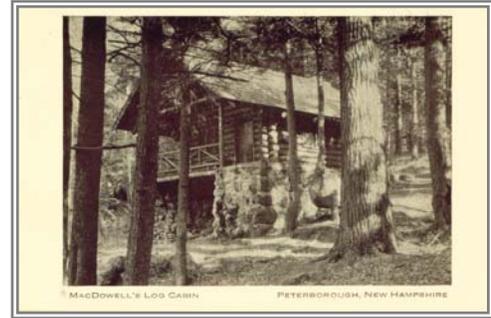
Peterborough’s early settlers recognized education to be the pathway to prosperity. From the first days of settlement, schools were held in homes and then in the Meeting House. Twelve school districts were eventually formed throughout the town, all paid for by residents and supervised by local people.

The Peterborough Academy (which became the GAR Hall) provided education beyond grammar school. Later, in 1871, a high school was built and supported by local taxes. Adult education was added to the public school system as a means to upgrade the quality of the teachers and the local work force. As the years passed the town even had Monadnock Community College, which provided college courses for teachers, technical workers at New Hampshire Ball Bearing and the general population. Mary Schofield pioneered young children’s pre-schools in 1925 with the Peterborough Nursery School. This tradition continues with the Happy Valley School and the Monadnock Community Day Care Center, now the Early Learning Center; both have operated since the early 1970s.

The Old Common mansion was used as a traditional private boarding school, called the Kendall Hall School for Girls. The school was operated by the Kendall family, and upon its closing, George and Kate Kendall continued to live in Peterborough and to support the arts and humanities, particularly the MacDowell Colony and the Historical Society. Kendall Hall was used as a summer site from 1946-50 for the Johns Hopkins’ School of Advanced International Studies, and then as a seminary by the Carmelite Order. Later on the Carmelites operated a retreat center open to all faiths. The mansion, called East Hill, was lost to fire in 2005.

The Monadnock Summer Lyceum, formed in 1828, brought information and new ideas from all over the world to townspeople—an institution that continues to this day.

The arts found fertile ground in the beauty of the region. Miss Mary Morison encouraged Marian MacDowell to bring her husband Edward, a renowned composer and director, to Peterborough for a summer respite. They purchased a parcel of land in 1896 that became the nucleus of the 450-acre MacDowell Colony, the nation’s oldest artists’ retreat.



MACDOWELL'S LOG CABIN PETERBOROUGH, NEW HAMPSHIRE

The Colony’s mission is to provide an environment in which creative artists are free to pursue their work without distraction. More than 4,000 artists have worked at the Colony since its inception, and their residencies have produced such American classics as Thornton Wilder’s Our Town, Aaron Copland’s Appalachian Spring, Virgil Thomson’s Mother of Us All, Dubose and Dorothy Heyward’s Porgy and Bess, Leonard Bernstein’s Mass. Colony Fellows have been awarded more than 50 Pulitzer Prizes. With the establishment of the MacDowell Colony, Peterborough came to have connections directly to Boston, New York and the world.

Townspeople were also early supporters of the Colony -- some 230 of them performed the Peterborough Pageant in 1910 to raise funds and awareness of it. And now, the colony will celebrate its centennial in 2007. An extra benefit is that the Colony not only shelters artists, but it also preserves a beautiful part of the town in a natural state.

Townspeople recognized the value of the arts in ways that predate the founding of the MacDowell Colony. Charles Franklin Pierce received commissions from local residents as he painted the cows and fields of Peterborough. The Sharon Arts Center, founded in nearby Sharon in 1949 as an art school and gallery, now has its shop located in downtown Peterborough where it joins several other art galleries and shops.



“The Road to Pasture” - An Example of Pierce’s Work

Theater arts were introduced in 1867 by the Trooly Rooral Theatre. The company consisted of amateur players, drawn from members of the Morison family and their friends. The theater was at their Pine Street home, Bleak House. The professional players of Mary Ware Laughton came for one summer in 1913, and returned for many years to carry on the tradition, at a site on the Middle Hancock Road, which Mrs. Laughton had purchased. Six years later Marie Currier, assisted by May Fiske Hoffman, established her Mariarden Theater-in-the-Woods along the same road.

Among the famous artists who came to hone their skills at these summer sites were Bette Davis, Ruth St. Denis, Martha Graham, and Ted Shawn. These camps set the stage for establishment of the professional Peterborough Players in 1933. Edith Bond Stearns, the

founder of the Players, came to Peterborough through her friendship with Marian MacDowell and a family summer residence. Peterborough itself inspired Thornton Wilder as he wrote "Our Town" at the MacDowell Colony in 1937, and he allowed the Players to give the first performance of his play at their summer theater in 1940. More recently, the Mariposa Museum and Center for World Crafts reinforced the interest in the arts. It is located in the Baptist Church that, after the fire of 2000, was saved from demolition. The Baptist Church building has an extraordinary history, serving the community in many ways over the years. It has been a ballet school, a newspaper office, Scout center and home theater for a marionette opera company.

IV. Peterborough's Early Roads

(This section was written in its entirety by Richard H. Sanderson, from his book on the same topic.)

We instinctively think of a town's system of roads in terms of a circulatory system. We speak of arteries such as Boston's central artery, or the "flow" of traffic out of the "heart" of the city. Our roads are the "lifeblood" of our town. The heart determines the flow of the blood.

The original proprietors of Peterborough - the men who received the original land grant - were speculators who had no intention of settling here. They wanted a quick buck by selling off hundred acre lots to settlers. Their grant required them to build a road to the meeting house, which they did, but nothing more. Other roads were the responsibility of the settlers. In earlier times, Peterborough required able-bodied men to do their fair share of road-building or pay a fine for failing to do so. We might try that.

The first permanent settlement of Peterborough was probably in 1749. For more than half a Century Old Street Road was the center of town, spiritually, commercially, and socially. The meeting house on the ridge above the old cemetery was both their house of worship as well as the place where town government functioned and where the farmers would gather after Sunday worship to discuss crops or the price of grain. The first store was also built on Old Street Road, as was the first tavern. All roads needed to provide a way for farm families to get to the meeting house for worship or to the one store in town. Most roads, as most travel, were local. When we speak of "roads," we mean something along the lines of a logging road today. They pulled out stumps and removed boulders. There was, for instance, a road over the pass between Pack Monadnock and Temple Mountain but it probably looked more like a trail than a road. It is most unfortunate that the first true road map of Peterborough was a county map drawn in 1858, more than a century after the first settlement of the town. There was another one drawn in 1892. The town itself never had a town map drawn until the 20th century!

As all the original settlers were farmers, the early lots sold were on high ground with good soil. Literally no one lived in what is now downtown Peterborough that flooded from time to time. Main Street was, in the 18th century, merely the end of the road to a grist mill operated by Samuel Mitchell on the Nubanusit at Elm Street. The only other family living on

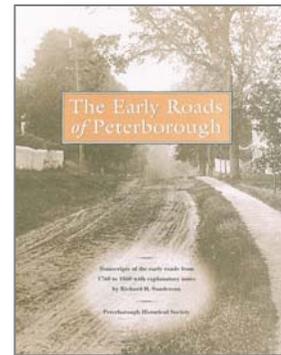
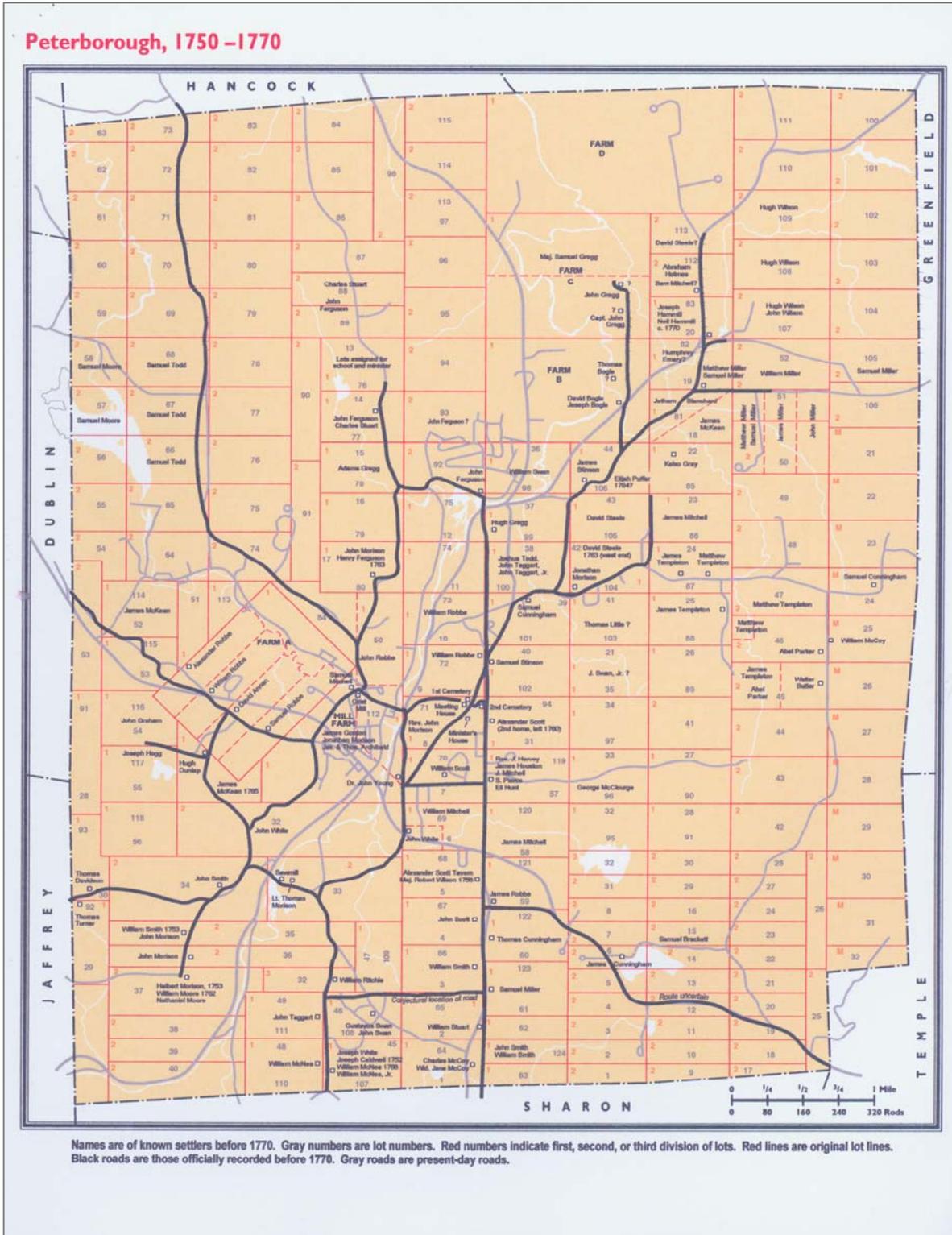


Figure #2:
Map of Peterborough's Early Roads



SOURCE: RICHARD SANDERSON, THE EARLY ROADS OF PETERBOROUGH.

a river was the Thomas Morisons who had a sawmill on the Contoocook near the bridge at Noone Falls. The importance of the grist mill is apparent from the fact that three of the first ten roads went to or from it.

Why did a town whose center of activity was on Old Street Road shift its center down the hill to the confluence of the Contoocook and the Nubanusit? It so happened that in the early 19th century, agriculture was in economic decline, largely because cheaper produce was arriving from larger farms to the west of New England while many of the farms here were becoming "played out." Fortunately, this was occurring at a time of rapid development of textile mills in New England. Peterborough was blessed with two rivers which joined near the geographical center of town. Mills were built along the Nubanusit between Grove and Elm streets, leading to the building of homes and mill houses downtown where no one had been living previously. Winter Street and Factory Street were built. In West Peterborough, virtually uninhabited in 1824, mills were built which created a need for housing and a road. So a road was built connecting Old Dublin Road with Windy Row. In North Village, the North Cotton Factory was built in 1813. The dam, foundation walls and some surviving mill houses remind us of its existence. Later, the Wilder Thermometer Factory was located there. Downtown, the Bell Factory, the second cotton mill in New England, the first in New Hampshire, was built on River Street in 1810. The Phoenix Factory, on the site of the present-day Guernsey building, was built in 1813, as was a mill for carding wool at Noone Falls. All these mills being built in such a short time had a profound effect on the population, on where people lived, and created a need for more roads.

Peterborough residents were slow to recognize the significance of this profound economic shift. This can be illustrated by a split that took place in the church around 1820. A map has survived from 1819 that shows the location of all the homes in town. It was not really a map, it was a drawing showing the distance between the meeting house and every house in town. Why did they want to know that? Because they badly needed a new meeting house and wanted to determine where it should be built. Some favored the same site (it had a beautiful view!), others recommended moving downtown where the population was growing. The split in the church had theological and ethnic roots (Congregational versus Presbyterian, Scottish original settlers versus English newcomers from Massachusetts) but may also have been affected by whether you were a farmer or a mill worker. Unable to resolve the differences, one portion of the congregation split off and in 1825 built what is now the Unitarian Church. The remaining members, convinced that the meeting house should remain up on the ridge, built a new house of worship at the intersection of Old Street Road and Sand Hill Road. The lower end of Sand Hill Road was built to accommodate travel from downtown to the church.

Those who built downtown obviously had a better eye for the future. In 1839, fourteen years after the split, the congregation on the hill took their meeting house apart, brick by brick, and carried it down to Concord Street where they built what is now the Congregational Church. If you look along Concord Street you will see many houses, as well as the Methodist Church, were built in the 1840s. If you worked in a factory you walked to work. If you could also walk to church, so much the better.

If you stopped your carriage in downtown Peterborough in 1825 and asked someone for directions to Jaffrey, how would they tell you? "Go up the hill, take a left on Elm Street (I

am using modern names), cross Old Dublin Road, continue on Noone Avenue over the hill to Old Jaffrey Road near Noone Falls, and follow Old Jaffrey Road to Jaffrey Center." That would have taken you an hour or more. The trip would have been shorter after Grove Street was built in 1826. As the center of town shifted, roads had to be built to accommodate to where new people lived as well as meet the need for good roads to transport manufactured goods from the mills to markets in Massachusetts.

Before 1823 there was not a single road in West Peterborough. The next year the Union Mill and a paper mill were built on the Nubanusit, requiring the town to build a new road between Windy Row and Old Dublin Road. But even with that, to get to West Peterborough from Peterborough village you would have had to go up Main Street to High Street, then on MacDowell Road to Windy Row and take a left to present-day Union Street in West Peterborough. That route would not do for a large mill to transport their goods on, nor would Old Dublin Road. So the town built a new, level road along the river. I suppose they assumed the dams at the mill would prevent flooding. We know they weren't entirely correct in that assumption. After Union Street was built, another mill was built between it and the river (on Briggs Street).

As mentioned earlier, the original roads, following the settlers, avoided the rivers. However, perhaps because so many dams were being constructed, reducing flooding, the second quarter of the 19th century saw the building of a number of roads along the rivers. I have spoken of Union Street but, in addition, the town built low roads on Concord Street, Grove Street and its extension beyond the basket factory, and the "new" road to Jaffrey. The latter road, incidentally, did not follow present Route 202 all the way; it followed the Sharon Road for some distance on the east side of the Contoocook, then crossed a bridge (still existing, but not used) to the west side of the river. All these river roads would have improved travel time to neighboring towns, not an important consideration in earlier times. Summer Street was added in 1858, to accommodate the demand for housing in the downtown vicinity and as a connection between Middle Hancock Road and the downtown. The section of the Greenfield Road (Route 136) between 202 and Happy Valley was built in 1844.

As the economy of Peterborough was adding to and changing the roads of the town, there were some earlier roads that eventually became discontinued. There were roads on which no one lived as farms were abandoned. A few that come to mind are Clubby Scott Road between Middle Hancock and Windy Row; Cornish Road between Old Dublin Road and Old Jaffrey Road; two roads that had been built to permit travel from Pine Street to the meeting house on the hill (one of which is still quite visible on the side of East Hill); the road over the hill north of Noone Falls, west of Route 202; the short piece of road from Noone Falls to Grove Street Extension, which is still passable on foot; the northern end of Crosby Road. Carley Road used to go through to East Mountain Road and Holt Road used to go through to Old Greenfield Road. Burke Road used to go through to Greenfield.



Downtown Peterborough circa 19__

Apart from modern highways and housing developments, a map of Peterborough today looks quite a lot like a map of 1850. Roads have been improved, some have been

straightened, but basically we are driving where others once rode on horseback. As we anticipate future growth, we must accept the reality that, while existing roads might be widened, there is no longer the option of significant new road building. I began this paper with an analogy between roads and a circulatory system. Our arteries are in place. We might add more capillaries, but that's all. In a small town, with limited, inherited roads in place, the only way to avoid blockages of the arteries is to control growth of the population⁵.

V. Significant Historic Resources in Peterborough

Many historical and cultural resources are identified, and their descriptions are entered into the holdings at the Peterborough Historical Society, Town Library, Town House, Peterborough Chamber of Commerce, NH State Register, and the National Register. The following list is not intended to be all-inclusive or final. Resources that are considered historically important will always be in flux, as some resources will no longer exist, and others will become historic through either age or formal dedication. Although Peterborough has done much to inventory its resources, the town has many resources that still need to be identified. In addition, all resources should be monitored on a continuous basis. The inventory information that is known is presented in the two maps on Pages 28 & 29.

➤ The Peterborough Historical Society

The Peterborough Historical Society is a community museum and education center with the mission of preserving, interpreting, and celebrating Peterborough's history as inspiration for our lives today and in the future. The Historical Society is a private nonprofit corporation and does not receive any local, state, or federal tax support. Its archives and museum preserve the original materials that illuminate the town's history. The Society's education programs, research center, and exhibitions share the town's past with the community.

The Peterborough Historical Society's staff and volunteers are trained to assist researchers in finding the information they need. Researching a property can be a complex process but the Society can help researchers find the information they need whether those resources are held at the Historical Society or at another institution. See the Society's "Guide to Property Research" for specific tips and sources for researching properties.

The Historical Society Museum

The Historical Society's museum has some 20,000 objects that document the town's history. These items include tools, textiles, furniture, household goods, personal artifacts, and examples of products made in town. A series of rotating exhibitions showcase aspects of the town and region's history. The museum is open year round.

⁵ These comments are those of the writer and do not necessarily represent the views of either the Historic Resources Subcommittee, the Master Plan Steering Committee, or the Planning Board.

The Morison Library and Archives

The Morison Library and Archives preserves over 20,000 items documenting the history of Peterborough's land, buildings, businesses, institutions, and people. The archives contain photographs, business and family records, deeds, tax records, maps, architectural plans, newspapers, and books. The archives are open to the public; there is no charge to use the research center.

- **Manuscript Collections:**
The bulk of the archives collection is made up of hundreds of collections documenting town government, businesses, churches, families, and cultural life. The collections span from the 1740's to the present. The archives have extensive holdings documenting the town's 19th century industrial economy with 12 collections of mill records. The manuscript collections include three architectural surveys of the town. These surveys are focused on the downtown area but include some properties in the outlying parts of town.
- **Deeds:**
The Historical Society preserves over 700 deeds in the archives. The deeds are cataloged by seller and buyer name. [Note: For other information concerning deeds refer to holdings of the Town House and Town Library as well as the Hillsborough County Registry of Deeds (Nashua) which has maps and original deeds for properties in Hillsborough County.]
- **Maps & Architectural Plans:**
The Society's collection of maps and plans includes 18th century maps of the town's lots, 19th & 20th century maps of the town, and a variety of architectural plans for some of the town's buildings. A large part of the collection is made up of plans for the Historical Building and the Peterborough Town House.
- **Peterborough Transcript & Newspaper Collections:**
The Society preserves a bound collection of the *Peterborough Transcript* from 1870 to the present. The Society also holds earlier issues of the *Transcript* and its predecessors, *The Contocook Transcript* (1849-1852) and *The Peterborough Messenger* (1847-1848).
- **Photography Collections:**
More than 10,000 photographs make up the Historical Society's photograph collection. The collections date from 1860 to the present and document all aspects of the town's history. The collection includes images of houses, farms, mills and factories, streets, and landscapes as well as a large number of portraits.
- **Books:**
The Society's library includes local town histories and genealogies, state directories and gazetteers, military histories, and works of fiction and poetry related to Peterborough. The reference collection includes books on architecture, agriculture, industrial history, New Hampshire and New England history, furniture, textiles, tools, and handcrafts.
- **Other Media:**
The Society has a small collection of video tapes (including footage of the town's 150th anniversary celebration in 1939), audio tapes, and compact discs. A collection of 39 oral histories preserves the recollections of 20th and 21st century residents.

The Main Museum Building

The Historical Society’s main building was commissioned by Clara Foster Bass, a descendant of one of Peterborough’s founding families and mother of New Hampshire governor Robert P. Bass (1873-1960). The building was constructed between 1917 and 1921.



Mrs. Bass commissioned Little & Russell of Boston to design and construct a Colonial Revival style public building that would include a museum, library, and assembly hall to “...house records of the history of this town and the Monadnock Region, to preserve memorials to the sons and daughters of Peterborough and to provide a meeting place for the intellectual and social advancement of future generations.” She left the building and an endowment in trust to the community.

Historic Buildings on the Museum Property

The Phoenix Mill House and the Brick Ends House are the last surviving structures of the large Phoenix Mill complex that dominated Peterborough’s downtown in the 19th century. The Historical Society building was placed on the site of the Phoenix Mill which had covered the area from Main Street to the Nubanusit River and from Grove Street west almost to Elm Street. The main brick mill building was demolished in



Brick Ends & Schoolhouse Then

the 1920s after several failed plans to revitalize the building. Over the next 40 years, various other buildings from the mill were rased until only the Phoenix Mill House and the Brick Ends House remained. In the 1960s downtown parking pressures threatened the buildings with demolition. The Historical Society rescued the houses and moved them from the banks of the Nubanusit to the Historical Society’s grounds in 1966.



Brick Ends & Schoolhouse Now

Built in 1824, the Brick Ends House is a double dwelling that became workers housing for the Phoenix Mill. The Phoenix Mill House was built about 1800 and served as housing for overseers of the mill. A center chimney cape, the house is now a hands-on learning space for local schoolchildren.

The placement of the houses behind Peterborough’s Memorial Gates contributes to the historic look of Grove Street. This collection of historical buildings expanded in 1999 with the addition of the District #8 Schoolhouse. Dismantled at its original site on Middle



War Memorial Gate and Maples

Hancock Road and reconstructed at the Historical Society, the schoolhouse is the last intact one-room school of the town's 13 district schools. Now the schoolhouse is used for education programs offered to region's elementary schools.

➤ Peterborough Town Library

Founded in 1833 by vote of Town Meeting, as the first free library supported by taxation in the world, the Peterborough Town Library provides a collection of materials on the history of the town as well as materials on historic preservation in general. The library catalogue is available on line at

<http://ptl.townofpeterborough.us:81/GLASOPAC/index.asp>. The professional Library staff is more than

willing to assist in locating materials in their collection. The following are some of the holdings helpful in researching the historic fabric of our community:



- The architectural survey of Peterborough by Paul Douglas Martins, which was commissioned by the Town, is an important document, complete with photographs, of the town's architectural heritage. This survey continues the work done for the Peterborough Historical Society by Professor William Morgan and should be used in conjunction with that survey.
- Maps of the town are helpful for seeing the growth of the Town over time. Of particular value are 20th century maps and the maps of early settlement.
- Building plans such as for the Library itself and other public or semi-public buildings.
- Local newspapers - available on microfilm.
- Genealogical resources.
- Peterborough Historic District Commission workbook is on file. (Other records are at the Peterborough Historical Society; the District did not get established.)
- Various town-generated reports are available that might prove useful, such as land use reports and economic development surveys and plans.
- There are three histories of the Town of Peterborough. The 1976 history written by Albert Smith is available for resource in the Library. The 1954 history written by G. A. Morison has a circulating copy as does the 1989 history, Our Changing Town.

Note that some references are best verified in more than one source. The Town Library Staff and the Peterborough Historical Society are particularly valuable on this point. Local Historical research is sometimes marred by "folklore", so caution is advised.

The **Kyes-Sage House**, an example of Carpenter Gothic 19th century architecture, which the Library uses for storing and resale of books contributed by townspeople. Public opinion which led to the saving of this structure came about in part thanks to the memory of earlier downtown structures, such as Twombly's Tavern and The Gatto House that were demolished.

➤ Peterborough Town House - Resources

- **Tax records and deeds** are available through the Assessing Office and Administration.
- **CD's of all Master Plans** are available at the Office of Community Development (OCD); in addition, the current Master Plan is available on the website.
- **Maps** are available through OCD. Depending on what they are, they might be on the website or in a planning document that is on the website; or they can be ordered here by filling out a form with a description of what information is desired to have on the map.
- **Land Use Regulations** - All of these regulations are available at the OCD and on the town's website.



➤ Aquarius Fire Museum - Fire equipment and memorabilia

➤ Peterborough Fire & Rescue – This local, mostly volunteer entity, celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2006. Since its founding in 1856, Peterborough Fire & Rescue has undergone a name change, the fire station has moved, and membership has increased. From the beginning, Peterborough residents have served as volunteer firefighters and rescue workers, dedicating their time to the safety of the community.

➤ MacDowell Dam - US Army Corps of Engineers

Photos, documents, memorabilia of the 1938 hurricane, construction of the dam, and Edward and Marian MacDowell - items are located at the Dam's main office building.

➤ Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce

Information on the economic vitality and quality of life in the Monadnock Region - includes walking tour brochures and information concerning current events and attractions of a cultural and historical nature. Web site: www.peterboroughchamber.com.

➤ The MacDowell Colony

Annual Medal Day Ceremonies - The Colony welcomes the public on an August Sunday each year for a ceremony at which the Edward MacDowell Medal is awarded. During this day the public has the opportunity to meet the Colonists and visit the studios where some of America's greatest works have been developed. In 1997, the MacDowell Colony was awarded the National Medal of Arts for nurturing and inspiring many of this century's finest artists.

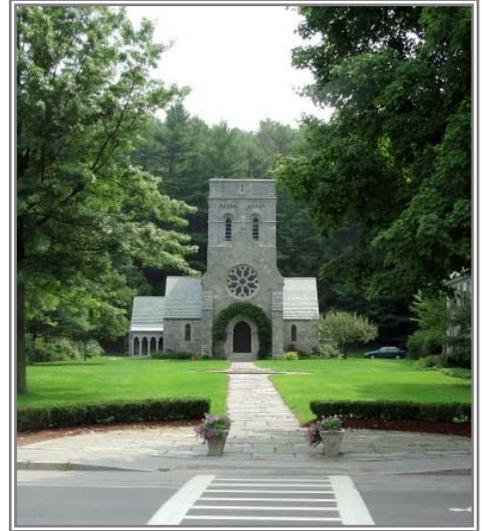
➤ Historic Markers (for listings, see Jonathan Strong's site book at the Historical Society)

- Bell Mill
- Putnam Park
- Trails and Forest Preserves
- MacDowell grave site (Heritage Commission - in process)
- Settlers' Rock (Heritage Commission - in process)

➤ Buildings Currently Registered on the National Historic Register

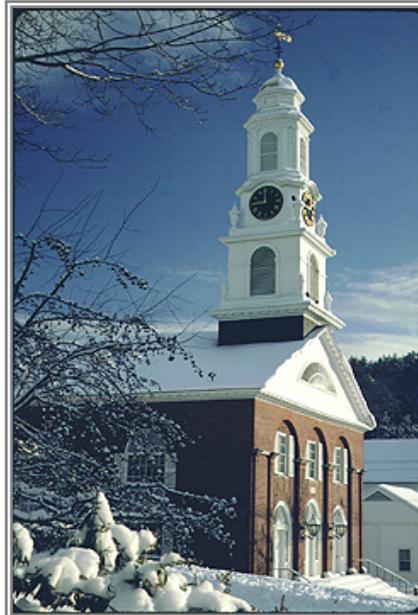


MacDowell House – Listed 1966



All Saints Church – Listed 1980

Unitarian Church –
Listed 1973



Post Office – Listed 1986



Town House – Listed 1996

➤ Buildings Determined Eligible for the National Historic Register



Baptist Church/Mariposa Museum



Community Theater



GAR Hall



20 Grove Street/Second Guernsey Building



Grove Street Houses



Historical Society



Noone's Mill



Sage House



Stone Barn



Terrace Hill Farm



Union Mill

**Figure #3:
Inventory of Historic Properties***

*The Historic Properties noted on this map and the one on the following page include houses described in the Morison History book and other resources inventoried in rural areas. Any house over 50 years old could be considered historic and contributing.

In-town neighborhoods that have had portions inventoried include: Concord, Grove, Pine, Granite, Summer, Evans, Nubanusit, Vale, Union, High, and Elm Streets; Evans and Old Wilton Roads; and the Gridley Lot. All inventoring is ongoing and has been limited by time and money.

The source information for both of these maps was provided by Historic Resources Subcommittee members.

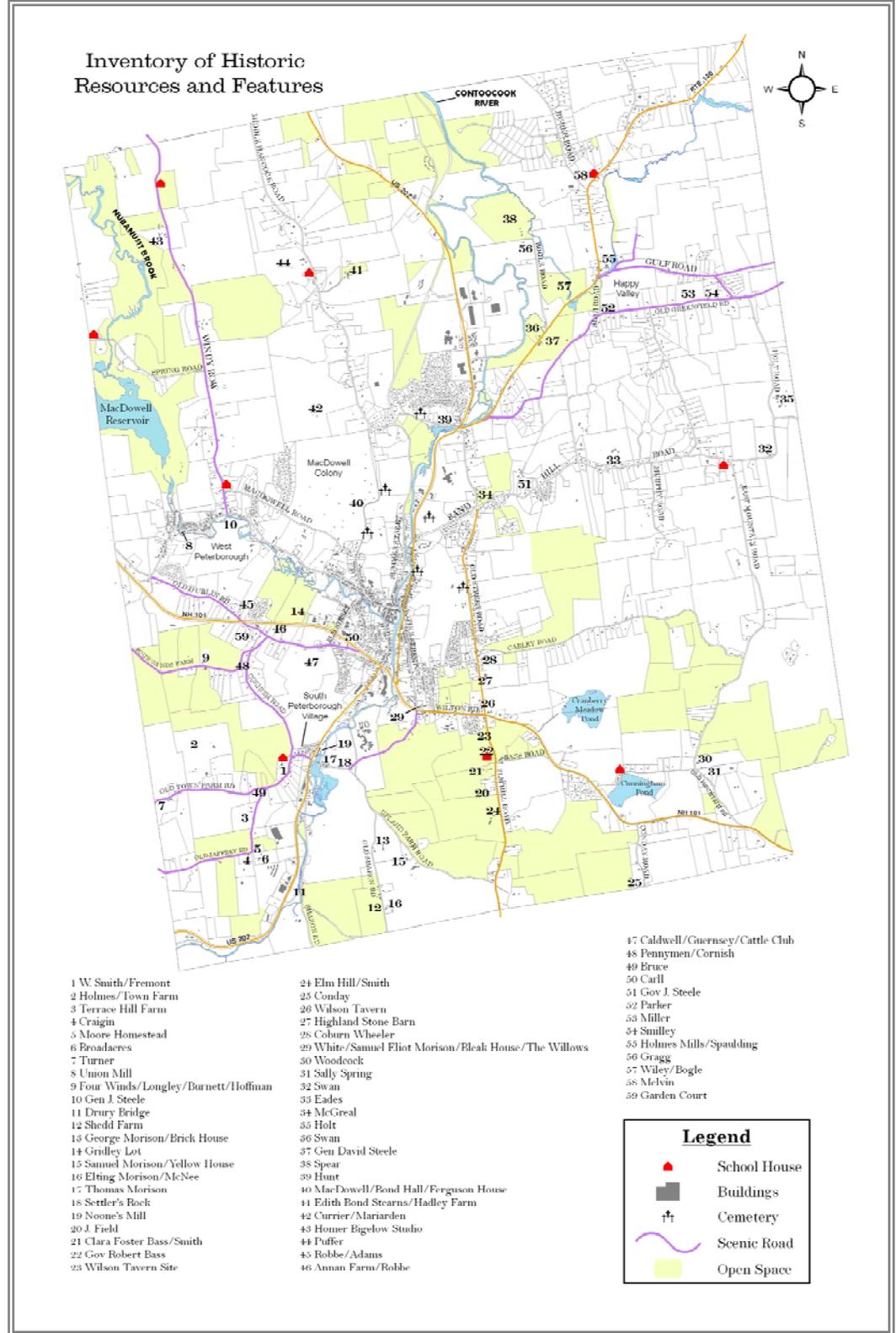
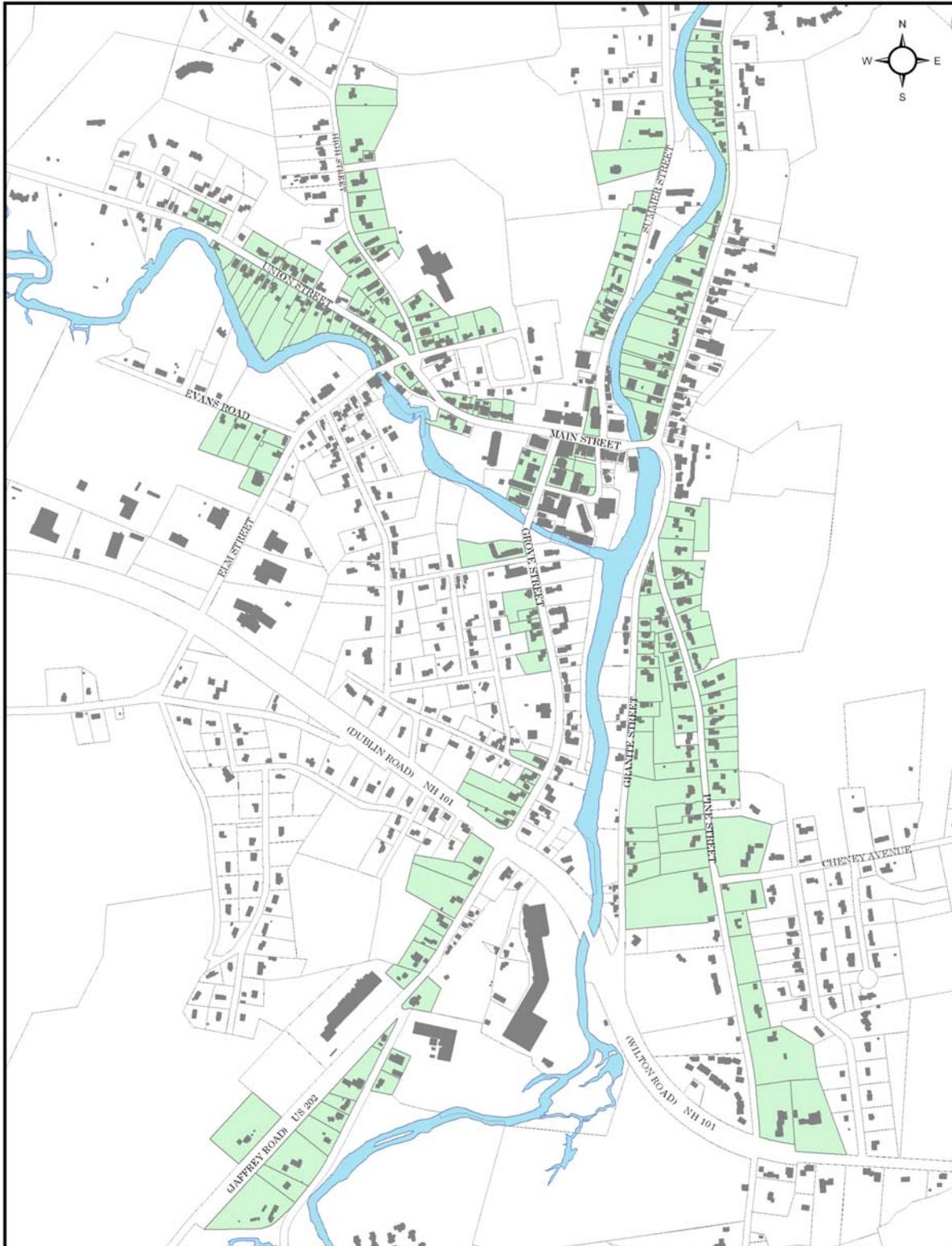


Figure #4:
Inventory of Historic Properties, Downtown Inset



VI. Conclusions

The Town has a long history of residents dedicated to cultural, historic and art-based groups, creating buildings of note for the town, and saving land for the public trust. The Historical Society, Library and Town Archives have documented the actions of its people and the community, leaving us valuable resources about the historic fabric, and building, industrial, social and cultural heritage to educate people about the preservation and legacy of the town.

The visioning process and the questionnaire surveys conducted for this Master Plan indicate that people want to keep the town smallish so that the neighborliness and sense of community with its own distinct character can be retained. There are a number of references in other chapters of the Master Plan that speak to the high value residents place on the historic fabric of Peterborough, among them:

- The high value townspeople place on compact village development and rural character, surrounded by a natural landscape as a cherished community resource.
- The need of a new model of traditional neighborhoods close to village areas and infrastructure, with social diversity and affordable starter homes that will remain affordable in the future.

In addition, the Peterborough Development Planning Project of 1995 included several statements that are relevant to this chapter:

- “The town has a rare combination of both intimate scale and rich cultural opportunities.”
- “A Town which, while an important part of a larger region, is itself a distinctive Place with unblurred edges and with a character which is uniquely its own.”
- “The Town is not only a physical place but is also a social community. Residents take community for granted only at their peril, for it is increasingly rare, even in rural settings, and is imperiled by technological and social change”

Through the Master Planning process concerns were expressed that what is cherished in Peterborough can be lost due to such factors as development in the rural areas, connected commercial development along the entrance corridors, loss of neighborhoods, and the anonymity or loss of community and social interaction due to the increase in the population and suburban development out from the center. We believe that residents care about these things, which are in part epitomized by the “look and feel” of the town, and therefore it is important that we can offer protection against these losses – protections that go beyond the good will of people in the past that has preserved or created our heritage of architecture, natural and cultural resources. The recommendations from this Subcommittee attempt to provide such protections, in the form of land use decisions and other non-regulatory approaches.