MILLBURY RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

BLACKSTONE VALLEY / QUINEBAUG-SHETUCKET LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM

Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation

John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor

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July 2007

Cover Photographs: Cordis Mills
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INTRODUCTION

The 22 Massachusetts communities within the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BRV) and the Quinebaug-Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor (Q-S) are linked by a common heritage of agriculture and industry powered by the rivers and streams that dominate the landscape of south central Massachusetts. River Corridor towns extend from Mendon on the east to Brimfield on the west. While they range in size from the city of Worcester to the compact town of Hopedale, each is equally shaped by the interaction of nature and culture over time.

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

To this end, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the two National Heritage Corridors (BRV and Q-S) have collaborated to bring the Heritage Landscape Inventory program to communities in south central Massachusetts. The goals of the program are to help communities identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected, and to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed in a pilot project conducted in southeast Massachusetts and refined in Essex County. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land*, which has provided guidance for the program since its inception. In summary, each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the DCR-BRV/Q-S consulting team. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting during which residents and town officials identify and prioritize the landscapes that embody the community's character and its history. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session including the consulting team and the LPC, accompanied by interested community members. This group visits the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathers information about the community.

The final product for each community is this Reconnaissance Report. It outlines the community's landscape history; describes the priority heritage landscapes and issues associated with them; discusses broader land planning issues identified by the community and concludes with preservation recommendations. Two appendices include a list of all of the heritage landscapes identified at the community meeting and a reference listing of land protection tools and procedures.

PART I

MILLBURY'S HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

MILLBURY'S LANDSCAPE THROUGH TIME

Millbury lies in the middle of the Worcester Plateau on the Blackstone River. The town is bounded by Worcester, Grafton, Sutton, Oxford, and Auburn. Its elevation decreases significantly from west to east, dropping 300' into the lower Blackstone valley. Singletary Brook and Dorothy Brook are the two main tributaries in Millbury. The town is further divided by its underlying soil types: a good quality loam toward the west provides good agricultural land, while the eastern section is underlain by stony, sandy soil.

The Nipmuc, a subgroup of the Southern Algonquians, inhabited this area before Anglo-American settlement. Their trail system likely included the river corridor as a major north-south route, with a cross trail that may have followed West Main Street. Millbury was part of the area known as Quinsigamond (including parts of Paxton, Holden, Worcester and Auburn), and is archeologically notable for its quarry sites and rock shelters, as well as small campsites along the river, that would have been used for seasonal hunting and fishing activities. In the second half of the 17th century, a number of Christian Indian towns were established in the area by colonial missionaries, including one in present-day Grafton, and another to the south in Webster, but the significant disruption of Native American lifeways came with the Nipmucs' loss of lands and independence in the aftermath of King Philip's War (1675-76).

Millbury was part of a colonial land purchase from Nipmuc sachem Wampus (John White) in 1704 which was centered in Sutton and included part of Auburn. In 1742, Millbury was established as Sutton's North Parish. The North Parish grew as colonists were attracted to its waterways and agricultural land, settling on dispersed farmsteads. As more land was cleared for cultivation and pasture, farming areas became concentrated into small villages at Old Common, Grass Hill and West Millbury. The farms specialized in grains and potatoes and, before dairying became popular during the mid-19th century, sheep. Saw, grist, triphammer, paper and fulling mills spread along the river and more easily dammed brooks. An iron foundry was established on the Blackstone in the mid-18th century, which evolved into an armory during the Revolution, when Asa and Elijah Waters won a government contract for the manufacture of guns.

In 1813 the town separated completely from Sutton. What its residents lost in land was more than compensated for by Millbury's water power resources and its proximity to Worcester. Although Millbury was bypassed by the turnpike construction boom that took place during the Federal Period (1775-1830), in 1828 the Blackstone Canal opened. Nine locks were required in Millbury to cope with the town's steep change in elevation, of which four were concentrated where the Blackstone falls down Millbury Hill (now Canal Street). Construction of the canal brought skilled Irish immigrant laborers to the area, and early 19th century industry quadrupled the town's population. At the same time, Goodell Manufacturing (1822) Millbury's first textile factory, was built on the Blackstone and other factories were being built along Singletary Brook beginning with the Braman Cotton Company in 1825. Settlements grew up around factory sites in Bramanville, West Millbury and on the Blackstone near the armory (an area now known as Armory Village), which remained in business until 1845. By 1840, at what was the peak of agricultural production elsewhere in Massachusetts, Millbury tallied 495 factory workers, compared to only 296 farmers among its population.

An indicator of Millbury's industrial importance was the routing of two separate rail lines through town: a spur of the Boston & Worcester to Armory Village in 1837, and in 1847, the Providence & Worcester that superceded the Blackstone Canal. Millbury was one of the first towns in the county to attract sizable immigrant populations: first the Irish, followed by an increasing number of French Canadians. By the mid-19th century, factories lined the Blackstone in Armory Village at River, Waters and South Main Streets, surrounded by four residential quadrants. The same pattern was followed in Bramanville, which developed as a center of textile manufacture. The agricultural village around Old Common lost much of its civic importance, which shifted to West Millbury with the expansion there of mixed manufacturing. Textile manufacturing continued to dominate the town's industry, however, well into the 20th century.

The Worcester Consolidated Street Railway came south to Millbury in 1900, and Armory Village became a regional transportation node. By the 1920s the streetcars were gone, however, and Millbury's roads were widened and repaved for automobile traffic. North Main, Canal Street and Providence Road became Route 122A, as Route 122 to Grafton was built to bypass Armory Village; Route 20 crossed the northeast part of town in 1931, and by 1940 a section of the Worcester-Providence Turnpike (Route 146) extended south through Millbury to Sutton.

The mid-20th century saw Millbury continue to grow, but with an increasing emphasis on suburban residential development, as more residents looked to employment in Worcester and other cities easily accessed north of town. Three new subdivisions appeared north of the center village. Millbury farmers, responding to a new consumer base, turned increasingly to fruit and market gardening. As the 20th century closed, however, the great textile mills were empty or converted to other uses and Millbury had become primarily a residential community for workers traveling to Worcester, the MetroWest area or the Boston area. Improvements in the transportation infrastructure, such as the Massachusetts Turnpike, Route 146 and the commuter-rail service to Boston, made Millbury more accessible and more desirable as a place to live. These changes and the development pressures they brought have significantly altered Millbury's landscape.

COMMUNITY-WIDE HERITAGE LANDSCAPE ISSUES

Concern for heritage landscapes is not new to Millbury. The town's Master Plan, prepared in 1998, noted: "a prominent goal is the desire to preserve Millbury's essential character, which includes its rural landscapes, scenic river views and historic mill town tradition." A comprehensive historic resources survey was conducted in 1989 and a Preservation Plan was also prepared at that time.

Millbury's Heritage Landscape Identification meeting, attended by interested residents including many representing town boards, was held on March 19, 2007. During the meeting, residents compiled a lengthy list of the town's heritage landscapes, which is included as Appendix A of this report. As the comprehensive list was being created, attendees were asked to articulate the value of each landscape and identify issues relating to its preservation.

Residents emphasized broad issues related to heritage landscapes and community character. These issues are town-wide concerns that are linked to a range or category of heritage landscapes, not just to a single place. In Millbury, four related issues stand out.

Village Preservation
Preserving the character of Millbury's village centers was strongly recommended in the 1998 Master Plan, where it was noted that many residents supported protection of the villages within Town. Specific zoning mechanisms, focused on Armory Village, were proposed in the Plan and in several subsequent studies. Today, there is still a need to implement important recommendations to provide permanent protections for these villages.

Agricultural Lands
As Millbury faces increasing demand for housing stock, the Town is witnessing development of its farmland and loss of this important element of its rural character. Mechanisms that provide protection for the land as well as for the activity of farming are essential to ensure that Millbury's farms can be sustained for years to come.

Historic Structures
Since so much of the developable land in Millbury is gone, and remaining land is so expensive, people are turning to tearing down historic structures and replacing them with new ones. The Master Plan stated that the "residents of Millbury have a sizable interest in preserving the structures in town which possess historical significance." Without a Demolition Delay Bylaw or Local Historic Districting, the town lacks a mechanism to slow down this trend and create the space for an exploration of alternatives.

Scenic Roads and Traffic Pressure
Millbury has a Scenic Roads Bylaw, but has designated only three roads as Scenic – Stone Road, Federal Hill Road, and Stowe Road. With the new Route 146 interchange and the Shoppes at Blackstone Valley, traffic has increased significantly. McCracken Road, a small winding country road, has become an access road for the mall and carries up to 15,000 cars a day. Consideration needs to be given to how to preserve the character of local roads while maintaining accessibility for increasing use by residents and visitors, particularly in light of pressures for widening roads and changing traffic patterns.

PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Based on information gathered at the community meeting, attendees identified a group of priority landscapes for the consulting team to focus on, through field survey, documentation and planning assessment. Each of the priority landscapes is highly valued and contributes to community character. None of them has any permanent form of protection.

Millbury's priority landscapes range from a discontinued road to the entire downtown center. Hillside farms are indicative of the town's early ridge-top settlement and strong agrarian roots, while mill villages echo Millbury's historic reliance on water-powered industry.

The landscapes which were given priority status by Millbury's community meeting represent a range of scales and types of resources. Each landscape is also representative of other, similar properties in the town and each demonstrates the multiple layers of significance that are common to most heritage landscapes.

Natural and cultural features, individual and civic histories, combine to present property owners and concerned citizens with a complex intermingling of present-day issues and opportunities. The descriptions and recommendations that follow are intended to be first steps and constructive examples for what needs to be an ongoing process: to identify what is valued and irreplaceable in the community, and develop strategies that will preserve and enhance Millbury's landscape heritage.

Old Common and Old Common Road

Description: Old Common is a small, cohesive collection of well-maintained 18th and 19th century residences grouped around a small green that served as Millbury's original town common. It is a quiet, bucolic and self-contained place, and the first area that town residents think of when they think of "historic" Millbury. There are eight well-maintained residences on the roads that surround the green. Greenwood Street, Carlstrom Lane and Carleton Road. Elmwood Street approaches Old Common from the east. Low stone walls delineate the front yards of several of the houses. One wall on Greenwood Street is constructed of huge boulders. The triangular green itself is privately owned, in two parcels. Norway spruce and maple trees dot the lawn of the green. The open space is smaller than it was originally, reduced in size by the widening of the bordering streets.

Four of the houses on Old Common are simple, 18th century residences that retain their agricultural outbuildings, recalling the importance of the farm economy. The remaining houses were constructed in the first half of the 19th century.

Old Common Road, which historically led to the common, is approximately 1 1/2 miles long, much of which is discontinued and exists as an unpaved trail. The paved portion of the road begins at West Main Street northeast of Lake Singletary and moves northwest less than two hundred feet to the unpaved portion of the road/trail. That unpaved portion, lined with impressive stone walls (some about four feet high) and moving past an old orchard, continues around the west side of Mount Ararat and along the western edge of

private property (J.E.P. Contracting) on Elmwood Street to Old Common. It appears as the driveway of the property. This historic resource was not surveyed during the 1989 comprehensive survey. On the Town Assessors Map Old Common Road is shown as an easement between private properties. The trail portion of the road is used by residents for walking, mountain biking and horseback riding. This portion of the road moves through a 180-acre area of open space that includes privately owned Mount Ararat (not addressed as part of this heritage landscape), the summit of which affords a little-known and spectacular vista across the countryside. Currently, 109 acres of land in this area is being developed into a 199-unit multi-family open space community for those aged 55 and older. A second project proposed within the Mount Ararat area, known as Old Common Estates, is a conventional subdivision of 19 homes on 24 acres. That proposal was denied by the Planning Board in 2006 due to technical inadequacies, but it is likely that the land will be developed eventually.

Background: The Old Common area represents the focus of the early municipal history of the Town of Millbury, as well as its agricultural beginnings. The first English settlers in the area came when lots were laid out as part of a plantation grant after 1704, and the town of Sutton was incorporated in 1714. In 1743 the northern portion of Sutton became a separate north precinct and this area became its civic focus as the site of the first meetinghouse, built in 1744 on land deeded to the town as Town Common. At some point thereafter, it reverted to private ownership. On an 1831 atlas, Old Common Road is labeled "Country Road from Sutton," an indication of the strong connection between Sutton and this area even after Millbury incorporated as its own town in 1813. Although few homes were constructed here, the area served as a gathering place because of the meetinghouse.

The oldest house, dating to about 1747 (11 Old Common) was built for the first minister, Rev. John Wellman. The home of the second minister, Rev. Ebenezer Chaplin (21 Old Common), is the second oldest, dating to about 1764. Both houses have associated barns. The residence at 9 Old Common served as a schoolhouse into the 20th century. Oral history and map evidence suggests that 1 Old Common was initially two separate buildings – a store and a separate shoeshop – before being converted into a residence in

the late 19th century. Prominent professionals and artisans with names that resonate in town today joined the ministers on the Common, including a doctor (Dr. Braman), attorney (Thomas Pope), farmer and Grange treasurer (Andrew Garfield) and small-scale textile operator (Francis McCracken, who used the former meetinghouse for his handloom weaving operation).

The second meetinghouse was built in 1802 across Greenwood Street, opposite the northern edge of the green. It was later moved to Bramanville in 1832, which ended the Common's period as the Town Center with houses, meetinghouse, the first school (1808) a store, tavern nearby, and the Town pound, which was located at the intersection of Carlstrom Lane and Carleton Road.

Today, Old Common is a desirable residential area, with a privately owned central green maintained as open space.

Issues:

- No protections for historically significant area: An unusually intact landscape expressive of Millbury's early years lacks permanent protections
- Traffic threats posed by new shopping development: a movement to make McCracken Road one way would direct an enormous amount of traffic heading to town center through this rural part of town.
- Ownership: The Old Common itself is privately held, and while it is currently maintained by the owners as open space, this is vulnerable to change.
- Access to northern portion of Old Common Road trail: public access to the discontinued (trail) portion of the road is blocked by encroachment of private drive and outbuilding on the north.
- Development pressures on Mount Ararat/Old Common Road area: development is threatening the loss of the open space through which Old Common Road passes and which has been highly valued by the community.

Recommendations:

- A survey was conducted of Old Common during the 1989 comprehensive survey. The earlier work should be revisited and updated as necessary, including documentation of Old Common Road, and the area should be evaluated for National Register of Historic Places eligibility.
- Implement the 1998 Master Plan recommendation to designate Old Common as a Local Historic District. The historical significance of the area and the community's recognition of that, the integrity of the physical resources, and the lack of protections all support the designation. Part II below and Appendix B describe the benefits of Local Historic District designation.
- The Planning Department, Planning Board, Public Works Department and Historical Commission need to work collaboratively to ensure that decisions regarding traffic flow in town do not have a negative impact on this area. Mass Highway's Context Sensitive Design Manual should be consulted during this process.
- Implement the Master Plan recommendation to pursue a Conservation Restriction or municipal acquisition of the acreage that encompasses Old Common Road and Mount Ararat to protect the resource and make it available for public enjoyment. Map the area as a first step in order to better understand the land and its relation to current and future development activity.

- Inform property owners on Elmwood Street of the easement that permits public access to Old Common Road, and work with them to facilitate that access.
- Consider acquiring land as necessary and possible at the Elmwood Street end of Old Common Road to allow for minimum public parking to access the trail. Consider posting a sign identifying the trail at this end.

Bramanville Village

Description: Bramanville Village, the largest of several mill villages in Millbury, is located along Singletary Brook, a tributary of the Blackstone River into which it flows a few hundred yards downstream. It is southeast of Old Common and southwest of Armory Village, and is equidistant from these historical and current town centers. Brierly Pond sits at the western edge of the village.

The 58-acre Bramanville Village area encompasses approximately 64 buildings and structures on eight streets around the village center, most of which are single- and multi-family residences to house mill workers. Two residences that are most likely the town's oldest mill housing are located in the district, on the north side of West Main Street. They include a single-story building on High Street and a two-story one on West Main, both with impressive granite rubble lower stories and center entries.

There are two standing mills on two mill sites along West Main Street. One of the mills in the area, currently Cesyl Mills, Inc. (a former spindle mill historically known as the Walling Woolen Mill and the W.W. Windle Wool Scouring Mill) on West Main Street, is a brick and wood frame structure. This building replaced the original mill on the site, a three-story brick structure with five stories in the rear built around 1854 in the new "Italianate" architectural style. That elaborate mill building largely burned to the ground in 1887, and what remains of the original complex is the brick office and picker house on West Main. A second prominent mill located on the corner of West Main and Burbank Streets, historically known as the M.A. Lapham Woolen Mill, now houses Steelcraft, Incorporated, manufacturers of medical equipment and information technology. This interconnected brick complex of one, two and three-story structures with common

architectural details was constructed over a 40 year timeframe (1879-1919). The Lapham Woolen Mill is the largest and most intact 19th century industrial building in Millbury. The former home of the mill Superintendent – a large, wood-frame, turreted Queen Anne-style residence – sits on a hill behind the mill on Burbank Street. Owned by the current owner of Steelcraft Inc., it is currently unoccupied. Another residential structure also owned by the mill owner, brick worker housing across Burbank Street from the wood residence, has been condemned.

Southwest of the mill on West Main Street is the brick Queen Anne-style fire station, constructed by the Lapham Woolen Company and currently under the same ownership as Cesyl Mills. Across Main Street and on a rise of land bounded by a low stone wall sits the Federal/Greek Revival Congregational Church, relocated from Old Common in 1832. The district also includes a former school and hotel, in addition to the mill buildings, church and fire station.

There is in an Adaptive Reuse Overlay District that applies to specified mill buildings, but not to other residential, commercial or industrial properties. The town has applied to the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) for technical assistance to create a mixed use overlay district that can provide the flexibility needed to support redevelopment compatible with the historic character of the village.

Background: Bramanville grew up around the waterpower provided by Singletary Brook. First utilized in the middle of the 18th century, by the mid-19th century this portion of the brook had been divided into five separate mill privileges. The earliest identified mill in the Village was a fulling mill established around 1750. In 1776 what was reportedly the first paper mill in central Massachusetts was established by Abijah Burbank. By 1855, near its peak of production, the mill manufactured over 437,000 pounds of paper annually, giving the village its first name of Papermill Village. At about the same time as the establishment of Burbank's paper mill, Asa and Andrus Waters established an armory just upstream from where the Singletary crosses beneath Rhodes Street, a predecessor to the larger armory later built by the Waters brothers at South Main Street (see Armory Village, below).

No additional mills were constructed in Bramanville until 1825, when a cotton mill was erected. Over the next five years, cotton and woolen mills continued to be constructed until, by 1830, all the mill privileges in the Village were being used. The 1860s were a period of expansion for the woolen mills, and tenements were built to accommodate growing numbers of workers. After the Civil War, Bramanville's expansion appears to have slowed as consolidation took place, probably aided by the effects of the Panic of 1872. For most of the 20th century, the Mayo Company dominated the economic life of the Village with four mills on Singletary Brook, most likely benefiting from World War I contracts. Today, mill activity in Bramanville is largely confined to Cesyl Mills and Steelcraft Inc.

Issues:

- No protections for historically significant area: Bramanville is a compact, largely intact mill village that lacks protection. Mechanisms including design standards to protect the historic resources and to promote appropriate reuse are needed.
- Many significant buildings are owned by a single owner: Bramanville's future hinges on this individual's plans, which are not clearly understood.

- Need to follow up on the 1998 Master Plan for an Overlay District: Millbury's application to CMRPC for technical assistance to create a mixed use overlay district is important.

Recommendations:

- Share the findings of this project with the mill property owner. The owner needs to know that this historic area and its structures are highly valued by Millbury's citizens.
- A survey was conducted of Bramanville during the 1989 comprehensive survey. The earlier work should be revisited and updated as necessary (including the area's boundaries, to make sure that all the appropriate resources are included), and the area should be evaluated for National Register eligibility.
- Make sure owner is aware that historic rehabilitation tax credits can be available to National Register-listed properties.
- Continue to pursue creation of a mixed use overlay district that will allow flexibility of reuse while preserving the historic growth pattern and character of the area. Explore the potential of a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District in Bramanville. Encourage mill owner to become engaged in planning for the future of the Village and his properties.

Armory Village and Blackstone River Rapids

Description: Armory Village, also known as Millbury Center, is the civic and commercial center of Millbury. The Blackstone River bounds the Village on the southeast, south and west sides, but is visually and physically inaccessible from the area's streets. The present VFW building on South Main Street is the site of the former Waters Armory, which catalyzed the growth of the area and gave the Village its name. The comprehensive survey of 1989 documented this area on eight separate area forms and 22 individual forms. The boundaries of Armory Village as a single district, therefore, are not clearly delineated.

The intersection of Elm and Main Streets marks the heart of the commercial zone of the Village, and encompasses residential, commercial and institutional uses. Some buildings are handsome 19th century structures, such as the brick Belfont Hotel and the adjacent Masonic Lodge on South Main Street. Some, while new or renovated, have respected the historic architectural fabric, including the MCU Credit Union and an addition to the Millbury Savings Bank. Architectural highlights of the area include the Federal/Greek Revival Millbury Federated Church and the brick Italianate Millbury Baptist Church. The most important surviving building from the early period of the Village is the home of the Armory's owner Asa Waters II on School Street, built between 1826 and 1828. It is a three-story frame dwelling with two five-bay facades and a porch with Corinthian columns. The Town purchased the mansion in 1976. It is listed on the National Register, and today houses the Millbury Historical Society Museum. The town's new municipal offices and the ruins of the Waters' cistern are located on former estate lands. On the other end of the temporal spectrum is the Central Diner on Elm Street, a well-preserved example of the streetcar-inspired diners of the early 20th century. It is currently closed, and in need of repainting.

Over the years, there have been architecturally incompatible additions to the Village that stand in stark contrast with its historic character. Some old buildings have been removed and replaced, while fires have played a role in the loss and replacement of others. Suburban-style parking setbacks and one-story commercial buildings break up the architectural continuity of the area.

There are two green spaces in the vicinity, the larger Upper Common on the corner of North Main and Elm Streets and Lower Common on South Main and Elm Streets. In 2002, Upper Common was refurbished with new paving, benches, lighting and planting. The effort was supported by municipal funds as well as private contributions and volunteer labor.

Residential streets radiate from the downtown in four directions, and vary considerably . Miles Street was home to the town's wealthy citizens during the 19th and much of the 20th century. This street lies close to the former path of the Blackstone Canal, which has been filled in. The houses along the street represent some of the most stylistically ambitious residences in Millbury, reflective of the positions of power and standing of their occupants. Styles include Tudor and Colonial Revival. There has been some infill of homes in styles at variance with the historic character of the street. Zoning allows multi-family housing with a special permit here. The homes along Maple Street south of the Blackstone River are exceptionally uniform mid-19th century Federal and Greek Revival-style residences built for the emerging middle-class of skilled factory workers, small businessman and sales staff. Other streets have worker housing in styles popular before World War II.

The falls, or rapids, of the Blackstone River descend over one hundred feet as the river flows north past the former Armory site, now the VFW, and under the South Main Street bridge. Situated some fifteen feet below street level, their power and beauty are a dramatic yet almost entirely unnoticed presence in the downtown. Visible only behind chain link fencing in the VFW parking lot and at the South Main Street bridge, neither location provides an inviting public point of access, either visually or physically. There have been discussions about whether the Blackstone River Bikeway could pass through the present VFW parking lot by the rapids.

Background: The falls of the Blackstone River, an early focus for saw and grist mills in Millbury, provided the opportunity for the Waters family to locate their metal working operations here and guarantee this as an early manufacturing hamlet. Asa and Elijah Waters purchased the site that became the Armory in 1808, operating until 1845.

Manufactories multiplied along the Blackstone River, including Cordis Mills on the east edge of the Village. Commercial and retail establishments expanded, and Armory Village became the focus of settlement, with most residential development surrounding the Elm/Main Street core and some located along these main spines. While Old Common was Millbury's first municipal center, the growth of Armory Village caused a realignment of the town's civic and social structure. The town's second church was built here in 1828, and eventually almost all of Millbury's institutions were contained in the Village, including three additional churches as well as civic and commercial structures. During the early years of the 20th century construction shifted from commerce to expanded town services, including a new high school, library, post office and fire station. On Elm Street east of Main, the Methodist Church was redeveloped as the Elm Draught House Cinema. As old buildings have been removed and new unsympathetic buildings added, the cohesive pattern of the Village has been eroded.

In 1999, following a recommendation of the 1998 Master Plan, the Town received a Community Development Block Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development to prepare a comprehensive downtown revitalization plan. The Millbury Improvement Initiative (MII), a community development corporation, was formed to spearhead work on a vision for downtown revitalization. Its mission is to:

> *Improve the quality of life in Millbury by undertaking projects that address the economic, environmental, and social needs of the residents while enhancing the town's physical image and fostering a sense of community pride.*

The MII does not have enforcement authority, and their work has been focused on signage and streetscape improvements. Several studies followed creation of the MII to address the physical and economic revitalization needs of Armory Village, including the Retail Market Analysis of 1999 and Millbury Center: A Comprehensive Village Plan and Action Program of 2000.

Issues:

- Unsympathetic infill, creating non-cohesive streetscapes and undermining the visual integrity of the center
- Need to increase the impact of the MII, and to consider historic preservation tools to work in concert with beautification and economic development measures
- Lack of access to and connection with Blackstone River and rapids landscape.

Recommendations:

- Assess zoning for the Village and its residential streets to ensure compatible treatment and development. It is critical that evaluation of measures to revitalize Armory Village take into consideration historic preservation objectives as well as economic development ones. At their best, these two objectives can mutually support one another.
- Update/consolidate the 1989 historic resources survey, clarify the boundaries of Armory Village, and complete any additional historic resources survey work as necessary. Some parts of the village were not inventoried in 1989, including the area north of Elm Street and west of North Main, and smaller areas of infill along Orchard

Street, Howe Avenue, and Millbury Avenue. Evaluate Armory Village for National Register eligibility.

- Implement the 1998 Master Plan recommendation to create Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NACD) in Armory Village. That recommendation specified three areas within the Village: Prospect-Hamilton-Miles Streets, Maple Street, and Cherry-West Streets. If NACDs are pursued, it is important that the civic and religious buildings in their historic landscape context be protected by such designation.
- Revisit the recommendation made in the 2000 Millbury Center Comprehensive Village Plan to adopt site plan review. Follow the Downtown Millbury Design Guidelines prepared as part of the Plan, in particular the following guidelines relative to protecting and strengthening the historic character of the district:
    - Emphasize preservation or historic restoration of original or unique façade elements. Repair and replicate original materials and detailing.
    - Design new work to capitalize on Millbury's Victorian and turn-of-the-century architectural heritage. Use design inspirations from the downtown neighborhood, so that new buildings "fit in."
    - Make efforts to maintain the scale and proportion of surrounding buildings in new construction.
- Encourage the VFW to visually enhance the parking area and maximize the potential of the site for public use. Continue to explore the possibility of aligning the Bikeway route to maximize connection with the rapids.
- The Planning Department and the Planning Board should look to outside sources of funding support for downtown improvements, such as Community Economic Development Action Grants, and outside planning opportunities such as the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affair's Urban Rivers Visioning workshop to assist in the revitalization process.

Grass Hill Farms

Good soil conditions in the western area of Millbury historically supported the development of prosperous farms in what is known as the Grass Hill neighborhood. Three farms were chosen as priority landscapes to illustrate the values of the agricultural economy and landscapes to Millbury, and the issues facing farming in town today. Recommendations for these farms are applicable to others in Millbury. They are located in close proximity to one another—two of them were at one time a single farm— at the intersection of two important town roads, West Main Street and Carleton Road. Together they form a large zone of nearly contiguous agricultural land.

Pearson's Dairy Farm

Pearson's Dairy Farm is one of the oldest working farms in Millbury. It is the last dairy operation in town, which once had many, and one of the last in southern Worcester County. Most of the property lies west and south of West Main Street, while the main farmhouse, retail operation and a barn are located on the east side of the street. The total acreage of the farm is 293 acres, of which 250 are in the APR program. The property is about half forested, half open. Originally the farm was 3000 acres, and went west into neighboring Auburn.

The farmhouse faces West Main, with two large old sugar maples in the front yard and trimmed yew foundation plantings. It is a five-bay, center-entry, Greek Revival-style building with rear additions, which has been somewhat altered over time. Next to the house is an outbuilding that contains the ice cream making machinery and serves as a store for the farm's retail operation where farm products are sold including milk, ice cream and maple syrup. Behind the shed there is a barn with farm machinery and an office room. Across West Main Street and down Fjellman Road is an early 20th century farmhouse occupied by the farmer's son who is currently working the farm operation. Nearby are several large cow barns and a sugar shack where maple syrup is produced. The land includes corn and hay fields and pasture, and includes a Christmas tree farm that has been operating for about 10-15 years. Beyond the barns the land rises past a rocky field traversed by a brook fed by the wetlands associated with Ramshorn Brook to the south. There are two small ponds in the northern portion of the property fed by two branches of this brook.

The farm has 100 head of Holsteins and milking Shorthorns, and one yoke of oxen. The Pearsons use their own acreage for growing corn for feed, as well as rent other property. At one time they rented 90 additional acres for raising hay, but over the years they have lost rental fields to residential development. This spring they were paying $700 per week for feed, because of the bad crops last year. Grain costs have also skyrocketed because ethanol production is competing for corn crops and has forced the price up.

Stowe Farm and Hawk Hill Orchards

Stowe Farm encompasses approximately 100 acres on the east and west sides of Stowe Road, with some of the acreage south of Carleton Road. Of the total acreage, a little less than 94 acres is in Chapter 61A. Approximately 50 acres is open, the rest forested.

Activity on the farm includes apple production, stabling of horses and equestrian education classes, and kenneling and raising of dogs in a barn across Stowe Road from the farmhouse. Early in the 20th century the farm cultivated crops including squash, cabbage and corn, with a small orcharding operation. Since that time apple production

increased from a few trees to 11 acres today. The farm has a stand and a pick-your-own operation in September. The farm also had a dairy operation until 1975, with approximately 30 milking cows.

Stowe Meadows Conservation Area lies adjacent to Stowe Farm to the east of the farmhouse, and was once part of the farm property. The family sold the 100 acres of conservation land to the town under the control of the Conservation Commission. Ramshorn Brook flows through Stowe Meadows from Soles Swamp south of the property into Pondville Pond. Within the area lie remains of a woolen mill, Rich's Mill, where the large (breached) dam and millrace are still visible.

The Stowe farmhouse is a substantial mid-18th century residence, with barns and outbuildings nearby. The house has a five-bay façade with center entry, and a rear ell whose ridge is higher than the front. 20th century additions include an enclosed front and open side porch. In the farm yard, split rail fencing and stone walls surround several corrals for horses. A small house dating to the early 20th century sits across the street.

Hawk Hill Orchards was once part of Stowe Farm, and the owner of Stowe Farm sold the land to his nephew about 25 years ago. It occupies 34 acres at West Main Street and Carleton Road, 10 of which are planted in fruit trees and 20 of which are forested. Fruit trees include peaches and about 15 varieties of apples, and the farm runs a pick-your-own operation in September. A house, formerly occupied by the current owner's parents, was recently renovated to serve as a farm stand where baked goods and crafts are sold. The former farm stand, a small building at the corner, is now used for storage. There are also a barn and other outbuildings on the property.

One parcel of Hawk Hill, approximately six acres, is under Chapter 61A.

Background: The Grass Hill area is a significant survival of the prosperous agricultural past of Millbury in the 18th and 19th centuries. The hill provided good soil for hay and grain crops and pasture from the time of Millbury's earliest settlement, and by the mid-19th century the area was largely cleared and cultivated. As industry and, consequently, population increased in the east and south of town, Millbury's agricultural land became even more important, providing a local source first for beef, butter and cheese and, later, milk and orchard produce. Houses and farm buildings clustered at intersections such as West Main and Carleton, leaving the backlands open for agricultural use as they still are today.

Several of the town's earliest colonial settlers and well-known farm families are associated with this area. Members of the Tainter family, colonial occupants of Stowe farm (also known as Tainter-Stowe farm), were among the founding fathers of Millbury and one, Lieutenant Joel Tainter, was a Revolutionary War veteran. By the mid-19th century the farm was owned by the Stowes.

Today, farm operations are challenged by high costs, loss of land to development, and competition from imported farm products, which have compounded the typical difficulties, such as the vagaries of weather, that farmers have always had to confront.

Issues:

- Lack of permanent protections for significant resources: while the majority of Pearson's Farm is under the APR program, the part of Stowe Farm that is still in agricultural use has no permanent protection. Without this, its important open space and historic resources are under threat.
- Need for updated historic resources survey work for area, and for individual properties: this is an important area historically, visually and economically. It is critical that it be documented using the best current methodology. There were discrepancies found between the 1989 survey and information derived from the Pearsons, for instance, on ownership history.
- Importance of large area of contiguous land: together with town-owned land, this area of the Grass Hill neighborhood represents over 500 acres of agricultural and conservation land, which provide varied and extensive wildlife habitat as well as scenic, historic and productive values.
- Changing economy and difficulty of supporting viable farm activity: rising costs, loss of rental hay fields to development, imported products. A farmer stated that 42% of apples sold in the region come from China, and he has cut way down on production because of competition from imported produce.
-

Recommendations:

- Share the findings of this project with the property owners. The owners need to know that these heritage landscapes are highly valued by Millbury's citizens.
- Work with the owners of Stowe Farm to help them consider more permanent protections such as an APR or CR for the property, and with the owners of Pearson's Dairy Farm to consider placing the remainder of their acreage under the APR program. Contact the owner of Hawk Hill Orchards to discuss protections for that property.
- Form a local Agricultural Commission to help advocate for measures that will support the viability of farming in Millbury.
- Update the historic resources documentation prepared in 1989 for each of these farms and for the area as a whole, in accordance with Massachusetts Historical Commission standards. Focus on the heritage landscapes as well as the structures.
- Implement the Master Plan recommendation to make Grass Hill a Local Historic District. Consider the boundaries for this designation after historic documentation has been updated.

Butler Farm

Butler Farm is a 50-acre farm on the west side of Singletary Road, across from Lake Singletary, at the town's boundary with Sutton. The hillside site affords a broad vista from the farm over the lake. Approximately half of the property is open; half young second-growth deciduous woodland. The fields are mown twice a year by the town, and volunteers conduct basic maintenance of the vegetation including tree pruning. The Boy Scouts have laid out a trail system, used for hiking and cross-country skiing, and 76 campsites in the woodland.

The farm is accessed via a steep drive, exhibiting some erosion on its uphill side, which leads to an early 20th century, 1 1/2 story Cape-style farmhouse with a fieldstone foundation. The house has been stabilized, including the installation of a new roof this past spring by a prison crew supervised by the Worcester County Sheriff's office. The town's emergency management supervisor has an office in the building; a "repeater pole" on the site sends signals to coordinate fire, police and ambulance emergency communication. Plantings near the farmhouse include arborvitae and spruce. A small area of fruit trees northwest of the farmhouse are remnants of a former orchard. A community garden has been started in front of the farmhouse.

In addition, the property includes a small parcel of land, likely once used as a parking area, on the opposite side of Singletary Road and adjacent to the lake. Access is controlled on this lakeside parcel with a roadside boulder barrier and a No Trespassing sign. The water is at a significantly lower level than the road, down a steep slope from this parcel.

Just outside of the town-owned property, to the southwest, is an aquifer with remnants of the 19th-century Millbury and Sutton Cranberry Company bog, stone walls, and sluice gate. A stone-wall lined track paralleling a stream may be associated with this enterprise, or be an old cow path.

The Town of Millbury purchased Butler Farm in 2000 for $300,000. Some outbuildings were taken down at this time.

Background: Butler Farm was used as a market garden for many years, prior to the most recent two owners before it came under town ownership. The recent past owner, Mrs. Butler, inherited the property from her uncle and used it as a summer home. During her tenure, local farmer Robert Pearson (see Pearson's Dairy Farm, above) hayed the land and kept it open. Before Butler's ownership, her uncle lived on the land. He didn't farm, but he did have a garden, grew highbush blueberries among other things, and his fields were used as a pasture for the neighbor's cows.

The town has created a Butler Farm Committee to oversee work on the property and plan for its productive use by the Town. Plans for future use include engaging school classes in a project to plant blueberries and sell them, carrying on a historic use of the property with a crop that would be well suited to the land.

Issues:

- Need for Assessment and Management Plan: although basic maintenance is performed, there are additional needs for landscape and infrastructure maintenance. Above all, there is a need for consensus on use.
- Need to better document and understand the rich historic and natural resources on the site: the site has not been documented on MHC forms or, as far as is known, by other inventory.
- Lack of Awareness and Interest: many townspeople do not know about the land, its availability for passive recreational use, and its potential for communal uses. Attempts to attract residents to use the land for community gardens have had mixed success.

Recommendations:

- Prepare a master plan for the property addressing the site's physical conditions and needs, natural and cultural resources, and uses. All of these things should be addressed in an integrated planning exercise. Incorporate a public planning process that heightens awareness of the property and its values
- Document the landscape and its historic features according to MHC standards, filing an Area form with the local historical commission and MHC.
- Conduct a natural resources inventory of property.
- Consider engaging school children in the inventory process, to heighten interest
- Consider whether a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) operation would be appropriate for the site, possibly run by a lessee. Look into CSAs in other communities
- Consider leasing the fields for haying to an area farmer
- Out of the master plan process, create a Friends group to champion the farm and work with the Town to develop a variety of creative ways for the public to use it, including educationally through the schools.

Dorothy (Dority) Pond (Big and Little)

Description: Dorothy Pond, also known as Dority Pond (1831 map), is the largest water body in Millbury and a Commonwealth Great Pond. The pond actually consists of several bodies of water: a small pond area north of Upton Street that was bisected by construction of the Massachusetts Turnpike in 1955, the large pond, and another small

pond area to its south (also referred to as Little Dorothy Pond). Little Dorothy Pond is hydrologically linked to the main body of water but separated by a narrow land mass carrying Riverlin Street across a dam. This dam, originally an earthfill dam constructed around 1825, was rebuilt about five years ago.

A second pond crossing northwest of Riverlin Street carries the abandoned railroad right-of-way originally of the Boston & Worcester Railroad (and later the Boston & Albany Railroad), known as the Millbury Branch, and some consider this the demarcation between Big and Little Dorothy Ponds. Dorothy Pond is fed by Broad Meadow Brook, whose headwaters begin on Vernon Hill near Saint Vincent's Hospital in Worcester. Seventy-five percent of the Broad Meadow Brook's 400-acre watershed is protected by Mass Audubon as the Broad Meadow Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, one of the largest urban wildlife sanctuaries in the country. Dorothy Brook leads from the pond south to join the Blackstone River, after feeding two more small ponds along the way.

Most of the shoreline of Dorothy Pond is developed, with the exception of approximately 50 acres of steep ledgey land on a peninsula at the southern end of the pond (accessed by Grover Road), and another area along the eastern shore. The town, through the Parks and Recreation Committee, owns several parcels on the east shore: a 4-acre town-owned parcel off MacArthur Drive which has frontage on Dorothy Pond and two town parcels totaling approximately 23 acres, which contain and surround Little Dorothy Pond. Accessed via Riverlin Street, this land was championed by the former Town Manager as the site for a town beach, but the project has not moved forward since his departure in 2004. Millbury's capped landfill and transfer station are adjacent to this property. A right-of-way off Wheelock Avenue/Cushing Terrace is used as an informal boat ramp.

Over the past several decades, Dorothy Pond has become increasingly shallow due to soil erosion, silting, and residential filling. In the 1950's, the depth of Dorothy Pond was approximately 30 feet. Today, the depth has been reduced to approximately 20 feet. Residential filling has occurred to create larger backyards and to combat erosion by construction of retaining walls. Much of the filling and grading activities have been conducted without Conservation Commission approval. Erosion may be due to high water levels, and problems associated with dam monitoring and water level control.

In the past, there was a significant problem with overgrowth of weeds, including Eurasian Milfoil, in the pond. This was likely due to leaching from the capped landfill, illegal filling and grading activities, herbicide/pesticide applications to lawns and the lack of a woody vegetative buffer to filter stormwater runoff. Residents have also been known to dispose of grass clippings and leaves by dumping them into the pond. During the past several years, the Dorothy Pond Association has funded annual herbicide applications to the pond that have managed weed growth.

Fishing in the pond is a popular activity. Although the pond is not stocked, there is a plentiful supply and diversity of fish. There has been concern about the scarcity of crayfish, however, and the absence of a once-abundant population of snakes and frogs. The decline of the frog population, in particular, is of concern because they are considered a bioindicator; their thin, permeable skin is sensitive to poor water and air quality that would also affect humans.

The abandoned railroad right-of-way that separates Big and Little Dorothy Pond is owned by the state and is under the control of the Department of Transportation and Construction. It is informally used by Millbury residents for fishing, bicycling and walking. An attempt by the town in 2002-2004 to obtain the right to construct a bicycle path along the right-of-way was unsuccessful.

There are the foundations of an ice house by the pond near Gover Road.

Background: Several precontact archaeological sites, including a rock shelter, indicate early human activity in the Dorothy Pond area.

Dorothy Pond, like so many other ponds in the region, became a popular summer vacation spot, and summer cottages grew up along its shores during the late 19th century and into the early 20th century. Over time, these cottages have been winterized or torn down and replaced by year-round housing.

Dorothy Pond has two islands today, but at one time there were two additional islands in the pond, each of which contained a house. Rising water levels caused the islands to erode into the pond.

Issues:

- Unauthorized activities: uncontrolled activities that constitute filling of wetlands along the pond shore need to be addressed
- Public land and lack of access: public access points are not well known or clearly marked and advertised. As a Commonwealth Great Pond, public access for purposes of boating, fishing, and hunting is required.
- Loss of wildlife: the marked reduction of once-prolific animal species raises concerns about the source of the problem
- Protection of undeveloped peninsula: adjacent undeveloped land provides visual relief and open space along an otherwise developed shoreline.
- High water levels, inadequate dam controls—impacts shore properties
- Potential pollution from a variety of sources: need to assess the quality of the water, particularly if there is a desire to use pond as a public beach area

Recommendations:

- Share the findings of this project with the Dorothy Pond Association, so they know that this area is highly valued by Millbury's citizens.
- Enforce regulations. The Town should consider hiring a Conservation Agent (full or part time), to assist in compliance and enforcement of the Wetlands Protection Act
- Work with state and federal agencies to closely monitor water quality in Dorothy Pond, and conduct a natural resources study to determine the source of species loss.
- Adopt a local bylaw that is more stringent than the state Wetlands Protection Act, in order to provide additional controls for the town to protect Dorothy Pond.
- Improve dam monitoring and water level controls.
- Inform town residents of existing access to the pond, and look for opportunities to increase access along potential rights-of-way to the pond.

PART II

BUILDING A HERITAGE LANDSCAPE TOOLKIT

EIGHT TOOLKIT BASICS

As our communities undergo rapid land use changes, heritage landscapes are particularly threatened because they are often taken for granted. There is a broad variety of resources that communities can call upon to protect these irreplaceable resources. Below is a checklist of the basics. Each is discussed in the sections that follow and in Appendix B.

1. Know the resources: Inventory
We cannot advocate for something until we clearly identify it – in this case, the physical characteristics and historical development of the town's historic and archeological resources. The necessary first step is to record information about the resources at the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: National Register Listing
The National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Listing brings a number of benefits including recognition, consideration when federally-or state-funded projects may impact the resource, eligibility for tax credits, and qualification for certain grant programs.

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

4. Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning
It is important that Open Space Plans and Comprehensive or Master Plans address heritage landscapes as vital features of the community, contributing not only to unique sense of place but also to environmental, recreational and economic health.

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

6. Defend the resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms
Effective and innovative preservation tools exist in the legal and regulatory realm. These range from a wide array of zoning, bylaw and ordinance mechanisms, to incentive programs and owner-generated restrictions on land use.

7. Utilize the experts: Technical Assistance
Regulations and creative solutions for heritage landscapes are constantly changing and emerging. Public and private agencies offer technical assistance with the many issues to be addressed, including DCR, MHC, the Heritage Corridor and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission.

8. Pay the bill: Funding Preservation
Funding rarely comes from a single source, more often depending on collaborative underwriting by private, municipal, and regional sources. Each town also has a variety of funding sources that are locally-based and sometimes site-specific.

MILLBURY'S TOOLKIT – Current Status and Future Additions

What follows is a review of the tools that Millbury already has in place, as well as a number of additional tools that fall within some of the categories noted above (The tools already in place for Millbury provide a good foundation for heritage landscape preservation, but their efficacy as protection for the town's natural and cultural resources can be significantly improved by strengthening existing measures and putting others in place. Appendix B includes extended descriptions of preservation measures; the specific applications of those tools to Millbury's resources are described below. In addition, the appendix contains a full description of additional avenues and creative approaches that Millbury can consider in developing a multi-pronged strategy for preservation.

A tool that has been proven to be one of the single most valuable resources in protecting heritage landscapes has been the Community Preservation Act (CPA). Towns that have approved the CPA have been able to leverage funding for such activities as historic resource surveys, acquisition of conservation restrictions and open space, adaptive reuse of historic structures, and signage programs. Millbury has discussed this measure and asked residents in the Open Space survey about their willingness to support the CPA. At present there has been mixed response to the initiative. It is recommended that the Town form a study committee to better understand how the CPA can benefit the Town. More information about the CPA can be found in Appendix B under 6. Defend the Resources: Laws, Bylaws and Regulations and 8. Pay the Bill: Funding Preservation.

These tools should be considered in combination with those recommendations made in Part I for Millbury's priority landscapes.

1. Know the resources: Inventory

Current: According to the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the town's inventory includes documentation for 555 buildings, structures and sites. Following the survey work, a Preservation Plan was prepared that evaluates Millbury's historic resources and provides a road map for preservation, including areas proposed for Local Historic Districts, other protection mechanisms, and sources of funding. The Town followed through on a number of these recommendations in their Master Plan (see below, Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning).

Additions: Survey methodology has improved over time and the inventory work conducted in 1988 and 1989, while extensive, should be revisited. Most important to heritage landscape preservation, there has been an increased focus on landscapes; the survey work of the 1980s focused heavily on architecture. In addition, important places like Armory Village should be assessed as an integrated Area with various components, rather than multiple Areas. Survey work should prioritize heritage landscapes and in particular those listed in this report.

Twenty-nine historic archaeological sites and twelve prehistoric archaeological sites have been surveyed in Millbury. It is recommended that a comprehensive archaeological survey be completed for the community. Known and potential precontact Native American and historic archaeological sites should be documented

in the field for evidence of their cultural association and/or integrity. Funding assistance for this effort would also be available from the MHC Survey and Planning grants, as well as CPA funding.

It is recommended that a similar, archaeological survey be completed for the community. Known and potential precontact Native American and historic archaeological sites should be documented in the field for evidence of their cultural association and/or integrity. Funding assistance for this effort would also be available from the MHC Survey and Planning grants, as well as CPA funding.

2. Gain recognition for their significance: State and National Register Listing

Current: Millbury has 84 properties and features listed in the National Register. Eighty-two of these are within the Blackstone Canal National Register Historic District (1995). The remaining two are Asa Waters Mansion and the U.S. Post Office, listed as Individual Properties. All are automatically listed in the State Register of Historic Places.

Asa Waters Mansion and the Millbury Public Library are protected by Preservation Restrictions. As a result, the library is also listed on the State Register of Historic Places.

In 1998, the MHC rendered an opinion that Millbury Federated Church and Central Diner in Armory Village were eligible for listing on the National Register.

There are no local historic districts in Millbury.

Additions: Millbury's Master Plan recommended that the Historical Commission outline a National Register program and prepare nominations. The Town should pursue designation plans and priorities with the MHC. Both Bramanville and Old Common are good candidates for National Register listing.

3. Engage the public: Outreach, Education and Interpretation

Current: The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor has published an excellent walking tour guide to Armory Village that describes the history and significance of a number of the Village sites, as well as providing brief historical background to the town as a whole.

Millbury's second grade classes do a yearly unit on Millbury history, including research and field trips. This has been part of their curriculum for the past 6-7 years.

Additions: Millbury's Open Space and Recreation Plan recommended publishing a guidebook and/or a map of the Town's open spaces, and installing signs at selected locations. This is an excellent idea that can expand on the effectiveness of the Heritage Corridor walking tour and heighten visibility of heritage landscapes. Millbury's Historical Commission should consider the development of interpretive tours using these tools as a way to reach out and keep heritage landscapes in the

public consciousness. There should be good coordination between the various groups interested in the Town's historic resources.

The Master Plan recommended that a Master Plan workshop be conducted every other year led by the Town Planner to discuss the major elements of the Plan and review zoning bylaws. It was recommended that this be conducted for the benefit of town officials, board members and the general public. It was stated that this would promote inter-departmental and inter-board communication, provide a status report on implementation, and discuss additions or revisions. This is an excellent suggestion that should be given a high priority.

Preservation Mass, as the statewide preservation advocacy organization, is a source of support for advocacy. They have a program that annually identifies and publicizes the 10 Most Endangered historic resources in the Commonwealth, which is a good way to advocate for resources that are imminently threatened.

4. Think in context: Comprehensive and Open Space Planning

Millbury has a track record of implementing recommendations made during planning studies. They have prepared numerous town-wide and area-specific plans, and successive ones have built on the findings of the last. Priority heritage landscapes addressed in this report were noted as important places in the Town's Master Plan and Open Space and Recreation Plan, including Stowe Farm and other farms in West Millbury, Old Common and Old Common Road, Bramanville, Downtown (Armory Village), the Blackstone River, and the Town's lakes and ponds.

Current: Master Plan 1998: An update of the plan is anticipated in 2008. Many of the goals stated in the Master Plan address heritage landscapes, including:

- Preserve rural character
- Preserve and strengthen existing village character
- Protect historically significant areas and sites
- Preserve, protect and expand open space
- Promote compatibility of land uses

It was noted that historic preservation is important in its own right and also that it can increase tourism and foster economic development.

Major recommendations from the Preservation Plan of 1989 were incorporated into the Master Plan's cultural and historic preservation recommendations. They include:

- Work with the Planning Board and MHC to develop a Bramanville Historic Overlay District
- Prepare a Demolition Delay Bylaw and/or develop an informal relationship with the Building Inspector
- Develop a façade improvement program with design guidelines
- Work with the Planning Board and Conservation Commission on improving the open space community bylaw or replacing it with an open space protection bylaw
- Create Local Historic Districts for Old Common and Grass Hill
- Create Neighborhood Preservation Districts for three areas of Armory Village, Bucks Village and West Millbury Village

- Coordinate the historic-cultural resources part of the GIS mapping project with the Planning Board

These are excellent recommendations, some of which the Town has already implemented. This current study confirms the importance of these actions to protect Millbury's heritage landscapes.

In addition to these cultural resource recommendations, the Plan also recommended a number of land protection measures, including acquisition by gift or easement of the 180 acres of land near Old Common Road mentioned above in the priority landscape discussion, and encouraging participation in the Chapter 61A and APR programs. It underscored the fact that only the APR program provides permanent protection for these properties.

The Plan recommended Village Overlay Zoning to protect the character of Millbury's villages, in addition to the use of historic and neighborhood conservation districts. It also proposed that open space easements be created around villages to contain and delineate them, and that a land trust dedicated to this purpose be formed and activated.

Additions: An update of the Plan is anticipated in 2008. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Plan. Prioritize the landscapes discussed in this study and bring the various boards and commissions together to develop a coordinated action plan for implementation.

Current: Open Space and Recreation Plan Millbury's Open Space Plan was adopted in 1998, and is currently being updated. As noted above, the Plan identified many of the priority landscapes in this report as beautiful and valued places for its residents. It noted the fact that public access to the Town's water resources is limited.

The Plan reported a strong community desire to protect the historic contrast between villages and forest covered hills and farmland. It recommended working with private owners and developers to see that these needs are understood and appreciated. It identified the Town's cluster zoning provision as an important tool in achieving this.

Additions: The Town stated in its application to this program that, in response to the findings of this project, it intended to devise a strategy for heritage landscape protection and incorporate it into its Open Space Plan update. This is a very positive commitment. It is also essential that the Town integrate its thinking about natural and cultural resource protection and enhancement.

It is vital that there be strong links between community economic development, open space, and recreation agendas in order to successfully address Millbury's environmental and development challenges. There should be regular joint meetings of the town boards involved with land-based and cultural resource issues. This scheduled interaction will help to maintain communication, coordinate planning priorities, and advance programs that support and promote community character and heritage landscapes.

5. Develop Partnerships: the Power of Collaboration

Current Status: The Master Plan recommendation for a Master Plan Workshop noted above (Engage the public: Outreach, Education and Interpretation) applies equally to communication with the public and to collaboration between Town departments and boards.

The Plan also recommended strong and active communication between the Historical Commission, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission.

The Town's application to the Heritage Landscape program identified as a benefit of participation the fact that the project would lay the groundwork for collaboration among the many boards, organizations and conservation-minded residents, many of thejm, as it stated, have limited or no contact with one another.

Additional Efforts: There should be regular joint meetings of the town boards involved with land-based and cultural resource issues. This scheduled interaction will help to maintain communication, coordinate planning priorities, and advance programs that support and promote community character and heritage landscapes.

It is important that the various organizations in Town focused on historic preservation, including the Historical Commission, the Historical Society, the Friends of Asa Waters Mansion, and the Millbury Improvement Initiative, maintain good communication relative to preservation and education initiatives.

6. Defend the Resources: Zoning, Bylaw and Ordinance Mechanisms

Current Mechanisms
Open Space Community Bylaw: The Town adopted a new open space bylaw that incorporates a four-step design process and innovative design standards, requires that at least 50% of a site is protected open space, and gives density bonuses to developers willing to provide more benefits such as protecting additional land.

Adaptive Reuse Overlay: The purpose of the Adaptive Reuse Overlay Bylaw is to encourage the redevelopment of abandoned, vacant or underutilized mill buildings, to encourage flexibility in site and architectural design and to allow for a mix of new land uses that are appropriate to both the needs of the community and the scale of surrounding neighborhoods. A variety of uses are permitted within an Adaptive Reuse Overlay area.

Route 146 Highway Corridor Overlay District: This bylaw was cited in DCR's publication Terra Firma: Identifying and Protecting Historic Roads as a protection success story. The purpose of the bylaw is to provide for orderly development and safe and efficient traffic movement while protecting the scenic, natural and historical features of the area.

Additional Mechanisms

The following strategies have consistently proven effective as basic preservation tools in communities throughout Massachusetts.

1. **Demolition Delay Bylaws** provide a time period in which towns can explore alternatives to demolition. There has been a lack of consensus in Millbury on this measure, and the Millbury Historical Commission should work with MHC staff to develop a bylaw that could best suit Millbury's needs. They should also work with other town groups to publicize the advantages of a demolition delay bylaw to the community. The most valuable aspect of this bylaw is that it creates space within which to have a conversation about how private and public needs can both be met in the service of preservation. Many towns have found that a delay of one year is the most effective time frame within which to negotiate alternatives to demolition. A majority of the bylaws apply to all structures built over 50 years ago, in accordance with federal standards.

2. **Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NACD),** further explained in Appendix B, are also local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected. Millbury has already discussed the possibility of establishing NACDs in several areas of town. The Millbury Historical Commission should work with the MHC staff to prioritize action on those recommendations. This will include more specifically determining how an NACD can help to maintain the character of areas which have changed through time, but which retain a valued neighborhood "feel" that may be threatened by incompatible development.

3. **Local Historic Districts (LHD),** further explained in Appendix B, are also local initiatives and the strongest form of protection to preserve special areas with distinctive buildings and places. Local designation can be tailored to specific community needs, and often protect private investment by enhancing property values. Millbury understands that the key to tourism and, in part, to economic development, is the preservation of the rural and village center character of the Town. Recommendations already made for LHD designations should be pursued, beginning with Old Common.

Additional mechanisms specific to Millbury's landscapes

The following recommendations are organized by the types of resources that Millbury has, and measures that should be considered to strengthen their protection.

<u>Mill Villages and Industrial Structures</u>

A defining characteristic of the entire Blackstone Valley and Millbury in particular is the mill villages that exhibit the vestiges of the transformative power of the industrial revolution in mills, dams, mill worker housing and transportation elements such as the associated rivers, canals and railroads or rail traces. Millbury exhibits that history in the villages of Bramanville, Bucks Village and West Millbury Village**.**

Millbury has an Adaptive Reuse Overlay bylaw, but it only applies to the mill buildings themselves and their site, not to abutting undeveloped residential and commercial properties. This has impeded redevelopment of properties in Bramanville

and elsewhere. The mixed use overlay district that the Town is exploring is intended to address this.

Agricultural Lands

Preservation of agricultural landscapes means preservation of the farming activities; otherwise, it simply is the preservation of land as open space. There are instances in which changing technology sometimes requires modifications to existing farm structures, or the addition of new ones. It is important to know what the features of an agricultural setting are and which features the community treasures in order to make a case for preservation of these settings.

Appendix B has a full list of regulatory tools that should be considered to protect agricultural land; the following highlights important measures to meet the needs of agricultural protection in Millbury.

1. Create an Agricultural Commission, a standing committee of town government created through vote at Town Meeting. This Commission would represent the farming community, promote agricultural-based economic opportunities, and work to protect and sustain agricultural businesses and farmland.
2. Prioritize parcels under Chapter 61A for future acquisition. Should the owner choose to sell land recently withdrawn from Ch 61, the town has only 120 days to act on its right of first refusal. The need to pay fair market value, combined with lack of readily-available funding from a program such as the Community Preservation Act, makes it difficult for the town to effectively act on this right.
3. Strengthen public-private partnerships to preserve farmland through purchase of APRs or CRs
4. Develop partnerships to raise funds to purchase development rights on farms or to assist a farmer in the restoration of historic farm buildings for which the owner would be required to donate a preservation restriction (PR).
5. Make information about the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources programs available to farmers, including the Farm Viability Enhancement Program (technical assistance, funding) and the Agricultural Environmental Enhancement Program (supports best management practices for agricultural operations to mitigate impacts on natural resources).
6. Document farms that are considered critical to the character of Millbury's community using MHC survey forms, updating surveys that were conducted in 1989.
7. Adopt a right-to-farm bylaw which allows farmers to carry on farming activities that may be considered a nuisance to neighbors. Refer to Smart Growth Toolkit at: http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/bylaws/Right-to-Farm-Bylaw.pdf
8. Explore Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), a partnership between a farm and a community of supporters. Community members cover a farm's yearly operating budget by purchasing a share of the season's harvest. This relationship guarantees farmers a reliable market, while assuring the members high quality produce, often below retail prices.

Scenic Roads

Scenic roads are an integral part of the historic fabric of the community. They are highly valued by Millbury residents and visitors alike and were listed as a heritage landscape theme during the public meeting. Roads must also accommodate modern transportation needs and decisions regarding roadways are often made with travel and safety requirements as the only considerations. Millbury has adopted the Scenic Roads Act (MGL Chapter 40-15C) but has designated only three roads to date for which there would be review and approval for the removal of trees and stone walls within the right-of-way. In addition to roadway issues, much of what we value about scenic roads – the stone walls, views across open fields and the many scenic historic buildings – is not within the public right-of-way. The preservation and protection of scenic roads therefore requires more than one approach.

1. .Complete an inventory with descriptions and photo documentation of each of the roads in Millbury considered to be scenic, including the character-defining features that should be retained.
2. Post attractive road signs that identify the scenic roads in town.
3. Coordinate procedures between Highway Department and Planning Board or Historical Commission.
4. Consider a Scenic Overlay District which may provide a no-disturb buffer on private property bordering on scenic roads or adopt flexible zoning standards to protect certain views. Such bylaws would apply to the landscapes bordering state numbered roadways, which would not be protected under the scenic roads designation, as well as to landscapes bordering town roads.
5. Develop policies and implementation standards for road maintenance and reconstruction, including bridge reconstruction, which address the scenic and historic characteristics while also addressing safety. This is an important public process in which the community may have to accept responsibility for certain costs to implement standards higher than those funded by Mass Highway Department. Such standards should have a section addressing the way in which the local Highway Department maintains roads; for example, requiring a public hearing if any new pavement width is to be added to a town road during reconstruction or repair. Policies can be adopted by local boards having jurisdiction over roads, or can be adopted at Town Meeting through a bylaw. In developing policies consider factors such as road width, clearing of shoulders, walking paths and posted speeds. A delicate balance is required.

7. Utilize the Experts: Technical Assistance

A list indicating the full range of available governmental and non-profit sources of technical assistance can be found in Appendix B.

8. Pay the Bill: Funding Preservation

A list indicating the full range of available governmental and non-profit sources of funding can be found in Appendix B.

Millbury has been designated a Preserve America community, which makes it eligible to receive technical assistance and matching grants related to heritage tourism. More on the Preserve America designation and a full listing of the range of funding sources can be found in Appendix B.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Millbury's residents have a strong sense of place, defined by the town's varied natural features and the historic land use patterns that grew out of them. The town has already begun to document and evaluate its most significant buildings and natural areas. It must now also look beyond these traditional resources to the landscapes, streetscapes, rural roads, neighborhoods and other natural and cultural assets that define the community's character. Like most municipalities, Millbury is facing multiple pressures for change that will have permanent impact on land-based uses and natural resources, especially its remaining farming areas. Special places within the community that were once taken for granted are now more vulnerable than ever to change.

The Millbury Reconnaissance Report is a critical tool in starting to identify the rich and diverse heritage landscapes in Millbury and in developing creative preservation strategies and partnerships. Millbury will have to determine the best ways and sequence in which to implement the recommendations discussed above. The town would do well to form a Heritage Landscape Committee, as described in DCR's publication, *Reading the Land*.

Landscapes identified in this report, especially the priority landscapes, will benefit from further documentation in accordance with MHC guidelines. The documentation in turn will provide an information base for the local publicity needed to build consensus and gather public support for landscape preservation. Implementing many of the recommendations in this report will require a concerted effort by and partnerships among municipal boards and agencies, local non-profit organizations, and regional and state agencies and commissions.

There are no quick fixes for the challenges of managing growth and funding preservation. Many of the recommended tasks and approaches will require cooperation and coordination among a number of municipal, regional and state partners to be successful. They will require time and a good dose of patience, as volunteer schedules, legislative procedures, and funding cycles try to mesh.

Circulating this Reconnaissance Report is an essential first step. The recommendations should be presented to the Board of Selectmen, who represented Millbury in its application to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program. Copies of the report should be available on the town's web site and distributed to town departments and boards, particularly Millbury 's Historical Commission, Planning Board, and Conservation Commission and will also be useful for the Millbury Historical Society, neighborhood associations, local land trusts, and other preservation organizations. Finally, a reference copy belongs in the town library. All of these circulation efforts will broaden citizen awareness, and result in increased interest and support for Millbury's heritage landscapes.

Finally, the project team suggests that the following recommendations be the top three priorities for Millbury as the town works to protect the character of its community:

1. Move forward on the Master Plan recommendation to designate Old Common a Local Historic District.

2. Move forward on the Master Plan recommendation to designate Grass Hill a Local Historic District.
3. Continue to pursue a mixed overlay district for Bramanville, and evaluate the village for National Historic Register listing.

Implementation of these and other recommendations in this report will involve the leadership and significant input from the Millbury Historical Commission. Several seats are currently vacant; an effort should be made to recruit new members who can share the efforts of moving these recommendations forward.

APPENDIX A

MILLBURY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

This list was generated by local participants at the Heritage Landscape Identification meeting held in Millbury on March 19, 2007 with follow-up fieldwork on April 25, 2007. **There are undoubtedly other heritage landscapes that were not identified at the HLI meeting noted above.** The chart has two columns, the name and location of the resource are in the first; notes about the resource are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

APR = Agricultural Preservation Restriction
LHD = Local Historic District
NRHD = National Register Historic District
Bold = Priority Landscape
CR = Conservation Restriction
PR = Preservation Restriction
NRI = National Register Individual Property

Summary of Priority Landscapes:

Grass Hill Farms: Pearson's Dairy Farm, Stowe Farm and Hawk Hill Orchards
Butler Farm
Bramanville
Armory Village and Blackstone River Rapids
Old Common (including Old Common Rd.)
Dorothy (Dority) Pond (Big and Little)

Agriculture	
Stowe Farm W. Main St.	Horses, apples, dog kennel; close to Hawk Hill Orchards; has a pick-your-own operation in fall; had a dairy operation until 1975 part of Grass Hill Farms area
Pearson's Dairy Farm W. Main St.	working farm – 100 head of cattle, maple syrup production, Christmas tree area, retail operation sells dairy and maple syrup products; 293 acres, of which 250 in APR program part of Grass Hill Farms area
Hawk Hill Orchards Carleton Rd.	Apples, peaches, farmstand selling baked goods, crafts, etc; pick-your-own operation part of Grass Hill Farms area
Butler Farm Singletary Ave.	approx. 50 acres, town purchased in 1999. Fruit trees, community gardens, view of Singletary Pond. Land includes small parcel adjacent to pond
Archaeology	
Mount Ararat	Multi-component site: precontact steatite quarry and the Old Common Road, blocked at both ends by private property
Rich's Mill and dam near Carleton Rd.	18th century remnants at Ramshorn Brook, can see where mill/dam was, private land
Deering Wildlife Management Area 214 Riverlin St.	A 182-acre estate owned by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife ; buildings burned, foundations remain; trail remnants remain
Waters Armory site	archaeological - Constructed beginning in 1808 by brothers Asa and Elijah Waters (operated between 1808 and 1845); buildings demolished in early

	1900s; stone-lined headrace remains; site now location of VFW Hall
Burial Grounds and Cemeteries	
theme: cemeteries	W. Millbury Cemetery (private), Providence St. Cemetery (town owned, oldest in town, Dwinell Cemetery (town-owned), Central Cemetery (town owned), St. Brigid's Cemetery (private)
Civic / Institutional	
Old Common and Old Common Rd. (trail, in portions)	Collection of 18th and 19th-century residences in West Millbury, clustered around the Old Common. Common is privately owned. Scenic views from Old Common Rd
Armory Village	includes Asa Waters Mansion, commercial, residential, civic properties, Upper and Lower Town Common; bounded on three sides by Blackstone River; commercial activity/development pressure, a lot of municipally owned property and residential streets with a variety of worker, middle and upper-class housing (see also Village)
theme: churches	W. Millbury Union Church (built 1888), Millbury Federated Church (built 1828), Millbury Baptist Church (built 1864), Assumption Catholic Church (built 1925), St. Brigid Church, First Congregational Church (built 1802-04), Raymond Memorial (in East Millbury, closed)
Firehouse	Queen Anne-style fire house (Bramanville Fire Barn) near First Congregational Church
Senior Center, Depot Station	The original depot station (40'x84' building) was incorporated into the Senior Center, which was constructed in 1996
Town Common	Upper and Lower; within Armory Village. Upper Common larger, improved as seating area; Lower Common small triangle of land across Elm St.
Elm's Draught House	former Methodist Church; now movie theater
Commercial / Industrial	
S & D Spinning Mill	on town seal; part of Bramanville (see Village)
Felters Co. Felting Mill	former H.W. Hakes Manufacturing Company; nine one and two story buildings (built between 1904 and 1913); today there is a variety of businesses in mill buildings
Harris' icehouse W. Main St.	produced ice by refrigeration (not a pond-ice storage facility)
Cesyl's Mill	historic waterwheel and mill former spindle mill – historically known as the Walling Woolen Mill and the W.W. Windle Wool Scouring Mill; largely burned in 1887, brick office and picker house remain
Cordis Mills	has been converted to residential use
Ramshorn Mill 11 Mill St.	located off of a portion of West Main Street familiarly known as "Sheep Shit Valley": the mill on Ramshorn Brook was the site of a wool-scouring operation (early-mid 20th century); fire in 1904 partially destroyed mill; the wool remnants rotting on the banks gave rise to the odor and the name

Miscellaneous	
large boulder Rivlin St. and Railroad Ave.	at pond edge
Open Space/ Recreation/ Parks	
Dorothy Pond (Big and Little)	also known as Dority Pond; a Commonwealth Great Pond (big pond); houses along most of shore except for steep Dorothy Hill area ; remains of an icehouse by pond, on Gover Rd.; pond has become shallow due to soil erosion, silting, and residential filling
Blackstone River - rapids area	rapids not easily visible–- best view from VFW parking lot; physical access limited; Blackstone River Bikeway planned to pass near rapids through parking area, over S. Main St. bridge
theme: ponds	Brierly, Howe (Big and Little, Cordis, Bucks Village, Wool Shop, Rice, Slaughterhouse, Singletary, Ramshorn
Reservoir near Prospect St.	Water levels at the well at Millbury Avenue (dug in 19th century) are controlled by adjustment of water levels in Howe Pond and Upper Reservoir. Water is released from Upper Reservoir to Howe Pond to keep pond full during periods of low groundwater levels
Davidson Sanctuary W. Main St.	town-owned bird sanctuary, nature trails, approx. 30 acres of upland
Colton Rd. Conservation Area Location?	53.5 acre parcel, owned by the Conservation Commission. Located east of Dorothy Pond and south of Colton Rd.; forested hills bisected by two power line right-of-ways; provide some habitat diversity and walking opportunities. The site has no developed trails or other facilities.
Clearview Country Club Park Hill Rd.	Property contains a residential home, 9-hole golf course, clubhouse and accessory structures. In December 2005, the Planning Board permitted the construction of 60 single family homes on the site. Approximately 48 acres of the parcel will be preserved as open space
theme: views	from: Shoppes of Blackstone Valley down onto town, of Clearview Country Club to West Millbury, from New England Electric corridor into town, W. Main St. at McGrath Rd., feed store area, hilltop vista surrounded by agricultural fields (hilltop visible from Singletary and S. Oxford Rd.)
heritage trees	5 designated trees, including copper beech on common, sycamores on library lawn, maples on Waters Mansion lawn.
greenspace next to CD Whitney Insurance Co.	Little patch of green next to the CD Whitney Insurance that is used for an annual picnic and block party; almost across from post office.
Residential	
Memorial Drive off Grafton St.	first veterans' housing in town
Bucks Village	mill housing
Ramshorn Brook Crossing	mill housing, W. Millbury
Asa Waters mansion 123 Elm St.	Landscape includes house, gazebo and ruins of the Waters' cistern on grounds (stone structure located between mansion and town hall). Also

	included in Armory Village area
Transportation	
Blackstone River, Canal and tow path	Blackstone Canal is listed as a NRHD; towpath and canal segments behind Cordiss Mills
theme: scenic roads	Scenic Road Bylaw designated roads: Stowe, Stone, Federal Hill. Others to be considered for designation include: Braney Rd., Miles St., Prospect St., Davis Rd. (W. Millbury), S. Oxford Rd., Millbury Ave., Dwinell Rd., Auburn Rd., McCracken Rd., Colton Rd.
Millbury branch of Boston and Albany	railroad tracks
Village	
Armory Village	center of town: residential, commercial, civic resources (also see Civic/Institutional)) commercial activity/development pressure, a lot of municipally owned property and a variety of residential streets.
Bramanville	mill village established 1749: includes fire station, mills, houses, First Congregational Church, hotel
Grass Hill Village	Federal period agricultural hamlet approximately between South Oxford Rd. and Carleton Rd.; includes the Grass Hill School, West Millbury Union Chapel, and the West Millbury Cemetery; formerly the residential center of the West Millbury agricultural area that includes Pearson and Stowe Farms

APPENDIX B

GUIDE TO PRESERVATION AND PLANNING TOOLS FOR HERITAGE LANDSCAPES

Preservation planning is a four-step process: **identification, evaluation, education** and **protection**. Within the realm of protection, there is a vast array of tools that communities can call upon and that are most effective when used in combination with one another. Stewardship of these resources involves education and community support, planning with a clear set of goals, and regulatory mechanisms.

Three useful documents to consult when planning preservation strategies are:

- Department of Conservation and Recreation, *Reading the Land*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Survey Manual*
- Massachusetts Historical Commission, *Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances*

The following eight sections – based on the Toolkit Basics – detail the resources and strategies available for heritage landscape preservation—from documentation and evaluation, to public education, to regulating activities and finding the revenue necessary to fund the effort.

1. KNOW THE RESOURCES: INVENTORY

The vital first step in developing preservation strategies for heritage landscapes is to record information about the resources on MHC inventory forms. One cannot advocate for something unless one knows precisely what it is – the physical characteristics and the historical development.

Survey methodology has advanced since the early work of the 1980s. If a community had survey work done during that time period, it is time for an inventory update, looking at resources in a more comprehensive and connected way than may have been done at that time. Even if survey work is more recent, there may be a need to document more resources throughout the community.

Using the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey methodology:

a. Compile a list of resources that are under-represented or not thoroughly researched, beginning with heritage landscapes.

b. Document unprotected resources first, beginning with the most threatened resources.

c. Make sure to document secondary features on rural and residential properties, such as outbuildings, stone walls and landscape elements.

d. Record a wide range of historic resources including landscape features and industrial resources.

e. Conduct a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey to identify patterns of prehistoric and historic occupation and to identify known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. Known and potential precontact and historic archaeological sites should be professionally field-checked to evaluate cultural associations and integrity. A professional archaeologist is one who meets the professional

qualifications (950 CMR 70.01) outlined in the State Archaeologist Permit Regulations (950 CMR 70.00).

NOTE: The Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth contains sensitive information about archaeological sites. The inventory is confidential; it is not a public record (G.L. c. 9, ss. 26A (1)). Care should be taken to keep archaeological site information in a secure location with restricted access. Refer to the MHC article "Community-Wide Archaeological Surveys" which appeared in Preservation Advocate, Fall 2005, and which can be found at the following MHC link: http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhcpdf/pafall05.pdf.

2. GAIN RECOGNITION FOR THEIR SIGNIFICANCE: NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

Survey work includes evaluation of whether resources meet the qualifications for National Register listing. This will provide new information about the eligibility of properties. Using the information generated in the survey work and the accompanying National Register evaluations, expand your town's National Register program.

- Develop a National Register listing plan, taking into consideration a property's or area's integrity and vulnerability. Properties in need of recognition in order to advance preservation strategies should be given priority.

3. ENGAGE THE PUBLIC: OUTREACH, EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

The best stewards and advocates for heritage landscape protection are members of the community. There are many ways to communicate the importance of these special places to the public, and to connect their preservation with the shared values and goals that community members have already expressed in various planning documents and forums.

Think creatively about how to educate the community about the values and threats to heritage landscapes, and how each town resident benefits from these special places. Use a combination of strategies to get the word out about heritage landscapes and preservation of community character, including:

- **Festivals and Tours** – Tours are a great way to draw attention to the history around us, and to engage more people in caring for it. Consider hosting a Heritage Celebration Day including tours and family-friendly activities, or plan a celebration around a particular place or area on a meaningful date. Make sure events are well publicized.

- **Signage and Banners** – Signs are a very effective way to announce special historic sites and districts. Banners can also bring attention to the significance of an area and make a celebratory statement about its contribution to the town.

- **Written Materials** – Clear, concise and engaging written material with engaging illustrations is a reliable way to relay information about community character and heritage landscapes. Make use of fact sheets and flyers to get the word out on particular issues such as a town ordinance that protects heritage landscapes, a threat that needs to be addressed, or an upcoming event.

- **School Curricula** – Start teaching at a young age. Children are very receptive to engaging stories, and there are no better stories to excite childrens' imaginations and build pride of place than stories of their town's past and present. Teachers have an opportunity to connect history

with environmental issues through classroom study, hands-on history projects, and field exploration of a town's heritage landscapes. Subsequently, students have an opportunity to teach their parents that preservation is everybody's business.

- **Lectures and Workshops** – Use these forums to raise awareness, educate at a deeper level about the community's history and its resources, and broaden the base of interest.

- **Website** – Keep Historical Commission and local historical organizations' entries on the town's website current, and include information about issues, proposals for preservation strategies, and upcoming events.

- **Press Releases** – Use all avenues including press releases to keep the public informed when a meeting or event is about to occur. Work with local reporters to develop special interest articles that highlight landscape resources.

Remember that bringing an issue or a heritage landscape to people's attention once will have only short-term effect. Outreach, education and interpretation must be ongoing concerns that involve preservation and conservation interests, teachers and community organizations in repeated projects to attract and engage the general public.

4. THINK IN CONTEXT: COMPREHENSIVE AND OPEN SPACE PLANNING

Communities use a variety of planning exercises and documents to define their goals and vision of the future, address community-wide issues, and recommend measures to respond to them. There are state mandates for towns to prepare Comprehensive or Master Plans and Open Space and Recreation Plans.

- Comprehensive or Master Plans provide an important frame of reference for land use decisions, and incorporate all of a community's issues including economic development, housing and transportation into an integrated plan. Heritage landscapes need to be seen through the lenses of community character, historic preservation, environmental health, and economic viability and growth. Their future and the values they contribute should be addressed within these multiple perspectives, not solely as historical assets of the community.
- Like Comprehensive Plans, Open Space Plans look holistically at the community—its history, demographics and growth patterns, and current conditions—to make recommendations that protect open space and natural resources for ecological health and public benefits. The Heritage Landscape Inventory Program provides a framework for looking at these important resources, and this new understanding should be incorporated into Open Space Plans.

5. DEVELOP PARTNERSHIPS: THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

Because heritage landscapes encompass such a broad range of resources and issues—from preservation of town centers, scenic roads and river corridors to promotion of smart growth and economic development – stewardship of these resources involves many interests in a community. It is essential that there be good communication between the many departments and committees that address issues related to heritage landscapes. Collaboration between public and private partners is also an essential element in a successful preservation strategy. National Heritage Corridor personnel are helpful guides to partnership opportunities for projects you may have in mind.

- Broaden the base. Preservation, particularly preservation of landscapes, is not just for the Historical Commission. It is important that the cause not be marginalized by those who view preservation as opposed to progress, or to personal interests. A look at DCR's *Reading the Land* shows the range of organizations and viewpoints that value heritage landscapes.

- Nurture public-private partnerships. Friends groups, neighborhood associations, and local land trusts all have important roles to play to spread the word, and to expand the capacity of the public sector to care for heritage landscapes.

- Take advantage of forums created to share issues and ideas. For instance, the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources offers a "cluster" format for monthly discussion and information exchange meetings among area farmers.

- Share resources across communities. Towns that lack funding for a town planner position, for instance, have found that "sharing" a planner with another community can be quite effective.

6. DEFEND THE RESOURCES; LAWS, BYLAWS AND REGULATIONS

A wide range of laws, bylaws and regulations is available to protect heritage landscapes. Following are brief descriptions of some of the most widely used and/or most effective of these tools, arranged alphabetically.

Adaptive Reuse Overlay District
An Adaptive Reuse Overlay District is superimposed on one or more established zoning districts in order to permit incentive-based reuses of existing built properties. These districts can be created to allow for the adaptive reuse of properties of a certain kind, or within a specified area within a community. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements.

Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR)
This program, managed by the Department of Agricultural Resources, offers to pay farmers the difference between the "fair market value" and the "agricultural value" of farmland located on prime agricultural soils, in exchange for a permanent deed restriction which precludes any use of the property that will have a negative impact on its agricultural viability. This program is different from the *Chapter 61* program, which provides tax incentives for short term restrictions.

Community Preservation Act
The Community Preservation Act is statewide enabling legislation that allows communities to assemble funds for historic preservation, open space protection and affordable housing through a local property tax surcharge (up to 3%, with some allowable exemptions) and state matching funds. These funds can support a wide variety of activities, including inventory and documentation of historic resources, restoration and acquisition.

Conservation Restrictions (CR)
A permanent deed restriction between a landowner and a holder - usually a public agency or a private land trust; whereby the grantor agrees to limit the use of his/her property for the purpose of protecting certain conservation values in exchange for tax benefits. EOEEA's Division of Conservation Services provides assistance to landowners, municipalities, and land trusts regarding conservation restrictions and has produced *The Massachusetts Conservation Restriction Handbook* as a guide to drafting conservation restrictions.

Corridor Protection Overlay District
A Corridor Protection Overlay District is intended to promote appropriate development within a given corridor, serving to protect natural (and sometimes cultural) resources. As an overlay zone, all regulations pertaining to the underlying zone apply, except to the extent that the overlay zone modifies or provides for alternatives to the underlying requirements. The Corridor Protection Overlay District can be used cooperatively by adjoining communities to help maintain continuous protection across town lines.

Demolition Delay Bylaw
With a Demolition Delay Bylaw, requests for a permit to demolish a historic building must first be reviewed and approved by the local historical commission. Demolition Delay Bylaws are either list-based (applying only to a specific list of buildings that have been previously identified), age based (applying to all buildings that are older than a certain age – typically 50 years), or categorical (applying only to resources that meet a specific criteria, such as having been documented on Massachusetts Historical Commission forms). If the historical commission does not approve of the demolition and deems a structure significant, it can impose a delay period, during which time the property owner is encouraged to explore alternatives to demolition. Delay periods of 6 months are common, although communities are increasingly adopting delay periods of up to one year.

Design Review
Design Review is a non-regulatory process that is undertaken by a town appointed Design Review Board. The board reviews the design of new construction and additions – typically those taking place in already built-up areas. Recommendations are made to the planning board to help preserve appropriate building patterns and architectural styles, with the goal of maintaining the overall character of a given area. Design Review Boards often limit their review to exterior architectural features, site design and signage.

Downtown Revitalization Zoning
Downtown Revitalization Zoning seeks to encourage businesses to locate in downtowns. Zoning of this nature is typically written to be attractive to businesses of a certain kind that would work well within the given infrastructure and transportation needs, but can also incorporate some of the same elements as Village Center Zoning (see below), such as encouraging mixed use development at a pedestrian-friendly scale, with minimal setbacks and offsite parking.

Flexible Development Zoning
Flexible Development Zoning allows for greater flexibility and creativity when subdividing land, to conform and work with the natural and cultural resources of a site and minimize alteration or damage to these resources, rather than follow standard requirements of subdivision regulations. While this does not prevent land from being subdivided, it does allow for the protection of some features, serves to preserve some undeveloped land, and promotes better overall site planning.

Local Historic Districts (LHD)
LHDs recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and their settings are preserved. They offer the strongest form of protection available for historic resources. LHDs are administered by a Local Historic District Commission (distinct from the community's Local Historical Commission), which reviews proposed exterior changes to buildings within the district. The kinds of changes that are reviewed vary according to the terms of the local bylaw.

Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (NCD)
Neighborhood Architectural Conservation Districts (sometimes known as Neighborhood Conservation Districts) are local initiatives that recognize special areas within a community where the distinctive characteristics of the neighborhood are important. They are less restrictive than Local Historic Districts in

that they focus on a few key architectural elements and massing, scale, and setback in an effort to embrace overall neighborhood character. As in Local Historic Districts, changes are reviewed by a Neighborhood Architectural Conservation District Commission.

Open Space Zoning
Open Space Zoning – also known as Cluster Development Bylaw, Open Space Communities Zoning, Open Space Development Overlay District, Open Space Preservation Subdivision, or Open Space Residential Development – allows greater density than would otherwise be permitted on a parcel, in an effort to preserve open space. Typically, construction is limited to half of the parcel, while the remaining land is permanently protected under a conservation restriction.

Rate of Development Bylaw
A town may slow the rate of its growth within reasonable time limits to allow the community to engage in planning and preparation for growth. This measure must be used for the purpose of conducting studies and planning for rational development, and not for restraining the rate of growth for a period of unlimited duration.

Right to Farm Bylaw
A Right to Farm Bylaw asserts the rights of farmers to pursue agricultural activities, provides community support for farming activities and requires dispute resolution so that abutters cannot make nuisance claims. Agricultural landscapes are widely considered to be significant heritage landscapes for which there is constant concern of potential development. This bylaw serves to help active farmers remain just that - active.

Scenic Overlay District Zoning
Scenic Overlay District Zoning protects scenic vistas by providing for a no-disturb buffer on private lands, thereby helping to maintain specific viewpoints. This type of zoning is more far-reaching than a Scenic Roads Bylaw (see below) and may be applied to numbered routes.

Scenic Roads Bylaw
The Scenic Roads Bylaw requires that a public hearing be held prior to the removal of any trees or stone walls that fall within the public right of way on a designated scenic road. Depending on how it is written, the bylaw may apply to a predetermined list of roads or encompass all roads in a community (other than numbered routes). The bylaw applies whenever there is any public or private impact to trees or stone walls within the right of way, including activities such as road widening, utility company work or creating private driveways.

Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw
Scenic Vista Protection Bylaws require additional design criteria for any proposals for new construction in areas that are determined by the town to be a scenic vista. Vistas may encompass natural, cultural and historic features.

Shade Tree Act
The Shade Tree Act is a part of MGL Chapter 87, which defines all trees within the public way as public shade trees. The municipal Tree Warden is responsible for the care, maintenance and protection of all public shade trees (except those along state highways). Trimming or removal of any public shade trees greater than 1.5” in diameter requires a public hearing. Chapter 87 applies to all communities; however, some communities have adopted their own Shade Tree Act Bylaws that provide stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 87.

Site Plan Review
Site Plan Review provides the planning board (and other boards and committees, depending how the bylaw is written) with an opportunity to consider a variety of community concerns – such as impacts to vehicular circulation, scenic vistas, topography and natural resources – during the permit process. Boards may comment on site plans and request changes to the design. Site Plan Review is typically limited to large scale projects and tied to the special permit process.

Smart Growth Zoning – Chapter 40R
Smart Growth Zoning (Chapter 40R) provides financial rewards to communities that adopt special overlay zoning districts allowing as-of-right high density residential development in areas near transit stations, areas of concentrated development, or areas that are suitable for residential or mixed use development. Such zoning can help direct compact growth to areas that are already developed – such as historic village centers – thereby discouraging growth in less suitable areas.

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)
TDR is a regulatory technique that allows a landowner to separate building or development rights from the property and sell them, receiving compensation for preserving land and allowing for the development to occur in areas selected for higher density projects. In essence, development rights are "transferred" from one district (the "sending district") to another (the "receiving district"). As a result, development densities are shifted within the community to achieve both open space preservation and economic goals without changing overall development potential.

Village Center Zoning
The goal of Village Center Zoning is to meet the needs of a small-scale, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly area by encouraging compact development. New construction is required to be built at a scale that is compatible with the neighborhood and to have a reduced (or no) setback from the street. Parking may be directed to discourage large lots in front of buildings. Village Center Zoning shares many similarities with Traditional Neighborhood Development, and the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

Wetlands Protection Act and Bylaws
The Wetlands Protection Act (MGL Chapter 131, Section 40) protects wetlands by requiring a careful review by local conservation commissions of proposed work that may alter wetlands. The law also protects floodplains, riverfront areas, land under water bodies, waterways, salt ponds, fish runs and the ocean. Communities may also adopt their own Wetlands Protection Bylaw, providing stricter regulations than those mandated in Chapter 131.

7. UTILIZE THE EXPERTS: TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Beyond DCR and the Heritage Corridor, technical assistance is available from many governmental and non-profit sources, most often free of charge to municipalities and non-profit organizations.

- American Farmland Trust: Clearinghouse of information supporting farmland protection and stewardship.
- Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission: The regional planning agency charged with assisting communities with local planning efforts in this region.
- Citizen Planner Training Collaborative: Provides local planning and zoning officials with training opportunities and online information; they also hold an annual conference to support land use planning.

- Green Valley Institute: Provides technical assistance about land use planning to communities within the Quinebaug-Shetucket Heritage Corridor. Web site and publications contain information of use to communities throughout the region.
- Massachusetts Historical Commission: Provides technical assistance as well as grants to municipalities and nonprofits for preservation planning and restoration projects.
- New England Small Farm Institute: A non-profit dedicated to providing technical assistance, information and training to farmers.
- The Trustees of Reservations: Offers conservation and landscape protection workshops, publications and connections through the **Putnam Conservation Institute.** The Trustees also manages a unique **Conservation Buyer Program** that links interested sellers with conservation-minded buyers and assists with establishing permanent property protection mechanisms.
- Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources is the state agency dedicated to supporting the agricultural activities in the state through special initiatives, programs and technical assistance.
- The Trust for Public Land is a national non-profit that assists municipalities with land conservation efforts.
- University of Massachusetts Extension
- DCR's **Lakes and Ponds Program** works with local groups and municipalities to protect, manage and restore these valuable aquatic resources. They provide technical assistance to communities and citizen groups, help to monitor water quality at various public beaches to ensure public safety, and provide educational materials to the public about a range of lake issues.
- **Massachusetts Agricultural Commissions** has recently launched a new website that includes helpful information both for communities with Agricultural Commissions and for those learning more about forming one.
- **UMASS extension (NREC)** – Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation) can provide assistance on issues related to land and water resource protection, smart growth/sustainability measures and forestry and farming management,

8. PAY THE BILL: FUNDING PRESERVATION

Funding for preservation projects is an important aspect of implementing strategies to protect heritage landscapes. There are local, state, regional, national and non-profit funding programs and resources that can assist communities in preservation and land conservation-related issues. The availability of such assistance varies from year to year and private property is not always eligible for funding. Examples include:

Local Funding Assistance

- Towns that have adopted the **Community Preservation Act (CPA)** find it to be an excellent funding source for many heritage landscape projects. While tricky to pass in lean economic times, the number and types of projects that are benefiting across the Commonwealth makes the CPA worthy of consideration. Such projects include MHC inventory, National Register nominations, cemetery preservation, open space acquisition and preservation and restoration of public buildings. The CPA (M.G.L. Chapter 44B) establishes a mechanism by which cities and towns can develop a fund dedicated to historic preservation, open space and affordable housing. Local funds are collected through a 0.5% to 3% surcharge on each annual real estate tax bill. At the state level, the Commonwealth has established a dedicated fund which is used to match the municipality's collections under the CPA. The amount of the surcharge is determined by ballot vote at a local election.

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

- Municipalities can establish **land acquisition funds**, increasing their revenue from sources such as an annual fixed line item in the municipal budget; income from forestry, farming and leasing of town-owned land; gifts and bequests; grants and foundation funding; and passage of the CPA, detailed above.

State Funding Assistance

Funding for a variety of preservation projects, primarily for municipalities and non-profit, is available through the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), the EOEEA Division of Conservation Services (DCS), the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and other state agencies. Further information on these programs is available on the agency websites.

- MHC **Survey and Planning Grants** support survey, National Register and a wide variety of preservation planning projects.

- The **Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund (MPPF),** administered through the MHC, funds restoration and rehabilitation projects.

- Towns that have a local historic district bylaw may apply for **Certified Local Government (CLG)** status which is granted by the National Park Service (NPS) through the MHC. At least 10% of the MHC's yearly federal funding allocation is distributed to CLG communities through Survey and Planning matching grants. To become a CLG, the town completes an application; after being accepted as a CLG, it files a report yearly on the status of applications, meetings, and decisions; in return the town may apply for the matching grant funding that the MHC awards competitively to CLGs annually. Presently 18 cities and towns in Massachusetts are CLGs. **NOTE:** CLG status is dependent in part on a municipality having at least one Local Historical District as evidence of the community's commitment to historic preservation.

Open Space Plans, with a requirement of updating the plan every five years, make a community eligible for **Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) grants** and technical assistance programs through the Department of Conservation Services.

- The **Massachusetts Self-Help Program** of DCS assists local conservation commissions in acquiring land for the purposes of natural and cultural resource protection and passive outdoor recreation.

- The **Massachusetts Urban Self-Help Program,** another DCS initiative, is geared toward assisting towns and cities in acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes.

- DCS **Conservation Partnership Grants** assist non-profits in acquiring interests in land for conservation or recreation, and have also been used in the past to help protect active agricultural lands.

- The **Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund**, distributed through the DCS, can support heritage landscape protection by providing up to 50% of the total project cost for the acquisition or renovation of park, recreation or conservation areas. Municipalities, special districts and state agencies are eligible to apply.

The **Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR)** administers a variety of grant programs that can help with heritage landscape preservation:

- **Urban and Community Forestry** grants fund projects which will result in sustained improvements in local capacity for excellent urban and community forestry management.

- The **Recreational Trails Grant** Program provides funding on a reimbursement basis for a variety of recreational trail protection, construction, and stewardship projects.

The **Department of Agricultural Resources** **Farm Viability Enhancement Program** works with farmers to develop sound business plans and funding assistance to implement them.

Regional and Non-Profit Funding Assistance

- The **John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Commission's Heritage Partnership Program** supports projects in corridor towns that further the Corridor goals of historic preservation, community revitalization, ecological restoration, land use planning, riverway development and educating people about the Valley's heritage. Communities and organizations located within the Corridor are eligible to receive funding, subject to availability.

- **Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor** provides mini-grants to member towns, supporting preservation of heritage landscapes including projects involving sustainable agriculture, river clean-ups, open space planning and natural resource conservation.

- The **Greater Worcester Community Foundation** provides grants to non-profit organizations for community enhancements.

- **The Trust for Public Land** (TPL) is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands and other natural places. TPL helps communities identify and prioritize lands to be protected; secure financing for conservation; and structure, negotiate and complete land transactions. TPL's New England Office recently launched the **Worcester County Conservation Initiative**, to accelerate the pace of land conservation in central Massachusetts by helping communities plan and finance conservation projects.

- The **National Trust for Historic Preservation** offers a variety of financial assistance programs. Based on the availability of funding, the National Trust awards more than $2 million in grants and loans each year for preservation projects nationwide.

- The **Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission** **(CMRPC)** does not administer grants, but can work with communities to write grants or help them find funding.

Federal Funding Assistance

- The **Farmland and Ranchland Protection Program** of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has protected 85 farms to date in Massachusetts on 6,335 acres with matching funds. Eligible organizations are federally recognized Indian tribes, states, local government, and non-governmental organizations. They are required to provide 50-50 matching funds for purchase of conservation easements in land with prime, productive soils that are subject to a pending offer, for the purpose of limiting conversion to non-agricultural uses of the land.

- All of the communities within the Blackstone Heritage Corridor have been designated **Preserve America** communities, making them eligible to receive technical assistance and matching grants related to heritage tourism. Eligible grant activities include research, documentation (e.g., historic resource surveys and National Register nominations), interpretation and education (e.g., signage, exhibits and itineraries), planning, marketing and training. (Communities within the Quinebaug and Shetucket Rivers Valley National Heritage Corridor may want to pursue Preserve America designation in order to take advantage of these funding opportunities.)

- The National Park Service's **Rivers & Trails Program** provides technical assistance to community groups and government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. The program does not offer grants, but can provide staff to help identify needs, assist partners in navigating the planning process, and help with organizational development and capacity building. The program can serve as a catalyst for successful trail development and conservation efforts.