

3. Issues and Needs Related to Historic Preservation in Wakefield.

The needs identified in this section were derived from many sources, including the Community Preservation Forum held on Saturday, February 3, 2001, meetings with Town of Wakefield board members and staff, preservation advocates and from observations of the consultant. A detailed list of the comments received at the Community Forum is included in the Appendix of this report. A news article on the forum is also included in the Appendix.

Issues and needs related to historic preservation in Wakefield have been divided into 11 categories:

- Inventory of Historic Resources
- National Register Nominations
- Downtown Wakefield
- Historic Neighborhoods
- Historic Landscapes
- Urban Design
- Town Properties
- Protection Initiatives
- Town Regulations
- Public Awareness
- Organizational Capability

3.1 Inventory of History Resources

A major survey of historic resources was completed by volunteers and a consultant in 1984. A total of 383 properties were surveyed at that time, encompassing many of the town's most significant historic resources. While this was a major accomplishment, there still remains a considerable amount of work that needs to be conducted to provide a comprehensive inventory of historic properties in the town.

This additional work includes (1) surveying additional historic properties that were not included in the 1984 survey scope; (2) updating the 1984 inventory to conform to the standards and forms issued by the Massachusetts Historical Commission; and (3) conducting new surveys of archaeological sites that are currently inadequately inventoried.

3.1.1 Need to inventory properties not yet surveyed.

As part of this Preservation Plan process, a windshield survey was conducted to identify properties that were surveyed in the 1984 inventory compared against those properties that deserved to be surveyed. This windshield survey showed that at least 545 additional properties in Wakefield have sufficient architectural or historical merit to be surveyed. These properties date mostly from the 19th Century but also include 20th Century structures as well. Appendix J includes a listing of the addresses of these properties.

Significant properties in terms of both architecture and history have not yet been inventoried and these properties exist in all of the town's older neighborhoods. One of the best reasons for conducting this survey is that, once on the town's Inventory of Historic Resources, these properties will be subject to the protections provided by the Demolition Delay Bylaw. Listing information is also the first step in being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places, where appropriate. A listing also provides information to property owners that tends to sensitize owners to the historical value of their property, a major first step in the preservation of significant resources.

3.1.2 Need to upgrade current surveys.

The survey work that was completed in 1984 needs to be updated to comply with the requirements of the 1995 Survey Manual published by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

3.1.3 Need to inventory additional archaeological sites.

The current inventory of Wakefield's historic resources does not include all of the significant archaeological sites in the town. As the town continues to develop, all available open land is being subdivided for house lots. Sites that at one time were considered too inaccessible for development are now being built upon. This development is threatening significant Native American settlement sites, sites that were used for thousands of years by indigenous populations.

There appear to be several archaeologically-significant sites in Wakefield that are not currently in public ownership and not yet developed. Action should be taken immediately to secure these sites from disturbance. Information available in the files of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and at the R.S. Peabody Museum of Archaeology in Andover.

3.2 National Register Nominations

The National Register of Historic Places recognizes coherent districts or individual properties that are important to American history, culture, architecture or archaeology. National Register designations are made at the federal level, with nominations made to the Secretary of the Interior through the Massachusetts Historical Commission. National Register designations are important because they recognize the significance of an area to the community, state or nation. Unlike 40C districts, however, they do not provide any protection against inappropriate alteration or demolition unless there is state or federal involvement.

3.2.1 Need to nominate additional districts to the National Register.

As part of the deliberations for this Preservation Plan, the Wakefield Historical Commission has identified areas that should be considered for National Register nomination, including the expansion of existing districts and the creation of seven new districts.

Expansion of existing historic districts.

Recommended expansions of existing historic districts include:

- **Common/Church-Lafayette Streets Historic Districts Extension:** The First Parish Church and the Old Burial Ground are listed as being in the Church-Lafayette Historic District by MHC but are not on the MHC map. The same is true of the Lower Common, which is on the listing but not on the map of the Common Historic District. This extension would include those properties and add additional dwellings on Church and Lafayette Streets to the Church-Lafayette Streets Historic District.

- **Wakefield Park Historic District Extension:** This extension would include the Shingle Style and Colonial Revival properties along Park Avenue to the Stoneham town line, and along Shumway Circle, Morrison Road and Morrison Avenue, and on a section of Chestnut Street, all of which deserve to be included in the district.

New historic districts

New National Register district nominations recommended by the Wakefield Historical Commission include the following:

- **Prospect Street Historic District:** This new district would extend from One Prospect Street to 108 Prospect Street and would include some of the most significant Georgian and Federal era dwellings on Cowdrey's Hill.

- **The Salem Street Historic District:** This district would extend from Main Street at edge of the Common Historic District at the beginning of Salem Street to 38 Salem Street. This section of Salem Street also contains many significant Federal style dwellings

- **Yale Avenue and Avon-Chestnut Streets Historic District:** This district would incorporate the existing Yale Avenue Historic District, including the remainder of Yale Avenue, and extend southward to include Avon and Chestnut Streets. It would include many dwellings dating from the arrival of the railroad and the creation of new wealth with the coming of the Industrial Revolution to Wakefield. The area includes many significant Victorian residential styles, including Italianate, Stick Style, Second Empire, and Queen Anne.

- **The Downtown Wakefield Historic District:** This district would extend from the Common Historic District on the north to the Americal Civic Center on Main Street on the south. It incorporates the commercial and civic architectural styles that developed as Wakefield evolved from a farming community to an industrial center with a vibrant downtown.

- **The Harvard Knitting Mills Historic District:** This district would encompass the Harvard Mills complex, the railroad depot, and the workers cottages that were built in the vicinity of the mill and the B&M Foundry. This area has an historical and architectural integrity that is distinctive.

- **The North Avenue Historic District:** The North Avenue district would extend from the intersection of Church and Prospect Streets (at the edges of two historic districts) on the south to the northern extent of Lakeside Cemetery to Shore Road. It would include the sites of the old ice houses (now park land), cottages of ice house workers and the historic cemeteries. The area also includes geologically-significant kame terraces and sites of native tribe settlements.

- **The Lakeside Historic District:** The Lakeside district would extend from the edge of the Salem Street Historic District on the south to Sweetser Street on the north and would extend from Main Street on the west to Pleasant Street on the east. It includes an interesting and significant transition from early Georgian and Federal dwellings along Main Street at Lake Quannapowitt to all of the major architectural styles of the 19th Century.

- **The Greenwood Historic District:** The Greenwood Historic District would extend along Oak Street and Greenwood Avenue from Main Street to 58 Oak Street. The district covers a range of dwellings that trace the development of the Greenwood neighborhood, including the early Federal farmhouse at 58 Oak Street at one end of the district to the Greenwood Union Church, an excellent example of religious Shingle Style architecture, at the other end.

See Map 13 on the next page for the locations of recommended new National Register districts in Wakefield.

3.2.2 Need to nominate individual properties to the National Register.

The Wakefield Historical Commission has determined that, for the time being, the individual properties that will be nominated to the National Register will be included in the seven districts that have been identified in the previous section.

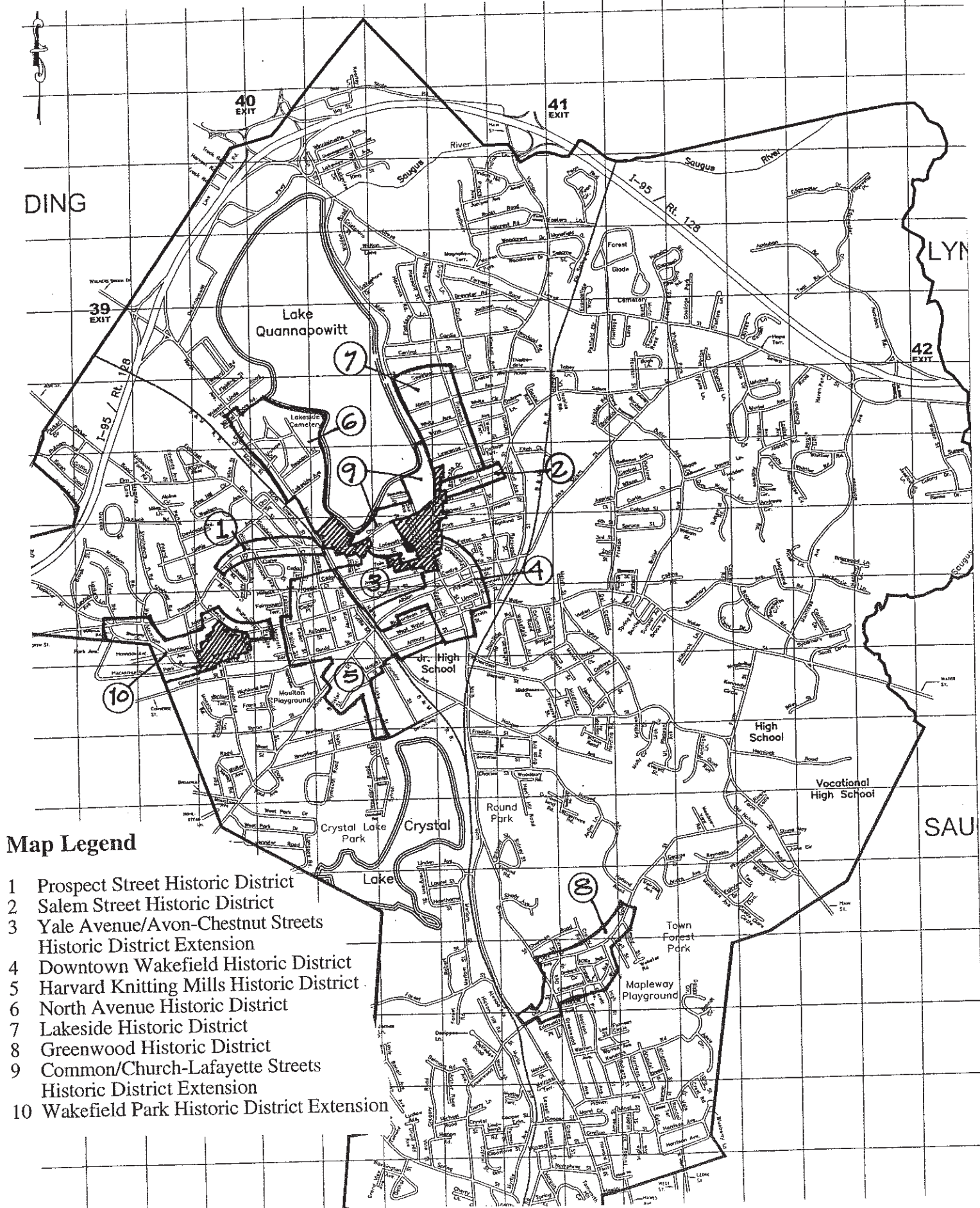
Some individual properties of note that should be considered for the National Register include the Lincoln School, One Elm Street, 4 Salem Street (the old parsonage building) and 259 Water Street (the birthplace of former governor John Volpe).

3.3 Downtown Preservation

Wakefield is fortunate to have a downtown that retains its historic character and is one of the town's great assets. As with most historic downtown, Wakefield's center has suffered the effects of market forces that favor "big box" retailing and easy auto access.

3.3.1 Need for a downtown vision.

One of the greatest needs for downtown is a clear sense of direction. It needs a vision of where it wants to be---and it needs a plan that shows how to get there. There is a wealth of experience available from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development on downtown revitalization, including what works and what doesn't. Those resources are available to assist the town in defining what direction to take for downtown Wakefield.



Map 13: Proposed National Register Historic Districts

Wakefield Preservation Plan / Town of Wakefield, Massachusetts / Alfred J. Lima, Consulting Planner

A downtown task force should then be formed to assess the current state of the downtown and review options for revitalization. It should assist the community in deciding what direction it wishes to take on downtown revitalization and how to get there. This should be followed up by retaining a consultant to prepare a vision plan for the center, including an action plan for implementation.

3.3.2 Need to create an organizational structure capable of achieving the vision for the center, including staffing.

As the task force assesses the direction of the downtown, a decision will need to be made early on regarding how to implement downtown revitalization. What organizational structure will work? What staffing needs will be required? An evaluation should be made of why the prior Main Street effort did not continue and what new organizational structure needs to be put into place.

3.3.3 Need to create a permanent and reliable source of funding for a downtown organization.

If a downtown organization is to survive, a reliable and permanent source of funding must be available. The Main Street Program that was attempted in the 1980's failed in great part because of the lack of such a predictable funding source. One available option is a Business Improvement District, a model which has been adopted in the commercial centers of Hyannis and Springfield and which holds promise for Wakefield.

3.3.4 Need for regulations that will guide the physical rehabilitation of downtown Wakefield in a manner consistent with historic preservation.

Once the downtown vision has been developed, regulations need to be adopted that will achieve the vision. However, many current regulations work against a coherent downtown vision because they were developed for vehicle-oriented business districts, with requirements (for example, parking, setbacks and signage) that are completely different from the downtown environment, with its pre-automobile layout.

The downtown area may need its own zoning district that reflects its unique historical development and needs. Consideration should be given to protecting the downtown's historic character by the adoption of design review regulations, special sign regulations, and facade improvement guidelines.

3.3.5 Need to designate Wakefield Center as a 40C local historic district.

One of the most effective tools in assuring that Wakefield's downtown is revitalized with a sensitivity to its historic architecture and character is to designate it as a 40C local historic district. This would be the most effective way to assure that historic properties in the center are restored and preserved and that new construction in the downtown is sensitive to the historic aesthetic of this area. Experience in other communities (for example, in Concord and Lexington)

has shown that the most effective and flexible method of preserving historic commercial centers is through local historic districts.

3.3.6 Need to improve the physical appearance of Wakefield Center in a manner that restores its historical integrity.

The commercial revitalization of Wakefield center will require improvements to its physical environment that respects the center's historic character. Given the cost of historic rehabilitation and the marginal nature of many downtown businesses, a funding subsidy from the Town may be necessary to achieve this.

The Town is fortunate in having in place a Community Development Block Grant program. These funds should be accessed to assist in implementing streetscape, facade and signage improvements for the downtown.

3.3.7 Need to address downtown parking issues in a manner that does not endanger historic properties.

The need to accommodate automobile parking in older town centers has been the greatest threat to historic downtown properties. To Wakefield's credit, it did not take the advice of its 1961 Master Plan, which recommended an urban renewal clearance area between Chestnut and Armory Streets to the rear of the buildings facing Main Street, in part to provide parking for the downtown.

A study should be conducted of parking needs in the center and how they can be met without adversely impacting historic resources in the downtown. If additional surface parking will result in threats to historic properties, then the Town should consider the option of parking structures to accommodate the need. While there has been an aversion to parking garages as being too urban for Wakefield, there needs to be a solution to the chronic downtown parking problem, and a well-designed parking structure can be integrated sensitively into the urban fabric.

3.4 Historic Neighborhoods

Wakefield is fortunate in having many historic neighborhoods that are tremendous assets to the community. They are rich in architectural styles, are walkable in scale, and are a reflection of the town's varied history.

By far, the greatest number of Wakefield's historic properties are in its neighborhoods. Historic preservation in the town requires the cooperation and support to hundreds of individual owners of historic residences. Since historic dwellings tend to be grouped in neighborhoods, reaching private owners can be enhanced through a neighborhood approach.

The Wakefield Preservation Plan has identified several needs in the area of preserving the historic and architectural integrity of Wakefield's neighborhoods. These include the need for:

- (1) increasing the awareness and appreciation of the value of historic preservation among owners of residential and commercial properties;
- (2) providing additional information and resources on proper property rehabilitation of historic structures.
- (3) conserving and improving streetscapes in historic neighborhoods;
- (4) preserving large and wooded lots in historic neighborhoods;
- (5) improving the delivery of the preservation message through neighborhood associations;
- (6) increasing neighborhood-level planning;
- (7) increasing the self-awareness of historic neighborhoods.

3.4.1 Need to increase owner awareness and appreciation of historic values.

By far the most cost-effective way to preserve historic residences in neighborhoods is to educate owners about the historical and architectural significance of their properties. Such information may be invaluable to owners who may have little or no idea of the historical or architectural significance of their structures. Without this knowledge, owners may resort to alterations that would detract from or destroy the integrity of their property.

There are various approaches to delivering this preservation message. One of the easiest and most effective approaches is to send each owner a copy of the inventory sheet of their property. The property inventory mailing might include an informational flyer that describes the architectural style of the building and a brief history of the neighborhood and the town.

This information is invaluable for owners of historic properties, regardless of their level of appreciation for historic preservation. For those owners of who have no knowledge of the historical and architectural significance of their properties, the data on inventory forms will alert them---perhaps for the first time---to the significance of their homes and their role in preserving the history of Wakefield. For owners who already have an appreciation for and knowledge of the historical and architectural significance of their properties, the inventory forms and historical information will reinforce their commitment to historic preservation. Such information tends to introduce a preservation ethic and fosters peer pressure to conserve the character of the neighborhood.

Educational efforts of this nature tend to instill and reinforce a sense of stewardship among owners of historic properties.

Given that by far the most historic structures in Wakefield are residences, the preservation of the town's historic resources will depend on encouraging a sense of stewardship among owners of these residences. The more prevalent this sense of stewardship, the more secure will be the town's historic architecture and neighborhoods.

3.4.2 Need to provide information and resources on proper rehabilitation of historic properties.

Owners of historic properties who may want to restore their structures in an appropriate manner may find that it is difficult to find information on proper restoration techniques. Currently, there is no central location to find such information. The Lucius Bebee Memorial Library would be the logical place for such a resource center.

In addition, there is a need to connect the information with those who need it. This delivery system should include not only access to materials but accessibility to resource persons who are knowledgeable about correct restoration techniques and sources of information and material. These resource persons can be preservation architects and consultants, experienced local contractors, or Wakefield residents who have conducted restoration work and are willing to serve as occasional volunteer mentors to other homeowners.

Communities such as Cambridge have created excellent materials and information delivery systems on historic restoration and can serve as models when creating a similar program in Wakefield. Based on their experience, they can advise on what materials have proven most useful to property owners and what person-to-person advisory system works best.

3.4.3 Need to improve and conserve streetscapes in historic neighborhoods.

Streetscapes provide framework for historic neighborhoods. Wakefield has a variety of neighborhoods with different streetscapes. Neighborhood streets differ in various ways: street width, curbing treatment, placement of utility wires (overhead or underground), sidewalks, trees and type of street lighting standard.

From the perspective of historic preservation, the ideal neighborhood streets are found in the Wakefield Park neighborhood. The streets here are appropriate in width (that is, not too wide); they are curving and respect the topography of the area; sidewalks are separated from the street with a grass strip; trees are placed next to the street in the grass strip; curbing type or existence varies according to the volume of traffic that the streets carry; utility wires are underground; and street lighting standards are historical and appropriate for the era of the architecture.

The overall effect of the streetscapes in Wakefield Park is one of peacefulness, where tree canopies arch over the streets, framing the historic residences, and where vehicles and pedestrians coexist without conflict. This neighborhood is fortunate in having had a master plan that had a certain vision of how streetscapes in the neighborhood should look.

Each street in an historic neighborhood should have its own "cross-section," or typical treatment, based on its width, traffic volumes and general character. This will require the development of a street improvement plan for each street in each historic neighborhood, a plan that can serve as a long term guide to capital improvements, particularly when streets are reconstructed.

Every time a street is reconstructed, the opportunity exists to reconsider the placement of sidewalks, whether utility lines should be placed underground, whether to plant street trees, and

what kind of curbing should be placed at the road, among other issues. Without a plan, these key decisions may not be adequately thought out and implemented.

3.4.4 Need to preserve the open space characteristics of neighborhoods.

Development pressures in Wakefield---coupled with the scarcity of remaining available land---are causing open lots in town to be built upon that were once thought to be undevelopable. This is resulting in the loss of open space in older neighborhoods.

There needs to be an effort to identify those open spaces in town that deserve to be preserved in historic neighborhoods, followed by action to protect them from future development. Priority should be given to preserving those sites that have archaeological value, including Native American mining sites in the upper hills that are in danger of being developed.

3.4.4 Need to spread the preservation message through neighborhood associations.

Too often, historic preservation may be perceived by town residents as a distant concept that does not relate to their own streets or neighborhoods. "Historic" to many homeowners may be interpreted to mean only those buildings which are very old or significant.

The appreciation of historic areas can be heightened through the rediscovery of the history around us in our own neighborhoods. Neighborhood associations are one way of spreading the preservation message.

3.4.5 Need to increase the level of awareness of neighborhood historic identity through neighborhood planning.

The identity of historic neighborhoods in Wakefield could be strengthened by a conscious effort to plan for historic preservation at the neighborhood level. Identifying individual neighborhoods and developing a preservation message tailored around that identity whenever possible would "bring the message home."

This could be accomplished through the formation of neighborhood associations where they do not exist or the strengthening of existing associations, the creation of walking tours, the compilation of histories of each neighborhood and house plaque initiatives. Neighborhood associations are an effective vehicle for implementing a range of activities related to conserving neighborhoods and their historic identity.

Where neighborhood associations are nonexistent or impractical, educational activities about planning for preserving a neighborhood's character can be made through local cable public access programming or other approaches. Another approach could be through the creation of individual booklets of each neighborhood that describe the history of the area, the architectural styles that exist there, the residents who have lived there over time, and current initiatives to preserve the area.

3.5 Historic Landscapes

While historic preservation is usually thought of as preserving buildings, the protection of historic landscapes is gaining increasing importance as a goal of local preservation efforts. Historic landscapes in Wakefield include natural areas such as Reedy Meadow and archaeological sites; improved areas such as the greenbelt around Lake Quannapowitt, Breakheart Reservation and the town's historic parks; and specialized areas such as historic cemeteries.

3.5.1 Need to preserve the Reedy Meadow Landscape

The Reedy Meadow is one of Wakefield's great natural historic assets. The former Pleasure Island theme park, built before the adoption of the state's wetlands protection act, encroached on the meadows and probably destroyed many valuable archaeological sites. The site of the theme park is now an industrial park, made especially attractive by the sweep of the meadows and the ponds created by the theme park. The buildable area of this stunning site has been increased by the use of parking garages, which allow greater density and height of buildings.

The preservation of the Reedy Meadow should begin as a regional effort with the Town of Lynnfield, since the meadow extends into both towns. The first goal in this preservation effort should be to create a plan for the protection of the area. This should be followed by the development of a joint management plan for the area to assure its long-term protection. Its status as a National Natural Landmark should be generally known and publicized.

Finally, the two towns need to coordinate a joint regulatory (zoning, wetlands protection, wildlife and vegetation management, etc.) and land protection plan for the area. The protection plan should identify which areas should be protected through acquisition of fee or easement rights. The two towns may wish to discuss nominating the Reedy Meadow as an Area of Critical Environmental Concern, to provide an additional level of review of future development at the edge of the meadow and to raise the level of awareness of the significance of this natural and historic landmark. Additional information on the ACEC initiative is included in Appendix O.

In addition, the long-term protection of the meadow would be enhanced through educational efforts aimed at informing the public of the significance of this area. Because the meadow is located "on the other side" of Route 128, and is therefore effectively isolated from public awareness, educational efforts a tours of the area would be especially appropriate here.

3.5.2 Need to protect and enhance the shoreline landscape of Lake Quannapowitt.

Lake Quannapowitt and its shoreline greenways and parks is Wakefield's jewel. It provides the setting for all of the town's early history, provides an attractive entranceway into the town and is a well-used recreational resource for the town. The town deserves much credit for its efforts to enhance the area, a commitment that has been ongoing for many generations and which continues today with the effort to acquire the Lani Island site.

Protection of the shoreline of the lake should begin with the commissioning of a landscape architectural plan for the shoreline environment. The scope of that plan should include the following:

- Develop a parkway concept for Main Street along the lake shoreline, similar to the tree-lined environment that existed there in the Victorian era.
- Redesign North Avenue to create a parkway effect, as much as practical within the right-of-way of the road, to improve the aesthetic character of this entranceway into the town and to improve pedestrian safety along this much-used thoroughfare.
- Develop a plan to connect paths along the shoreline of the lake.
- Identify which parcels need to be in public ownership to achieve these objectives.
- Develop a landscape treatment plan in the tradition of Olmsted, so that the landscape has a consistent thematic unity.
- Include historic markers along the path to inform the public of the geologic significance of the landscape, how it was formed and the human use of the lake over time.
- Include an annual implementation plan.

3.5.3 Need to preserve the integrity of Breakheart Reservation.

While only a small percentage of Breakheart Reservation is in Wakefield, it is a major recreational resource immediately available to the residents of the town. The Friends of Breakheart Reservation and the MDC are cooperating on developing a plan for the improved maintenance and use of the reservation. Included in the plan should be the protection of historic resources and the improvement of the access to the reservation from the Wakefield side.

3.5.4 Need to preserve important archaeological sites in Wakefield.

The greatest danger to archaeological sites in Wakefield is that few persons know where they are located. In the effort to keep these sites from being vandalized, secrecy has led to their destruction because the Planning Board and other agencies do not know of their existence or locations.

An example of this is the Cunningham property on Wiley Street. This site, once the home of amateur archaeologist Dr. Everett E. Tyzzer, is well-known as the location of a major and long-standing Native American settlement area on the Mill River and contiguous uplands. Dr. Tyzzer collected thousands of artifacts from this immediate area along the Mill River and other sites in and around Wakefield.

However, the Tyzzer site illustrates the dilemma of wanting to protect such sites vs. the need to know early enough of their existence so that early protective strategies can be put into place. The Wakefield Historical Commission and other agencies is in contact with the

Metropolitan District Commission about possible MDC acquisition of this site, since it abuts the Breakheart Reservation.

If nothing is done to protect archaeological resources, increasing development pressures will lead to the destruction of the remaining sites in town. There is therefore a need to identify where these sites exist and to take steps to protect them in either public fee ownership or with a preservation easement if the site remains privately-owned.

In addition, *general* areas identified by the Massachusetts Historical Commission as having archaeological importance should be identified and given special status as an archaeological overlay district. This district would have two purposes: (1) to alert public officials and boards of the possible existence of archaeological resources in the area; and (2) to provide the legal foundation for boards to request additional information on sites proposed for development within the district.

3.5.5 Need to improve planning for the town's historic parks.

The lower and upper Town Common is one of the signature historic landscapes in Wakefield. It is a unifying space that ties together civic buildings and historic neighborhoods. It is also a transition space, in that it provides a transition from the lake to the center of town. Most significantly, it is a civic space where residents congregate for recreational activities.

What the Common and other town parks need is a master plan that would guide public expenditures. The town's parks began in the tradition of Olmsted, and it would be appropriate to prepare a master plan for all of the town's parks that would provide the vision and ultimate goal of improvements for these areas. Otherwise, these important spaces will be vulnerable to well-meaning but sometimes inappropriate plantings and improvements that may detract from a greater vision.

3.5.6 Need to enhance the environment around Crystal Lake.

While there is a reluctance to encourage the pedestrian use of watershed land of public water supplies, the area around Crystal Lake could be enhanced for the greater benefit of Wakefield residents. An analysis should be made of whether the town should continue to site its garages and store its maintenance vehicles at the edge of its water supply. The water works land on Broadway might be studied for reuse as a public park for residents of this area of town, who are underserved by access to public recreational land.

3.5.7 Need to create a Mill River Greenway.

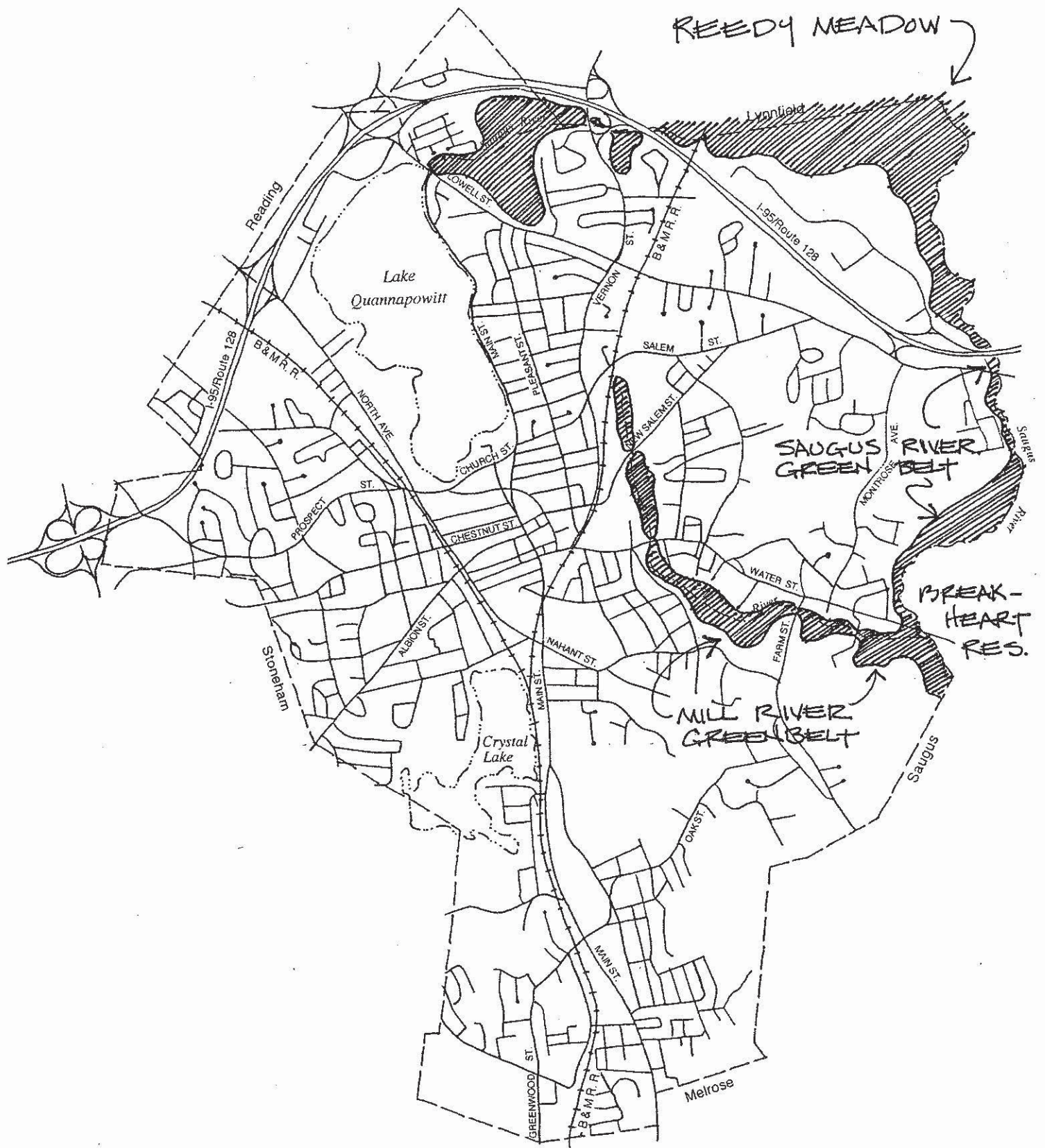
The Mill River is one of the Town's important historical waterways. It was the site of the town's first grist mill, built by John Poole in 1650, and later provided water for mills built during the period of the Industrial Revolution. It was also the site of Native American settlements for at least 8,000 years. In addition, it provides a green swath of open space and wetlands through an extensive part of the interior of Wakefield before it empties into the Saugus River where the Breakheart Reservation begins. The Mill River Greenway would be an excellent way of extending the open space of the Reservation north into Wakefield.

3.5.8 Need to create a Saugus River Greenway.

A Saugus River Greenway would create a connection between the river's source at Lake Quannapowitt, the Reedy Meadow through which the river flows, and the Breakheart Reservation. One of the major reasons for creating such a greenway is to protect the natural and archaeological resources that extend along the shoreline of the river. Many Native American settlement sites have been identified along the shoreline landscape of the river. Since the Saugus River flows through Wakefield, Lynnfield and Saugus along the path of the proposed greenway, coordination among these towns would be required to implement this greenway concept. Map 14 on the next page shows the possible extent of the greenways for the Mill and Saugus rivers, including their connection into the Breakheart Reservation.

3.5.9 Need for a lands committee to be an advocate for these landscape initiatives.

Many of the recommendations in this plan related to the acquisition, preservation and enhancement of historic landscapes involve tasks outside the usual purview of the Wakefield Historical Commission. Implementing these open space recommendations will involve cooperating with the Conservation Commission, the Department of Public Works (on parks and boulevards) and open space advocates. Advocacy of recommendations in the Preservation Plan will be important because many of these recommendations will involve convincing the Board of Selectmen, the Finance



Map 14: Proposed Greenways Plan for the Saugus and Mill Rivers

Wakefield Preservation Plan / Town of Wakefield, Massachusetts / Alfred J. Lima, Consulting Planner

Committee and Town Meeting of the value of funding projects that involve considerable expense.

One of the main open space advocacy organizations in town is the Apple Pie Trust, which was influential in the effort that led to the Town acquiring the Lani Island parcel on Lake Quannapowitt. It would be logical for the Trust to coordinate with the Historical Commission and the Conservation Commission in working to realize the recommendations contained in this plan.

3.5.10 Need to amend the 2000 Wakefield Open Space and Recreation Master Plan to include the historic landscape recommendations contained in the Wakefield Preservation Plan.

The Wakefield Open Space and Recreation Master Plan is the principal planning document related to protecting open space and natural resources and to improving passive and active recreational facilities in the Town. In addition, it qualifies the Town to apply for state Self-Help land acquisition funds and Urban Self-Help recreational facilities improvement funding.

It is therefore logical to incorporate the open space and recreation recommendations of the Preservation Plan into the Open Space Plan, if the Conservation Commission believes that these recommendations complement the goals of the plan.

3.6 Urban Design

During the February 3rd Wakefield Preservation Forum, residents expressed many recommendations that could be characterized as urban design in nature. Streetscapes as they impact historic preservation were of particular concern. If historic preservation is in great part a private responsibility (through the ownership of private residences), public responsibility clearly lies in enhancing streetscapes.

3.6.1 Need to increase street tree plantings.

This need includes both arterials and neighborhood streets. In particular, street trees need to be included when streets are planned for reconstruction. A street's ideal cross-section needs to be planned for and anticipated in historic neighborhoods and along major arterials.

The kind of street tree is important here, since trees need to be large enough not to interfere with traffic and pedestrian use. This brings up issues of what to do when overhead utilities exist. Should trees be planted within public rights-of-way when these ROW's are too narrow or should the Town attempt to get abutting property owners to plant trees on their properties along the street. What if some property owners do not want trees? All of these issues need to be resolved in a Town policy before proceeding.

During the year 2000, Wakefield's Forestry Division has planted 61 shade trees in town, with funding originating from the Town, from the Trees for Wakefield organization, and from the Mass ReLeaf Program. Mass ReLeaf funded tree plantings on Main Street in Greenwood.

3.6.2 Need to improve the aesthetics of public and private parking lots.

In the age of the automobile, preserving the aesthetics of communities, particularly in historic areas, requires that the ugliness of parking lots be mitigated. This is especially true of historic commercial areas, where large parking areas must be accommodated.

Improving the aesthetics of parking lots should be addressed on two levels:

(1) revising regulations to improve landscaping in future lots; and (2) improving the aesthetics of existing lots. Section 190-37 "Location and design of off-street parking spaces" and Section 190-31 G. "Screening and buffer strips in industrial, business and multiple family districts" could be significantly improved by being much more specific as to landscaping requirements and to require more landscaping than currently specified.

Improving the aesthetics of existing lots is more difficult, since it requires convincing owners that this is a good idea and that it is worth spending funds for this purpose. Usually, this only occurs where there is an approval needed for a reconstruction activity or the need for a special permit or site plan approval. However, public lots should be reviewed as to the need for aesthetic improvements, with funding for these improvements included in the Town's capital improvement program and in annual budgets of the Department of Public Works.

3.6.3 Need to place utility lines underground.

Currently, utility lines are placed underground in new residential, commercial and industrial developments. These are conducted at the developer's expense. Placing utility lines underground in existing streets will need to be conducted in coordination with a street reconstruction schedule and a priority list of those streets that should have their lines placed underground. This will require a funding source and the cooperation of the Municipal Gas and Light Department and the Department of Public Works.

3.6.4 Need to improve the aesthetics of Greenwood Center.

Greenwood Center is an urban design challenge. It's problems arise out of the typical auto-oriented retailing trend that favors ever-larger big-box outlets in regional centers. It is also small and lacks a critical mass of activity and a viable retail mix. The most important need for Greenwood Center is for a plan that can provide a sense of direction that is practical for this area. This should begin with the commissioning of an urban design plan for the area.

3.6.5 Need to revise the sign bylaw to improve future sign design.

The revision of the sign bylaw should take into account several factors: (1) signs in historic districts; (2) signs in Wakefield Center; (3) signs at entranceways into the town and along the town's main business-zoned arterials; and (4) general sign aesthetics. The sign bylaw needs to be reviewed and revised to assure that the bylaw results in signs that match what residents expect in the appearance of the town.

3.6.6 Need for a pedestrian-friendly path system in town.

The walking path system around Lake Quannapowitt is one of the town's great assets. However, not all of the route in the town is pedestrian-friendly, particularly that part on North Avenue. Outside of this stunning pedestrian path, the town's sidewalk system is quite adequate, particularly in historic areas. Planning needs to occur for a path system that would be off-road, including providing for a path system along old scenic roads that do not now have sidewalks and for a path on the old rail trail, when that line is discontinued.

3.6.7 Need for period lighting in historic areas.

This need could be addressed by incorporating appropriate street lighting into the model street cross-sections that should be prepared for all historic streets and arterials in Wakefield. The most appropriate time to implement street lighting improvements would be when streets are being reconstructed and utility lines placed underground. Styles of historic lighting standards should be decided beforehand, particularly as this relates to gas and electric reproductions. Gas standards should be used only for those streets where earlier house styles predominate.

3.6.8 Need to lessen traffic impacts in historic districts.

Since most historic districts are either on arterials or are in inner-town areas, they tend to suffer disproportionately from traffic and parking issues. It is beyond the scope of this preservation plan to recommend traffic calming solutions to localized traffic problems; however, a process should be set in place through the Traffic Commission to address issues that are brought to their attention.

3.6.9 Need to create a Wakefield Civic Design Commission.

Currently, when the Town authorizes a new building project, the Board of Selectmen appoint a building committee to select an architect and oversee the project. This process has worked well for many generations. However, there may be a need for input from standing committees and boards to introduce issues that the building committees or their architects may not have considered. One of these issues is impacts on historic resources and how to mitigate any impacts from new construction projects.

One way to assure that historical and aesthetic issues have sufficient standing in public projects is to create a civic design committee. This committee would have the responsibility of advising building committees on design issues, including issues related to historic preservation. One of the main purposes of the Civic Design Commission would be to assure that lay building committees are given the resources and information to make informed decisions on design issues.

3.6.10 Need to improve civic design of MBTA rail improvements as it relates to historic resources.

The MBTA owns considerable property in Wakefield and that property traverses through many historic residential and non-residential areas. Indeed, the rail system provided the incentive for the historical development of these areas.

The demand for parking and the need for economies may result in improvements at MBTA stations that do not always complement historic surroundings. There is therefore a need to work with the T in project review during the early planning stages to assure that historical considerations are adequately taken into consideration.

3.6.11 Need to develop a boulevard plan for Wakefield.

Wakefield's historic resources could be enhanced through the redevelopment of the town's main arterials as boulevards. This should begin with a master plan for arterials that emphasizes traffic calming, the safe accommodation of pedestrians, placing utility lines underground, and the planting of a canopy of shade trees along the route of these traffic ways.

3.7 Town-Owned Property

The Town of Wakefield is the owner of some of the town's most significant historic buildings and sites. The Town therefore has a major responsibility in assuring that these properties are managed and maintained in a manner that preserves their life and utility.

3.7.1 Need to plan for the preservation of Town-owned historic properties, including the preparation of a Townwide Preservation Plan for Historic Schools.

Three steps are necessary to begin to preserve the Town's historic properties: (1) revise the inventory of historic properties owned by the Town; (2) prepare a strategic plan that can guide the implementation of actions to restore and preserve these structures and sites; and (3) implement the plan through Town and state funding. The strategic plan should include an analysis of town programmatic needs.

Excellent examples of adaptive reuses of Town-owned historic structures are the restorations of the former Lincoln School into senior housing and the former Warren School into the Town Senior Center.

The study should ask: what do we have for an inventory; what are our programmatic needs; and how can our historic inventory meet these needs? Needs should include education, public works, public safety, administration, etc.

Where the Town acquires new historic sites, as with the two properties to the north of Town Hall on Common Street, or where an existing property is to be reused, it should be restored to its original condition.

One of first tasks in planning for the the Town's historic properties is to implement one of the provisions of the Memorandum of Agreement between the Town, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Department of Education. That agreement, signed in May, 2001, arose out of the circumstances surrounding the proposed demolition of the Woodville Elementary School. One of the stipulations of the agreement requires that the Town of Wakefield will prepare a townwide preservation plan for historic schools. This provision states

that “the Town shall develop a preservation plan for the continued use and/or adaptive reuse of its historic school buildings and grounds and shall submit the said plan to the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Wakefield Historical Commission for review and comment.”

The Memorandum of Agreement is included in Appendix K.

3.7.2 Need to preserve and restore the Town’s war memorials.

This should begin with a survey of all of the Town’s war memorials, followed by an initiative that would lead to the preservation and restoration of these historic monuments. The three war memorials at the southern end of the Common should be studied to determine if they could be rearranged so that they relate to one another in a unified way. Some of these memorials are being overgrown with shrubbery.

3.7.3 Need to develop a long-term space needs plan.

The preservation of the Town’s inventory of historic properties will depend in great part on finding uses for them. The Town needs to study what its long-term needs are in all areas of its activities and to determine how its historic properties can fill the needs in certain areas.

3.7.4 Need to prevent intrusion into historic landscapes.

In addition to determining the need for structural space, the Town needs to determine what open space or site needs it will have in the long term. Without such a study, historic landscapes will be preempted over time, in piecemeal fashion.

3.7.5 Need to create a system of “Special Places.”

Historic sites and landscapes can be the locations for “Special Places,” sites where ordinary places can be transformed into something beyond the ordinary. An example is the environment around Lake Quannapowitt, where sites such as the proposed Spaulding Park (formerly the site of the Lani Island restaurant) can be transformed into memorable landscapes. Other Special Places could include Wakefield Center, Reedy Meadow, and historic park and school sites.

3.8 Privately-Owned Historic Property

While the Town of Wakefield may own the most significant historic buildings in the town, by far the most number of historic properties in Wakefield are owned by private individuals. Because of this, historic preservation efforts in town must have a strong private component and direction. The private component includes both private homeowners and owners of non-residential historic properties.

3.8.1 Need for a homeowner assistance program.

Owners of historic dwellings range from those who know the significance of their properties and who maintain them well to those who have little knowledge of the historic value of their properties and who therefore allow alterations that detract from a structure’s integrity.

What looks like a dilapidated old house to a buyer could on closer inspection be a 1750's Georgian farmhouse of enormous significance to that community.

There is a need for a major effort at educating owners of historic residences of the value of their properties and how to maintain them in a manner that preserves their integrity. This need includes information contained in the Town's historic survey, information on architectural styles, information on the history of neighborhoods, and related historic information.

3.8.2 Need for a non-residential owner assistance program.

Owners of non-residential historic properties also need assistance, particularly in terms of how to preserve their historic properties in a manner that continues to complement its income generation potential. The "bottom line" can either be a threat to the preservation of historic properties or it can be an incentive to preservation. The difference can be in the information given to the owner.

In addition, special attention needs to be given to the preservation of the town's large churches. The preservation of these churches---or their alteration in a manner that detracts from their historic integrity---is a major challenge, especially in instances where there is a dwindling congregation and therefore the scarcity of financial resources to maintain a large historic structure.

3.8.3 Need for funding to save threatened historic properties.

Threatened historic residences could often be saved if emergency local funding was readily available for purchasing the property. Such funding is rarely accessible, yet, with tear-downs of historic homes becoming more common because of the scarcity of lots, the need to have access to special emergency funding is becoming more acute.

3.8.4 Need to pursue needed funding through the Community Preservation Act.

Funding for historic preservation could be available on a predictable basis through the adoption of the Community Preservation Act, enabling legislation that allows municipalities to tax themselves up to 3% of property tax revenues for the purposes of supporting initiatives in open space protection, affordable housing and historic preservation. A citizen petition initiated a vote on the measure in Wakefield in March, 2000, but the measure failed, although narrowly.

The Community Preservation Act could fund many recommendations included in this preservation plan, including assistance to owners of historic homes, a preservation trust, acquisition of threatened archaeological sites, improvements to historic landscapes such as along Lake Quannapowitt and much more.

3.8.5 Need for a preservation trust to protect endangered historic properties.

When historic properties become threatened, there must be some entity in place to acquire or otherwise protect such resources. The most effective means of accomplishing this is through a preservation trust, which could buy, restrict and resell endangered sites or hold them for purchase by the Town or a non-profit entity.

An option could be the formation of a land trust that has in its scope the protection of both land and historic buildings. A combination land/preservation trust might also appeal to a wider constituency and assist in integrating open space and historic preservation goals.

3.9 Town Regulations Revisions

Historic preservation in Wakefield can be significantly advanced through selective revisions to the town's regulations, particularly the zoning bylaw and subdivision regulations.

3.9.1 Need to protect the most significant historic areas with local historic district status.

Both the Commons and the Church/Lafayette National Register districts should be given the protection of 40C or local historic district status. National Register designation is important in educating a community about the value of an area's historic value; however, NR status does not give the protection against demolition and alteration that is provided by a 40C district. The Commons and Church/Lafayette NR districts are both significant in terms of their and historical and architectural significance and deserve the protection of 40C status.

In addition, Wakefield Center should also be nominated for National District and 40C Local Historic District status. The revitalization of the center will be advanced by the design guidance and protections to historic properties afforded in the 40C statute.

3.9.2 Need to strengthen the Town's sign control bylaw.

As noted in the section above on Urban Design, the revision of the sign bylaw should take into account several factors: (1) signs in historic districts; (2) signs in Wakefield Center; (3) signs at entranceways into the town and along the towns main business-zoned arterials; and (4) general sign aesthetics. The sign bylaw needs to be reviewed and revised to assure that the bylaw results in signs that match what residents expect in the appearance of the town.

3.9.2 Need for regulations to require more information on historic resources.

Preserving historic sites, particularly archaeological sites, requires that Town boards know where these sites are located. The Wakefield Zoning Ordinance and the Planning Board's Subdivision Regulations need to be amended to include provisions that require developers to identify where historic resources are located, so that reviewing boards are given adequate notice.

Requiring this information on plans is also useful for developers, since they may anticipate the concerns of reviewing boards and revise their plans before submission to protect these resources. The definitions of these resources should be amended to make it clear what is included under the definition of an historic resource. The amendments should also include wording on how the information is to be mapped.

3.9.3 Need for the subdivision regulations to include “due notice” provisions.

The Subdivision Regulations of the Planning Board should be amended to include “due notice” provisions. This wording would give developers notice that the impact on and protection of historic resources will be considered when approving or denying a plan or when granting waivers from the regulations. The revised wording should allow the Board to request additional information, site investigations, or impact studies in order to protect historic resources. Including the wording will provide the necessary safeguards in the event of a legal challenge.

The ability to successfully defend a legal challenge to the denial of a plan based on historical considerations will depend in part of the thoroughness of the documentation of historical resources by the Historical Commission. Therefore, the completion of survey work should be expedited in order to clarify what historic resources the community has identified as significant. Individual nominations to the National Register of Historic Places will be an important factor here.

3.9.5 Need to involve the Historical Commission in plan reviews.

The ability of the Wakefield Historical Commission to save an historical structure or site will depend on the degree to which the Commission is given the opportunity to review development plans. To achieve this, an informal notification process needs to be implemented so that the comments of the Commission are a part of all plan reviews. In addition, the Planning Board’s Subdivision Regulations need to be amended to include the Historical Commission in the agency distribution list for all preliminary and definitive subdivision plans and to require their comments on all plans. The Zoning Bylaw should also be amended to add the Commission as a plan reviewing board for Site Plan Review, for Special Permits and for zoning amendments.

3.9.6 Need for a Town regulation to place utility lines underground.

In order for the Town to be able to place utility lines underground, the Town will have to comply with state laws that require Town Meeting approval of a bylaw that authorizes this and of the assessments to cover the costs of this work. The wording and procedures for this are covered in state statutes.

3.9.7 Need to protect historic barns.

Barns are one of the most endangered historic buildings because of their size, cost to maintain and non-productive use. Because barns are treated as accessory buildings in the Zoning Bylaw, they cannot be converted to a use which might provide an economic incentive for their preservation. One of the uses that might be allowed through a Special Permit could be the conversion of barns to residential units. This would provide an adequate economic incentive for

the restoration of the barn yet have minimal impact on abutters. One of the standard provisions of the Special Permit should be that the exterior of the barn would remain minimally changed.

3.9.8 Need to conserve neighborhoods by means other than historic districts.

Some historic neighborhoods in Wakefield are not appropriate for National Register or 40C status because of the degree of non-contributing intrusions or because of the extent of alteration, particularly through wrap-around artificial siding. Some neighborhoods may also resist 40C designation. In order to provide a degree of protection to these areas, "neighborhood conservation districts" are a viable alternative.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts include most of the important provisions of historic districts---design review of new construction and major renovations and control over demolitions---and therefore provide most of the most important protections included in 40C districts. They are usually used in areas that would usually not qualify for local district designation but nevertheless deserve to be protected. The City of Cambridge has had the most experience with neighborhood conservation districts in Massachusetts.

3.9.9 Need to revise the zoning bylaw to allow flexibility in the redevelopment of Wakefield Center.

Wakefield Center developed before the advent of the automobile and, as such, has a pedestrian scale that is missing from post-automobile developments. The current Business zone in the Wakefield Zoning Bylaw allows considerable flexibility in that it has no setback requirements for front, side and rear yards and allows 80% lot coverage. Mid-rise and garden apartments are allowed in the Business district (which extends considerably beyond the downtown area; see the zoning map in the second section of this report) but not mixed use development (retail on the first floor and residences above).

The Zoning Bylaw should be reviewed to determine how it should be amended to encourage the redevelopment of downtown in a manner that provides economic incentives to preserve historic structures through adaptive reuse.

3.9.10 Need to revise the Demolition Delay Bylaw to define historic and new accessory buildings.

Accessory buildings include barns, outbuildings, and garages, among other structures. Structures such as these are important contributors to the historical character of a resource yet they are often the most endangered because of their lack of economic use or because of neglect. It is important to protect these structures through the Demolition Delay Bylaw; however, there is a need to clarify what is an historic accessory structure and what is a new structure. Removing new accessory structures from the purview of the Demolition Delay Bylaw would allow the administration of the bylaw to apply to only those structures that it was intended to protect.

3.9.11 Need to adopt an archaeological overlay district to increase protections for vulnerable sites.

One of the dilemmas in preserving important archaeological sites is the need to keep the locations of these sites as confidential as possible, yet assure that Town boards that review development plans know that archaeological resources may exist on a site that these boards are reviewing. Current practice results in sites that have archaeological significance either being developed without the knowledge of reviewing boards or being discovered so late in the development planning process that saving a site becomes extremely difficult.

This dilemma could be addressed in part by incorporating the most important undeveloped archaeological areas in Wakefield into an archaeological resource zoning overlay district. This district could include a mandate that development plans within this district must be reviewed by the Wakefield Historical Commission for their archaeological significance and a report would be required from the Commission within a certain time frame. This process would preserve the confidentiality of the location of important sites yet still alert reviewing agencies of the significance of the area proposed for development.

Where areas were determined by the Commission to warrant further review, sites would need to undergo further research and a field investigation to definitively determine the significance of the site and what strategy should be followed to protect the historic resource.

3.9.12 Need to protect Reedy Meadow with special district status.

In Wakefield, Reedy Meadow is being encroached upon by development in the industrial park. Development is occurring at the very edge of the meadow without much regard for the protection of this unique landscape. There is a need to provide additional protections to Reedy Meadow through zoning provisions such as a resource protection overlay district that includes additional setbacks from the wetlands boundary and other provisions that will supplement the regulations contained in the Wetlands Protection Act.

3.9.13 Need to improve the aesthetics of new development in town.

During the Preservation Forum held on February 3, 2001, mention was made of the need to improve the quality of new construction in the town. This is especially true of franchises and new construction in historic areas. Design review is necessary if the town wishes to pursue this objective, which is especially appropriate in the town's business districts that line its main arterials.

3.9.14 Need to review the Town bylaw and procedures related to wireless communications facilities.

The regulation of these visually obtrusive facilities and towers may need to be reviewed for their effectiveness in protecting historic properties and districts. This has been a controversial topic in Wakefield, and it deserves to be studied to assure the public that all available means are being used to protect the integrity of historic sites. In addition, communication between the Board of Appeals and the Historical Commission needs to be

improved on the issue of upholding the requirement for a 250 foot setback from historic properties for cell towers that is currently included in the bylaw.

3.10 Public Awareness

Public awareness is the foundation of historic preservation. If the public is to know about the value of historic preservation, it must know what exists and the value of that resource. All too often, the preservation community takes for granted community support and fails to realize that support arises out of awareness.

In Wakefield, public awareness must begin with a strategy that is capable of reaching both property owners and the general public, plus special constituencies such as public officials and school populations.

3.10.1 Needs related to educating owners of historic properties.

In planning for increasing public awareness about historic preservation, the question needs to be asked: "awareness of what directed to whom?" The answer depends to some extent on the purpose of the educational message. Because private property owners are the stewards of by far the greatest number of historic properties, the most acute need is to assure that all owners are aware of the significance of their properties.

Next in importance is the general population, who will provide the support that is so essential to the long-term success of historic preservation efforts. Finally, there are focus groups and school populations. Focus groups would include preservation advocacy organizations, town boards that review development plans, municipal officials and businessmen.

Owners of historic resources---whether these properties be residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural or vacant land---need to be given the highest priority for preservation awareness efforts. These owners are the stewards of Wakefield's history, and the future of these resources depends on how well they realize the importance of their property and how they act on this awareness.

Property owners need to be provided with the following:

- *Information about their property:* The most important and readily-available information that can be provided to owners is the inventory forms on their properties. Priority should be given to distributing the 383 inventories that have been prepared to date.

The next priority should be to commission the completion of those properties that were not surveyed in the 1983 survey. Finally, the 1983 survey should be updated to conform with the current standards of the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

- *Information about architectural styles:* The mailings of inventory forms should also include a generic description of the architectural style of the property, since most of the survey forms provide only a cursory description of architectural features. These descriptions should include illustrations of typical detailing of that style, in order to give owners a greater appreciation of the role of architectural details and the importance of keeping the original design

integrity of a style. Such information will help owners to develop a greater appreciation for their property.

- *General historical information:* Also included should be a history of Wakefield that emphasizes the architecture of the town, for example, the narrative history prepared as part of the 1983 inventory.

- *Information about resources:* Property owners should also be supplied with information about restoration resources available to them, including restoration books and videos in the library and technical assistance available from agencies and individuals.

One approach to providing educational materials to owners is through realtors. The Historical Commission may want to distribute volumes of historic inventories to local realtors from which they can make copies as properties come on the market. Forums directed to realtors on the value of historic properties may also be helpful.

3.10.2 Need for preservation support materials.

Implementing an effective public awareness program will require several categories of support materials, including:

- *Historic resources inventories:* Property owners are the most important target for public awareness activities, and, as noted earlier, it is essential that adequate information on their historic properties be made available to them. The first priority here is to inventory the additional properties that have not yet been surveyed in town. The next priority is to upgrade the 383 surveys that were in 1983 so that meet the current survey standards of the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

- *Historic units/curriculum units:* Local history is rarely told in its full scope but in topics or "units." Historic units for Wakefield would include the history of the local shoe industry, the rattan industry and the textile industry; Native American settlement; agriculture; neighborhood development; Puritan settlement; the settlement of the town's ethnic groups and any number of other topics. The units would include references to historic resources in town, as a means of reinforcing the historic preservation message and placing it in today's context.

Each of these units should have its own set of support materials, including a written history that would be self-contained for that topic but written in reference to local, state, national and world history. These units would be invaluable resources in providing adults with a greater appreciation of their community's history and of its historic resources. They would also be a tremendous curriculum resource for teachers to use in implementing the history and social studies frameworks mandated in the Massachusetts Education Reform Act. The town is fortunate to have a current history in the book: *Wakefield: 350 Years by the Lake*, prepared by Wakefield 350, Inc.

- *Illustrated programs:* A slide program and accompanying text should be prepared for each of the historical units. Such programs will be invaluable in conveying the core message of each aspect of Wakefield's history. For ease of presentation, these programs should be put on video cassette. This would also allow the programs to be shown on local cable television and in

classrooms. The slide program presented at the February 3rd preservation forum could be scanned and recorded for local cable TV.

- *Reference resources:* An important component of any public awareness effort is to encourage and assist owners of historic properties to restore their structures in an appropriate manner. Support materials need to be compiled for this purpose, including books, videos, and other resource materials. These could be made available for circulation at the Lucius Bebee Memorial Library. In addition to restoration resources, the Library should be the central repository of all of the historic resources inventories prepared for the Wakefield Historical Commission.

- *Brochures:* Brochures need to be prepared to support a variety of public education efforts, including neighborhood walking tour brochures, bicycle tours, brochures on architectural styles in town, and pamphlets on regulatory issues such as the Demolition Delay Bylaw.

- *House plaques:* House plaques are one of the most visible and effective tools in assisting owners and the general public in appreciating the historic value of a dwelling. Few house plaques exist in Wakefield. They are a very cost-effective way of making owners and the public aware of the value of an historic property.

3.10.3 Need for delivery systems.

There are a number of potential delivery systems that can be used in increasing the level of public awareness about historic preservation and the town's history. These include:

- *Direct mail:* This would be the most effective method for reaching property owners, where specific information about their properties would be provided. This delivery system would be the most expensive, but the most effective for this purpose.

- *Cable television:* Local access stations can provide an outlet for prepared programs such as slide programs that have been transferred to video format. Television has the tremendous advantage of reaching a large audience.

- *Newspaper articles:* Wakefield's newspapers have the potential to play an important role in the public awareness effort through news articles related to the coverage of preservation forums and other events or through the sponsorship of a weekly or monthly column on historic or preservation issues. Coverage in the newspaper has enormous leverage and impact because of its wide readership and is an especially effective way of reaching political, civic and business leaders.

- *Forums and lectures:* Annual, semi-annual or monthly forums should be initiated by the Historical Commission and other historic and preservation organizations in town. This could complement the lectures currently offered by the Wakefield Historical Society but be more focused on preservation topics. Forums and lectures are excellent opportunities to focus on topical issues related to historic preservation or to relate the town's history through its historic resources. Forums can be used to bring consultants and advocates from other communities to discuss issues that are of current concern to Wakefield. For example, a forum on National Register and local 40C districts could include a panel of resident/owners from other communities

who have had long experience living in such districts. The perspective and experience of others can be of great assistance when sorting through complex issues.

- *Walking tours:* Walking tours are a pleasant and effective method of increasing public awareness about neighborhood historic resources. Walking tours can also be supplemented with “armchair tours” that replicate the walking tour through the use of a slide or computerized program.

- *On-site educational programs:* Some of the most effective educational programs currently being offered in town are at historic sites. Programs at the Colonel James Hartshorne House could include not only the history associated with the house but incorporate the history of ice harvesting that occurred on nearby Lake Quannapowitt and on the geologic history of the lake.

- *School programs:* The history and social studies frameworks mandated under the new Massachusetts Education Reform Act are an incentive for school systems to incorporate local history into curriculum units. The school curriculum in Wakefield needs to be reviewed to determine how historic preservation might be integrated into the teaching of history, for example, through the teaching of architectural styles.

- *Exhibits:* One possible option here is to encourage local or regional camera clubs to sponsor annual photo competitions on preservation themes and have the winners exhibited at a central place.

- *Preservation Awards/Preservation Week:* Awards presented during Preservation Week are an excellent way of publicly recognizing owners of historic properties who have restored their structures. Public recognition of exemplary restoration projects builds an ethic of stewardship that is the foundation of local historic preservation.

3.10.4 Need for a space that can serve as a place for teaching Wakefield's history.

Presenting the preservation message to the general population will require a more broad-ranging educational effort. To be effective, the preservation message should be integrated into the general history of Wakefield. The more the public appreciates the history of the town, the more they will tend to appreciate the architectural and archaeological legacy of that history.

The greatest need in building an appreciation for history and preservation among the general public is *basic information*. The public can't be expected to appreciate local history and historic preservation if they don't know much about it. Reaching the general public will require both adequate informational materials and delivery systems for that information.

However, public education would be improved if there was an additional site in town where that history could be told from various perspectives, a place with sufficient space where media presentations could be supplemented with artifacts from the town's past. Such a place would also assist in telling Wakefield's interesting history in an interactive manner.

The Historical Society museum has an impressive collection of artifacts, documents and paintings and conducts a variety of educational programs. However its current space limits the scope of its on-site activities. The West Ward School has been mentioned as an appropriate place for expanding the educational functions of the Historical Society. It could be both a museum and a teaching place that allows for more active presentations. With the restoration of the important West Ward School, the timing may be appropriate for this unique building to assume a new role. There is also currently an interest in the town in starting a rattan museum, which would add to the resources and sites available for building a public appreciation of Wakefield's history.

3.11 Organizational Capability

Preserving Wakefield's historic resources will require an organizational structure that will allow the mounting of a successful and sustained long-term campaign. Some entity or entities needs to make sure that something happens. Existing public and private agencies in town have their own strengths and specialties. The Historical Commission, for example, has as its central role the documentation of historic properties and the designation of National Register and other special districts. It also administers the Demolition Delay Bylaw. The role of the Historical Society is that of archivist and public educator.

There are certain gaps in the organizational needs for historic preservation, including the need for an advocacy organization, a preservation trust, a loan program, a funding mechanism for downtown revitalization, and ongoing planning.

3.11.1 Need for a preservation advocacy organization.

Every community needs an organization that is the principal advocate for historic preservation goals. Historical Commissions and Historical Societies often assume this role on occasion, but the function does not fit these agencies. Historical Commissions, as public agencies, are necessarily limited in how far they can go in advocating for historic preservation objectives, and Historical Societies are generally focused on archival and educational functions. The role of advocacy rarely suits their membership.

What is needed is a special private organization whose sole purpose is to protect historic properties, such as a Preservation Society. Such organizations should be ready and willing to "enter the fray" when necessary and to put up a sustained defense of historic preservation goals. Without such an organization, there will be a vacuum whenever an historic property is threatened. Such advocacy organizations are free to lobby public officials and Town Meeting for preservation goals without concern for the consequences in other areas.

3.11.2 Need for a private preservation trust and loan program.

When an historic property is threatened, there is often no entity available to protect it through purchase and resale. A preservation trust would have the legal authority to purchase, restrict, hold and dispose of historic properties as necessary. In addition, a preservation loan

program would provide a dedicated source of funds to purchase such properties and hold them for a protection alternative. The Community Preservation Act now makes this possibility much more realizable than formerly.

3.11.3 Need for a dedicated source of funding to guide the revitalization of downtown.

Experience in Wakefield and elsewhere shows that the excellent model of downtown revitalization---the Main Street Program, an initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation---rarely receives sustained local funding following the initial state seed funding. As a result, promising downtown revitalization efforts wane and disappear. Attempting to revitalize an obsolete historic downtown without a dedicated and reliable source of funds to support a downtown organization and staff is doomed to failure.

One possible source of such funding is a Business Improvement District, which is a special tax assessment district for downtowns. In Massachusetts, Hyannis and Springfield have such districts. Needless to say, the adoption of a BID requires a strong willingness to revitalize a downtown.

3.11.4 Need for an annual planning day to set priorities for a work program.

Master plans become out-of-date within a few years, and this Wakefield Preservation Plan will be no exception. While the analysis and goals of this plan will tend to have currency for several years, the action plan and priorities will change rapidly. This is because circumstances change from year to year and opportunities arise each year that are often totally unpredictable.

The only way to adequately plan for the protection of historic resources is to meet annually to develop a new action plan for the year. In order to assure that this is done, a certain date should be reserved each year for this "Planning Day." This Planning Day will provide an opportunity to review progress made in historic preservation goals, to review what opportunities exist for the coming year, and to develop an action plan for implementation.

An annual planning process of this kind will result in an accelerated rate of success in implementing historic preservation goals.