

2025 Historic Preservation Plan

Concord Historical Commission



In any weather, at any hour of the day or night, I have been anxious to improve the nick of time, and notch it on my stick too; to stand on the meeting of two eternities, the past and future, which is precisely the present moment...

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854



Cover photograph: The *1836 Battle Monument* and North Bridge in Minute Man National Historical Park, Concord, Massachusetts, commemorate the opening battle in the American Revolution. The Monument marks the site of the “shot heard round the world,” a quote from Ralph Waldo Emerson’s *Concord Hymn*. The memorial takes the form of an obelisk, an ancient Egyptian means of keeping time by the shadow of the sun, evoking the cyclical nature of time.

Photograph by Jay Sullivan, 2008. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=21183460>

CONCORD, MASSACHUSETTS 2025 HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

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Partners and Stakeholders

Town of Concord

Building & Inspection Division
 Concord Free Public Library
 Concord Recreation Department
 Division of Natural Resources
 Economic Vitality & Tourism Division
 Graphic Information System Program
 Planning Division
 Public Schools
 Public Works
 Sustainability Division
 Town Clerk's Office
 Town Manager's Office

Town of Concord Boards and Committees

Agriculture Committee
 Cemetery Committee
 Climate Action Committee
 Community Preservation Committee
 Concord250 Executive Committee
 Concord Cultural Council
 Concord Municipal Affordable Housing Trust
 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
 Economic Vitality Committee
 Historic Districts Commission
 Historical Commission
 Housing Authority
 Housing Development Corporation
 Library Committee
 Natural Resources Commission
 Planning Board
 Public Works Commission
 Record & Archives Committee
 Select Board
 Trails Committee
 Transportation Advisory Committee
 West Concord Advisory Committee
 West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee
 Zoning Board of Appeals

Local Partners

Concord Art Association
 Concord Business Partnership
 Concord Chamber of Commerce

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 Concord Land Conservation Trust
 Concord Museum
 First Parish
 Friends of Sleepy Hollow Cemetery
 Friends of Walden Pond
 League of Women Voters of Concord-Carlisle
 Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House
 Ralph Waldo Emerson Memorial Association
 Save Our Heritage
 The Robbins House
 The Thoreau Society
 Thoreau Farm
 Umbrella Arts Center
 Walden Woods Project
 Wright Tavern Legacy Trust
 51 Walden Performing Arts Center

Tribal, Federal, State and Regional Partners

Bay Circuit Trail and Greenway
 Battle Road Scenic Byway Committee
 Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
 Freedom's Way Heritage Association
 Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail
 Friends of Minute Man National Historical Park
 Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge
 Harvard University (Estabrook Woods)
 Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band
 Historic New England (Scotchford-Wheeler House)
 Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe
 Mass Audubon (Brewster's Woods)
 Massachusetts Commission on Indian Affairs
 Massachusetts Dept. of Conservation and Recreation
 (Walden Pond State Reservation)
 Massachusetts Historical Commission
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council
 Minute Man National Historical Park
 National Park Service
 OARS: for Assabet, Concord, and Sudbury Rivers
 Preservation Massachusetts
 Regional Housing Services Office
 SuAsCo River Stewardship Council
 Sudbury Valley Trustees
 The Trustees (The Old Manse)

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Elm Street/Three Arch Bridge, Sudbury River (Heritage Strategies)

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The **2025 Historic Preservation Plan** for Concord, Massachusetts provides a long-term vision and strategic goals for the town’s historic preservation program. It is intended to guide the work of the Concord Historical Commission (CHC) for the next decade, as well as advising allied boards, commissions, Town departments and community organizations who are stewards of Concord’s heritage and cultural resources. The plan recommends collaborating with new and existing partners to preserve and enhance the tangible reminders of Concord’s history and to “nurture a more equitable, healthy, resilient and vibrant community.”¹ While the plan is intended to put forth goals, recommendations and action items for the next decade, periodic updates will ensure that current or evolving issues and opportunities potentially affecting historic resources are addressed.

Vision

This plan is based on a national, multi-dimensional preservation movement “that grounds its work in human needs and aspirations and becomes a prevalent, powerful and practical force to sustain, improve and enrich people’s lives.”² It marks a milestone year in the town’s history, two hundred and fifty years after the battles at Concord and Lexington sparked a revolution resulting in the founding of the country and the first modern republic built on popular consent.

The following vision statement guides the Concord historic preservation program toward achieving this goal:

In Concord, preservation is retrospective and forward looking, centered on people and the environment, and fully integrated into community plans and practices.

As a place of experimentation and innovation, Concord supports sensitive development that preserves and enhances the town's multi-faceted past.

As a place of national and local memory, Concord recognizes its power to provoke thought, provide historical perspective and inspire action on timeless social and environmental issues.

Summary

Historic preservation is a field focused on the tangible reminders of our collective past, the touchstones of human identity and creativity that surround and shape us. In Concord, those reminders include symbols of national identity as well as places where ordinary people did extraordinary things. Thanks to many generations of citizens who have invested in the heritage of Concord, history is palpable here and intrinsic to the town's character and identity. The town's distinctive place in the American story creates a highly desirable place to live and visit and drives its economic vitality.

This historic preservation plan presents a forward-looking approach to preservation in Concord in 2025 that not only saves places that have meaning, but also contributes to an equitable, healthful and resilient community. It builds on the comprehensive long-range plan *Envision Concord, Bridge to 2030* (2018) by focusing on an established core value: History and Character. The plan affirms Concord's commitment to stewarding cultural resources that reflect the people's history of this land and provides a strategic framework for preservation actions to advance community-wide goals.

Many individuals contributed to the preparation of this plan. Led by the Concord Historical Commission (CHC), the plan is a collaborative effort among residents and stakeholders who participated in a survey and many discussions and public meetings; the consultant, Heritage Strategies; Town Planning Division; Concord Historic Districts Commission (HDC); and Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), who provided critical guidance and financial support. The Concord Community Preservation Committee granted essential project funding.

The Historic Preservation Plan for Concord contains four primary chapters and a series of technical appendices. Following this Introduction, Chapter 2 provides Background for the plan, Chapter 3 presents the Opportunities Analysis, and Chapter 4 describes Recommended Actions. Technical Appendices support the plan's content, including a summary of the community survey, history of preservation in Concord, preservation accomplishments, funding opportunities and a glossary.

The outcomes of this plan are many:

- Identifies critical opportunities and challenges in Concord today;
- Connects historic preservation to core values of Concord;
- Provides background information on the preservation program;
- Delineates preservation goals and tools for managing Concord's continued growth over the next decade;
- Recommends ongoing practices and specific actions to advance those goals;

- Encourages communication, cooperation and collaboration among the many stewards of Concord’s historical and cultural assets; and
- Provides a framework for the Concord preservation program and partners to develop annual action and fiscal plans.

The plan is intended to be a useful snapshot in time that provides flexibility for town boards, committees and divisions to develop new ideas and strategies as opportunities and challenges arise, an on-line tool to be updated regularly to ensure its ongoing relevance and accessibility.

Why History Matters

2025 is an important moment to reflect on why history and historic preservation matter. Understanding our history equips citizens with the context, critical thinking skills and sense of civic responsibility necessary for informed self-governance. The Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks explains how

History prepares people to have the knowledge and skills to become thoughtful, active and lifelong participants in a democratic society and complex world.

Government of the people, by the people, for the people is not just a historical phrase..., but an ideal that must be renewed and reinvigorated by each succeeding generation.³

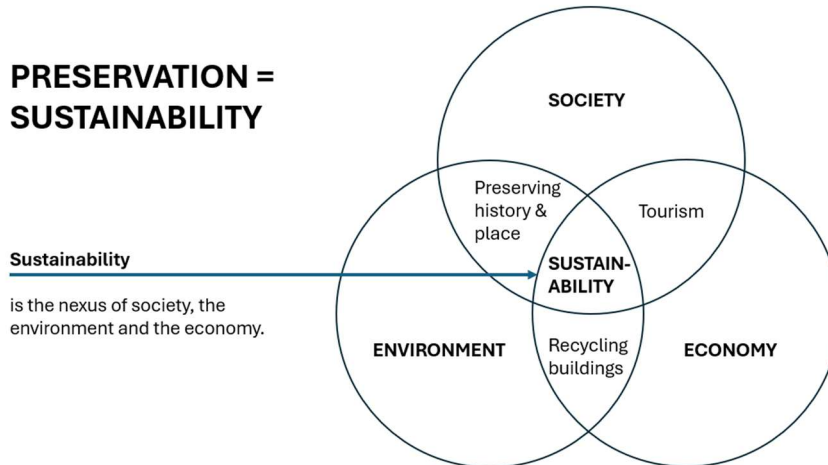
Why Historic Preservation Matters

Preservation Sustains Concord

In a rapidly changing world, we must take care of what we have in order to retain the current quality of life. Historic preservation is the practice of protecting and maintaining cultural resources like buildings, sites, objects and landscapes that are important to history, culture and heritage. It is an inherently sustainable and resourceful planning tool that helps communities thrive and manage change, ultimately leading to far-reaching social, environmental and economic benefits. By maintaining historic buildings and landscapes, communities can provide affordable housing, create jobs, and promote sustainable development, while also creating a tangible link to their cultural heritage for future generations.

What are Cultural Resources?

Cultural resources are the tangible, physical evidence of past human activity such as archaeological sites, historic buildings, structures, objects, and districts that are valued for their historical, cultural, scientific or traditional significance. These non-renewable resources also include cultural landscapes, traditional cultural properties, and even tangible or intangible cultural practices that provide a connection to a community's history and heritage.



Source: Preserve
Historic Phoenix,
2015

Historic Preservation Provides Economic Benefits

- **Encourages local investment:** Reinvesting in Concord’s historic places draws visitors and events, revives commercial areas, provides incubation space for small businesses, supports skilled construction and artisan trades, stabilizes property values, and provides affordable housing. It supports a sound, sustainable and vibrant economy that also fills deeper human needs without compromising livability.⁴
- **Boosts local economies:** Historic preservation can lead to community revitalization and stimulate local economies through tourism and the support of small businesses and arts organizations.
- **Supports affordable housing:** Older buildings often contain more affordable housing units, contributing to a more diverse mix of residents.

Historic Preservation Provides Environmental Benefits

- **Reduces waste:** Reusing and rehabilitating existing buildings conserves resources and reduces waste compared to demolition and new construction, reducing the carbon footprint of new development.
- **Saves energy:** Preserving historic buildings can reduce the need to demolish them and build anew, saving energy and materials associated with both demolition and new construction. Preserving open space, agricultural landscapes and tree canopy provides essential carbon sequestration benefits and resilience to climate change.
- **Combats sprawl:** Utilizing existing buildings in built-up areas helps prevent development from spreading into undeveloped areas.

Community Voices

The people of Concord played a key role in shaping preservation goals and recommendations in this plan. Project team members made it a priority to engage with Concord citizens in order to ensure that the plan is grounded in community needs and aspirations and a diversity of perspectives are represented. A detailed survey distributed to every household in Concord, stakeholder interviews and focus group sessions, informal gatherings, public meetings, a public forum and a public comment period provided essential input and helped shape the goals and recommendations of the plan. The project team consulted past planning documents that represent an even broader local constituency across decades. In addition, this plan incorporates lessons learned from national and regional organizations and from large cities with extensive resources and diverse populations.

Familiar Foundations

This plan builds on several key planning reports and town initiatives that present a roadmap for Concord's future, particularly the comprehensive long-range plan *Envision Concord, Bridge to 2030* (2018), *Open Space and Recreation Plan* (2015), and *Historic Resources Masterplan* (1995).

Some preservation methods and tools described in this plan will be familiar, since historic preservation at the local level takes place within a framework of state and federal programs and laws. Strategies established in Town of Concord comprehensive long-range planning efforts and other plans continue to be relevant in the 21st century. Grounded in foundational programs, laws, and plans, this document offers new insights and tools for sustainability and progress through preservation.

New Opportunities and Challenges

In the three decades since the publication of Concord's *Historic Resources Masterplan*, dramatic societal, environmental, and technological changes have reshaped the fields of preservation and planning. Local preservation actions can help address pressing regional and global concerns: social and economic inequity, climate change, housing affordability, development pressures, economic recovery, and the health of democracy.

Concord faces a number of recent federal and state government actions and once-in-a-lifetime opportunities and challenges:

Proposed Hanscom Airfield Expansion Project

Concord governmental agencies and organizations, along with the towns of Bedford, Lexington, and Lincoln and Minute Man National Historical Park have serious concerns about the environmental impact of the proposed expansion of Hanscom airfield for private jets.

Redevelopment of Massachusetts Correctional Institution-Concord (MCI-Concord)

In 2024, Governor Healy closed MCI-Concord (a former State Prison and Reformatory that opened in 1878). The Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM) is now considering how to divest this large and highly visible property. Proposed redevelopment, with a mix of commercial, housing, municipal uses and greenspace, will represent an irreversible change for the town.

Route 2A Project Through Minute Man National Historical Park

Current negotiations among Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration and the National Park Service (NPS) aim to reconcile concerns about automobile traffic, pedestrian and cyclist safety, and visitor experience on this roadway that traverses a nationally significant cultural landscape.

Multifamily Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities

Concord recently adopted new Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Communities zoning which permits multifamily housing by right in designated zones, some of which are in historic village centers and neighborhoods.

Accessory Dwelling Units

According to a state law passed in 2024, Accessory Dwelling Units under 900 square feet are permitted by right. Programs and policies can encourage reuse of historic accessory structures and compatible infill development.

Environmental Sustainability Requirements in Historic Districts

Legislation passed in 2024 requires historic district commissions to “give substantial weight to the threat posed by climate change” in their review of applications.

Core Values

To address 21st-century opportunities and challenges, the Concord preservation program affirms and expands upon established community values and goals identified in *Envision Concord: A Bridge to 2030*. This historic preservation plan furthers community goals for Inclusivity, Livability and Sustainability with a special emphasis on History and Character.

These community values and goals inform preservation actions developed in this plan, with the highest priority actions achieving multiple town values and goals. Weaving historic preservation tools, theories and strategies into Town plans and practices will help sustain Concord.

Inclusive Participation, Collaboration and Partnerships

Community planning is most effective when it involves all parts of the community, divisions of government and regional partners. The preservation program in Concord has critical review, advisory and commenting roles in decision making.

In this democratic republic built on popular consent, everyone has a seat at the table in identifying and preserving places that matter. Including people with diverse perspectives, backgrounds and experiences will help ensure that decisions about managing change and sharing Concord history are more accessible, inclusive, just and relevant.

Inclusive Cultural Heritage

History and Culture are inseparable from one another and integral to community planning. Regional planning efforts envision a Greater Boston in 2050 “full of unique places and experiences that bring joy and foster diversity and social cohesion.”⁵

Concord’s national park, state park and abundance of popular, accredited non-profit organizations provide fun, informative and meaningful experiences. Its national symbols and power of place embody timeless, relatable themes and stories from diverse perspectives that resonate with broad audiences. A carefully planned and managed preservation, public history, tourism, and contemporary arts and culture program will play a vital role in this regional vision, enhance the quality of life for Concord residents and visitors, and boost the local economy.

Celebrating Untold Stories

Nothing about us, without us.

As a well-known heritage destination representing ideas of revolution, protest and American identity, Concord is developing and sharing “people’s history” stories about ordinary people who fought for social justice and human rights or are otherwise associated with events and broad patterns of history. Much more work is needed to uncover and amplify forgotten or overlooked stories and perspectives to ensure a more truthful, welcoming, just and inclusive environment relevant and accessible to all. This includes the role of individuals and lesser-known communities in shaping both nationally and locally significant stories, events and movements.

Vital Village Centers and Public Places

In the survey conducted for this plan, Concordians identified homogenization, urbanization and commercialism as major challenges that could strip Concord of its distinctive sense of place. When asked what they cherish about living in Concord, an impressive number of residents identified the town’s distinctive character, sense of community, independent local businesses and the human scale and walkability of historic village centers. Beyond the village centers, public streets and town-owned properties are touchstones that present tangible evidence of Concord values to residents and visitors.

Historic Preservation is an interdisciplinary field that researches, documents, preserves, and enhances cultural resources where we live, breathe and work. It helps manage change of the inherited built environment through stewardship of landscapes and resources.

Public History. Research and preservation of Concord’s material culture enhance public history, a separate field closely related to historic preservation that acknowledges the role of history in shaping place, culture and memory (MAPC. “Historic Preservation and Public History: Past Present and Future”).

Heritage Tourism. Both historic preservation and public history are essential to heritage tourism, “the business and practice of attracting and accommodating visitors to a place or area based especially on the unique or special aspects of that locale’s history, landscape and culture” (Advisory Council. Preserve America Executive Order, 2003).

Contemporary Arts and Culture. Contemporary arts and cultural programming take place within an inherited setting of cultural resources.

Cultural Landscapes and Open Space

This preservation plan recognizes the importance of cultural landscapes in context and in their entirety, rather than buildings, structures and objects in isolation. The Concord Open Space Framework developed by the Natural Resources Commission clearly maps the broad natural, agricultural and built areas within Concord. This preservation plan supplements and supports the Natural Resource Commission's leadership in natural and agricultural areas and focuses more closely on preserving places aligned with cultural heritage.

Cultural Landscapes are geographic areas, including both cultural and natural resources which are associated with an important event, activity, individual or group, or which demonstrate a significant cultural or aesthetic value. They contain a combination of both built and natural features including buildings and structures, circulation, water features, vegetation, and objects and may be vernacular in character or designed according to an aesthetic style. They range from small designed gardens, parks, cemeteries, and campuses to large-scale agricultural landscapes and scenic reservations.

Preservation tools can help protect the character of rural landscape beyond Concord's village centers that are endangered by development pressures. Agricultural lands, woodlands and open spaces support human health and well-being. They address basic societal and environmental needs for clean water, locally-produced food, wildlife habitats and outdoor recreation.

Housing Choice and Affordability

Preservation helps maintain Concord's existing highly varied housing stock, which in turn supports an economically diverse community – a key goal for social sustainability. Successfully preserving existing smaller homes for young families, retirees and lower-income households takes a conscious effort.

Mobility and Access

Walkable streets and public transit play important roles in Concord's historic and future development. Rivers, trails, roads and railroad lines connect people to Concord's dense village centers and the wider region. Written in Concord by Henry David Thoreau, the influential essay *Walking* emphasizes the importance of walking as a method of experiencing the world.

Environmental Sustainability

Concord's long legacy of leadership in the environmental movement distinguishes it from other communities. Its forward-looking vision for preserving landscapes and buildings helps reduce waste, carbon emissions and encroachment on nature. It supports resilience and mitigates threats from climate change resulting from increasing greenhouse gases. Reusing buildings—and making them more energy efficient—plays an essential role in meeting Concord's goals for sustainability, resilience and climate action.

Preservation Goals and Highest Priority Recommendations

To realize the vision for a forward-looking preservation program grounded in Concord's core values, this plan organizes recommended actions into four goals based on four basic preservation tools.

Goal 1: Public Appreciation

Expand public understanding and appreciation for preserving Concord as a place of national memory, meaning and inspiration for all people.

Highest Priority Recommendation:

- ★ Develop a robust preservation communications program.

Goal 2: Documentation

Enhance knowledge and inform decision making about Concord's multifaceted cultural resources, including landscapes, through research and documentation.

Highest Priority Recommendations:

- ★ Undertake a thematic study report and preservation survey for the Concord Reformatory, Wardens' House, Northeast Correction Center agricultural land and associated West Concord sites.
- ★ Prepare a study report identifying historic resources in the entire Thoreau Depot/Hubbard Street/Sudbury Road area to provide information for future planning and design.
- ★ Inventory Town- and school-owned lands and structures, noting significance, documentation completeness, and protection status.

Goal 3: Planning and Land Use Management

Preserve Concord's distinctive historic character through effective land use regulations, sensitive planning and proactive development strategies.

Highest Priority Recommendations:

- ★ Hire Metropolitan Area Planning Council to suggest specific revisions to Concord's existing zoning bylaws and related tools to retain or preserve traditional village scale, streetscape and architectural character, balance preservation with economic vitality, and strengthen local identity. (e.g., site plan review criteria and Village Center Districts).
- ★ Strengthen the demolition review bylaw.
- ★ Update HDC design guidelines to address recent legislative initiatives and support town environmental, economic and social goals. (e.g., Accessory Dwelling Units, electric vehicle charging stations)

Goal 4: Operations

Improve operational effectiveness and efficiency by strategically investing time and resources.

Highest priority recommendations:

- ★ Update HDC administrative codes to expand projects eligible for administrative review and approval and update CHC administrative code to clearly define its regulatory and advisory roles.
- ★ Realign job scope of the Senior Planner to support this plan. Hire or re-assign a dedicated part-time administrator to support the CPC.



Meriam's Corner, Concord, c1900 (Detroit Publishing Co., Library of Congress)

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

Concord History and Character

Historic Themes

Nestled at the confluence of the Concord, Assabet and Sudbury rivers, Concord has a rich and layered history that spans from its Native American roots to today. Readers can consult many published sources that describe Concord's history in detail, so this overview focuses instead on a summary of notable themes that have shaped its physical development.

For about 12,000 years of societal development and changes in climate, people of the Massachusetts, Nipmuc and Pawtucket nations lived seasonally in this area called Musketaquid, utilizing the fertile floodplains for agriculture, the waterways for fishing and transportation, and the woodlands for hunting. Their relationship with the land was shaped by deep ecological knowledge and a sustainable use of resources.

In about 1635, local Native leaders and English colonists negotiated a trade of land under fundamentally different cultural viewpoints. The exchange resulted in one of the first inland European settlements in New England. Puritan settlers laid out the town called Concord, a word meaning unity and peace, in the form of a six-mile square with house lots clustered within one-half mile of the central meetinghouse. Subsistence needs shaped early colonial development, with agricultural fields, woodlots, and communal grazing areas defining much of the town's physical layout beyond the village center.

Concord's identity as a revolutionary community took root in the 18th century, with the events of April 19, 1775, when British troops marched on the town to seize military supplies. The battle at the North Bridge, where colonial militia fired the "shot heard round the world," signaled the outbreak of the American Revolution and the founding of the first modern democratic republic. That watershed moment has been immortalized in art and memory. Still visible from the American Revolution era are the central town common, many houses and farms, several taverns, the town's two oldest burying grounds, stone walls and some important roads. Many of these iconic landmarks are preserved within the Minute Man National Historical Park or one of Concord's six local historic districts.

"Historic Context"

This term refers to the period of history, specific events, or social, political, and economic conditions that shape an event, object, site, place, or piece of writing. Knowing the historical context helps us understand the reasons behind actions, beliefs, and cultural norms of the time, and how they influenced the present. To support analysis and interpretation of historic resources, well-rounded teams of people write historic context statements that describe a definitive theme, period in history, and geographic location. In Concord, many of the most beloved and historic places are associated with more than one context.

In the early 19th century, Concord became a nexus of American intellectual and literary life. The once rural farming village became a flourishing town with a diverse population and national significance. The homes and walking paths of Transcendentalist thinkers and writers such as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau are vital parts of the town's landscape. Thoreau's experiment in simple living at Walden Pond broadly influenced conservation ideals and continues to inspire people from all walks of life who visit the pond and surrounding woods, now protected as a state reservation. Railroads, mills, industrial buildings, worker housing, suburban villas and large-scale commercial farming reshaped the town's physical development in the 19th century, resulting in identifiable villages and neighborhoods. Underground Railroad sites and a state Reformatory convey stories of Concord as a haven for freedom seekers and a place of experimental reform. Rehabilitated 19th-century mill buildings and railroad lines serve today's housing and connectivity needs.

In the 20th century, Concord evolved into a suburb of Boston with new schools, neighborhoods, commercial areas and roads to meet the needs of a growing population. Innovative architects and theorists introduced modern neighborhoods, communal living patterns, technologies and styles to Concord. A new cadre of conservationists, preservationists and historians helped ensure that Concord retained its distinctive semi-rural character and meaningful, nationally significant cultural landscapes. Carefully written zoning regulations and conservation efforts have helped to preserve farmlands and forests and limit overdevelopment. Historic preservation and heritage tourism have been central themes in Concord's development, with concerted efforts to retain landscapes and landmarks that represent pivotal moments, patterns and innovations in American history.

Important themes of liberty and justice, nature and conservation, and civic engagement and responsibility continue to shape Concord's identity and physical form. They run through layers of Musketaquid and Concord past and present, from Indigenous pathways to revolutionary battlegrounds, to sites of literary inspiration and acts of social conscience. Today, Concord remains a symbol of American ideals, its development carefully balancing heritage, ecological stewardship, and thoughtful growth.

Indigenous Lifeways

As Nutayunean—We Still Live Here. The Nipmuc, Pawtucket, and Massachusetts peoples have inhabited this region for about 12,000 years. The lands now called Concord have been a thriving area of human habitation for millennia and were long known as Musketaquid—an Algonquin word meaning roughly “land among grassy river”. Just outside the center of town to the west, the Sudbury and Assabet Rivers come together to form the Concord River. These rivers made Concord a desirable place to live, providing abundant fish, game, and plant life, as well as convenient transportation.

Other resources include: river floodplains and planting fields, Egg Rock, Old Calf Pasture, Nashawtuc Hill, Concord Museum, and archaeological resources.

Agriculture

People have practiced agriculture and cherished the fertile farmland of Concord for at least one thousand years. Corn, beans and squash were the earliest staple crops. Early English settlers introduced foreign, more intensive agricultural practices, crops and animals that altered the Indigenous landscape. Horticultural writers like Simon Brown, editor of *The New England Farmer*, and innovators like Ephraim Wales Bull, inventor of the sweet Concord grape, were widely influential, even helping save the European wine industry.

Other resources include: Prison Farm, Barrett Farm, Verrill Farm, Nine Acre Corner, extended farmhouses and their settings, Lexington Road, and Thoreau Farm/Birthplace.

Save Our Heritage celebrates its 10-year restoration of Barrett’s Farm, the Act of Congress to expand the boundary of Minute Man National Historical Park, and the transfer of the Farm to the Park. (Save Our Heritage)



American Revolution

Concord is best known as the site of the opening battle of the American Revolution on April 19, 1775, when “the shot heard round the world” took place. The battle itself and associated events in Concord helped shape America’s democratic form of government and intellectual traditions and values. Minute Man National Historical Park, Battle Road, Concord Center and Concord’s local historical districts preserve hundreds of acres of connected cultural landscapes associated with the American Revolution.

Other resources include: Concord Museum exhibits and programs provide context to resources found throughout Concord. Wright Tavern, Colonial Inn, The Old Manse, Joseph Hosmer House and dozens of other “witness houses” (some previously considered too modest

in scale to be noteworthy), Old Hill and Old South Burying Grounds, roads and trails date to the day of the battle. Many monuments and memorials—such as the *1836 Battle Monument*, graves of British soldiers and Daniel Chester French’s famed sculpture of *The Minute Man* (1875)—commemorate that pivotal day in local and world history.

Enslavement, Freedom and Abolition

Concord residents played notable roles in emancipation efforts over centuries, using individual agency and activism, legal challenges, and abolitionist organizations to advance the cause of freedom for all. Massachusetts was the first US state to abolish slavery in 1783, but only after well over a century of enslaving people of Indigenous and African descent. Concord resources include many neighborhoods and sites associated with people who were enslaved, achieved freedom, and/or fought for abolition, including several Underground Railroad sites on the National Network to Freedom such as The Wayside. Today, visitors arriving by train can follow the path of those who sought freedom along the historic railroad route, to the site of the now replaced 1850s depot, and walk to nearby safe houses.

Other resources include: The Concord Museum and Robbins House provide many Enslavement, Freedom and Abolition programs or exhibits, including a walking tour of Concord’s African American History. 17th- and 18th-century sites throughout town include the restored John Jack headstone in the Old Burying Ground and homes and landscapes associated with enslaved and freed people such as the Old Manse, Block House, Barron House, Cuming House and Farm (Prison Farm), Thoreau Birthplace, and Brister’s Hill. Concord citizens like the Alcotts and Bigelows secretly opened their homes to Shadrach Minkins and others fleeing enslavement, even after the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 criminalized their humanitarian acts of conscience. The Franklin Sanborn House and Schoolroom is the site of the raid and near arrest of a member of the “Secret Six” who funded John Brown’s raid on Harpers Ferry. The Concord Female Abolition Society met in the houses of Susan Garrison, Mary Rice and Mary Brooks.

In a complex collaboration effort between the Town of Concord, Drinking Gourd Project, Minute Man NHP and generous individuals, the Robbins House was saved from demolition and moved to its current site on Town land near the North Bridge in 2011. CPC funding supported an archaeological study, survey form, building move, and building rehabilitation (Town of Concord)



Robbins House in its
new location (Nancy
Fresella-Lee)



American Literature

Concord is a literary hub and longstanding literary tourism destination in the United States, home to influential American writers like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Louisa May Alcott, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Harriet Hanson Robinson, and Malcolm X. Margaret Fuller frequented here. Numerous book publishers, journalists and newspaper editors resided in Concord, a town also known for pencil manufacturing. Concord sites were recognized as early as 1852 in *Homes of American Authors* and include the first National Park Service site and National Wild and Scenic Rivers to be recognized for their literary value.

Other resources include: Well-known literary tourism sites along and near the Battle Road National Scenic Byway include the Concord Museum, Orchard House, The Old Manse, The Wayside, Emerson House, Author's Ridge at Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, site of Thoreau's night in Concord jail and the Concord Free Public Library. Outlying sites include Walden Pond, Walden Woods, Brister's Hill, Thoreau's birthplace, Thoreau-Alcott House, Concord Boathouse, Sudbury-Assabet-Concord National Wild and Scenic River, Concord Reformatory, Frank Sanborn House and sites associated with William Stevens Robinson, Simon Brown, and the Peabody sisters.

Transcendentalism

A distinctly American philosophy created and practiced in Concord, Transcendentalism recognizes the divinity of Nature. Since all aspects of Nature are unified in this divinity, each person can reach transcendence through immersion in Nature, the ultimate church.

Other resources include: The Old Manse, where Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote his groundbreaking and highly influential essay, *Nature*; Concord's woodlands and walking trails, especially the Emerson Thoreau Amble; Walden Pond and Woods; Thoreau cabin site; "Bush," the Ralph Waldo Emerson House; the School of Philosophy at Orchard House; Thoreau's birthplace; the Thoreau-Alcott House; The Wayside (house of Nathaniel and Sophia Peabody Hawthorne);

Margaret Fuller sites; and Mary Peabody Mann House. The Concord Free Public Library and Concord Museum preserve artifacts, manuscripts and publications of Transcendentalists.

Civic Engagement

As its name implies, Concord has always prided itself on civic engagement and consensus building, even in moments of intense strife. Perhaps because of its experience on April 19, 1775, a day forever embedded in Concord memory, the town includes many sites of peaceful protest and political activism on subjects ranging from women’s suffrage, abolitionism and Civil Rights to peace, war and social reform. The Concord Town House is the hub of civic discourse and voting; as a Lyceum, it hosted well-known speakers like abolitionists Wendell Phillips and John Brown and many others. The site where Thoreau spent a night in jail protesting war and slavery is associated with *Civil Disobedience*, his essay that inspired world social justice leaders Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mohandas Gandhi.

Other resources include: John Jack gravestone; Wright Tavern; sites of former meeting houses; downtown churches where Frederick Douglass, the Grimkes, and other abolitionists spoke; Concord’s abundance of Greek Revival architecture (a style symbolically connecting modern and ancient democracies); Orchard House (home of Louisa May Alcott, a women’s suffrage leader), women’s suffrage headquarters at 42 Main Street; sites associated with Harriet Hanson Robinson and Margaret Fuller; and the Reformatory where Malcolm X was incarcerated.

Nature and Environmentalism

Concord is associated with pioneering early conservation and environmental efforts that are a powerful source of inspiration for environmentalists of all ages, past and present. Walden Pond is its most famous site associated with Thoreau’s early scientific records still used to measure climate change today. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote his widely influential essay *Nature* at The Old Manse. Concord is also home to October Farm and Brewster’s Woods, where early ornithological studies of William Brewster, Robert Alexander Gilbert, Harvard University and the Massachusetts Audubon Society took place.

Other resources include: Walden Pond and Woods, the Emerson House, Great Meadows, rivers, flood plains, and Indigenous sites.



Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (Wikipedia)

Industry and Industrial Development

Damon Mill (1808) in West Concord is an especially early American Industrial Revolution site, a profitable Northern cotton mill dependent upon Southern slavery. Irish and other workers built 19th-century railroads that spurred rapid industrial, population and economic growth. West Concord industries like the Waring Hat Factory and Boston Harness Company contracted prison labor from the Concord Reformatory and profited by selling wares produced within prison walls; they also accumulated enough wealth to build entire neighborhoods of speculative houses.

Other resources include: Massachusetts State Prison Warden's House, associated manufacturing sites and workers' housing, Bradford Mill (Allen Chair Factory), Nashoba Bakery Building, and the Thoreau-Alcott House (pencils). Colonial and early American industry are represented by the Pellet-Barrett House, John Stacy House and Bookbindery, and mill sites.



Before and after views of rehabilitated Bradford Mill in West Concord (John Boynton)

Incarceration

Jails and prisons figure prominently in nearly all eras of Concord's post-European settlement history, from a former jail site on Main Street that held American Revolution prisoners of war and the county jail site where Thoreau spent his famous night of protest, to the State Prison/Reformatory (MCI-Concord) and Prison Farm. The nationally significant correctional facility is one of the Concord sites featured in *A People's Guide to Greater Boston* (2020). A deeper understanding of life within Concord's jails and prisons would enhance themes of Revolution, Protest, Reform, and American Identity which draw international visitors to Concord.

Other resources include: State Correctional Institution sites (including Prison Farm, Wardens' House, prison cemetery, Dr. Cuming House, etc.), remnants of prison and jail walls, Thoreau jail site, West Concord housing developments, West Concord railroad, West Concord industries that employed Reformatory men, sites built with prison labor (poorhouse land and Mill Dam), and the house of Frank Sanborn (a leader in prison reform efforts).



Massachusetts Correctional
Institute (MCI), Concord
(Concord Bridge)

Housing for All

Between and within prominent houses of Concord from the 17th century to the present are modest living spaces and structures that housed underrepresented residents in Concord history. Henry David Thoreau raised awareness and appreciation for small houses and simple living when he retreated to a one-room cabin on Walden Pond built from a salvaged shanty of an Irish railroad worker. His book *Walden* (1854) urged readers to “simplify, simplify, simplify.” In the mid-20th-century architects, economists and educators experimented with homes and neighborhoods designed for “every man.”

Other resources include: Walden Pond, open landscape of the poor farm on Walden Street, workers' housing in West Concord, philanthropic housing, post-war housing for returning

veterans, Conantum, Jennie Dugan Road and post-war neighborhoods. More recent experimental housing in Concord includes two compact “pocket neighborhoods” of energy-efficient cottages in Riverwalk (2012) and Concord Millrun (2023).

Art, Craftsmanship, Architecture and Landscape Architecture

Talented artists and craftspeople are represented throughout Concord in resources ranging from archaeological discoveries and carved grave markers to workshops, studios, homes and museum collections. Artist Elizabeth Wentworth Roberts and architect Lois Lilley Howe created Concord Art Association before women were welcome in the workplace or had the right to vote. Nationally recognized artistic figures who lived and worked here include sculptor Daniel Chester French; graphic designer Will Bradley; and modern architect Carl Koch, who helped reinvigorate Concord’s reputation as a place of creativity and innovation.

Other resources include: traditional crafts and industrial arts sites such as Old Hill and Old South Burying Grounds, Allen Chair Manufactory, the Gothic Revival house of stonemason Cyrus Pierce, homes and workplaces of silversmiths and clockmakers, and craftsmen within the Reformatory and employed in West Concord industries. Fine arts in Concord are also represented in the homes, studios and works of sculptor Daniel Chester French; artist Abigail May Alcott (Orchard House); artist Sophia Hawthorne (The Wayside); photographer Robert Alexander Gilbert (October Farm and Brewster’s Woods); Colonial Revival architects Harry Little, Thomas Shaw and Andrew Hepburn; and modernist architects Carl Koch, William Burkes, Peter Chermayeff and Robert Bergemann. Other particularly notable works of architecture and landscape architecture include the North Bridge allée and commemorative landscape; Boat House by Peabody and Stearns; Emerson School by John Faxon; Concord Power Station by Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow; Conantum and other modernist neighborhoods and houses; and Trinity Episcopal Church by Pietro Belluschi (with stained glass by Charles Connick). The Umbrella Arts Center, the Concord Museum, the Performing Arts Center at 51 Walden, and studio spaces at Bradford Mill are all housed in historic buildings.



House in Conantum
(Nancy Fresella-Lee)

Legal Basis for Historic Preservation

Historic preservation at the local level takes place within a framework of federal and state programs.

Federal Historic Preservation Program

Antiquities Act (1906)

The 1906 Antiquities Act protects archaeological and other historic sites located on public lands. It authorizes the United States President to proclaim “historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures and other objects of historic or scientific interest” as national monuments.

National Park Service Organic Act (1916)

The 1916 National Park Service Organic Act created the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior. In 1933, existing national parks, military parks and monuments were consolidated into a single National Park System.

Historic American Building Survey (1933)

The Historic American Building Survey (HABS) is the oldest federal preservation program in the United States. It was established in 1933 as a collaborative project among the Works Progress Administration, Library of Congress and the American Institute of Architects. It was transferred to the National Park Service in 1934. The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) was added in 1969; Historic American Landscapes Survey (HALS) was added in 2000. Thirteen Concord resources listed in Chapter 3 are documented in HABS.

National Historic Sites Act (1935)

The 1935 National Historic Sites Act established “a national policy to preserve for public use, historic sites, buildings and objects of national significance for the inspiration and benefit of the people of the United States.” It called for the creation of a national survey of historic sites and buildings to be completed within five years. In 1960, the **National Historic Landmarks Program** was established by the National Park Service with the first group of designated landmarks representing historic properties with exceptional significance in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the U.S. Five of the six National Historic Landmarks in Concord were established between 1961 and 1966; the last is the Wayside, designated in 1985.⁶ Today, there are approximately 2800 National Historic Landmarks in 50 states, the District of Columbia, and US territories.

National Historic Landmarks in Concord

Ralph Waldo Emerson House

NHL designation: 1962; NHL ID: 66000129



Emerson House (NPS/Wikipedia)

The Old Manse

NHL designation: 1962; NHL ID: 66000131



The Old Manse (Trustees)

The Wayside

NHL designation: 1985; NHL ID 66000127



The Wayside (Heritage Strategies)

Orchard House

NHL designation: 1962; NHL ID 66000128



Orchard House (Heritage Strategies)

Wright Tavern

NHL designation: 1961; NHL ID: 66000793



Wright Tavern (Heritage Strategies)

Walden Pond (NHL District)

NHL designation: 1962; NHL ID: 63500803



Walden Pond (Listening to America)

National Historic Preservation Act (1966)

The cornerstone of the national program is the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966. The NHPA charges the federal government with administration of the national preservation program in partnership with states, federally recognized tribes, and local governments. The National Park Service oversees NHPA federal preservation activities and each state administers the national historic preservation program at the state and local levels through the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The Massachusetts Historical Commission manages the statewide historic preservation program in Massachusetts, with support from the federal Historic Preservation Fund, appropriated by Congress. Described below, Section 106 of the NHPA ensures historic preservation review of any project utilizing federal dollars, approval or land.

National Register of Historic Places

Established by the NHPA, the National Register of Historic Places is the nation's official list of historic properties that have been determined to be significant in local, state, national, and/or international history. In 1966, National Historic Landmarks became a subset of the National Register. There are approximately 96,000 historic properties listed on the National Register including districts, sites, single buildings, structures, and objects. In Massachusetts the program is administered by the National Park Service in partnership with the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The nearly 200 Concord properties listed on the National Register are analyzed in Chapter 3.

This national program is important on a local level because it identifies and evaluates resources according to uniform, professionally recognized standards and criteria. These criteria are specifically designed to help national, state and local governments, organizations, and individuals identify important historic and archeological resources worthy of preservation when making planning and land development decisions.

Listing in the National Register is an honorific designation. It raises public awareness of the character and significance of a given historic property or district and builds community support for its sensitive preservation treatment.

Listing provides owners with opportunities for grants and other incentives, especially for governmental and nonprofit owners. For owners of historic commercial properties, listing in the National Register is an eligibility requirement for both federal and state historic tax credit programs. Since listing is also a requirement for Massachusetts Preservation Project Funds, municipalities and non-profit organizations frequently seek National Register status for their buildings and cultural landscapes.

A formal listing recognizes the importance of a historic resource or area without placing restrictions on the resource or obligations on its owner. Conversely, a listing on the National Register does not protect a resource from demolition or adverse alteration by its owner, whether private, nonprofit, or governmental. National Register status is considered in environmental review of government-sponsored projects under Section 106 of the NHPA but does not fully protect the property from adverse impacts of those projects.

Rehabilitated Damon Mill,
Main Street, West
Concord (Heritage
Strategies)



Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties

The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties (the Standards) establish best practices for the preservation, rehabilitation, restoration, and reconstruction of historic properties, including both buildings and landscapes. Accompanying Guidelines interpret the Standards for particular resource types and treatments, most notably the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes. Additional guidelines address flood adaptation and sustainability in building rehabilitation.

The Standards and Guidelines provide invaluable guidance for the treatment of all historic resources, regardless of their status. Historic district commissions across the country used these national guidelines as a foundation for local historic district design guidelines. Adherence to the Standards is a project requirement for historic tax credits and for most local, state or federal preservation grant funding (including Concord Community Preservation funds).

Advisory Council on Historic Preservation

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation was created by the National Historic Preservation Act as an independent federal agency that promotes the preservation, enhancement, and productive use of historic resources in the United States. It advises the President and Congress on national policy, reviews federal programs and policies, and is responsible for advocating for full consideration of historic values in federal decision making.

Department of Transportation Act (1966)

Section 4(f) of this act describes responsibilities of the Secretary of Transportation to preserve natural and human-made sites along highway routes.

Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act (1966)

This act directs the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development “to assert an interest in historic preservation and reduce its Urban Renewal activities by clearing older buildings.” It encourages recycling and reuse of existing housing over demolition and replacement.

Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Program

Established in 1963, the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) manages a number of federal programs in Massachusetts directly relevant to Concord, such as the National Register, the Certified Local Government program, the federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program, and environmental compliance for federal and state projects (Section 106, National Environmental Policy Act and Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act). Additionally, the commission manages a set of complementary state-level preservation programs, including technical assistance to local communities, planning and project grants, the state Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit, and the State Register of Historic Places. MHC has jurisdiction over local historical commissions (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 8D), and preservation restrictions (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 184, Sections 31-33).⁷ It periodically updates the statewide historic preservation plan.

Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth

The Massachusetts Historical Commission maintains the Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth that includes parks and landscapes, areas, buildings, structures, objects, burial grounds and archaeological sites. Inventory information is recorded on survey forms according to MHC standards and guidelines. The Concord Historical Commission is responsible for maintaining the official Inventory of Concord resources, analyzed below in Chapter 3. Even before the historical commission existed, the Concord Historic Districts Commission began adding records to the state Inventory in the 1960s.

The Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) is an online database and essential educational and research tool that allows individuals to search the Inventory for information on historic properties and areas. An interactive aid, MACRIS Maps, allows users to view Inventory information spatially. While MACRIS contains a great deal of information, users should be aware that it does not include information on all historic properties and areas in Massachusetts, nor does it reflect all the information on file on historic properties and areas at the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

The Inventory is regularly used in local historic preservation planning and decision making, providing information about and describing character-defining features of districts and properties protected by local regulations such as local historic districts and demolition review. It is also regularly used in federal and state environmental reviews (Section 106, NEPA, MEPA reviews).

Preservation Restrictions

The owner of a historically significant structure or site can ensure its long-term protection by opting to enter into a legal agreement known as a preservation restriction. Restrictions may be perpetual or last for a term of years. The agreement designates a government entity or a qualified nonprofit organization as a second party (“grantee”) to administer and enforce it. Preservation restrictions are recorded at the registry of deeds and are binding on current and future owners while in effect.

Thoreau Farm – Minot-Wheeler House/Thoreau Birthplace (Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area)



The value of a perpetual restriction on a historic property donated to a qualified holder may be considered as a charitable deduction for income tax purposes.⁸ Under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 184, Sections 31-33, the Massachusetts Historical Commission must review and approve all perpetual preservation restrictions. Other restrictions can be term-limited to not more than 30 years, although they can be renewable in 30-year periods.

In Concord, six historic properties have permanent preservation restrictions held by several entities including MHC, Historic New England, and the Town. The Concord Historical Commission manages preservation restrictions held by the Town. Additional preservation restrictions could be created through several methods used in Massachusetts:

- The owner of a historically significant property may opt for a preservation restriction to ensure its preservation under future owners.
- Local, state and federal preservation programs may require a preservation restriction to qualify for or as a condition of restoration or rehabilitation grant funds.
- A city or town may require a restriction to protect a significant property as a condition of a permit or variance.

Restrictions for other purposes such as conservation, agricultural preservation, watershed protection, affordable housing and archaeology can also help preserve community character and irreplaceable assets.

Perpetual Historic Preservation Restrictions in Concord:

- Minot-Wheeler House/Thoreau Birthplace, held by Town of Concord
- Hubbard-French House, held by Town of Concord
- Wright’s Tavern, to be held by Town of Concord (anticipated in 2026)
- Scotchford-Wheeler House, held by Historic New England
- The Old Manse, held by Massachusetts Historical Commission
- Orchard House/School of Philosophy, held by Massachusetts Historical Commission

The Town of Concord holds approximately 100 conservation restrictions managed by the Natural Resources Commission, many of which were negotiated with developers.

While not strictly a state initiative, the Native Land Conservancy, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit, has created legal agreements guaranteeing Indigenous people cultural access to land in perpetuity, known as Cultural Respect Easements (CREs). These “provide Indigenous people with safe areas to practice their traditional and spiritual lifeways, such as ceremonies, seasonal celebrations, camping, and more.”

Concord Historic Preservation Program

By state and local statute, the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission serve as the official bodies responsible for the preservation and stewardship of Concord’s historic properties. Unlike non-profit local historical societies, they are agents of local government. The Town of Concord Planning Division is an essential partner in the preservation team, providing professional planning staff to help realize community preservation goals.

Concord Historical Commission

Concord residents created the Concord Historical Commission (CHC) at Town Meeting in 1973 by adopting Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 8D that describes its purpose and core responsibilities. Its purpose is to preserve, protect, and develop the historical and archaeological assets of Concord. It shares mandated responsibilities with all other local historical commissions in Massachusetts:

- Conduct research on places of historic or archaeological value;
- Cooperate with the State Archeologist in conducting surveys and reporting on sites;
- Coordinate the activities of unofficial bodies organized for similar purposes;
- Keep accurate records of its meetings and actions and file an annual report; and
- Maintain a membership of not less than three nor more than seven members. (In Concord, there are five members and an equal number of possible alternate members.)

MGL Chapter 40, Section 8D also describes optional responsibilities of all local historical commissions:

- Advertise, prepare, print and distribute books, maps, charts, plans and pamphlets which it deems necessary for its work;
- Make recommendations to the Select Board and, subject to their approval, to the MHC;
- Hold hearings;
- Enter into contracts and other agreements;
- Accept gifts to further its work;
- Hire staff; and
- Acquire property in the community’s name.

All local historical commissions work in cooperation with other municipal agencies to ensure that preservation is considered in community planning. They coordinate with other groups whose interests

involve history and historic preservation. They also serve as the local municipal arm for state and federal preservation agencies, alerting them to state and federal preservation issues.⁹ They have important planning, advisory and regulatory roles, some of which are more specifically described in local bylaws and regulations.

Creating a Positive Climate

Local historical commissions play important roles in creating a positive climate for preservation. Long ago, Massachusetts Historical Commission identified five critical means of creating that climate:

- Bring a positive, confident approach to performing this role in the community;
- Establish good constructive relations with the public and other government agencies;
- Develop a strong understanding of local history, local governmental structure, and historic preservation programs and procedures;
- Cultivate annual funding at some level; and
- Follow clearly defined administrative procedures.¹⁰

Public outreach, educational programs and publications can be an important part of this community building. The CHC offers ongoing educational programs such as a historic house marker program and a preservation award program. One of the CHC members offers regular informal historical topic forums about current topics and happenings in town.

CHC Planning and Advisory Functions

- Participate in master planning, open space planning and other community planning activities;
- Tailor preservation plans to community needs;
- Propose new general bylaws to Town Meeting and work with the Planning Board on zoning bylaws as appropriate;
- Nominate new local historic districts or existing local historic district expansions for legislation by the Town Meeting, in cooperation with the Historic Districts Commission;
- Nominate historic properties for listing in the National Register of Historic Places;
- Perform roles described in the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act:
 - Serve as the formal liaison and as a member of the Community Preservation Committee to advise on the annual distribution of grants from Concord’s Community Preservation Fund; and
 - Advise the Community Preservation Committee on updates to the Concord Community Preservation Plan.
- Advise other Town departments, boards, committees, and commissions on preservation matters, including a role in advising on certain specific decisions such as:
 - Advise the Board of Appeals on special exceptions to the Section 6 of the Zoning Bylaw;¹¹
 - Advise the Planning Board on names of new streets under Section 6 of the Subdivision Rules and Regulations;¹² and
 - Advise the Town Manager on the maintenance and use of town-owned historic properties.

CHC Regulatory Functions

- Carry out the town’s Demolition Review Bylaw.
- Participate as a consulting party in formal reviews of state and federal projects that affect historic resources (Section 106, NEPA, MEPA). Because of the many federally owned properties in Concord, the CHC receives frequent requests to participate as a consulting party in these formal environmental reviews.
- Administer preservation restrictions held in the name of the Town of Concord in accordance with MGL Chapter 184, Sections 31-33.¹³

Concord Historic Districts Commission

Local historic districts are the most effective and time-tested means of protecting and enhancing historic villages, neighborhoods, and areas. The Concord Historic Districts Commission (HDC) helps guide changes within the districts with a design review process using established guidelines and standards. Established in 1960 for “the preservation and protection of buildings, places and districts of historic or literary significance,” the HDC preserves the town’s most celebrated historic areas. Since adopting the local historic district bylaw through a Special Act of state legislature, Concord has established six local historic districts encompassing 863 acres and at least 630 buildings.

Four of Concord’s local historic districts coincided with the creation of Minute Man National Historical Park and are among the earliest established in Massachusetts and the nation: American Mile Historic District (1961); North Bridge/Monument Square Historic District (1961); Barrett Farm Historic District (1961); and Main Street Historic District (1961-62). Later additions include the Hubbardville Historic District (1998) and Church Street Historic District (2005).¹⁴

Concord’s local historic districts and Minute Man National Historical Park preserve national treasures represented in their connected cultural landscapes. These places of national memory are associated with the opening battle of the American Revolution leading to the founding of the first modern democracy. In the widest perspective, a 19th-century Hungarian leader and freedom fighter described them as “the opening scene of a revolution that is destined to change the character of human governments and the condition of the human race.”¹⁵

They contain many layers of meaning and association spanning millennia of human habitation. Concord's historic districts are famous for:

- First battle of the American Revolution that led to the creation of the first modern democratic republic.
- Early leadership in the global environmental movement. Forward-thinking naturalists like Emerson and Thoreau built upon and popularized traditional ecological knowledge of Indigenous people of Massachusetts.
- Free thinkers dedicated to social justice who embraced personal expression, experimental living and peaceful protest to challenge conventions and inspire world leaders like Gandhi and King.
- Continued commitment to thoughtful observation, dialog, consensus building, and civic engagement.

Under a town bylaw first adopted in 1961, Concord's local historic districts are locally designated under a Special Act of the state legislature, rather than under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40C, under which most subsequent local historic districts in Massachusetts have been established.

The HDC's primary role is to review proposed exterior alterations, landscaping, additions, signs, demolition, and new construction within the town's designated local historic districts. Importantly, the HDC can decide not to permit a proposed demolition within its districts. Its work is directed by a series of commendable guiding documents, including design guidelines, rules and regulations, administrative guidelines, and a policy governing new construction and Town projects.

Under Section 12 of the Concord Historic Districts Act, the HDC can work with the Historical Commission on amending or nominating new local historic districts for consideration at the Annual Town Meeting. Section 13 enables Town Meeting to "enact additions, changes or amendments to its zoning by-laws to assist in carrying out the purpose of this Act." Thus, other aspects of the town's zoning and subdivision are linked to its earliest preservation legislation.

As with any board or committee, the HDC has advisory and educational functions in addition to regulatory functions. Its members interact with other town bodies "to remain informed of proposed projects, policies and actions of other boards and committees and act as a resource to resolve any potential issues which may involve HDC action."¹⁶

National Register Historic District? Local Historic District? What is the difference?

Some National Register Historic Districts and Local Historic Districts in Concord overlap, but they are not one and the same. Both delineate areas or thematic groupings of historic properties, but their purposes and functions are different.

National Register Historic Districts are included on the nation's formal list of historic properties designated by the National Park Service. National Register Historic Districts do not affect property owners and do not receive the protections of locally-designated districts.

Local Historic Districts provide local protections, regulated under local municipal bylaws, and approved by Town Meeting. Local historic district commissions review alterations, new construction and demolition within locally designated districts.

Contributing vs. Non-Contributing Resources
National Register district nominations typically distinguish between "contributing" and "non-contributing" properties, structures and/or features. Most locally regulated historic districts in Massachusetts do not distinguish between individual contributing and non-contributing resources because the district itself—its overall character, historic appearance and feeling—are the focus of preservation actions. Local review helps ensure that changes to district properties do not diminish the historical integrity of the district.

Town of Concord Planning Division

The Planning Division furthers community planning goals and guides both private and public land-use decisions. The team consisting of the Town Planner, two Senior Planners and two administrative assistants works with the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Historical Commission, Historic Districts Commission, Community Preservation Committee, West Concord Advisory Committee and Transportation Advisory Committee. Only one Senior Planner is devoted to the two statutory historic preservation commissions as well as a third statutory commission and granting agency: the Community Preservation Committee.

Concord Community Preservation Committee

The Concord Community Preservation Committee (CPC) distributes funds to support essential components of livable communities: historic preservation, open space, recreation and community housing. Under the Massachusetts Community Preservation Act (CPA) (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44B), requires an appropriation of at least 10% of annual revenues for historic preservation. Concord raises Community Preservation Funds through a surcharge of 1.5% of the tax levy on real property which is matched by the state; the CPA allows for a surcharge up to 3%. Concord typically updates its Community Preservation Plan and distributes grants for eligible projects from the Concord Community Preservation Fund once per year. A Historical Commission liaison is a voting member of the CPC and helps ensure coordination and communication between the two entities.

Wheeler-Harrington House, West Concord, listed on the National Register (Heritage Strategies)



Understanding Federal and State Preservation Regulations (Section 106, NEPA, MEPA)

Concord has an abundance of historic resources and participates in an unusually high number of federal and state reviews. For any project involving federal or state dollars or approvals, project managers must submit a Project Notification Form to the Massachusetts Historical Commission as the first step in a state and federal review process.

When federal agencies fund, permit, license, or approve a project, they must consider how that project might affect historic places. This is a requirement of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Before moving forward, agencies must consult with stakeholders, identify any historic resources in the project area, assess impacts, and explore ways to avoid or minimize harm. They also must give the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a chance to comment.

A similar federal law, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), requires agencies to consider environmental impacts—including cultural and historic resources—before approving major projects. Because Section 106 and NEPA often apply to the same projects, agencies are encouraged to coordinate the two review processes to improve efficiency, ensure public involvement, and consider alternatives early in planning.

The review process includes consultation with interested or “consulting parties” which may include the local government. This provides a chance for the local historical commission and others to advocate for considering historic resources in government actions. Notification and consultation are initiated and coordinated by the federal agency, with the State Historic Preservation Office (here the Massachusetts Historical Commission) playing a key review and consultation role.

These laws do not prohibit changes to historic properties. Instead, they ensure changes are considered carefully and transparently. If a project does affect a historic place, thorough documentation may be required.

In Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Historical Commission also reviews any projects that require funding, licenses, permits, or approvals from state agencies, pursuant to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 9, Sections 26-27C, in a process similar to the federal Section 106 review. In addition, under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA), state agencies must consider the effects of their actions on the environment, including historic and archaeological properties. MEPA filings must be provided to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

‘Avoid, Minimize, Mitigate’

State Historic Preservation Offices often follow the mantra of “avoid, minimize, mitigate” in Section 106 Reviews. This best practice in preservation reviews begins with a search for solutions that avoid adverse impacts to historic resources. If a project cannot avoid adverse impacts, are the impacts minimized? Mitigation is a last resort. What are the losses and how will they be mitigated? Mitigation can take many forms such as documentation, interpretive or commemorative materials or salvage. Both Concord preservation commissions should consider establishing a protocol of ‘avoid, minimize, mitigate’ in negotiating changes, especially when demolition is involved.

Importantly, these laws are triggered by government involvement, not simply by whether a property is listed on the National or State Register of Historic Places. Projects without listings still require review if state or federal agencies are involved.

This regulatory process only applies to public actions. If there is no state or federal government involvement and no local protection is in place, private property owners can alter or demolish historic resources. That is why local ordinances, historical commissions and historic district commissions play a key role in safeguarding historic places.

Certified Local Governments

The National Historic Preservation Act establishes a program to certify local governments to participate in the national historic preservation program, supporting best practices and creating partnerships among government agencies at the local, state, and national levels. In Massachusetts, the program is jointly administered by the National Park Service and Massachusetts Historical Commission, with each municipality working through a state-specified process.

If certified, a local government has access to designated federal grants as well as technical assistance provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the National Park Service. In Massachusetts, for example, the required local match for MHC Survey and Planning Grants is 40% for Certified Local Governments (CLG's); it is 50% for all other applicants. Some funding years, Massachusetts Preservation Projects Funding is only open to CLG's. Certified governments report annually on their activities in the following categories:

- Inventory of historic properties
- Local historic districts and landmarks
- Local tax incentives
- Brick and mortar grants and/or loans
- Local design reviews and historic preservation compliance
- Local property acquisition

Massachusetts has 34 Certified Local Governments. The Town of Concord is not yet certified but is pursuing CLG best practices and building eligibility toward CLG status. Regardless of certification status, local governments have the opportunity to network with other preservation-related commissions through the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions and with such other programs as Main Street America.

Previous Studies and Preservation Plans

Generation after generation here has dedicated itself TO Concord history, preserving and teaching it to the best of their abilities.

A Concordian, 2024

Our understanding of Concord's past sets the stage for our aspirations as a community. Pride in Concord's past has spurred continuous efforts to safeguard its special qualities. Concord is not only attractive because of its history but also because of the visible evidence of care which those efforts have produced.

Concord's Long-Range Plan, 1987

Concord's Historic Preservation Plan marks a moment in a long and continuous effort to preserve Concord's unique power of place and enduring symbols. Preservation and commemorative efforts began in the 18th century within weeks of the Battle of Concord and Lexington through oral histories and illustrations. 19th-century commemorations included annual celebrations, writings, monuments and organizations such as the library, historical society and earliest historic house museums. The 20th century introduced a new strategic and regional approach, beginning in 1925 with an unsuccessful state effort to designate Battle Road as a memorial highway, followed in 1955 with a concerted and successful, local, state and federal effort.

In a 1958 report to U.S. Congress, a new National Historical Park and local historic districts were conceived as two parts of a whole, nationally significant cultural landscape, a permanent memorial to be protected with the strongest preservation tools for all people and all time. Citizens and stakeholders achieved these ambitious goals within just two years.

Minute Man National Historical Park was created seven years before the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. During this short period, local communities were not guaranteed a seat at the table on federal projects, even national parks. Concord experienced this directly. Fortunately, that oversight was remedied quickly and local communities have had that seat at the table on federal projects under Section 106 of NHPA for nearly 60 years.

Recognizing the importance of cultural landscapes and historic properties outside the limits of the historic districts and national park, Concordians created a Historical Commission (1973) in the years leading up to the Bicentennial.

Over six decades, CHC and HDC members and staff contributed to numerous local and regional planning efforts. Since 1987, comprehensive strategic plans for Concord include chapters on Historic and Cultural Resources that guide preservation planning. Concord's first dedicated preservation plan was completed in 1995. Specialized surveys and plans set additional ongoing and time-based goals, objectives and actions to fulfill. Among many local planning documents that guide this plan, the following local and regional planning documents were most influential in its creation.

Concord Preservation and Conservation Planning

Town of Concord Long-Range Plan (1987)

(Town of Concord)

For the first time in 1987, the Concord Long-Range Plan included a section dedicated to historic preservation as well as a preservation timeline. The concise list of ten recommendations included seven that have been achieved: begin Historic Resources Inventory, improve visitor signage, identify and sign satellite Visitor Information Centers, begin efforts to preserve Barrett Farm, adopt Scenic Roads Bylaw, and adopt Demolition Bylaw. The following three additional 1987 recommendations have not been implemented: create an archaeological site overlay district, expand local historic districts toward Thoreau Depot, and establish a Visitor Center on Route 2.

Historic Resources Masterplan (1995)

Narrative Histories of Concord and West Concord (1995)

(Concord Historical Commission)

With essential funding from MHC, the CHC hired architectural historian Anne Forbes to conduct a series of four intensive Historic Resource Surveys across the entire town with a team of volunteers in 1989-1992. This effort culminated in a Concord Historic Resources Masterplan and a “Narrative Histories of Concord and West Concord” booklet in 1995. The former was slightly updated in 2001 to record more demolitions under “Lost Concord.”

The 1995 Historic Resources Masterplan is essentially an enhanced survey report unique to Concord. Much of the Masterplan focuses on inventory results, including a street-by-street guide to approximately 900 historic properties, and an evaluation chart for 664 historic resources. Properties were prioritized based on four local criteria used to evaluate significance: early date; role played; noted resident; and architecture. Today, evaluation of historical significance should be based on criteria more closely aligned with National Register eligibility standards. The 1995 plan prioritized lists of historic resources and their protection status informed the first iteration of Concord’s demolition delay bylaw that applied to only the highest priority properties outside of local historic districts.¹⁷

In addition to survey results, the 1995 Historic Resources Masterplan includes preservation planning components: a History of Preservation Planning in Concord, supplementary Narrative Histories, Partners and Stakeholders, and no less than 65 Recommendations for Action (not prioritized). Six overarching goals continue to be relevant today:

- Secure optimum protection for most significant historic resources.
- Develop citizen knowledge and responsibility for our historic resources.
- Promote the integration of preservation strategies into Town policies and procedures.
- Continue surveying and expand the Inventory of Historic Resources.
- Form alliances.
- Explore funding mechanisms.



Concord Center (Doug Ellis)

Comprehensive Long-Range Plan, Concord: A Vision for 2020 (2005)

(Concord Planning Board and Concord Planning Division)

This comprehensive plan included a section on historic preservation that served as the update to the 1995 Historic Resources Masterplan. It included a summary of issues and progress and provided recommendations that closely aligned with those of the 1995 plan. However, it did not recommend continued surveying, resulting in a long lapse in this activity that is so fundamental to preservation work. Overarching goals identified specific types of resources valued highly by the community:

- Surveyed historic and cultural resources, as well as Native American archaeological sites and artifacts;
- Historic and cultural scenic vistas, including farm land, scenic roadways, stone walls, road widths, sidewalks, major trees, and village centers;
- Cultural resources.

Concord Reconnaissance Report: Freedom's Way Landscape Inventory: Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program (2007)

(Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation and Freedom's Way Heritage Association)

The Concord Historical Commission and other community members participated in the creation of a Heritage Landscape Inventory Reconnaissance Report that was part of a larger regional study for the Freedom's Way Heritage Area. The study took a broad look at the entirety of Concord. It outlined the history of the community; described new high-priority heritage landscapes; discussed planning issues; identified planning tools; and concluded with preservation recommendations. In addition to suggesting specific strategies for newly identified high-priority heritage landscapes, it recommended general preservation strategies such as surveying heritage landscapes for inclusion in the Inventory, agricultural preservation tools, neighborhood conservation districts to preserve downtown and neighborhood character (no longer relevant in Massachusetts), revisions to the demolition delay bylaw, scenic road strategies, and funding sources.

Residents identified the following eight priority heritage landscapes: Barrett Farm, Estabrook Woods, Flood Meadows, Massachusetts Department of Correction land, Nine Acre Corner, Virginia Road, Walden Woods/Route 126 Corridor, and West Concord Village.

West Concord Historic Resources Survey and Plan (2013)

(Concord Historical Commission and Concord Planning Division)

The Historical Commission followed up the first broad West Concord survey of 1989 with a survey plan and targeted survey of selected properties in 2013. Of the 75 properties surveyed, it identified those potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and suggested five additional prioritized phases of future survey work to support National Register nominations. The 2013 project is the town's fifth and last formal survey to date.



Concord Junction, Mass., 1893,
Geo. E. Norris (Boston Public
Library/Digital
Commonwealth)

Open Space and Recreation Plan (2015)

(Concord Natural Resources Commission and Concord Natural Resources Division)

Concord's excellent track record of successful natural resource protection efforts results in part from its commitment to long-term planning. Massachusetts communities are obligated to update their Open Space and Recreation Plans (OSRP) every ten years as a requirement for state grant funding. The Concord OSRP provides an Open Space Framework that identifies three areas of significant conservation interest: large natural areas, large agricultural areas, and wildlife and water protection corridors. The framework distinguishes between these areas of conservation interest (open and untouched by suburban sprawl) and built areas (both inside and outside village centers). It reiterates findings of the 2007 Heritage Landscape Reconnaissance Report, identifying high-priority heritage areas, scenic sites, and proposed agricultural overlay districts.

Envision Concord: Bridge to 2030, Balancing Change with Tradition (2018)

(Concord Planning Board and Concord Planning Division)

Concord's current comprehensive long-range plan, *Envision Concord: Bridge to 2030, Balancing Change with Tradition (2018)* fosters a holistic approach to planning through five community criteria and seven principles. In the comprehensive planning process, Concord residents identified "Cultural and Historic Resources" as so central to the town's character, livability and long-range success that this term is listed first among five categories of "community criteria" to be used in evaluating and coordinating town decision making.

The Cultural and Historic Resources chapter establishes four classic preservation goals: foster better collaboration among organizations; promote education and awareness; undertake additional survey and study work; and review effectiveness of regulatory tools to better protect and preserve historic character and cultural resources.

Matrices and checklists draw connections among cross-disciplinary goals for making progress on multiple fronts. A simple count of matrix cross references between Culture and History and other planning components suggests that the following preservation objectives would have the greatest impact:

- Renew and improve village centers (8)
- Explore green neighborhood zoning and cluster zoning (8)
- Participate in proactive educational and public relations initiatives (7)
- Preserve Concord's current combination of land uses and consider design standards that preserve the town's New England character (7)
- Identify systems and typologies of historic landscapes (5)
- Implement Heritage Landscape Reconnaissance strategies (5)
- Review 1994 road policy (5)
- Foster cooperation and collaboration, especially regional collaborative efforts (5)

Concord Community Preservation Plan (2025)

(Concord Community Preservation Committee)

The Community Preservation Committee annually updates its plan and priorities for awarding grants, including grants for historic preservation. A Historical Commission liaison helps ensure that historic preservation is considered across all three spheres: housing, historic preservation, and open space and recreation.

State and Regional Preservation Planning

Preservation through Bylaws and Ordinances (2010)

(Massachusetts Historical Commission)

The publication describes a wide range of zoning and other preservation tools used by Massachusetts communities and provides examples of their use.

Battle Road Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan (2011)

(Metropolitan Area Planning Council)

Prepared in collaboration with the towns of Concord, Arlington, Lexington, and Lincoln and the Minute Man National Historical Park, this plan proposes strategies to manage transportation, land use, and tourism along the Byway. It provides a guide for preserving and promoting Byway resources. Most of the Concord resources lie within local historic districts, but proposed extensions reach out beyond the districts to the Thoreau Depot area and Walden Pond.

Freedom’s Way National Heritage Area Management Plan (2015)

(Freedom’s Way Heritage Association, Inc.)

This plan guides the non-profit Freedom’s Way Heritage Association in managing the large National Heritage Area that consists of 45 communities linked by historical events that helped shape America’s intellectual traditions and form of governance. It outlines strategies for realizing objectives through stewardship, planning and resource development, education, communication, collaboration, heritage tourism and interpretation. It also provides a business plan for the Heritage Area.

Massachusetts State Historic Preservation Plan, 2023-2031 – Draft (2024)

(Massachusetts Historical Commission)

This core planning document sets the stage for preservation organizations across Massachusetts. It envisions that “Historic preservation efforts in Massachusetts will include the Commonwealth’s full range of historic, cultural, and archaeological resources associated with all of the groups and peoples who have lived here. Historic preservation will be integrated into local, state, and federal planning processes, supporting sustainable and resilient development in all of the Commonwealth’s communities. Local, regional, tribal, and state agencies will have the funding and technical resources they need to carry out their desired historic preservation activities.” It establishes goals for Building Capacity, Documentation and Protection, Housing and Economic Development, Sustainability and Resiliency, and Public Outreach and Education.

See Bibliography & References for a full list of plans and Appendix for A Long Tradition of Historic Preservation in Concord, 1775-1975. See Appendix of Accomplishments, 1975-2025, for a summary of preservation highlights over the past fifty years of preservation activity.¹⁸



Monument Square, Concord Center (John Phelan, Wikimedia)

CHAPTER 3: OPPORTUNITIES ANALYSIS

Community Voices and Partners

This plan was guided by extensive community outreach and engagement in order to ensure that it represents a diversity of people and perspectives, is focused on the places and stories that matter to Concord and is grounded in community needs and aspirations. The community has helped shape the goals, objectives and recommendations that form the actionable items the Historical Commission, Historic District Commission and others can undertake to retain and preserve Concord's character.

Project team members engaged in numerous outreach efforts over many months. A survey distributed to every household in Concord, informal gatherings, public meetings, a public forum and a public comment period provided essential input. Consultants conducted interviews and discussions with knowledgeable community and organizational leaders, many of whom have long memories of Concord's past work to preserve and protect its heritage. These included town government bodies; community organizations; directors, curators and educators of numerous cultural organizations; historians and archaeologists; and a Hassanamisco Nipmuc Band Tribal leader. The following engagement efforts included input from 21 stakeholders, 22 organizations, and over 350 community members, showing substantial local interest:

- A community-wide survey distributed to every household in Concord (Spring 2024, 338 participants spent an average of 45 minutes developing thoughtful responses);
- Small stakeholder interviews and meetings (21 people, 14 dates);

- Four meetings with stakeholder focus groups explored historic preservation, education, economic vitality and tourism, and natural resources and open space (May 2024);
- Public gatherings such as the Tourism Huddle and Historical Topics Forum;
- A community forum to present plan emerging recommendations and solicit feedback (November 2024);
- Work sessions open to the public nearly every week in 2025;
- Public comment period on the preliminary draft plan (August 2025).

Key Conclusions

Concord's Power of Place

Many respondents to the heritage survey identified the importance of its *genius loci* and noted the interconnectedness between people and their setting as the cornerstone of well-being. Heritage and sense of place is what grounds the community, the very soul of the town. Survey respondents also noted the intangible aspects of Concord history—both the wonderful and challenging aspects—that create a sense of community. With this in mind, residents' hopes for preserving Concord's unique power of place extended beyond its physical attributes to include a continued commitment to civic engagement, communal care, social and environmental justice, kindness and intellectual rigor.

Balance is a Central Theme

Across all engagements, a dominant theme was the desire for balance—between growth and preservation, tourism and livability, historic character and modern demands, and inclusion without erasure of Concord's unique identity. The survey responses revealed a strong desire to protect Concord's historic sense of place while accommodating thoughtful development and inclusive storytelling.

High Value of Historic Resources and Open Space

Respondents emphasized preserving historic village centers, farmland, trails, and green spaces as well as iconic sites like the North Bridge, Orchard House, and Walden Pond. "Green Concord" and "Historic Concord" were both cited as essential to the town's identity, with the protection of viewsheds and greenspaces ranking slightly higher than all other considerations.

Support for Integrating History and Character into Town Planning to Support Sustainability

Participants expressed strong support for climate-conscious preservation of historic buildings, a desire to limit large-scale destructive development, and concern for retaining small businesses and character of town centers.

Desire for Inclusive and Diverse Narratives

Many participants advocated for a broader interpretation of history, calling for inclusion of underrepresented groups (e.g., Indigenous, Black, women, LGBTQ+, recent immigrant groups, workers) and overlooked sites such as Robbins House and Conantum neighborhoods.

Support for Education, Tourism, and Local Business

There was strong community support for arts, education, and tourism as means to celebrate heritage and strengthen economic vitality. Participants expressed support for preservation strategies that develop interpretive tools for enriching the visitor experience. Cultural institutions like the Concord Museum, Concord Free Public Library and the National Park Service received abundant praise.

Preservation Perceptions and Challenges

While many residents value historic preservation, some mistakenly perceive it as elitist or at odds with sustainability, affordability and economic expansion goals. Others stressed the need to better communicate the role and benefits of preservation today and to dispel misconceptions based on preservation practices of the distant past.

Top Challenges Identified

Gentrification, loss of community character, climate change, housing affordability, and overdevelopment were top concerns. The influx of affluent newcomers and high property values raised fears of homogenization and demographic shifts. Some respondents expressed skepticism about a small town's ability to address broad systemic issues like climate change or statewide housing shortages.

Strong Civic Engagement and Volunteerism

Respondents lauded the town's tradition of civic involvement and the dedication of volunteers working on preservation, while also noting the benefits and drawbacks of a high number of committees.

Trends

- **Community-wide desire for thoughtful zoning and infill guidelines** that preserve Concord's historic scale while enabling economic and housing diversity.
- **Increased attention to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion values in preservation**, including storytelling, planning, and public education.
- **Ongoing perceived tensions** between modernization and the desire to retain Concord's distinct historic identity.
- **Strong appetite for planning and inter-organizational collaboration**, especially involving schools, nonprofits, and the National Park Service.

Integrated Planning and Preservation

Preservation today is about far more than buildings. A holistic approach to community planning and preservation maximizes environmental, social and economic opportunities associated with village centers, neighborhoods, open space and structures with deep roots in the community. These historic assets fill essential human needs for continuity, identity, beauty and belonging. Their human scale, walkability and familiarity foster community and connectivity. Preserving these special places plays a critical role in saving energy and addressing climate change; boosting the local economy; making sure every resident has a safe, affordable home; and working to advance equity and social justice. Preservation uses the past to help move us forward.¹⁹

This section describes and analyzes opportunities for integrating an array of preservation tools and practices to help shape Concord's future.

Environmental Sustainability

*The climate crisis demands decarbonizing everything everywhere.... Avoiding emissions by optimizing the benefit of existing resources is the only reliable and rapid path to zero emissions – especially resources as durable and resource-intensive as buildings. The care, reuse, and adaptation of existing buildings and communities must be made the first priority of climate action policies and program.*²⁰

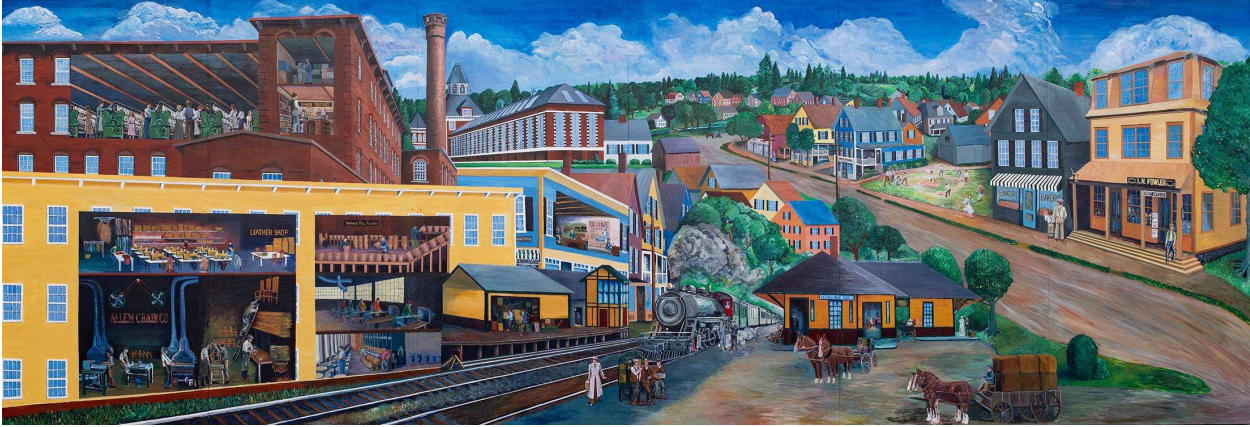
Carl Elefante, architect

Concord is widely recognized as a place of early and continued leadership in the environmental movement. In the 19th century, Nature was the object of intense scientific and spiritual inquiry on both sides of the Atlantic. Leading thinkers Charles Darwin, John Ruskin, George Perkins Marsh, Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau define the age, and perhaps no other place in America better captures this impulse than Concord, the home and place of inspiration for Emerson and Thoreau.

Achieving environmental sustainability in a changing global climate begins with preserving the landscapes and buildings that we already have. Older neighborhoods are dense, walkable, transit-accessible, and mixed-use. Investment in these older neighborhoods conserves resources, uses existing public investments in infrastructure, and prevents suburban sprawl into irreplaceable open space ecosystems. Those ecosystems support carbon sequestration and climate change resilience.

Building new, energy-efficient buildings may reduce operational emissions, but it increases embodied carbon emissions. Embodied carbon is a significant percentage of global emissions. The term refers to the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the entire life cycle of building materials including manufacturing, transport, installation and disposal. In fact, new construction generates far more carbon emissions than preservation and reuse.²¹

Concord residents demonstrate their commitment to environmental sustainability in their long-range community plan, climate action and resilience plan, and dedicated sustainability guides for landscapes and older houses. Environmental sustainability ranked high on the 2024 preservation survey and is one of the five core community criteria and values, along with History and Character, in *Envision Concord*. However, the concept of embodied carbon and the benefits of reusing and recycling existing buildings and infrastructure have not been directly addressed in Concord planning documents until now.



Concord Junction in the Industrial Age by Edward Feather and a team of West Concord artists (Town of Concord)

Community and Connectivity: Village Centers, Streets, Public Places and Neighborhoods

Concord's village centers are among the Town's most recognized features. Preservation of the existing character, diversity, variety and scale of these districts is vital to the continuation of Concord's ability to attract both residents and visitors.

Concord Zoning Bylaw

When asked what they cherish, value and take pride in, an impressive number of Concord residents surveyed for this plan identified the town's strong sense of community, civility and civic engagement, its independent local businesses, unique downtown areas and neighborhoods. The human scale and walkability of village centers fosters that strong sense of community and connectivity among residents. One survey respondent wrote how "preserving the ability to stroll through the town centers and pop into fun shops and restaurants is a big part of the Concord experience for me."

Residents and scholars alike value the small-town feel of "America's hometown." That quality supports the long-standing appreciation of Concord as "not just a microcosm of small towns in the USA, but the microcosm of a prototypical US small town," as one survey respondent wrote. The sense of history and community embodied in its physical fabric "prepares us to live and thrive in a broad and diverse 21st-century democracy." Despite strong civic engagement, excellent long-range plans, village center studies, a 1994 Roads Policy, Scenic Roads Bylaw and local historic districts, citizens continue to identify homogenization, urbanization and commercialization as major challenges that could strip Concord of its unique sense of place.

In *Envision Concord*, some residents acknowledged that the unique character of Concord is not always clearly defined. In order to preserve character, we need to do a better job of describing the unique characteristics of different centers, neighborhoods and streetscapes. And, as citizens pointed out, we need to expand the definition of what is worth preserving. Historic preservation is the field that defines tangible and intangible characteristics of the community: its districts, village centers, agricultural areas, corridors, neighborhoods and infrastructure.

Envision Concord called for the town to “renew and improve Concord’s village centers as vital pedestrian-friendly economic and social hubs that enable community engagement on a wider scale.” Key Land Use goals included developing design standards that preserve the town’s New England character and exploring zoning alternatives that enable higher density, mixed-use, more walkable and economically diverse neighborhoods within and near village centers.

A 2007 Village Center Study designed “to protect the unique character of the three centers; enhance the quality of village life; and enhance both the economic and housing opportunities” considered two traditional villages of Concord Center and West Concord, as well as a third community hub: the Thoreau Depot area. Village Center Study recommendations for village overlay zones, design guidelines and design review are preservation tools typically informed by historic character, scale, context, themes and resources.

In Concord Center, the HDC provides design review of proposed changes following carefully crafted design guidelines revised over six decades. The West Concord Advisory Committee advises the Planning Board on new development proposals in the West Concord Village and West Concord Business Districts. A 2005 goal to “institute an informal Design Review Subcommittee on the Planning Board with a strong educational focus to review design of new construction in historically sensitive areas not currently protected” has not been implemented.²²

Economic Vitality

Concord’s historic resources are central to its economic vitality, quality of life and identity. For example, both History and Character and Economic Vitality lie at the heart of Big Idea #1 in *Envision Concord*: “Strengthen the sustainability of local businesses and commercial districts and the cultural, historic and civic assets in Concord by

Selected examples from “Twenty-Four Reasons Historic Preservation Is Good for Your Community” (2020 PlaceEconomics)

Heritage Tourism. Tourism is just one economic contributor of historic preservation, but it is an important one. Consistent findings in both the US and internationally indicate that heritage visitors stay longer, visit more places, and spend more per day than do tourists with no interest in historic resources.

Small Businesses. Small businesses...are the backbone of the American economy...[and they] offer the greatest entrepreneurial opportunity to women and minorities.... It is often historic districts that are the location of choice for small businesses. Historic districts and buildings have a competitive advantage. They contain attractive buildings, spaces, and other attributes desirable to small businesses...[such as] competitive rents.

Start Ups and Young Businesses. Almost all net new job creation comes from new businesses. Where do those businesses choose to locate? Often in local historic districts.... New and small businesses want their physical location to be a reflection of the quality and character of the goods or services sold within.

Downtown Revitalization. Main Street is an economic revitalization program based on utilizing each downtown’s historic buildings. There is no more cost-effective program of economic development of any kind in the United States today.

Jobs in Knowledge and Creative Class Sectors. While workers in the knowledge and creative fields will never be a large percentage of the entire workforce, they have a disproportionate impact on the economic vitality of a city. And employers of those workers are disproportionately choosing to locate in historic districts.

Preservation as a Catalyst. The redevelopment and reuse of a historic building is often the catalyst that spurs additional investment nearby in both additional historic preservation and new construction.

connecting businesses to cultural, historic, and civic resources, and developing coordinated strategies that serve cross-sector goals.”

In response to community input, sections of this plan are dedicated to topics related to preserving the unique qualities and vitality of Concord’s village centers, collaborating among organizations, promoting education and awareness, funding the preservation of historic cultural venues, and carefully managing a heritage tourism program in order to balance tourism with livability.

National studies describe broader economic benefits of historic preservation that were not necessarily reflected in community input at the local level.

Heritage Tourism Management Recommendations

Adopt best practices such as *ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism* and the World Tourism Organization’s *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*.

Compare tourism management in Concord to similar towns (populations, attractions, and settings). Seek assistance from Minute Man National Historical Park and Freedom’s Way in tapping into resources available to communities with national parks.

Build information about visitation at individual sites and cross-site visitor behavior as a baseline for future planning.

Explore tourism and economic development programs offered to “trail towns” to capitalize on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail in West Concord.



Colonial Inn (Visit Concord)

Selected Cultural Organizations within Historic Buildings in Concord

Concord Museum (Concord Antiquarian Society)

Harry Britton Little, 1930



(Photo by Samuel Chamberlain. Phillips Library at Peabody Essex Museum. Digital Commonwealth)

Concord Art Association (Concord Art Center)

John Ball House, ca. 1752. Alterations by Lois Lilley Howe, 1922



(Photo by Samuel Chamberlain. Phillips Library at Peabody Essex Museum. Digital Commonwealth)

Concord Free Public Library

1873. Alterations by Harry Britton Little, 1933



(Town of Concord)

The Umbrella Arts Center (Concord High School)

Kilham, Hopkins & Greeley, 1929



(Freedom's Way National Heritage Area)

Housing

As for a shelter, I will not deny that this is now a necessity of life.

The luxury of one class is counterbalanced by the indigence of another.

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden*, 1854

Concord is a desirable place to live. Consequently, high land and housing prices have made the town unaffordable to some who currently reside here, and to many others who would like to move here. Concord residents are committed to addressing housing and community diversity, as evidenced in many plans, programs, surveys and interviews. Preservation survey respondents recognize that the existing housing stock is more affordable and desirable than the incompatible and over-sized new construction that could replace it.

According to national studies, preserving existing buildings needs to be a central strategy in housing affordability.²³ Even if a building is not historic, just old, historic preservation is one of the best places to find tools and evolving ideas for addressing the problem of housing diversity and affordability. The solution will take a mix of approaches, such as keeping older, more affordable homes that already exist, adapting buildings for residential use, and adding compatible new housing to older neighborhoods.

New construction often cannot meet demand and is not affordable for low- and middle-income residents unless considerable subsidies from public and private funding are available. Existing rental housing can be updated at a lower cost than new construction, while keeping residents in their homes and reducing embodied carbon emissions associated with new construction.

Current programs support the cost-effective preservation of existing homes. The Massachusetts Community Preservation Act helps achieve affordable housing, historic preservation and open space objectives by encouraging, “wherever possible, the reuse of existing buildings or construction of new buildings on previously developed sites.” With support from the Community Preservation Fund, the Concord Housing Development Corporation runs a “buy-down” program for the conversion of existing market rate unrestricted housing to restricted affordable housing. It also offers grants to assist lower income property owners with necessary repairs to their homes. The Cambridge Historical Commission manages an Affordable Housing Preservation Grants Program for homeowners that meet eligibility requirements utilizing the city’s Community Preservation Fund.

Envision Concord, several reports on “mansionization,” the recent Housing Production Plan, and this historic preservation plan address community wishes by:

- Discouraging the demolition of smaller homes and their replacement with larger, more expensive residences;
- Encouraging “missing middle” options such as accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and cottage housing and;
- Revising the floor-area-ratio to promote the retention of smaller size homes on certain size lots.

To help encourage the preservation of the existing housing stock, the Town could consider increasing barriers to demolition such as enhancing the existing Demolition Review Bylaw or charging a fee. Nantucket has a bylaw that encourages house moving.

Educational solutions could have an impact as well. A popular tourist destination and mecca for creative thinkers, Concord can help shape public opinion about housing through public history and by example. Its compact village center is the result of a 17th-century law requiring new house construction within one-half mile of the meetinghouse. Concord has a long tradition of “experiments in living” with Thoreau showing the way with his economical cabin on Walden Pond. Historic traditions and patterns can inspire affordable and environmentally sustainable solutions today.

The 1992 Walk for Walden Woods, led by Don Henley, Kirstie Alley, Ed Begley Jr., and Harry Hamlin. (The Lowell Sun)



Open Space

Open space, open mind.

A Concordian, 2024

Each town should have a park, or rather a primitive forest, of 500 or a thousand acres, where a stick should never be cut for fuel, a common possession forever, for instruction and recreation.

Henry David Thoreau, *Journal*, 1859²⁴

Like the National Trust in England, Concord has long understood that historic structures and scenic landscapes are integral to one another, support human health and well-being, and provide many community benefits. In the face of development pressures, the Town and its citizens have consistently placed a high priority on protecting the integrity of the abundant natural, agricultural and scenic resources of Concord. In 2024, preservation survey respondents ranked the protection of natural, agricultural and cultural landscapes at the top of the list of preservation priorities, with older neighborhood and commercial areas a close second.

Historic preservation is a planning tool that can help support the work of Concord’s Natural Resources team and partners who have done an extraordinary job in preserving natural and agricultural lands. Remarkably, about 38% of Concord’s land is permanently protected. About one quarter of undeveloped land is uncommitted to either protection or development.²⁵

Concord’s remaining farmland and farms are essential character-defining features of its rural identity and are at high risk. As undeveloped land, farmland is vulnerable to development pressures, being already

cleared, relatively level, and with soils more likely to accommodate septic systems. Since the population is expected to remain steady through 2050,²⁶ maintaining open space is a matter of careful management of the population's footprint.



Barrett's Mill Farm
(Town of Concord)



Hutchins Farm
(Hutchins Farm)

New Opportunities and Challenges

Several new legislative initiatives, highlighted below, will affect historic preservation planning and local historic districts in municipalities across the Commonwealth. In addition, several larger opportunities and challenges stem from proposed state and federal governmental action which brings Section 106 Reviews into play. As a “consulting party” to Section 106 Reviews, the local historical commission participates in project planning for a number of state and federal projects.

Proposed Hanscom Airfield Expansion Project

Concord governmental agencies and organizations are part of a larger group of towns, non-profits and Minute Man National Historical Park concerned about the proposed expansion of Hanscom airfield for private jets. Concord’s efforts are coordinated in part by the local advocacy organization Save Our Heritage, which has taken on a number of “save” projects over the years.²⁷ The National Trust for Historic Preservation recognized historic assets in the greater Concord region among America’s 11 Most Endangered Historic Places, not once but twice.

Redevelopment of Massachusetts Correctional Institution-Concord (MCI-Concord)

In 2024, the Governor closed MCI-Concord (the former State Prison and Reformatory) and is now considering how to divest this large and highly visible property. The Town is working with a consulting firm to analyze economic, housing, and infrastructure opportunities and develop new zoning for the redevelopment of the site.²⁸ In keeping with Concord’s reputation for social consciousness, environmental sustainability, and preservation, recent visioning sessions confirm that the community continues to place a high value on the history of West Concord and the state correctional facilities there.

Route 2A Resurfacing and Related Improvements Project

Route 2A is a narrow two-lane road following the historic route of Battle Road through Minute Man National Historical Park. Considerable negotiation under Section 106 Review is aimed to reconcile concerns about automobile traffic, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and impacts to the historic landscape and visitor experience. The federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation is taking an active role in this review.

Multifamily Zoning Requirement for MBTA Communities

This 2021 law designed to preserve open space and concentrate development near public transit requires communities in Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority (MBTA) service areas to zone for multifamily housing by right in locally-selected MBTA Communities zones. At Town Meeting in 2023, Concord adopted new MBTA Communities zoning and overlay districts, some of which are in historic village centers and neighborhoods, including local historic districts.

Accessory Dwelling Units

According to a state law passed in 2024, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s) under 900 square feet are permitted “by right.” Local laws still apply, including design restrictions in village overlays and local historic districts. Updates to Concord’s HDC Design Guidelines could help encourage sensitively-

designed ADU’s throughout Concord, even beyond its local historic districts. In towns like Concord, traditional village centers and neighborhoods were built more densely than more recent residential neighborhoods.

Environmental Sustainability Requirements in Historic Districts

Legislation passed at the end of 2024 requires historic district commissions to consider the threat of climate change and renewable energy solutions when reviewing applications, encouraging a pragmatic approach to solar installations and other sustainability measures. Updates to the HDC Design Guidelines would help ensure compatible design solutions and provide clarity for property owners.

Preserving Place

Public Appreciation and Education

Concord is a place of national memory and meaning with broad social and environmental significance; its landscapes and structures are enduring symbols that resonate with broad audiences today. Thanks to many generations of people dedicated to preserving and building knowledge about Concord’s unique power of place, this small town is a well-established heritage tourism destination that draws regional, national and international audiences. Its national park, state park and abundance of popular, accredited non-profit organizations support authentic visitor experiences.

Concord residents place a high value on education and the town is well known for its innovative thinkers, writers, entrepreneurs and educators past and present. In the long-range plan *Envision Concord*, citizens considered High Performing Schools as an essential planning principle to consider in shaping the community’s future.

During this preservation planning process, respondents to the survey ranked education and the intangible forms of heritage (storytelling) as two of the three highest preservation priorities. These local priorities echo national preservation trends and interests. Preservation organizations around the world are working to shape the preservation message, work with the tourism sector, tell more complete and relevant stories, publicize the benefits of preservation, weave preservation throughout education, and strengthen and connect networks.

The ICOMOS International Charter for Cultural Heritage Tourism (2022) advocates “responsible and diversified cultural tourism development and management contributing to cultural heritage preservation; community empowerment, social resilience and wellbeing; and a healthy global environment.”

Key principles of the charter are:

- Place cultural heritage protection and conservation at the center of responsible cultural tourism planning and management.
- Enhance public awareness and visitor experience through sensitive interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage.
- Raise awareness and reinforce cooperation for cultural heritage conservation among all stakeholders involved in tourism.

The Concord Historical Commission’s longstanding goals to enhance public history and to build appreciation for heritage preservation are intertwined. The preservation team sees opportunities to develop historical contexts, overarching themes, concepts and development patterns for Concord to strengthen their relevance for all. This historic preservation research and documentation can provide a sound foundation for educators and for marketing professionals to develop specialized audience-oriented materials.

Concord’s commitment to telling a more complete American story through preservation aligns with Town goals to build “a community where every resident, visitor, and worker—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, ability, religion, or socioeconomic status—feels welcomed, valued, and heard.”²⁹ An important partner is the Town’s Visitor Services program that offers docent-led tours and markets Concord to visitors. The Town’s most recent Tourism Marketing Plan (2023) recognizes the importance of developing and telling truths that attract a wider and more diverse audience. It also supports an “integrated communications campaign that enhances the Town image, promotes the Town’s assets and positions Concord as a great place to visit.”

Sample Tools for Encouraging Individual and Non-profit Action

Enhance webpages to encourage preservation, reuse and rehabilitation of buildings over demolition; address conversions of outbuildings, compatible infill construction, etc.

Provide an on-line “clearing house of information” on Concord’s cultural landscape, an *Envision Concord* goal. This could include Cultural Landscape Reports, Historic Structures Reports, HABS records, scenic road information, unpublished manuscripts and other resources not available in MACRIS. It could list resource materials for noteworthy designers and makers represented in Concord.

Encourage stewards of significant properties to apply for CPA funding for Cultural Landscape Reports and Historic Structures Reports before implementing capital projects by adding language to the Community Preservation Plan.

Encourage owners of properties listed in or potentially eligible for the National Register to become a single-property local historic district or donate preservation restrictions to a non-profit organization like Historic New England.

George Washington Dugan of the Massachusetts 54th Volunteer Infantry is now represented among other soldiers on the Civil War Monument in Monument Square (Town of Concord)



Historic themes and associations are an integral part of Concord's unique image and genuine "brand" or message, permeating all aspects of the Concord experience.³⁰

Documentation: Surveys, Inventories and Reports

Our understanding of Concord's history is constantly evolving as new information becomes available and our appreciation for historical figures and events evolves. Documentation of historic resources directly impacts decision making about what to save, restore, rehabilitate and remove within the historic context and preservation goals at the time. Continued efforts to document, interpret and preserve unrecognized or underappreciated community members, new areas and themes in history, and the events they represent should be an active part of Concord's historic preservation program.

Concord's best-known historic resources were documented long ago through local, state and federal programs, reflecting a broad national recognition of their importance. The Historic American Building Survey (HABS) began documenting Concord resources as early as 1934. A federal study report focused on Battle Road (1958) prepared by the Boston Historic Sites Commission established the national significance of many of Concord's historic properties related to its Revolutionary War history. This resulted in the establishment of Minute Man National Historical Park in 1959 (Concord, Lexington and Lincoln) and designation of all of the town's National Historic Landmarks in the early 1960s. Concord established local historic districts at this time, and followed in the subsequent decades with several survey and planning initiatives and collaborative work to designate scenic roads, scenic byways and a national heritage area.

Historic Properties Inventory

The Inventory of Historic and Archeological Assets of the Commonwealth is a critical tool for recording and understanding the extent, history, quality, integrity, and significance of older properties. Communities are underserved by an outdated or incomplete inventory, missing out on funding opportunities and risking the loss of culturally significant landscapes, structures and other assets.

Concord's inventory work in the 1990s was so extensive and of such high quality for its time, it must have felt like a task completed. The 1995 Historic Resources Masterplan emphasized the need to continue the annual survey, but the next comprehensive long-range plan (2005) omitted this core preservation responsibility. The 2007 heritage landscape report revived and revised survey recommendations with an emphasis on priority heritage landscapes. The current comprehensive long-range plan (2018) calls for undertaking "additional survey and study work to identify historic resources that are not adequately documented, not fully understood, or currently unknown." It emphasized the need for broad survey work that identifies "characteristic systems and typologies of historic landscapes that are particularly important to Concord's character."

The extensive inventory for Concord contained in the Massachusetts Historical Commission's database (MACRIS) encompasses 1,928 historic properties surveyed in five primary phases in 1989-1992 and 2013. In 1995, 40% of the inventoried properties did not have protection, leaving 60% vulnerable to destruction or inappropriate alteration.

Concord's designated historic resources include:

- 6 National Historic Landmarks: Orchard House (1962), the Old Manse (1962), the Ralph Waldo Emerson House (1962), Walden Pond (1962), Wright's Tavern (1961), and the Wayside (1985);
- Minute Man National Historical Park encompassing 485 acres and 11 to 13 historic buildings in Concord (nearly 1000 acres in total);
- 4 National Register Historic Districts encompassing 611 acres and 167 buildings: Concord Monument Square-Lexington Road, Minute Man National Historical Park, Hubbard-French Historic District, Isaac Davis Trail;
- 17 additional individual properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places such as: Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Thoreau Birthplace, Deacon Thomas Hubbard/Henry French House, Damon Mill;
- 6 Local Historic Districts encompassing 863 acres and at least 630 buildings: North Bridge/Monument Square, American Mile, Barrett Farm, Main Street, Church Street, Hubbardville;
- 9 locally designated Scenic Roads: Ball's Hill Road, Barrett's Mill Road, Garfield Road, Liberty Street, Monument Street, Old Road to Nine Acre Corner, Strawberry Hill Road, Sudbury Road, Westford Road;
- The Battle Road Scenic Byway, a National Scenic Byway and All-American Road; and
- Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.

Even with this impressive track record of documentation, significant gaps in the Concord survey remain. Since the survey work of the 1990s focussed on resources over fifty years of age, Concord historic properties dating after 1941 are not inventoried. Understanding of Concord's cultural history has evolved significantly as a result of new scholarship and grass roots efforts. Resources that were not previously considered historic need reevaluation; others were inadvertently missed. Appendix B includes a list of gaps and underrepresented resources identified by preservation survey respondents in 2024.

Standards for documentation have changed over the last three decades as well. The surveys of the 1990s were necessarily broad, without the benefit of search engines and digitized sources now readily available through the internet. (e.g., deeds, probate records, Town records and newspaper articles) Many of the inventory forms lack sufficient information about contributing or character-defining features, integrity, and significance, all of which inform future preservation strategies. Potential eligibility for listing on the National Register was provided in some survey years, but not others.

During this multi-year preservation planning process, the Historical Commission secured Community Preservation Act funding for two prioritized survey projects and has applied for funding a third. One will commemorate the 250th anniversary of the Battles of Concord and Lexington and the founding of the United States by studying pre-1775 structures and untold stories that they represent. Another will create a survey plan and inventory of prioritized mid-century modern neighborhoods and structures as the first step in improving documentation of post-1940 resources in Concord. The proposed third project would result in a thematic preservation study of the Concord Reformatory and associated West Concord sites.

Building a complete picture of the context for inventoried properties is a high-priority task. For the most part, Concord's survey forms cover individual buildings or small neighborhoods and areas with little additional context. Grouping the area forms geographically and/or thematically and providing well-researched context statements would provide a more complete sense of Concord's physical and cultural evolution. Context statements are needed to evaluate relative significance, identify and set priorities for protection, and support nominations for National Register listings and/or local protection. Thematic and large geographic groupings would enhance the current inventory and provide interpretive tools to enhance the visitor experience and inform community visioning. If funded, the proposed Concord Reformatory/West Concord Thematic Study will help accomplish this goal for many West Concord neighborhoods.

Historic Structure Reports, Cultural Landscape Reports and other Specialized Reports

Many of Concord's most celebrated sites have been studied in greater depth.

The federal Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS), Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) and Historic American Landscape Survey (HALS) document important assets through measured drawings, photographs, and other specialized studies. HABS records deposited in the Library of Congress document thirteen Concord structures between 1934 and 1984: Old Bank Building on Main Street (1934); Old Manse, The Wayside and Orchard House (1941); Samuel Brooks House and Hunt-Hosmer Barn (1961); Wright Tavern (1962); Meriam House, Widow Stowe House, Daniel Taylor House (1963); Elisha Jones House (1965), Peter Bulkeley House (1971), and Major John Buttrick House (1977). All of these structures are permanently protected through Minute Man National Historical Park or local historic districts. All but three are owned by public or private preservation organizations or are further protected through preservation restrictions.

Cultural Landscape Reports and Historic Structure Reports document specific, individual and groups of historic resources. They represent best practices in the management of national parks, historic house museums, municipal properties and other historically significant resources and can be required for construction projects involving public funds or lands. Minute Man National Historical Park and Community Preservation Funds have supported numerous Historic Structure Reports and Cultural Landscape Reports in Concord.

Archaeological studies are frequently required for projects subject to Section 106 Review or on National Park lands. Other helpful reports are the Battle Road National Scenic Byway's Corridor Management Plan (2011); scenic roads report by the Concord Historical Commission; the review of resources for the Freedom's Way National Heritage Area's management plan; and Harvard Forest, especially its Sustainable Working Landscapes program.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places includes approximately 96,000 listings, including about 1.8 million contributing resources. About 60% are individual property listings with 40% as National Register Historic Districts. These historic districts contain the vast majority of contributing resources, with about 1.5 million buildings, structures, sites and objects. Only 2,800 are designated National Historic Landmarks.

In Concord, four National Register Historic Districts encompass 167 properties. Additional individual listings include six National Historic Landmarks and 17 properties. Concord is fortunate that, thus far, no buildings on the National Register have been lost. Just six properties have been listed on the National Register since 1992, when Concord completed its intensive four-phase survey.

In Concord's five surveys between 1989 and 2013, surveyors identified 241 properties as potentially eligible for the National Register. Potentially eligible properties included individual listings and contributions to future historic districts. Suggested potential National Register districts identified in the 1990s include the Thoreau Depot area and Nashawtuc Hill, which are directly adjacent to the existing Main Street Local Historic District.

The 2013 West Concord preservation study prioritized the following areas for further study as potential National Register Districts: Damon Mill, Derby Street, Commonwealth Avenue/Winthrop Street, and Upland Road. In 2013, high priorities for future surveying included unsurveyed properties in the Commonwealth Avenue and Derby Addition areas and those in three additional potential National Register districts: Highland Street, Riverside Park and Westvale/Damondale. A formal Determination of Eligibility for those properties was recommended by consultants since potentially eligible properties would involve a state and federal review process.

Achieving National Register protection for such a large number of properties is unlikely in the near term, given the amount of effort required for nominations, including notification to property owners who are given an opportunity to object. If a majority of owners object, listing cannot proceed.

A solution to this challenge is Multiple Property Documentation based on an area or theme which allows more listings over time, more easily and less expensively. This approach encourages comprehensive thinking about Concord's resources and their context and allows research to proceed regardless of the availability of owner consent at the time. Thematically related resources do not necessarily need to be contiguous to one another. The process begins with a document that describes historical context and serves as a basis for evaluating the National Register eligibility of properties related to the theme or area. Related properties can be nominated either when the Multiple Property Form is submitted or later, but at least one property eligible under the context must be nominated and listed for a National Register Multiple Property Context to be registered.

Because the National Register is such a foundational preservation tool, expanding and introducing National Register districts is a long-standing Concord goal identified in all town preservation planning documents since 1995, as well as the current Community Preservation Plan.

Selected Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places in Concord

Colonel Roger Brown House, c1708
Designated 1983, NRHP Ref: 83000785



(Wikipedia)

Concord Armory, 1887-1927
Designated 2007, NRHP Ref: 07000945



51 Walden Street/Concord Armory (Wikipedia)

Hubbard-French Historic District
Designated 2000, NRHP Ref: 00000686



Thomas Hubbard House, 1781-88 (Wikipedia)

Union Station/Concord Junction
Designated 1989, NRHP Ref: 89000143



West Concord Station/Club Car Café (Heritage Strategies)

Minute Man National Historical Park Historic District (multiple buildings, sites, structures, objects)
Designated 1966 (with subsequent additions), NRHP Ref: 66000935

Battle Road

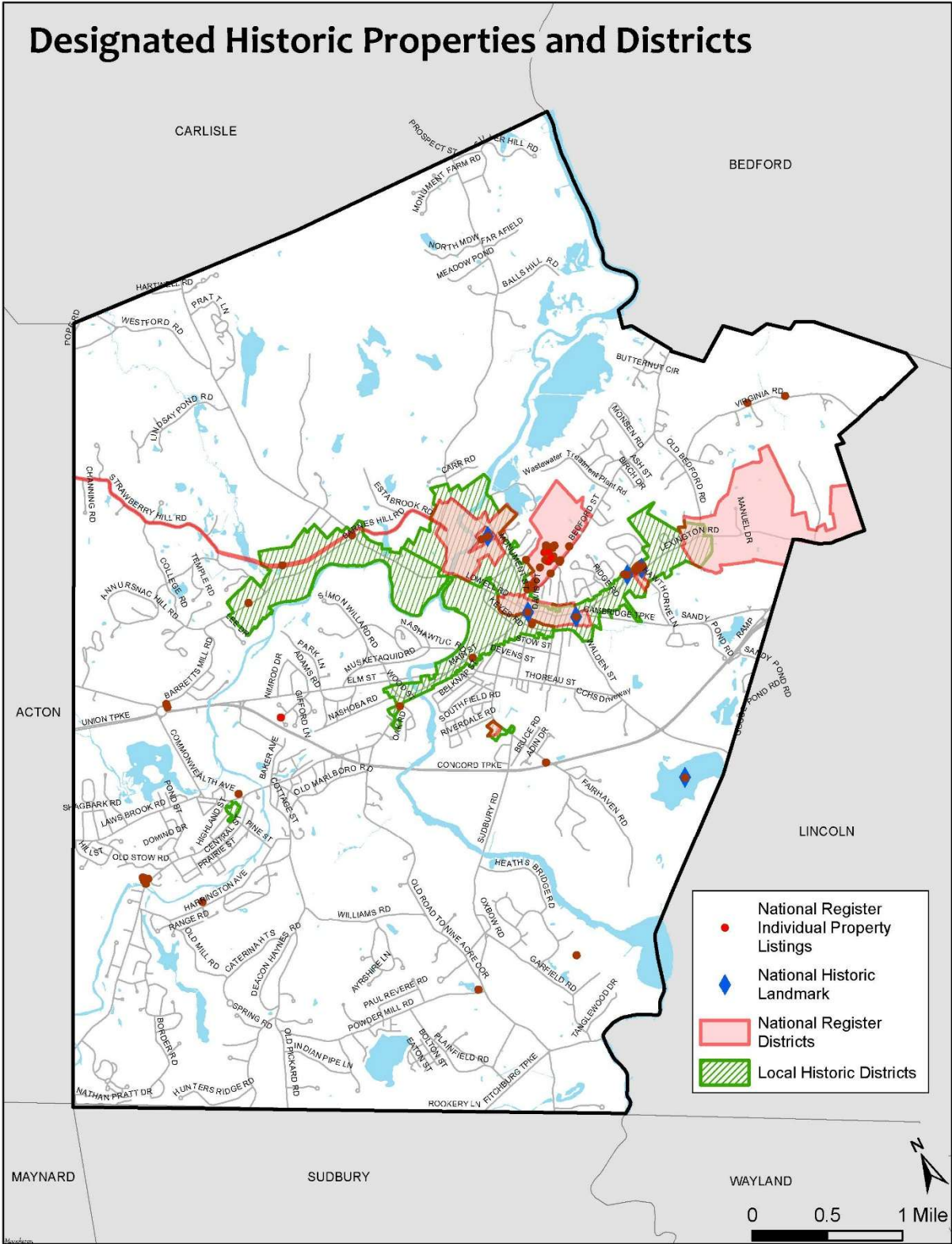


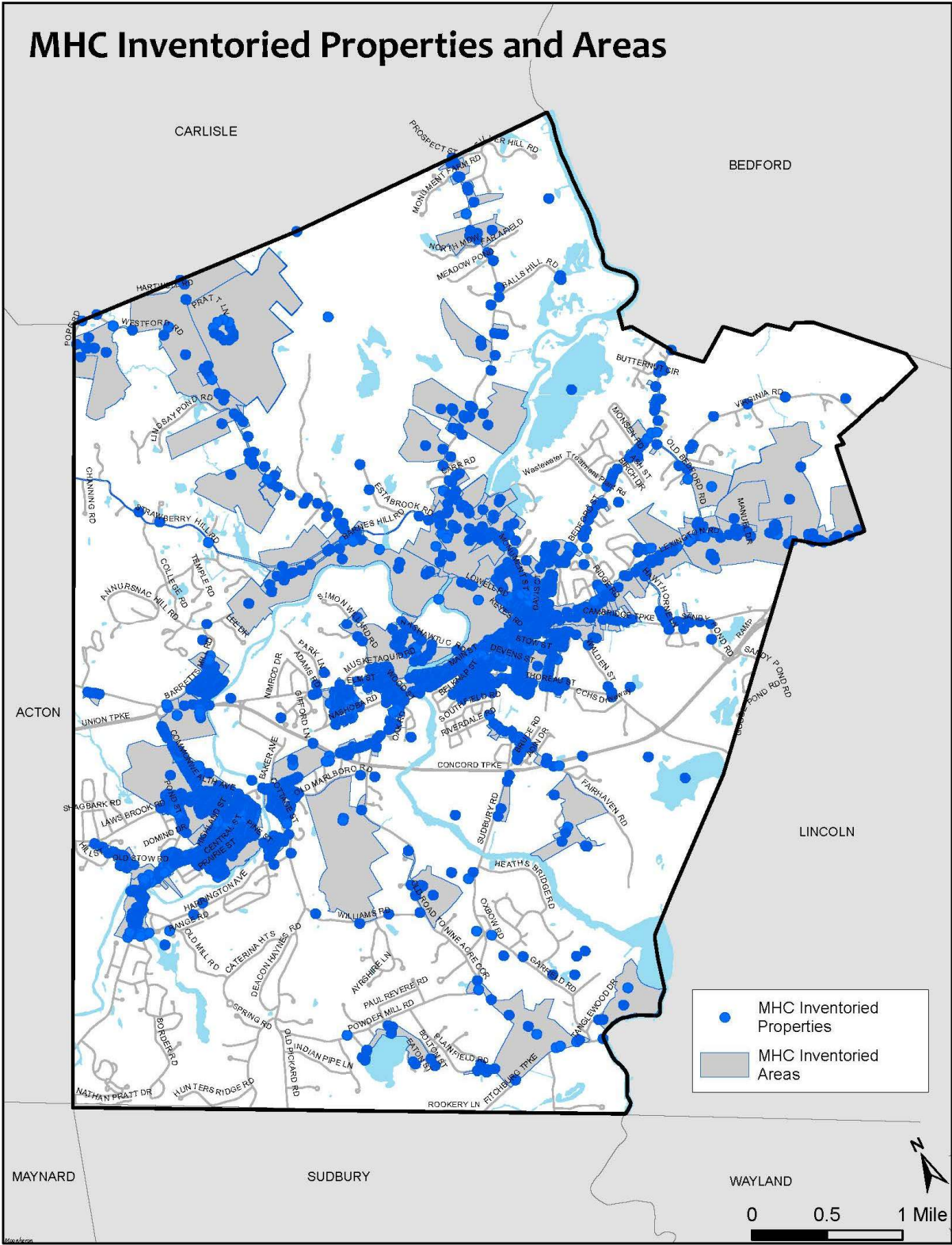
Reenactors on Battle Road (Wikipedia)

Old North Bridge



Old North Bridge (Wikipedia)

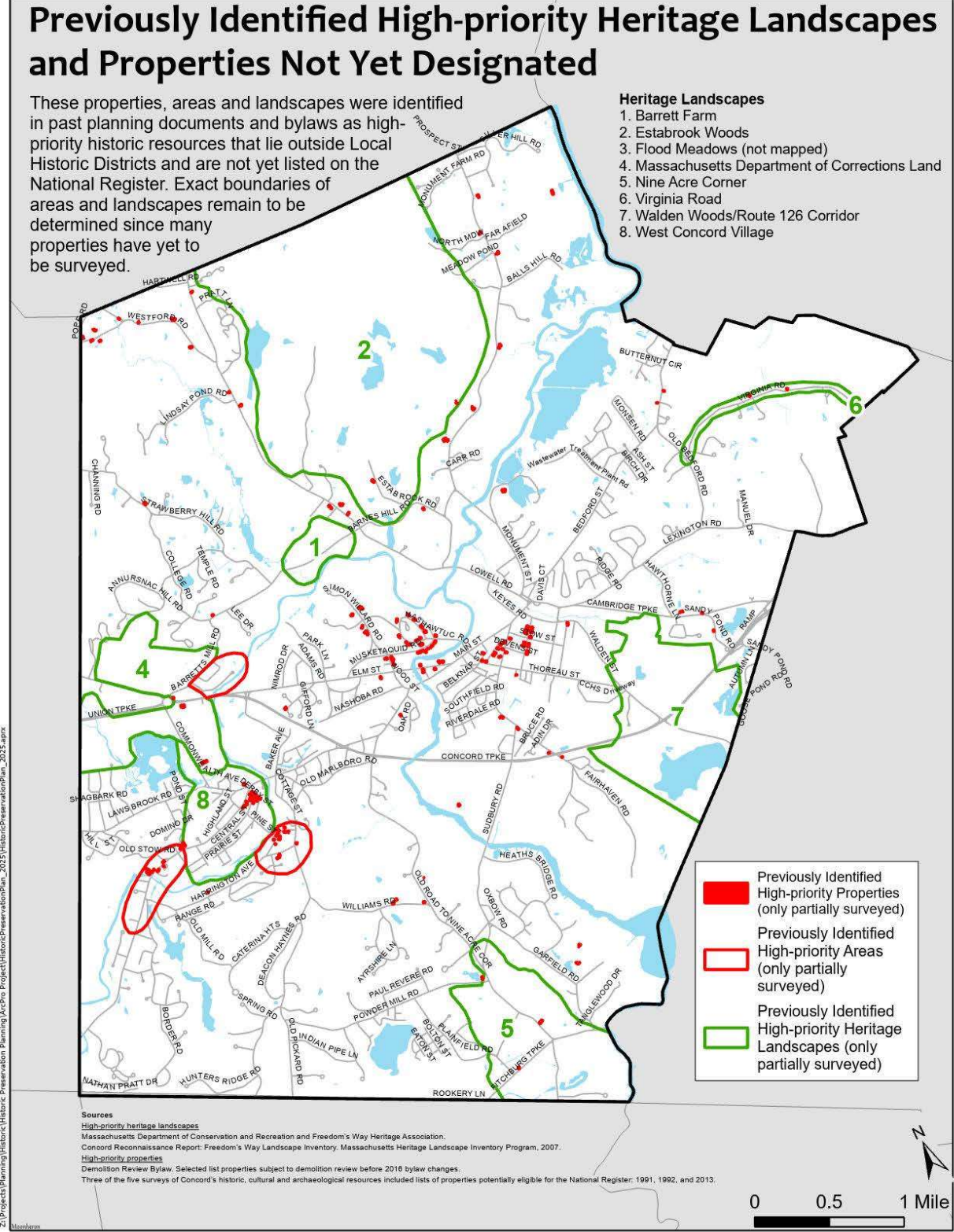




Previously Identified High-priority Heritage Landscapes and Properties Not Yet Designated

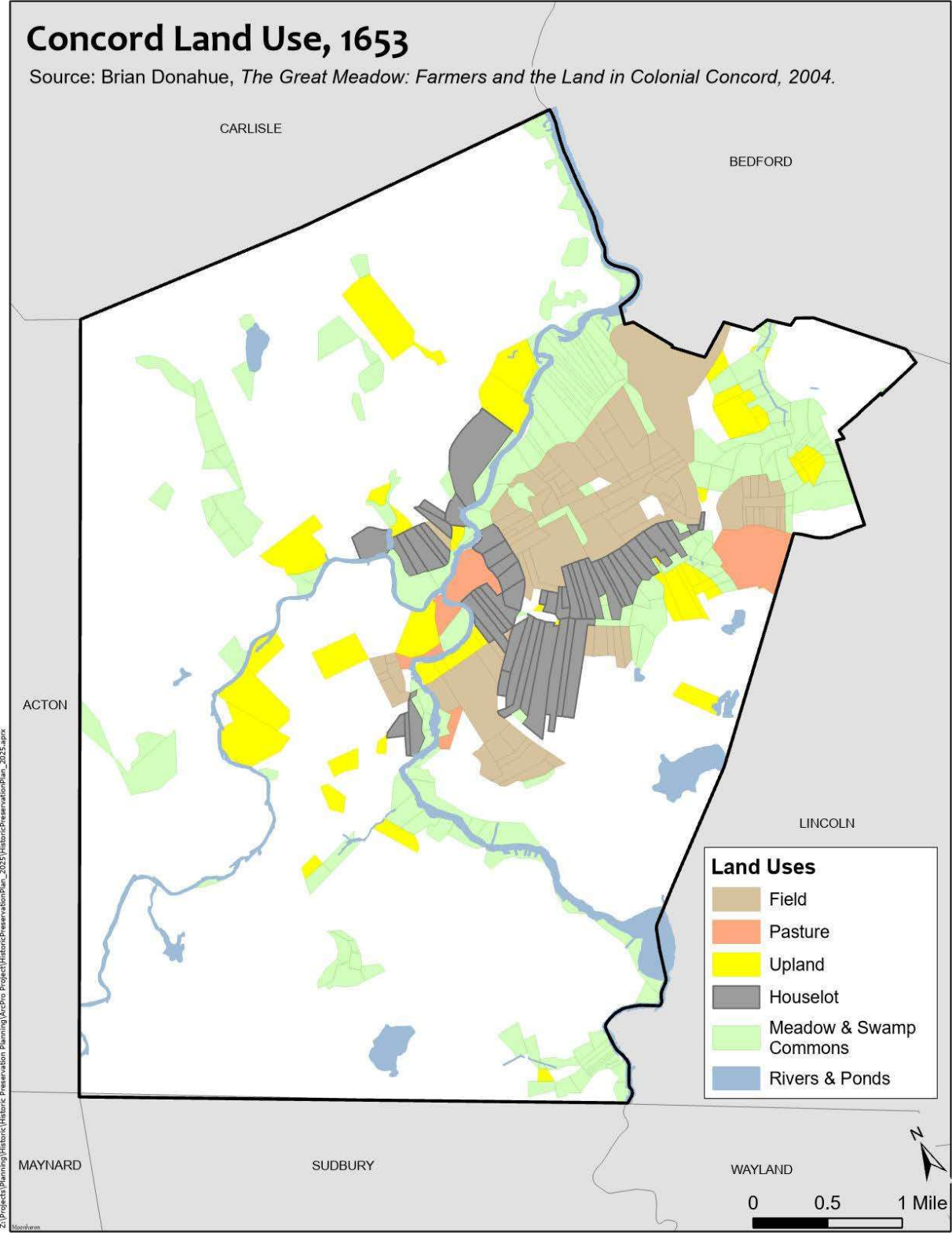
These properties, areas and landscapes were identified in past planning documents and bylaws as high-priority historic resources that lie outside Local Historic Districts and are not yet listed on the National Register. Exact boundaries of areas and landscapes remain to be determined since many properties have yet to be surveyed.

- Heritage Landscapes**
1. Barrett Farm
 2. Estabrook Woods
 3. Flood Meadows (not mapped)
 4. Massachusetts Department of Corrections Land
 5. Nine Acre Corner
 6. Virginia Road
 7. Walden Woods/Route 126 Corridor
 8. West Concord Village

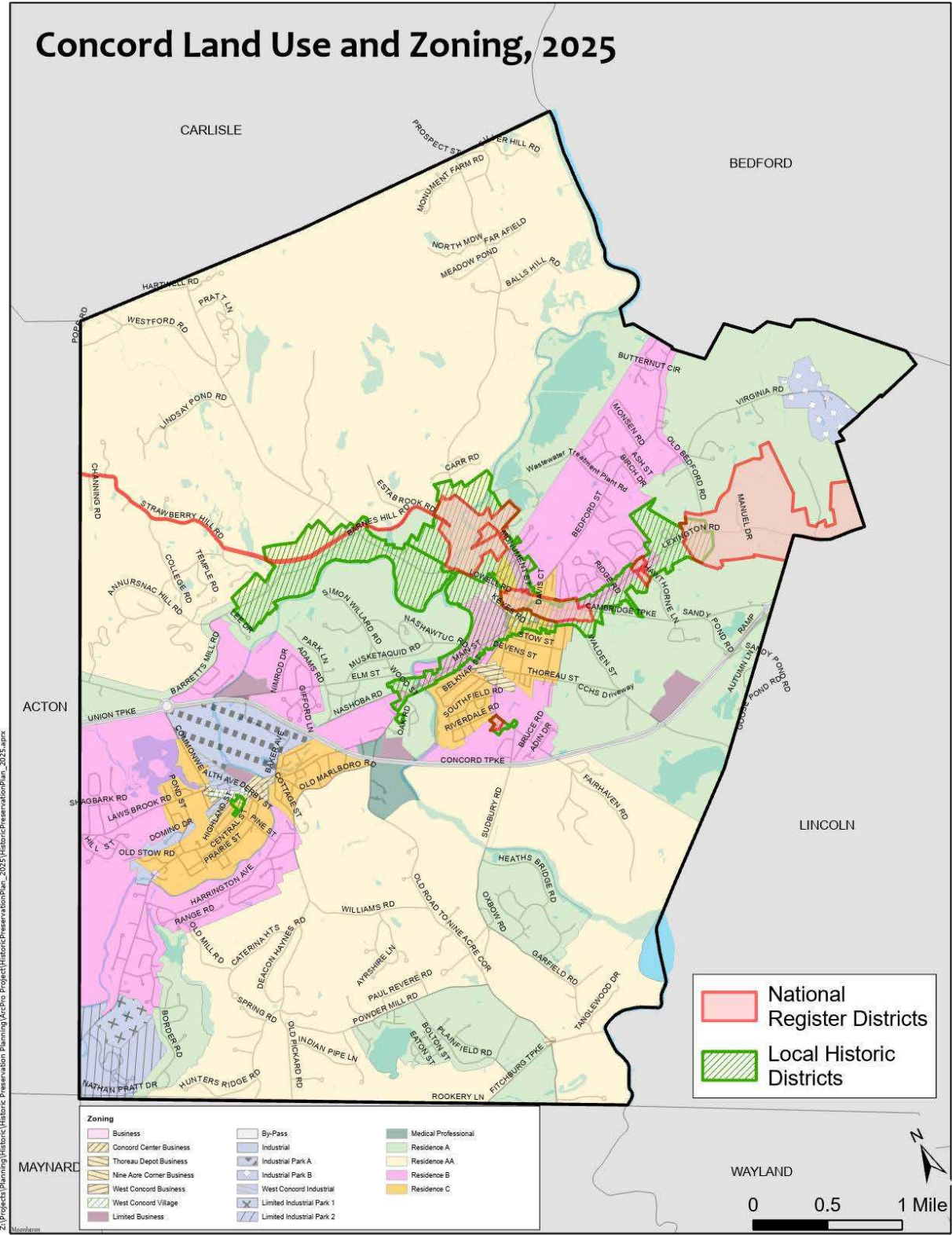


Concord Land Use, 1653

Source: Brian Donahue, *The Great Meadow: Farmers and the Land in Colonial Concord*, 2004.



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Land Management and Municipal Bylaws

The Zoning Bylaw and Historic Preservation

Most current zoning forces the creation of homogenous neighborhoods that lack the interest and amenities of older neighborhoods. The zoning adopted by your community may be creating the very type of community that you would find undesirable. Yet, it doesn't have to be this way.³¹

Remember - "You get what you zone for"³²

Massachusetts Historical Commission

More than any other factor, Concord's Zoning Bylaw shapes the future of Concord; it can help carry out town preservation goals.³³ Zoning establishes districts that determine the allowed uses for every parcel of land in town. It also establishes dimensional regulations that limit the location, size and shape of buildings on each parcel. Many of Concord's historic neighborhoods and buildings pre-date zoning use and dimensional regulations. Historic neighborhoods often have unique setbacks, scale and mixed uses that run contrary to traditional zoning regulations. Uses and dimensions that existed prior to the enactment of zoning that are not permitted within the current zoning district are known as legal pre-existing non-conforming uses.³⁴

Three sections of the current Concord Zoning Bylaw designed to help preserve community character are: zoning for Residential Compounds, Residential Clusters and a provision in the Dimensional Requirements.

Concord's zoning for Residential Compounds (Section 8) of up to five single-family dwellings highlights the importance of "preserving the rural character of the Town" by modifying dimensional requirements for the development and requiring a perpetual conservation restriction. "Any land within the Residential Compound not designated as a building lot shall be designated as permanent open space."

Concord's zoning for Residential Clusters (Section 9) is to "encourage the conservation of significant open space and the efficient use of land in harmony with its natural features" by allowing the modification of design standards for the construction of new subdivision roads and the dimensional requirements for the new lots. A perpetual restriction is required.

Concord's Dimensional Regulations (Section 6) allows special exceptions to the dimensional regulations for new lots "for the purpose of preserving existing historically significant structures or dwellings." It defines how the Planning Board and Historical Commission advise the Board of Appeals by submitting a written evaluation of the historic structures, an opinion of the appropriateness of the proposed lot layout and setbacks, and recommendations for preserving significant structural features.

Zoning in Concord has done a good job of sustaining the existing uses and dimensions of structures within its historic areas. Concord's Maximum Floor-Area-Ratio (FAR) limits the total gross floor area of all buildings on a lot in the four residential zoning districts. This has had a deterrent effect on the construction of new over-sized buildings or large additions, within reason. Smaller residential buildings are still threatened, however, as the Maximum FAR on larger lots may allow for much larger dwellings than existing ones, offering an incentive to tear down the existing dwelling. Reducing the Maximum FAR

to more or less match existing buildings would help remove the temptation to build larger homes but is politically difficult.

Similarly, any increased height allowances within historic areas could, over time, increase pressures to replace existing buildings with new ones with more usable square footage.

In addition, historic structures are referenced in the Zoning Bylaw’s Use Regulations for Formula Businesses (Section 3.3) and under Special Provisions concerning the Floodplain Conservancy District (Section 7.2), personal wireless communications facilities (Section 7.8), and solar photovoltaic installations (Section 7.9). Formula Business limitations are specifically designed to “maintain the unique, small-scale, small-town character and the quality of life for all Concord residents.” *Envision Concord* encourages researching alternative zoning methods to preserve the natural, agricultural and architectural characteristics of Concord while allowing appropriately scaled and designed redevelopment or development. It identifies several possible approaches such as:

- Amending the Maximum FAR bylaw to match the neighborhood or village center context;
- Developing design guidelines for each village center;
- Developing design guidelines for established residential neighborhoods;
- Considering form-based codes (rather than land use codes); and
- Reviewing possible Green Neighborhood or Cluster Zoning, agricultural overlay zones, and other zoning or review mechanisms.³⁵

This historic preservation plan strongly supports each of these approaches, paired with Historic Context Studies, Village Overlay Districts and Local Historic Districts. First, the distinctive character of priority historic village centers and neighborhoods must be clearly defined. Then, zoning should be tailored more closely to existing conditions so that future development matches the historic context of Concord’s distinctive centers and neighborhoods.

2025 aerial view of new subdivision construction on Main Street in West Concord, resulting in the demolition of two historic buildings and tree clearing (Doug Ellis)



The Massachusetts Historical Commission recommends hiring a consultant to prepare a more targeted preservation-oriented Zoning Analysis to develop these ideas further. Its publication *Preservation Through Bylaws and Ordinances* (2010) offers an excellent description of zoning and other tools that communities in Massachusetts have used to preserve community character.

Subdivision Rules and Regulations

To preserve “the special historical and rural character of Concord” and other purposes, the Concord Planning Board established Subdivision Rules and Regulations (Regulations). The Regulations set out the requirements and standards for the creation of new subdivision roadways and new building lots; they also define advisory roles of Town boards and committees in the review of proposed subdivisions of land and construction of roads. Subdivision applications require a narrative statement describing “effects upon important...scenic or historic sites or buildings and the impact of the subdivision on any historical or cultural resources located within one hundred (100) feet of the proposed development as identified in the Survey of Historical and Architectural Resources and Historic Resources Masterplan.” (Section 5.4.2) This language needs to be corrected and strengthened.

Requirements for Improvement and Design (Section 6) includes “large trees” and “scenic or historic spots” among natural features to be given “due regard” by the developer. “These features shall be left undisturbed wherever practical and the Board may waive design requirements in order to protect important natural features.” (Section 6.2.1)

Design Guidelines

Design Guidelines currently exist for Concord’s Local Historic Districts (that include Concord Center) and for the West Concord Village District. The 2007 Village Center Study recommends design guidelines for the Thoreau Depot Area as well.

The HDC periodically fine tunes its comprehensive set of Historic Districts Design Guidelines to address emerging issues and foster environmental sustainability. The design review process is clearly expressed in the Historic Districts Act, Rules and Regulations, and Guidelines for Administration.

The West Concord Village District includes informal design guidelines that would be enhanced by historic preservation and architectural history perspectives. The informal West Concord Village design review process, if any, should be reviewed and updated along with the guidelines.

Village Center Zoning

Village Center Zoning is designed to maintain historic development patterns, preserve existing historic buildings, allow for mixed uses, and encourage new construction that is compatible with the setbacks and scale of existing structures. These special zoning districts allow uses and dimensional requirements that are more consistent with 19th- and early 20th-century village centers than are allowed by conventional zoning.³⁶

In the 2007 Village Center Study, Village Overlay Districts were recommended for all three villages of Concord where the Concord Center and Thoreau Depot Zoning Districts would be treated alike and the West Concord Village District would receive a different treatment.

Since 2007, a small West Concord Village Zoning District and accompanying informal design guidelines were established in West Concord as a less rigorous alternative to a local historic district. The village zoning district sits directly adjacent to the tiny Church Street Local Historic District protecting just three anchor buildings. A comparative study of the approaches to the West Concord Village Zoning District and the well-established Concord Center local historic districts could help enhance preservation practices in all village centers, including Thoreau Depot.

Neighborhood Conservation Districts

Several Concord comprehensive plans and analyses have called for Neighborhood Conservation Districts, which were once a recommended approach to support neighborhood character through limited design review. Today this solution is no longer viable in Massachusetts due to a recent adverse judicial ruling. Massachusetts Historical Commission can no longer advise Neighborhood Conservation Districts; instead, they advise preserving neighborhoods through local historic district designation with design standards that can be tailored to the needs of each neighborhood.

Local Historic Districts

Many of Concord's most significant resources are protected from demolition or adverse impacts by local historic districts, the most effective and time-tested preservation tool. However, many more previously identified high-priority sites remain at risk. High-priority historic buildings, landscapes and sites are identified in Concord's early demolition review bylaws, Historic Resources Masterplan, Heritage Landscape Reconnaissance Study and West Concord Study.

Concord local historic districts have expanded quite slowly over the years. Establishing multiple-property local historic districts can be challenging since the process involves multiple property owners. On the other hand, designating "single-property" local historic districts is quite feasible as a means of protecting individual buildings without creating a new bylaw for local landmarks. Improved communications is the best starting point in any effort to expand or introduce new local historic districts. The preservation team could raise awareness and encourage use of this tool for prioritized sites that could inspire individual property owners or grassroots efforts among neighbors.³⁷

Thematic, noncontiguous local historic districts are another solution not yet explored in Concord that could gain interest among property owners. They consist of a group of historic properties not necessarily adjacent to each other which are significant and unified under a single theme.

Local historic district actions have passed at Concord Town Meeting only when owners are willing. Other Massachusetts communities have used single-property or thematic local historic district designation as a tool of last resort to prevent especially important properties from being demolished or adversely altered. It may take several months and considerable effort to apply a demolition delay, document a potential new local historic district and move the proposal through the planning process in order to meet the Annual Town Meeting schedule.

Agricultural Overlay Areas

Concord's Natural Resources Commission, Agricultural Committee and non-profits use an impressive array of tools to protect Concord farmland, including Agricultural Preservation Restrictions (APR).

Zoning can enhance those areas not yet protected. Both the Open Space and Recreation Plan and the earlier Heritage Landscape Reconnaissance Study call for the development of Agricultural Overlay Areas to promote the protection of agricultural lands and farming.

Scenic Roads and Areas

Scenic roads are within the public domain managed by the Town of Concord. Nine have been designated under the town's 2022 Scenic Road Bylaw, based on significant research, photography, and description: Balls Hill Road, Barretts Mill Road, Garfield Road, Liberty Street, Monument Street, Old Road to Nine Acre Corner, Strawberry Hill Road, Sudbury Road, and Westford Road.

Concord's Scenic Roads Bylaw helps protect the scenic quality and rural and historic character of local roads from activities related to road construction and maintenance. Scenic road regulations adopted in 2024 guide the Planning Board's review of plans for the cutting and removal of Public Shade Trees or the removal, rebuilding or destruction of stone walls on Concord's scenic roads.³⁸

In the next update to the Open Space and Recreation Plan, the town could explore scenic area overlays to extend landscape protection to viewsheds and areas along designated roads.

Public Shade Tree Bylaw

Public Shade Trees contribute to community character. Under Massachusetts General Law Chapter 87, all trees within a public way or on its boundaries are considered Public Shade Trees under the care and custody of the Town's Tree Warden. Public Shade Trees cannot be cut, trimmed or removed by any person other than the Tree Warden without a permit. Additionally, a Public Shade Tree cannot be cut down or removed by the Tree Warden or others without a public hearing.

Tree Preservation Bylaw

The Tree Preservation Bylaw encourages the preservation and protection of trees on residential lots during significant demolition and/or construction activity. It designates areas of a lot where trees must be protected and requires mitigation for trees removed through replanting or payment of fees to support Town tree planting and maintenance.

Demolition Review Bylaw

In order to reduce waste and carbon emissions while retaining a diverse and affordable housing stock, Concord's Housing and Sustainability goals discourage demolition and encourage reuse, recycling and preservation of existing buildings.

According to the Demolition Review Bylaw, the Historical Commission reviews proposed demolition of sensitive historic structures outside Concord's local historic districts. By determining a historic building "preferably preserved," the CHC can delay—but not deny—demolition. The delay provides time to encourage owners to seek alternatives that preserve, rehabilitate, relocate or restore the building; it also provides time to hold a public discussion and document the historic structure before it is lost.

Initially this bylaw delayed demolition for only six months and applied to 72 high-priority unprotected structures listed in the 1995 Concord Historic Resources Masterplan. The Concord Historical Commission regularly amends and strengthens the bylaw. In 2016, the bylaw was amended to apply to

any building constructed before 1941 with a one-year delay. In 2021, any property over 50 years old became subject to demolition review, substantially increasing the number of reviews each year.

More changes to the bylaw are recommended to clarify sections and address the protection of extremely important properties. For example, an 18-month demolition delay may be needed to save a treasure, since an 18-month delay would provide sufficient time to create a single-property local historic district at Town Meeting. In addition, the definition of “historically significant” should be updated and expiration dates clarified. Changes that would address partial demolition of selected structures and take into consideration future development plans should be researched and evaluated.

Town-owned Property

The Town of Concord owns many acres of municipal and conservation lands, as well as 173 structures. The Natural Resources Commission and Division of Natural Resources provide model stewardship of conservation land, widely admired by regional ecologists, land stewards and activists. The Concord Historical Commission and its Planning Division professional staff are valuable advisors on proposed changes and major maintenance on cultural landscapes and historic structures.

Town and school lands are listed and mapped in the Open Space and Recreation Plan every ten years, but most parcels have not been evaluated for historical significance. Many Town-owned conservation lands, totaling more than 1,500 acres, will likely have historical significance as well.

Most pre-20th century Town-owned buildings have been surveyed for their historical significance, but many others have not been evaluated. Some are also located in existing National Register or local historic districts or individually listed on the National Register. Only assets found to be historically significant by the Historical Commission are eligible for Community Preservation Funds.

In addition, Concord also owns a number of properties under shared stewardship with others through leases and Memoranda of Understanding. For example, a 1963 Agreement with Minute Man National Historical Park concerns the Town-owned allée in the North Bridge unit, along with historic and archaeological assets such as the Minute Man statue, Battle Monument, North Bridge and Grave of British Soldiers. The Town owns and operates conservation land on Barrett’s Mill Road, which is within an administrative boundary of the National Park.

The Town supports social and economic vitality by leasing public land and historic structures to nonprofit cultural and agricultural organizations. The town leases the 1887 Concord Armory to the performing arts organization 51 Walden and a former school to a visual and performing arts organization, The Umbrella Arts Center. In an unusual stewardship arrangement between a non-profit, town and National Park, the Town leases land to a non-profit that owns the historic Robbins House standing on that land.

Finally, the Town owns real property interests in many other sites through preservation and conservation restrictions. For example, the Historical Commission is responsible for Preservation Restrictions on the Minot-Wheeler House/Thoreau Birthplace, the Hubbard-French House, and the Wright Tavern, a National Historic Landmark. In 2019, the Concord Natural Resources Commission acquired land within the National Historic Landmark boundary of the Ralph Waldo Emerson House.

Examples of Historically-Significant Town Owned Buildings and Landscapes

141 Keyes Road/Concord Power Station, 1898
Alexander Wadsworth Longfellow, Jr., architect



141 Keyes Road (Town of Concord)

Harvey Wheeler Grammar School, 1917
William Herbert McLean, architect



Harvey Wheeler Senior Center (Town of Concord)

Concord Edison Electric Light Plant, 1934



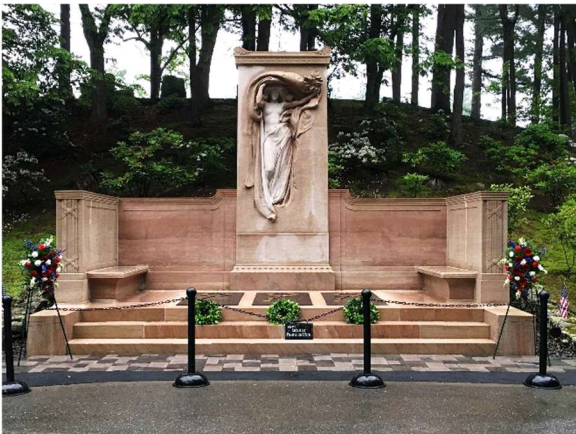
Concord Municipal Light Plant (Nancy Fresella-Lee)

Town House, 1851
Richard Bond, architect



Town House (Town of Concord)

Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, 1855
Cleveland & Copeland, landscape architects + others

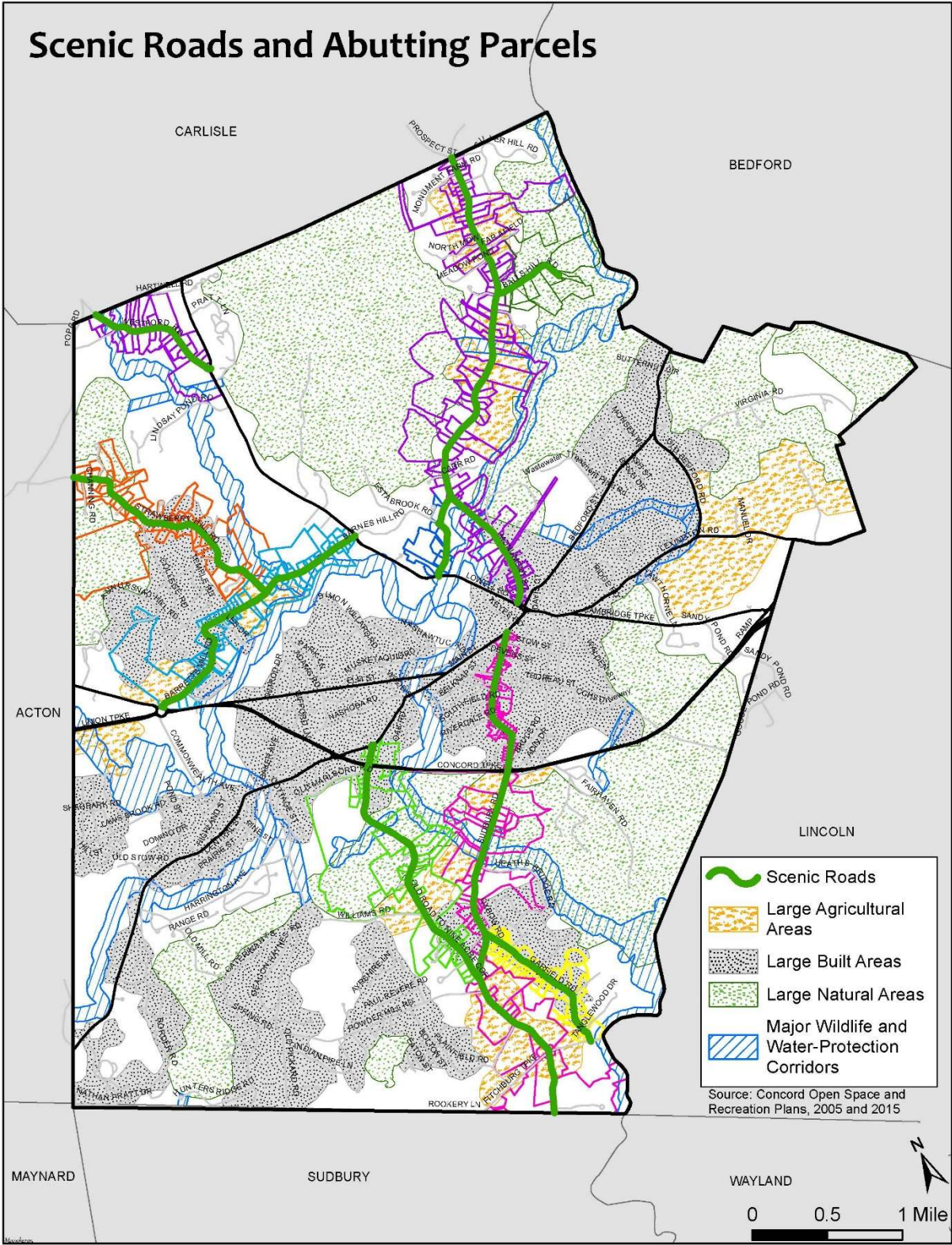


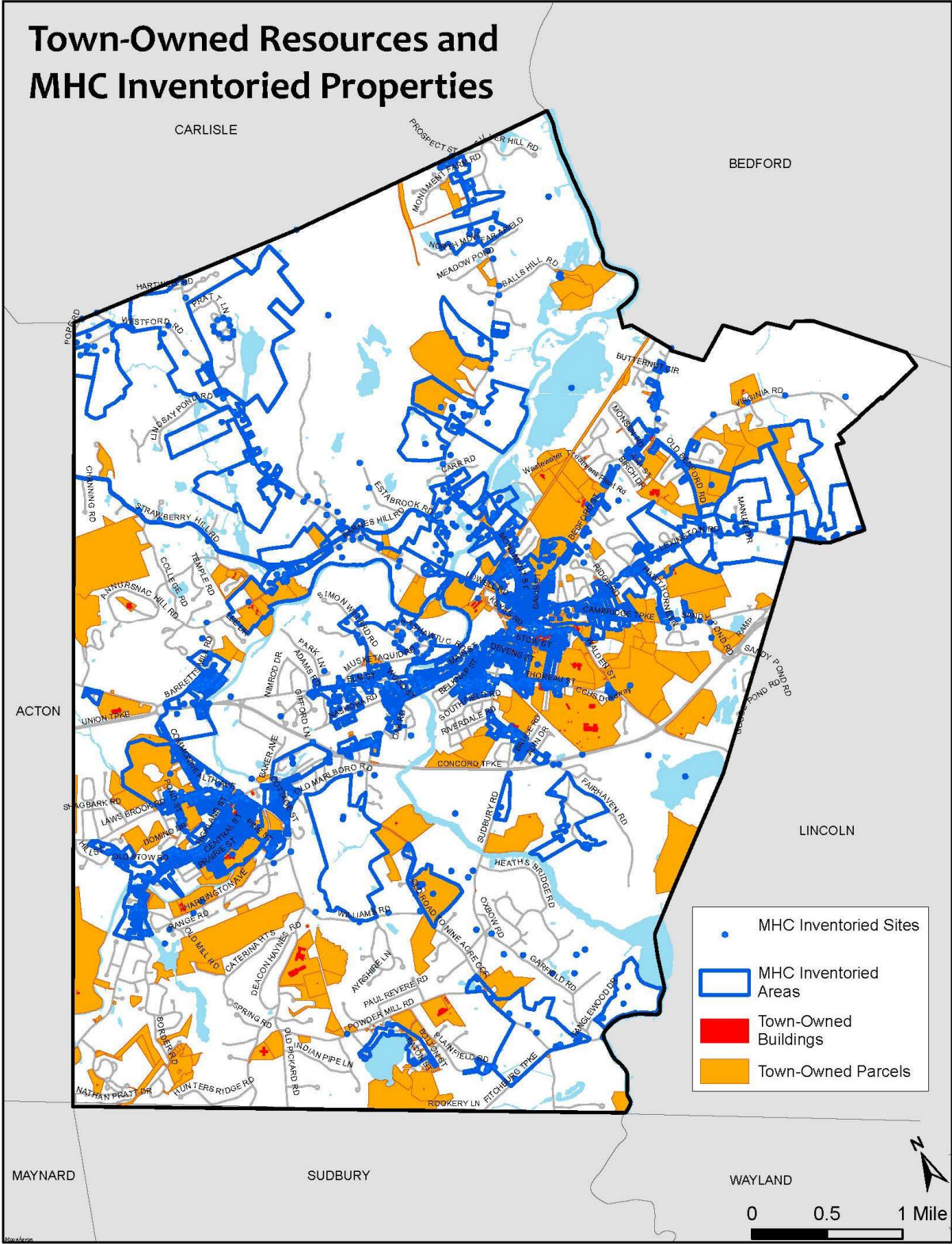
Melvin Memorial by Daniel Chester French, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery (Town of Concord)

Heywood Meadow, 1635
Vernacular cultural landscape



Heywood Meadow (Concord Bridge)





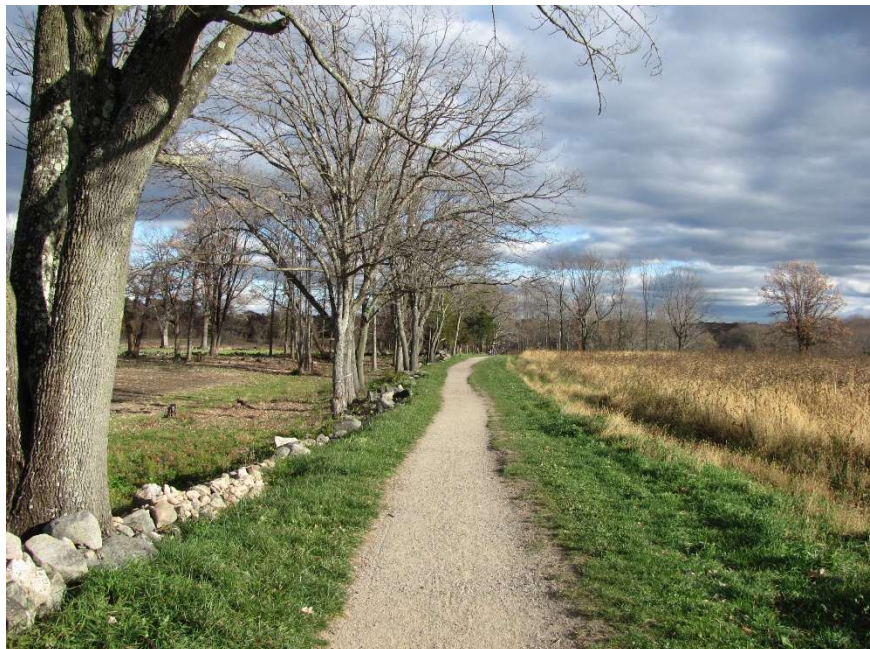
Archaeology

The preservation of archaeological resources in Concord is a longstanding goal first articulated in the 1987 Concord Long-Range Plan. According to Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40, Section 8D, the Concord Historical Commission is responsible for the preservation, protection, and development of both historic and archaeological resources. Its responsibilities include working with the State Archaeologist on precious resources below ground that tell the story of people who live here today and have been a part of this land for several millennia.

Concord is known to preserve an especially rich archaeological record. According to the Heritage Landscape Survey Report, “Concord has 134 ancient Native American sites... and 34 historic archaeological sites.... Concord has more documented archaeological sites than any other community in the region.”³⁹

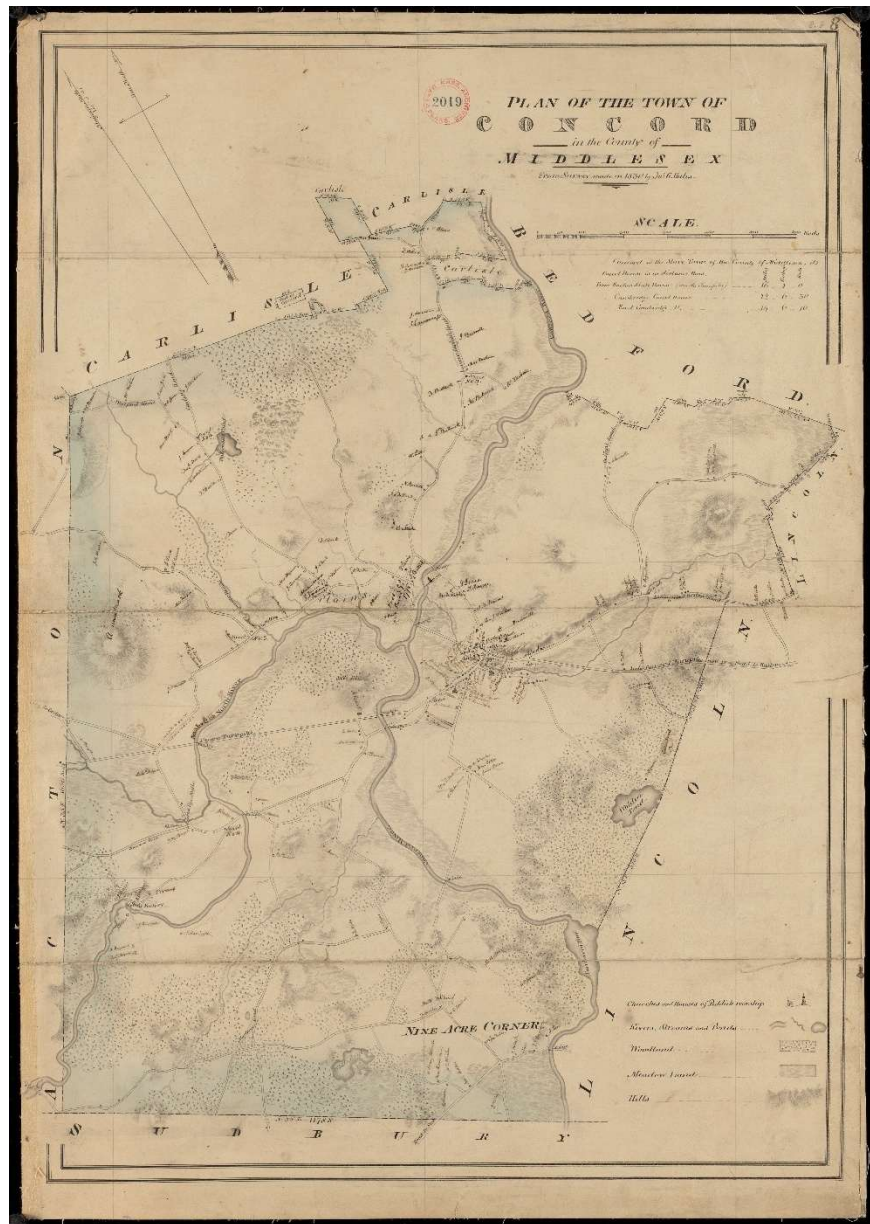
Indigenous people figure prominently in Concord history, as do amateur and professional archaeologists. Thanks to the lifelong work of archaeologist Shirley Blancke and those who came before her, the Concord Historic Resources Masterplan provides an overview of known ancient Native American sites and archaeologically sensitive areas.

In site evaluation of proposed subdivisions of six or more lots, current Subdivision Rules and Regulations require evaluation of the impact of the subdivision on any historical or cultural resources located within one hundred (100) feet of the proposed development. (Section 5.4.2(j)) No formal bylaw protects archaeological sites in Concord, resulting in significant losses. For example, the Town placed a sewage treatment plant on land where Indigenous people and freed African Americans lived and worked. More recently, the Town has conducted archaeological studies on its own land before making significant changes. For example, when the Town expanded Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, the Historical Commission enlisted an archaeologist to conduct a study and record evidence of Indigenous settlement. Then, the Commission advocated for the installation of a commemorative marker.



Battle Road, Minute
Man National
Historical Park
(Wikimedia)

The Massachusetts Historical Commission recommends Townwide Archaeological Reconnaissance Surveys which communities surrounding Concord have completed. These surveys of both ancient and historic period resources follow well established methodologies for such projects under permit and oversight by the State Archaeologist. Preparations for the 400th anniversaries of the 1630 English settlement of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 2030 and 1635 incorporation of Concord in 2025 could include an archaeological reconnaissance survey in collaboration with Tribal Partners. The survey would enhance knowledge of best practices and laws designed to protect ancient and historic archaeological resources. The survey would assist board and committee members and residents in making informed decisions about land development or acquisition projects.



Plan of the Town of Concord, John G. Hales, 1830 (Massachusetts Office of the Secretary of State/Digital Commonwealth)



Walking tour of Monument Square, Old Burying Hill (Town of Concord)

CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN

To realize the 2025 vision for a forward-looking preservation program grounded in Concord's core values, this plan includes recommended ongoing practices for everyday management of cultural heritage as well as specific future actions. This chapter identifies ongoing preservation practices and organizes action steps into four goals based on four basic preservation tools: public education and outreach, documentation, land use and planning, and operations. The preservation team prioritized fifteen short-term actions that address multiple community values and goals and are marked with a star (★).

Ongoing Practices

Carefully-selected recommended actions listed in this chapter advance the following value-based practices for sustaining Concord in the 21st century.

Inclusive Participation, Collaboration and Partnerships.

Address critical regional and Concord needs by: a) broadening civic engagement and planning teams; b) providing professional preservation advice and comments on town projects and plans; c) strengthening collaboration among Concord historical and cultural institutions; and d) collaborating with new and existing partners in allied fields.

Inclusive Cultural Heritage

Enhance experiences of Concord's places and structures and the diverse stories they represent by: a) expanding the breadth of cultural resources and narratives represented in the preservation program; and b) engaging the people closest to those stories as essential project team members and advisors.

Vital Village Centers and Public Places

Support Town stewardship goals for its pedestrian-friendly economic and social hubs by: a) preserving the unique historic character and human scale of Concord's village centers, streets and public places; and b) modelling cost effective preservation practices with Town-owned properties.

Housing Choice and Affordability

Maintain a diverse housing stock by: a) discouraging the demolition of noteworthy smaller homes and their replacement with larger, more expensive residences; b) encouraging renovation of existing single-family homes and outbuildings; and c) encouraging sensitively-designed infill construction of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) and the rehabilitation of accessory buildings.

Mobility and Access

Ensure context-sensitive solutions for safe and accessible routes that improve mobility and access, reduce motor vehicle dependency, and encourage active modes of transportation such as walking, rolling and cycling by weaving historic preservation into transit planning efforts.

Open Spaces

Support Concord's stewardship goals for agriculture, open space, biodiversity, sustainability, resiliency, and health by: a) preserving the historic character of Concord's cultural landscapes, viewsheds and countryside; and b) protecting and promoting ongoing local agricultural activities, land use, and traditions.

Environmental Sustainability

Reduce carbon emissions and support resilience by: a) preserving open space, agricultural lands and the tree canopy; b) encouraging and facilitating rehabilitation of historic and older structures over their demolition through public education as well as informed zoning and planning review; and c) facilitating the weatherization and retrofitting of older buildings.

Recommendations

Goal I: Public Appreciation

Expand public understanding and appreciation for preserving Concord as a place of national memory, meaning and inspiration for all people.

Why It's Important

This goal seeks to advance appreciation for Concord's multifaceted cultural resources. Educational outreach, strong communication, and active collaboration are among the most cost-effective preservation strategies, offering the greatest potential for broad and lasting impact. When people have the opportunity to gain deeper knowledge about the heritage that surrounds them, they are more likely to be motivated to protect it. Citizens and visitors can be inspired to adopt preservation practices within their reach and join community preservation efforts.

Recommended Actions:

- ★ Develop a robust preservation communications program.
- ★ Craft themes and historic context statements for Concord's cultural landscapes and resources to support community preservation, educational, visioning and brand messaging efforts.
- Publish an up-to-date history of Concord that highlights the development of the built environment and builds on previous work.

Recommended Practices:

- Review proposed new markers, signs and monuments to help ensure historical accuracy, interpretive value and appropriate design.
- Evaluate past and present Historical Commission educational initiatives. (e.g., historic marker program, historic street sign program, preservation awards program)
- Adopt best practices for public education that emphasize mission, accuracy and public trust responsibilities. (e.g., American Association of Museums Code of Ethics, Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks)
- Provide tools to encourage individual action in heritage preservation efforts.

National Trust for Historic Preservation
2024 *America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places* news conference.
Activist and actor Ashley Judd
delivers keynote speech
(Save Our Heritage)



Goal 2: Documentation

Enhance knowledge and inform decision making about Concord's multifaceted cultural landscapes and historical and cultural resources through research and documentation.

Why It's Important

This plan draws renewed attention to the importance of a comprehensive, up-to-date and well-researched inventory of cultural resources. It promotes a broader understanding of historical context than any previous Concord planning effort. An outdated or incomplete inventory of historic resources with limited context compromises community visioning, planning and financial decision-making. In the survey for this plan, Concord residents expressed a high level of interest in expanding knowledge about Concord's past to tell a more complete and inclusive story. Today, historical significance is much more broadly defined than in the past. Early surveys missed archaeological resources, more modest or altered housing, sites considered too recent to be historic at the time, and sites significant for their broad cultural or ethnographic associations. Regular updates to the inventory also ensure that Concord's resources are considered in environmental reviews by state and federal programs whose spending, permitting, and project planning might affect those resources.

Recommended Actions:

- ★ Undertake a thematic study report and preservation survey for the Concord Reformatory, Wardens' House, Northeast Correction Center agricultural land and associated West Concord sites.
- ★ Evaluate, update and expand Concord's Inventory of Cultural Resources. Identify gaps and develop a plan for adding new properties and areas.
- ★ Prepare a Cultural Landscape Report for Monument Square/the Center of Concord.
- ★ Complete the survey of pre-1775 structures for Concord250, highlighting under-represented Concord residents of the 17th and 18th centuries.
- ★ Survey undocumented post-1940 neighborhoods and structures, beginning with experimental residential communities such as Conantum.
- ★ Prepare a study report for the entire Thoreau Depot/Hubbard Street/Sudbury Road area.
- ★ Complete an archaeological reconnaissance report for Concord to identify critical/sensitive areas and inform future planning and design projects.
- Inventory Town- and school-owned lands and structures, noting significance, documentation completeness, National Register eligibility, and protection status.
- Prepare an illustrated report on Concord's historic transportation networks and their character-defining features and design details to inform planning and design projects and to identify potential additional scenic roads.
- Prepare MHC Area Forms for all Local Historic Districts.

Recommended Practices:

- Expand the breadth of cultural resources and narratives represented in the preservation survey program to reflect a more complete story, relevant to all, particularly “untold stories” related to underrepresented voices and communities.
- Approach surveys with public history interpretation in mind and supplement MACRIS inventory forms with narratives and tools to assist Concord educators.
- Consider Multiple Property Documentation Forms as a means of encouraging more National Register listings and highlighting Concord’s most significant properties. Consider potential for a regional approach. (e.g., modernist neighborhoods)
- Include specific citations, illustrations, and research files as important components of the preservation survey project record.

Brister’s Hill is a historic 18.6 acre site in Walden Woods known for its connection to Thoreau and the formerly enslaved Brister Freeman. The Walden Woods Project bought the land from developer to prevent the development of a large office building and commissioned The Reflection Circle. (Sasaki Associates, Inc.)



Goal 3: Planning and Land Use Management

Preserve Concord's distinctive historic character through effective land use regulations, sensitive planning, and proactive development strategies.

Why It's Important

"One of Concord's most recognizable characteristics is the interplay of its land uses, including the historic and traditional town centers, concentrated commercial hubs surrounding its train stations and the extensive amount of rural agricultural fields and conservation land.... [A comprehensive land-use plan] takes the guesswork out of land use and development planning so that the Town can be proactive about attracting the types of uses and development it wants, while protecting and enhancing what it holds dear." (*Envision Concord*)

Preservation values are carefully woven through Concord's land use policies in order to guide growth and development in ways that honor the town's history and identity. These values can be expressed through both land use regulations, such as zoning and subdivision regulations, as well as other regulations with an explicit focus on historic resources, such as those guiding the Historical Commission and Historic Districts Commission.

Recommended Actions:

- ★ Hire Metropolitan Area Planning Council to suggest specific revisions to Concord's existing zoning bylaws and related tools to retain or preserve traditional village scale, streetscape and architectural character, balance preservation with economic vitality, and strengthen local identity. (e.g., site plan review criteria and Village Center Districts)
- ★ Strengthen the demolition review bylaw.
- ★ Identify potential Village Center Districts, as well as thematic and single-property Local Historic Districts.
 - Draft a bylaw to rehabilitate historic accessory buildings.
 - Undertake a new bylaw for archaeological resources that addresses: 1) site work on town properties, particularly those within "high potential" areas and near documented archaeological sites; 2) any development in sensitive archaeological areas; and 3) any large-scale projects requiring site plan review.
 - Designate additional scenic roads.

Goal 4: Operations

Improve operational effectiveness and efficiency by strategically investing time and resources.

Why It's Important

Operational improvements will strengthen the effectiveness and efficiency of the historic preservation program and the Town. By refining policies, procedures, and planning practices, the Town can better align its efforts, reduce redundancies, and create stronger synergy across departments. Ensuring adequate staffing, volunteer support, and financial resources is critical to carrying out this work successfully. Sufficient operating and grant funding will help ensure a proactive, collaborative, and cost-effective approach to shaping Concord's future.

Recommended Actions:

- ★ Update HDC administrative codes to expand projects eligible for administrative review and approval and update CHC administrative code to clearly define its regulatory and advisory roles.
- ★ Update HDC design guidelines to address recent legislative initiatives and support town environmental, economic and social goals. (e.g., Accessory Dwelling Units, electric vehicle charging stations)
- ★ Realign job scope of the Senior Planner to support this plan. Hire or re-assign a dedicated part-time administrator to support the CPC.
- Improve shared stewardship of historic and cultural assets under Town leases and preservation restrictions by documenting and clarifying partnership roles and responsibilities.

Recommended Practices:

- Include preservation team representatives as advisors in developing town plans and projects involving physical changes to village centers, streets, public places, neighborhoods, signage and infrastructure.
- Routinely update codes, guidelines and procedures to reflect current best practices, streamline processes for residents and address emerging opportunities and challenges.
- Revise practices as appropriate to complement changing state and federal legislation.
- Continue to stay engaged in high-priority environmental impact conversations.
- Conduct annual planning sessions and suggest updates for the Community Preservation Plan.
- Adopt Certified Local Government (CLG) best practices and consider applying for CLG status.
- Continue to identify and secure grant funding for prioritized projects.
- Encourage use of the CHC gift account as allowed by Massachusetts General Law.

Weave Preservation Strategies into Town Planning Documents such as:

- Comprehensive Long-Range Plan (Planning Board)
- Housing Production Plan (Planning Division)
- Open Space and Recreation Plan (Natural Resources Commission, Division of Natural Resources)
- Community Preservation Plan (Community Preservation Committee)
- Zoning bylaw revisions (Planning Board)
- Hazard Mitigation Plan



Concord Center (Nancy
Fresella-Lee)

Action Plan

Priority	Number	CHC = Concord Historical Commission HDC = Concord Historic Districts Commission PD = Planning Division PB = Planning Board MCI = MCI Concord Advisory Board MMNHP = Minute Man National Historical Park	Implementation Leads	Paid Consultant?
GOAL 1: PUBLIC APPRECIATION. Expand public understanding and appreciation for preserving Concord as a place of national memory, meaning and inspiration for all people and all time.				
Yes	1.1	Develop a robust preservation communications program.	CHC, HDC, PD	
Yes	1.2	Craft themes and historic context statements for Concord’s cultural resources, including landscapes, to support community preservation, educational, visioning and brand messaging efforts.	CHC PD	\$
	1.3	Publish an up-to-date history of Concord that highlights the development of the built environment and builds on previous work.	CHC, PD	\$
GOAL 2: DOCUMENTATION. Enhanced knowledge and inform decision making about Concord’s multifaceted cultural landscapes and resources through research and documentation.				
Yes	2.1	Undertake a thematic study report and preservation survey for the Concord Reformatory, Wardens’ House, Northeast Correction Center agricultural land and associated West Concord sites.	CHC, PD, MCI	\$
Yes	2.2	Evaluate, update and expand Concord’s Inventory of Cultural Resources. Identify gaps and develop a plan for adding new properties and areas.	CHC, PD	\$
Yes	2.3	Prepare a Cultural Landscape Report for Monument Square/the Center of Concord.	CHC, PD	\$
Yes	2.4	Complete the survey of pre-1775 structures for Concord250, highlighting under-represented Concord residents of the 17th and 18th centuries.	CHC, PD	\$
Yes	2.5	Survey undocumented post-1940 neighborhoods and structures, beginning with experimental residential communities such as Conantum.	CHC, PD	\$
Yes	2.6	Prepare a study report for the entire Thoreau Depot/Hubbard Street/Sudbury Road area.	CHC, PD	\$
Yes	2.7	Complete an archaeological reconnaissance report for Concord to identify critical/sensitive areas and inform future planning and design projects.	CHC, PD	\$
Yes	2.8	Inventory Town- and school-owned lands and structures, noting significance, documentation completeness and protection status.	CHC, PD	
	2.9	Prepare MHC Area Forms for all Local Historic Districts	CHC, PD	

4 RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION PLAN

Priority	Number	CHC = Concord Historical Commission HDC = Concord Historic Districts Commission PD = Planning Division PB = Planning Board MCI = MCI Concord Advisory Board MMNHP = Minute Man National Historical Park	Implementation Leads	Paid Consultant?
	2.10	Prepare an illustrated report on Concord’s historic transportation networks and their character-defining features and design details to inform planning and design projects and to identify potential scenic roads.	CHC, HDC, PD	\$
	2.11	Identify high-priority National Register nomination listings based on significance, potential threat, and potential for tax credits.	CHC, PD	\$
GOAL 3: PLANNING and LAND USE MANAGEMENT. Preserve and enhance Concord’s distinctive historic character through effective land use regulations, sensitive planning and proactive development strategies.				
Yes	3.1	Hire Metropolitan Area Planning Council to suggest specific revisions to Concord’s existing zoning bylaws and related tools to retain or preserve traditional village scale, streetscape and architectural character, balance preservation with economic vitality, and strengthen local identity. (e.g. site plan review criteria and Village Center Districts)	CHC, PB, PD	legal
Yes	3.2	Strengthen the demolition review bylaw.	CHC, PD	legal
	3.3	Identify potential Village Center Districts, as well as thematic and single-property Local Historic Districts.	CHC, PD, HDC, Property owners	legal
	3.4	Draft a bylaw to rehabilitate historic accessory buildings.	CHC, PD	\$ possibly
	3.5	Undertake a new bylaw for archaeological resources that addresses: 1) site work on town properties, particularly those within “high potential” areas and near documented archaeological sites; 2) any development in sensitive archaeological areas; and, 3) any large- scale projects requiring site plan review.	CHC, PB, PD	legal
	3.6	Designate additional scenic roads.	CHC, PD, PB	
GOAL 4: OPERATIONS. Improve operational effectiveness and efficiency by strategically investing time and resources.				
Yes	4.1	Update HDC Administrative codes to expand projects eligible for administrative review and approval and update CHC administrative code to clearly define its regulatory and advisory roles.	CHC, HDC, PD	legal

4 RECOMMENDATIONS & ACTION PLAN

Priority	Number	<p>CHC = Concord Historical Commission HDC = Concord Historic Districts Commission PD = Planning Division PB = Planning Board MCI = MCI Concord Advisory Board MMNHP = Minute Man National Historical Park</p>	Implementation Leads	Paid Consultant?
Yes	4.2	Update HDC design guidelines to address recent legislative initiatives and support town environmental, economic and social goals. (e.g., Accessory Dwelling Units, electric vehicle charging stations)	HDC, PD	
Yes	4.3	Realign job scope of the Senior Planner to support this plan. Hire or re-assign a dedicated part-time administrator to support the Community Preservation Committee.	PD	
	4.4	Improve shared stewardship of historic and cultural assets under Town leases and preservation restrictions by documenting and clarifying partnership roles and responsibilities.	Town Manager, PD	legal

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<https://www.nps.gov/articles/000/guidelines-for-applying-secretary-standards.htm>:

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Guidelines on Flood Adaptation for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings

Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes.

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How to Complete the National Register Registration Form (NRB 16A)

How to Complete the National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form (NRB 16B)

How to Prepare National Historic Landmark Nominations

Researching a Historic Property (NRB 39)

Historic Residential Suburbs: Guidelines for Evaluation and Documentation

Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Archeological Properties (NRB 36)

Guidelines for Identifying, Evaluating, and Registering America's Historic Battlefields (NRB 40)

Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places (NRB 31)

How to Evaluate and Nominate Designed Historic Landscapes (NRB 15)

Guidelines for Evaluating and Nominating Properties That Have Achieved Significance Within the Past Fifty Years (NRB 22)

How to Apply National Register Criteria for Post Offices (NRB 13)

Guidelines for Documenting and Evaluating Rural Historic Landscapes (NRB 30)

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Guidelines for Evaluating and Documenting Traditional Cultural Properties (NRB 38)

Defining Boundaries for National Register Properties (with Appendix for Archeological Properties) (NRB 21 & 12)

Telling the Stories: Planning Effective Interpretive Programs for Places Listed in the National Register of Historic Places

GIS Map Guidance

Guidelines for Local Surveys: A Basis for Preservation Planning (NRB 24)

Preservation Briefs: Over 50 titles addressing a broad range of historic preservation issues from materials conservation to accessibility and energy efficiency.

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/preservation-briefs.htm>

Preservation Tech Notes: In-depth technical guidance on materials and treatments

<https://www.nps.gov/orgs/1739/preservation-tech-notes.htm>

HABS/HAER/HALS Documentation Guidelines

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/heritagedocumentation/guidelines.htm>

Selected Books and Publications about Concord

NOTE: For more extensive reference lists, see Anne McCarthy Forbes' *Narrative Histories of Concord and West Concord* (1995) and Public Historian Victor Curran's more recent bibliography for his Concord Town History and Guide Training course. Anne Forbes' report followed four years of intensive survey work for the Concord Historical Commission.

Blancke, Shirley and Barbara Robinson. ***From Musketaquid to Concord: The Native and European Experience***. Concord, MA: Concord Antiquarian Society, 1985

Chapin, Sarah. ***Concord, Massachusetts***. Mount Pleasant, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1997

Donahue, Brian. ***The Great Meadow: Farmers and the Land in Colonial Concord***. New Haven: Yale University Press (Yale Agrarian Studies Series), 2007

Fischer, David Hackett. ***Concord: The Social History of a New England Town, 1750-1850***. Waltham: Brandeis University Press, 1983

Forman, Richard T. T., Delia R. J. Kaye, and Robert White. ***Ecology along Concord Trails: Exploring Fourteen Areas***. Concord, MA: Natural Resources Division, 2021

Foster, David R. ***Thoreau's Country: Journey Through a Transformed Landscape***. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999

French, Allen and Leslie Perrin Wilson. ***Historic Concord and the Lexington Fight***. Concord, MA: Concord Free Public Library, 2010

Garrellick, Renee, with William Bailey. ***Concord in the Days of Strawberries and Streetcars***. Concord, MA: Concord Historical Commission, 1985

Gross, Robert A. ***The Minutemen and Their World***. Stuttgart: Picador (Pan Macmillan/ Holtzbrinck Publishing Group), 2022 (Revised and Expanded Edition)

_____. ***The Transcendentalists and Their World***. Stuttgart: Farrar, Straus and Giroux (Pan Macmillan/ Holtzbrinck Publishing Group), 2021

Keyes, John Shepard. ***Memoirs of Members of the Social Circle in Concord***. Arkose Press, 2015 (reprint of Riverside press editions, 1882-1909)

Lemire, Elise. ***Black Walden: Slavery and Its Aftermath in Concord, Massachusetts***. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019

Marshall, Megan. ***The Peabody Sisters: Three Women Who Ignited American Romanticism***. New York: Mariner Books (HarperCollins Publishers), 2006

Maynard, W. Barksdale. ***Walden Pond: A History***. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005

McAdow, Ron. ***The Concord, Sudbury and Assabet Rivers: A Guide to Canoeing, Wildlife and History***. Sudbury, MA: Sudbury Valley Trustees, 1990

- Mitchell, John Hanson. *Walking Towards Walden: A Pilgrimage in Search of Place*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley Publishers, 1995
- Petruionis, Sandra Harbert. *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau's Concord*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006
- Primack, Richard B. *Walden Warming: Climate Change Comes to Thoreau's Woods*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014
- Schofield, Edmund. *Thoreau's World and Ours: A Natural Legacy*. Lakewood, CO: Fulcrum Publishing, 1993
- Scudder, Townsend. *Concord: American Town*, Boston, MA: Little, Brown and Company, 1947
- Shattuck, Lemuel. *History of the Town of Concord*. Boston, MA: Russell, Odiorne, 1835
- Smith, Tim. *Thoreau's Walden*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 2002
- Swayne, Josephine L., ed. *The Story of Concord Told by Concord Writers*. Boston, MA: Meadow Press, 1906
- Walcott, Charles. *Concord in the Colonial Period, 1635-1689*. Boston, MA: Estes & Lauriat, 1884
- Wheeler, Ruth. *Concord: Climate for Freedom*. Concord, MA: Concord Antiquarian Society, 1967
- _____. *Our American Mile*, Concord, MA: Concord Antiquarian Society, 1957
- Wood, David F. *An Observant Eye: The Thoreau Collection at the Concord Museum*. Concord, MA: Concord Museum, 2006
- _____. *Eyewitness to Revolution: The American Revolution Collection at the Concord Museum*. Concord, MA: Concord Museum, 2025

REPOSITORIES

See also “Researching Historic Properties in Concord” <https://concordma.gov/3310/Researching-Historic-Properties-in-Conco>

Massachusetts Historical Commission. **Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth**. This inventory is accessible through the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS), an interactive database updated regularly with information on historic properties, sites, and districts, and also through MACRIS Maps. <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massgis-data-mhc-historic-inventory>; <https://mhc-macris.net> <https://maps.mhc-macris.net/>

Town of Concord, **Archives** <https://concordma.gov/2610/Archives-and-Records>

Town of Concord, **Planning Division**

Concord Free Public Library, **Special Collections** holds many important unpublished resources including the following on Concord's built environment:
Jarvis, Edward. "Houses and People in Concord, 1810-1820," 1882;
Keyes, J.S.; rev. Tolman, Adams, "Houses and Owners or Occupants in Concord," 1885; and
Wheeler, Ruth, "Concord House Files," 1960s.

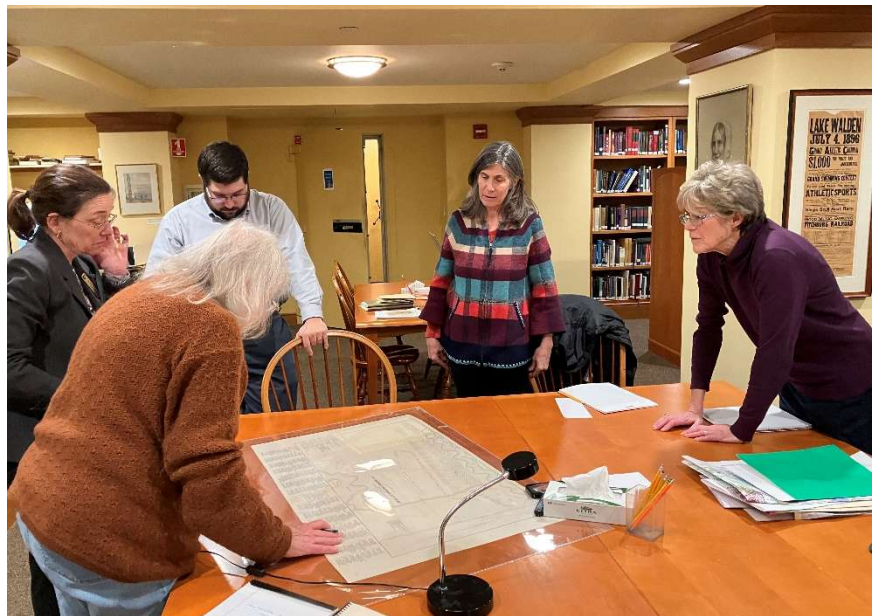
<https://concordlibrary.org/special-collections#:~:text=The%20mission%20of%20the%20William,of%20art%2C%20sculpture%2C%20and%20any.>

Concord Museum

http://www.concordcollection.org/Mhomed.aspx?dir=PERMANENT&utm_source=concordmuseum.org&utm_medium=site

Middlesex County Registry of Deeds

<https://www.masslandrecords.com/MiddlesexSouth/D/Default.aspx>



Special Collections,
Concord Free Public
Library (Heritage
Strategies)

END NOTES

¹ Ibid.

² National Trust for Historic Preservation (National Trust). *Preservation for People: A Vision for the Future* (2017). https://cdn.savingplaces.org/2023/05/12/11/18/36/276/Future%20of%20Preservation_May%202017%20non%20layout.pdf

³ Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks: History and Social Studies (2018). <https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf>

⁴ National Association of Preservation Commissions (NAPC), *Messaging Guide for Local Historic Preservation Programs* (2023). <https://www.napcommissions.org/messaging-guide>. Thompson M. Mayes, *Why Do Old Places Matter? How Historic Places Affect Our Identity and Well-being* (American Association of State and Local History, 2018), quoted here: <https://savingplaces.org/stories/why-do-old-places-matter>. Godschalk and Anderson. *Sustaining Places: the Role of the Comprehensive Plan: PAS Report 567* (American Planning Association, 2012), 4.

⁵ Metropolitan Area Planning Council, “Thriving, Arts, Culture and Heritage,” MetroCommon 2050 Goals (2019). <https://mapc.gitbook.io/metrocommon-2050-goals/goals/thriving-arts-culture-and-heritage>

⁶ National Park Service, National Historic Landmark database.

⁷ Massachusetts General Law Chapter 40C regarding local historic districts does not apply to Concord, where local historic districts were created by a Special Act of state legislature.

⁸ Owners wishing to qualify for this benefit should consult with tax advisors and those who specialize in establishing deed restrictions. Owners who sell their restrictions or establish them as a condition of land development or grant funding would not be considered donors. Perpetual preservation restrictions involve the participation of the Massachusetts Historical Commission and are recorded in the State Register and the Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth.

⁹ Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). *Preservation Planning Manual: Local Historical Commissions: Their Role in Local Government* (1987), pp. 5, 21, 22. <https://archive.org/details/preservationplan00zimm>

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 12.

¹¹ The Historical Commission’s role is to “submit to the Board [of Appeals] a written evaluation of the historical significance of the existing structure or dwelling, an opinion of the appropriateness of the proposed lot layout and setbacks requested, and an evaluation or recommendation of the significant structural features that should be included in a preservation plan.” Concord Zoning Bylaw, Section 6.3.3.2

¹² “The Planning Board, after consultation with the Fire Chief and the Historical Commission, shall have final authority over the names of streets in a subdivision.” Concord Zoning Bylaw, Section 6.7.4

¹³ “Said commission may acquire in the name of the city or town by gift, purchase, grant, bequest, devise, lease or otherwise the fee or lesser interest in real or personal property of significant historical value and may manage the same.” [Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40 §8d, 2023](#)

¹⁴ All but the American Mile district and Church Street district have been amended over the years with small expansions.

¹⁵ *The Lexington-Concord Battle Road: Interim Report of the Boston National Historic Sites Commission to the Congress of the United States* (1958) quotes Louis Kossuth, a Hungarian leader celebrated in the cause of freedom, p. 11.

¹⁶ Concord Historic Districts Commission Guidelines for Administration, Section 2.8.

¹⁷ Several current Concord planning documents and the current demolition delay bylaw still specifically refer to the prioritized list of historic resources published in the 1995 Concord Historic Resources Masterplan.

¹⁸ Other key resources in this plan include National Trust, *Preservation for People*; NAPC, *Messaging Guide*; and Landmarks Illinois, *The Relevancy Project* (2023).

¹⁹ NAPC, *Messaging Guide*; Mayes, *Why Old Places Matter*.

²⁰ Elefante, Carl. “The Greenest Building Is...One That Is Already Built” *Forum Journal*, Vol. 21. No. 4, Summer 2007. <https://savingplaces.org/stories/why-do-old-places-matter-sustainability>

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- ²¹ NACP, *Messaging Guide*, pp. 53-55. The National Trust for Historic Preservation provides many resources on this issue, such as https://cdn.savingplaces.org/2023/05/24/11/14/36/697/The_Greenest_Building_Full.pdf <https://savingplaces.org/stories/cutting-carbon-resources-for-preservationists>. New calculators are available to help understand the benefits of saving existing buildings <https://savingplaces.org/stories/the-reuse-imperative>. See also, <https://www.bostonpreservation.org/resource-item/greenest-building-quantifying-environmental-value-building-reuse>.
- ²² *Concord Long-Range Plan* (2005).
- ²³ PlaceEconomics.
- ²⁴ Henry David Thoreau, *Journal*, October 15, 1859, quoted in *Open Space and Recreation Plan for Concord Massachusetts* (2015), back cover.
- ²⁵ “As of 2001, approximately 38% of the Town was developed land. This figure has changed little over the past decade.... In contrast, protected open space increased markedly over the same time frame. Uncommitted land decreased an equivalent amount.” *Open Space and Recreation Plan* (2015), pp. 20-21.
- ²⁶ <https://mapc365.sharepoint.com/:x/s/DataServicesSP/EWqs0CKNnFVDnZsfFZQ-rC0Bqme37hEenlvp3HSGAke7-Q?rttime=uef--M6p3Eg>. Concord’s population declined slightly after 2018. A number of Chapter 40B housing developments are slated to open soon, which might change MAPC’s projected trajectory slightly upward.
- ²⁷ Save Our Heritage’s successful efforts include an expansion of Minute Man National Historical Park to incorporate the Col. James Barrett Farmhouse, now among the many resources in the park in need of further protection from the air traffic out of Hanscom. <https://www.MinuteMan.media/3267/Proposed-Hanscom-Airport-Expansion-Proje>
- ²⁸ <https://concordma.gov/3514/MCI-Concord-Redevelopment>
- ²⁹ Charge of the Concord Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee.
- ³⁰ “A brand is a set of expectations or associations resulting from an experience with an organization. It is how your key constituents think and feel about what you do. Brand impressions result from every single experience or contact a person has with an organization. It is relevant, consistent and inextricably linked to mission and strategic plan. Developing a strong brand is the starting point of a successful communications strategy.” Michele Levy, *Brand Messaging for Stonehurst, the Robert Treat Paine Estate in Waltham, Massachusetts* (2007).
- ³¹ Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC), *Preservation Through Bylaws and Ordinances* (2010), p. 3. <https://www.hingham-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/6735/preservation-through-bylaws-and-ordinances->
- ³² Ibid.
- ³³ Concord Comprehensive Long-Range Plans (2005 and 2018), *Concord Village Centers Study* (2007), and *West Concord Master Plan* (2010).
- ³⁴ MHC, *Preservation Through Bylaws and Ordinances*.
- ³⁵ *Envision Concord*, Land Use Action 1.4.
- ³⁶ MHC, *Preservation Through Bylaws and Ordinances*.
- ³⁷ In Boston, a citizens’ petition begins the Landmark designation process. Joseph M. Bagley, *Boston’s Oldest Buildings and Where to Find Them* (Waltham, Massachusetts: Brandeis University Press), 5-6.
- ³⁸ As authorized by the Scenic Roads Act, [General Law - Part I, Title VII, Chapter 40, Section 15C](#).
- ³⁹ *Concord Reconnaissance Report: Freedom’s Way Landscape Inventory*, p. 15.