

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SURVEY PRIORITIES

COMMUNITYWIDE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Gloucester Historical Commission commissioned this Survey Update Plan in order to better understand what has already been inventoried and what remains to be done in documenting the city's historic resources. This project is part of a long continuum.

Since the Cape Ann Historical Association was established in the early 20th century (the successor to the Cape Ann Scientific and Literary Association, founded in 1873, and the predecessor to today's Cape Ann Museum), Gloucester has engendered a committed, knowledgeable, and energetic preservation community. The 1960s through the 1990s saw the establishment of a local historic district and large National Register district; two major, professional survey projects; a preservation plan and temporary preservation planner; a study of municipally owned properties; an historic building plaque project; and an ambitious, citywide National Register nomination process.

More recently, a number of local, regional, and state programs involving historic landscapes, open space, the harbor, and economic and cultural development have addressed historic resources. The City's Community Development Department has taken a sustained interest in preservation as a positive planning tool, and has a good record of consulting with the Historical Commission on major projects.

These private and public preservation efforts have achieved some notable successes against formidable threats. Nonetheless, synthetic siding has enveloped downtown Gloucester. Economic decline and redevelopment continue, alternately, to encroach upon historic commercial and industrial properties through lack of maintenance, demolition, and demolition by neglect. Suspicion of governmental regulation has hindered the designation of local historic districts and listings in the National Register of Historic Places, where design review would help protect significant cultural resources and enhance meaningful community development. Successful preservation requires a broad base of community support. Survey work forms the foundation of that understanding and appreciation.

This survey plan has been formed in consultation with, and with comments from, members of the Gloucester Historical Commission, Gloucester Historic District Commission, Gloucester Archives Committee, Historic Burial Grounds Committee, City of Gloucester Community Development Department, and staff of the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). Numerous planning projects that relate to and impact historic resources were identified and reviewed, and have been cited throughout the text and in the bibliography. Recommendations of the 1990 Preservation Plan, which post-dates the majority of Gloucester's existing survey work, were carefully studied.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Gloucester's existing inventory of historic resources is remarkably comprehensive and professional in quality. Although only about 12% of existing buildings are represented, the

inventory covers a wide range of cultural resources in terms of resource types (buildings, areas, burial grounds, objects, structures, landscapes), building types (residential, institutional, commercial), public and private ownership, age, and geographic location. (See Section 3 of this report for a detailed analysis.)

Only a tiny number of municipalities in Massachusetts (e.g., Cambridge) have surveyed every property in their communities—even those cities and towns with demolition delay ordinances. A total inventory does not seem merited and is not recommended for Gloucester at this time, due to the cost, time, and limited benefits of such an exhaustive task. Nonetheless, several critical additions and updates to Gloucester’s inventory are recommended. More importantly, future survey work should be tied as closely as possible to partnerships with other planning and conservation efforts in Gloucester. Collaboration ensures better preservation planning and will amplify the effects of additional survey work.

The Community Development Department is unconvinced of the feasibility of a demolition delay ordinance, due to the uncertainty of tangible benefits, traditional community resistance to governmental regulation, and the relatively infrequent incidence of demolition, citywide. If the Historical Commission wishes to pursue this preservation tool, additional survey work would be useful, and for practical purposes might be focused on areas with high significance, integrity, visibility, and degree of vulnerability—for example, Route 127 (in its entirety) and commercial/industrial centers such as the downtown waterfront and Lanesville and Magnolia centers.

More thorough documentation of historic resources would benefit several other current planning efforts, including the City’s North Woods Study, Open Space and Recreation Plan, Gloucester Harbor Economic Development Plan, Fuller School Site Reuse Study, Harbor Walk, and the Building Committee for Lanes Cove Fish Shack; and state and regional programs such as the Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Initiative, Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program, and Mass in Motion. Recommendations in this plan for further survey work address (indeed, emphasize) these complementary efforts.

The Massachusetts Historical Commission seems particularly interested in bringing the inventory up to date with post-World War II resources; updating area forms to current standards, including district data sheets; and completing the stalled Multiple Property documentation, in order to provide a context for many additional National Register listings.

More specific recommendations are described below, generally in descending order of priority within their categories.

Survey Priorities for Neighborhoods and Resource Types

Because Gloucester residents tend to identify themselves by neighborhood, enhancing the documentation of neighborhoods and sub-areas is recommended. Several categories of property types remain largely undocumented or underdocumented, and should be addressed to improve the comprehensiveness of Gloucester’s inventory. The following are recommended:

Neighborhood Overviews

Review, correct, and expand all neighborhood overviews from this survey plan as a basis for public education and outreach, and for future survey work and historic designations.

Updated Area Forms

- Annisquam (could be accomplished instead by completing the inactive existing National Register nomination)
- Folly Cove
- Freshwater Cove
- Head of the Cove
- Lanesville Center/Lanesville
- Lexington Avenue, Magnolia
- Rocky Neck (could be accomplished instead by completing the inactive existing National Register nomination)
- Stage Fort Park (historic landscape)

New Area Forms

- Bass Rocks
- Bay View
- Brier Neck
- Hodgkins Cove
- Lane's Cove
- Magnolia Center
- Ravenswood Park (historic landscape)
- Riverdale
- Riverview
- Rowley Shore
- Wingersheek Beach

Post-World War II Properties

Mid-20th-century-modern properties include residential, commercial, and institutional buildings and structures. Many of the residential properties appear to have been built as summer houses. Commercial properties include two doctors' offices on Washington Street near Addison Gilbert Hospital, and the Carroll Steele building on Pleasant Street. Structures/landscapes include the A. Piatt Andrew Bridge and Grant Circle. Approximately 50 to 100 properties merit documentation; see the preliminary list in Appendix A at the end of this report.

Integration with Other Active City Planning Projects and Development Trends

- Downtown waterfront development: Survey all commercial and industrial buildings and structures along Rogers Street, Commercial Street, and the Head of the Harbor. Many of these are included in the proposed Central Gloucester National Register boundary extension; some, such as the Birdseye facility on Commercial Street, merit individual survey forms due to redevelopment potential. Include sea walls, piers, and other structures.

- Downtown commercial development: Survey all commercial properties along Main Street, from Washington Street to the Head of the Harbor, to provide a base of information for potential redevelopment, alterations, and demolition.
- Cultural district designation for East Gloucester: Survey commercial and industrial properties; complete the National Register nomination for Rocky Neck.
- North Gloucester Woods Study: Survey all historic properties within the North Gloucester Woods study area.
- Open space preservation and enhancement: Update documentation for Stage Fort Park, and undertake new survey documentation for Ravenswood Park.
- Scenic roads and bike trails: Survey all properties more than 50 years old along Route 127.

Properties Related to Artists' Communities, Summer Resorts, and the Granite Industry

These themes of Gloucester's history and development are underrepresented in the existing inventory. Many would be picked up in new/expanded area forms for Bass Rocks, Brier Neck, Magnolia, Bay View, Annisquam, Hodgkins Cove, Lanesville, and Folly Cove.

City-Owned Properties

Examine the current list of municipal properties to ensure comprehensive and up-to-date documentation for all historic properties (more than 50 years old), including buildings, statues, structures, and landscapes.

Underdocumented Property Types and Geographic Areas

Bridges: Two stone bridges in West Gloucester, on Walker Street and Concord Street; A. Piatt Andrew Bridge on Route 128.

West Gloucester: The neighborhood as a whole may be slightly underrepresented. Development along private roads in the Coffin's Beach/Wingaersheek Beach areas was probably excluded because of the survey criterion for visibility from a public way. The buildings at 93 and 139 Wingaersheek Road are two major examples of significant pre-World War II design in this area that are not yet surveyed.

Priorities for Survey-based Work

Support for Multiple Property Nominations

The maritime industry context was completed and several nominations accomplished through it, including the East Gloucester Historic District, Babson-Alling House, Webster-Lane House, and Fisherman's Memorial. A boundary increase for the Central Gloucester Historic District was documented and proposed for National Register listing, but was not pursued because of property owners' objections at the time (mid-1990s). This expansion of the existing district should be revisited.

Work was initiated but is incomplete for the summer resort, artist communities, and granite industry development themes. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places provides recognition and prestige; limited protection from state and federally funded, licensed, or permitted projects; and eligibility for tax credits and grants.

The following priority properties were identified in a preliminary list in the 1990s:

- Bass Rocks
- Bay View (particularly important to identifying connections with the granite industry)
- Central Gloucester District boundary extension
- Davis Neck life saving station
- Fairview Hotel
- Folly Cove (particularly important to identifying connections with artists' communities and the granite industry)
- Gothic Revival cottages in West Gloucester (Pine Cone Cabin, which has an inactive National Register form, and an unidentified other building)
- Head of the Cove (may be within the boundaries of the inactive National Register nomination for Annisquam)
- Lanesville (particularly important to identifying connections with artists' communities)
- Magnolia stores on Lexington Avenue
- Magnolia Tea House
- Summer/Hovey Streets
- Twin Lights Manor (inactive National Register nomination form)

Support for Other Potential National Register Listings

Magnolia: Historic documentation for individual properties in this neighborhood—one of the longest-occupied areas of Gloucester, with ties to the maritime industry, summer resorts, and artists communities— is meager; updating would likely be required in preparation for historic designations.

The following individual buildings in Magnolia have previously been recommended for National Register listing:

- Flume Street - Summer Chapel
- 93 Lexington Ave. - Lowell Estate
- Magnolia Ave. - Blynman School
- Shore Drive - Faulkner Estate, Marble House
- Shore Drive - Miramar
- 20 Shore Drive - Walker Estate
- 13-19 Shore Drive
- 14 Shore Drive
- Shore Road - Fish shack

Rocky Neck: The Rocky Neck community is considered an especially significant and vulnerable resource. As described in the *Heritage Landscape Inventory* for Gloucester (p. 116), “Rocky Neck is a unique but fragile enclave that epitomizes many values associated with Gloucester. It has a dramatic and powerful relationship to the sea, it reflects the long-term tradition of artists inspired by the landscape, and it also contributes to the economic vitality of the community.”

The inactive National Register district nomination for Rock Neck should be completed and moved forward. Consider surveying all properties in the neighborhood for a potential demolition

delay ordinance and/or designation as a local historic district or neighborhood conservation district.

Other Historic Designations and Local Regulations

Further discussion within the Historical Commission and between the Historical Commission and the Community Development Department is recommended to investigate the ultimate goals, likely outcomes, and best use of resources involved with adopting a demolition delay ordinance, and with pursuing local historic district or neighborhood conservation district designations for areas such as East Gloucester Square, Annisquam, and Rocky Neck.

Managing Information and Making It Easily Accessible

Expand the Historical Commission's website, to provide informative, interesting, and easily accessible material related to historic properties and preservation in Gloucester. Consider incorporating existing inventory forms (or a link to MHC's MACRIS database), copies of all National Register forms; maps of National Register-listed districts and individual properties, and of the local historic districts; copies of related planning documents (e.g., the Harbor Walk, Open Space and Recreation Plan, Essex coastal scenic byway plan, burial ground documentation and preservation plans, etc.); links to other preservation organizations (such as the Gloucester Archives Committee, Gloucester Historic District Commission, Cape Ann Museum, Magnolia and Annisquam historical societies, Mass. Historical Commission; Historic New England, National Park Service [which has excellent technical publications], and National Trust for Historic Preservation); and special features that may change from time to time.

Create a database for the Gloucester Historic Resources Inventory, to record and manage information for survey and planning efforts. It should be searchable by date of construction, property type (residential, government, education-related, religious, transportation-related, commercial, industrial), historic designation (local historic district, Massachusetts landmark, National Register), and geographic area.

Create a *cultural resources base map* using the City's Geographic Information System (GIS).

Compile and become familiar with paper and/or electronic copies of MHC inventory forms, National Register forms, and relevant planning documents. The Massachusetts Historical Commission can make available an up-to-date MACRIS Street Index of all Gloucester properties in MHC's inventory files.

Important, related reports might include the following:

- *City of Gloucester Facilities Capital Management Report* (2010).
- *City of Gloucester Harbor Plan & Designated Port Area Master Plan* (2009).
- *Essex Coastal Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan* for the Essex National Heritage Commission (2011).
- "Fuller School Site Reuse Study" (Working Draft, 2011).
- *Gloucester Harbor Characterization: Environmental History, Human Influences, and Status of Marine Resources*, by the Mass. Office of Coastal Zone Management (2004).
- *Gloucester Harbor Economic Development Plan* (2011).

- *Gloucester Open Space and Recreation Plan 2010-2017* (2011).
- “Gloucester Reconnaissance Report; Essex County Landscape Inventory; Massachusetts Heritage Landscape Inventory Program” report by the Mass. Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Essex National Heritage Commission.
- “Historic Resource and Protection Survey and Planning Project” for municipally owned properties by Goody, Clancy (1992).
- “First Parish Burial Ground Preservation Plan” by Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture (2008).

Maintain a *list of properties provided with historic building plaques* by the Gloucester Historic Preservation Committee; coordinate with the list of surveyed properties.

IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Using the recommendations in this report, the Gloucester Historical Commission should determine its own priorities for the long and short terms, and prepare a schedule for preparation/upgrading of survey forms and for preparing nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. Solicit funding from the City and from the Massachusetts Historical Commission for professional consultants.

Public awareness and support for Gloucester’s cultural resources are extremely important—without them, better preservation planning will not happen. Continue building partnerships on projects and processes with the Community Development Department, Cape Ann Museum, and Archives Committee. Provide online public access to documents, maps, and forms through the City’s website.

SCHEDULE FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Integrating with existing planning processes and organizations is first priority, and can be undertaken by Historical Commission members. The tasks recommended above in **Managing Information and Making It Easily Accessible** (creating databases and maps) should be undertaken as soon as possible. Similarly, coordination with the Community Development Department and other cultural resources and planning agencies, to offer assistance and request support, should continue in a proactive fashion. Positive and productive relationships are the necessary context for all efforts that protect and enhance Gloucester’s historic resources.

Individual survey forms could be undertaken by experienced Historical Commission members. The more complex survey work—including mid-20th-century properties and area forms—is more appropriate for experienced professional consultants. The documentation and evaluation required for National Register nominations is also most suitable for professionals, and makes the review and approval process for nominations smoother and faster. The tangible benefits of National Register listing (i.e., eligibility for state and federal tax credits for rehabilitation, and for grants from public and private organizations) make hiring consultants a good investment.

Professional fees for individual MHC building forms are approximately \$200 to \$300. Costs for preparing MHC area forms could vary from approximately \$1,500 to \$3,000, depending on the

size of the area and whether a National Register application is also being considered for the area. (More complete documentation is required for review of National Register eligibility by MHC staff.) Because these area forms will be used for consideration of potential National Register districts, they should be undertaken sooner rather than later. The costs for National Register applications typically ranges from \$2,000 to \$5,000 for individual properties and \$10,000 to \$18,000 for districts.

Completing the Multiple-Property National Register documentation for Gloucester will build upon a large body of existing work (and a significant financial investment already made by the City) and make future National Register nominations much more efficient. If funding can be procured, work on one development theme and at least one associated property per year is recommended. The cost for developing the substantial supporting documentation required for Artists' Communities, Summer Resorts, and the Granite Industry is projected to be about \$20,000 for each development theme.