

MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT 2

Adopted: February 6, 2006

Chapter 3: Natural and Cultural Resources

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Cultural Resources

Cultural resources are the places and institutions that contribute to a community's unique identity.

The Wamesit tribe that lived in the Shawsheen River Valley and the European settlers who came to the area in the early 18th century shaped Tewksbury's identity. Colonists established the Town of Tewksbury in the area formerly known as Wamesit in 1734. The Massachusetts Historical Commission has identified approximately two dozen sites of possible archaeological significance that date back to these early inhabitants.³³

Architectural Traditions

Tewksbury's economy was comprised of agriculture, grazing, lumbering and cottage industry until the early 20th century, when commercial businesses and market gardening of hothouse carnations became the dominant industries. Today, the Town Common, Town Hall and Victorian-era homes preserve the architectural character of the town's heritage. Nearly 50 historic buildings and landmarks were identified in the 1998 Open Space and Recreation Plan. However, only Tewksbury State Hospital and the Cyrus Battles House on North Street are listed on the State Register of Historic Places.³⁴ The buildings and grounds of Tewksbury State Hospital are also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.³⁵ There are more than 900 houses in Tewksbury that were built before 1939, or 9% of the town's total housing stock.³⁶ Map 4 depicts the location of town's historic resources. The Town Center, Andover Street and Shawsheen Street all include collections of historic buildings. Table 2 provides a list of locally recognized historic buildings and landmarks. In the mid-nineteenth century, a railroad corridor was constructed connecting Tewksbury to Lowell and Boston. Tewksbury's proximity to these two regional cities hastened its transition from a rural town to a suburban community after World War II.

Other Resources

Tewksbury State Hospital and Public Health Museum

Tewksbury State Hospital was built in 1854 as a state almshouse.³⁷ Over time, its mission changed and it became the Tewksbury State Hospital in 1900, the Massachusetts State Infirmary in 1909, and Tewksbury State Hospital and Infirmary in 1938. Anne Sullivan, Helen Keller's teacher, was a 19th century client before transferring to a school for the blind. Facilities were added so that Tewksbury State Hospital could treat chronic and contagious diseases, which it did throughout the 20th century.

It served the neediest patients requiring shelter and treatment, particularly during the years following the Panic of 1857 and the Great Depression. Today, the Massachusetts Public Health Museum is housed on the property in the Old Administration Building, which dates to 1894. Designed by Boston architect John A. Fox, this Queen Anne building on East Street is a three and a half story, red brick structure

³³ Open Space and Recreation Plan, (1998), 19.

³⁴ Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Register of Historic Places, (2001), 319.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

36 Bureau of the Census, Census 2000, Summary File 3, Table DP-4.

37 Unless otherwise noted, information cited about Tewksbury State Hospital was obtained from the following source: The Public Health Museum in Massachusetts [online], [cited 14 November 2002]. Available from the World Wide Web at <<http://www.publichealthmuseum.org/old-adminbuiding.html>>

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with a slate roof with bridge-end chimneys, roof dormers, and a copper-clad clock tower. It was built during the late 19th century when there was an effort to replace wood frame buildings on the campus with masonry structures. The original building was enlarged with lateral wings around 1920, and a one-story rear addition around 1930. This building and the Tewksbury Hospital campus were listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.

The Silver Lake neighborhood is also a scenic and unique environment. A 19th century summer colony for residents seeking a vacation home near Silver Lake in Wilmington, the Silver Lake neighborhood reportedly has a greenhouse that was used to cultivate carnations when the town was known as the “Carnation Capital of World.” Tewksbury residents developed greenhouses and hothouses for carnations and other commercial flowers between 1890-1915, notably on North Street, Marshall Street, Pleasant Street and Main Street, and for many years this was a prominent industry.³⁸

Finally, Tewksbury has an unusual collection of public art by internationally renowned sculptor Mico Kaufman. The “Water” sculpture of Anne Sullivan and Helen Keller occupies a highly visible location on Main St. in front of the Town Hall in the Town Center and is very important to Tewksbury residents. Other significant Kaufman sculptures in Tewksbury include “Touching Souls,” at the Methodist Church on the corner of Main and South Streets, “Muster,” at the South Fire Station, “Wamesit Indian,” on Main Street in Wamesit and the “Veterans Memorial” in front of Town Hall.

Scenic Resources

During a series of public meetings for the 1998-2003 Open Space Plan, residents identified several places as important scenic resources. The Shawsheen River was identified as being a special place with the least use and the least protection. Development along its banks prevents access for viewing or recreation. The landscape overlooking the Shawsheen was highlighted as being particularly important. Other scenic landscapes include Ames Hill, from which the Boston skyline is visible, Catamount Road and Trull Brook. None of these resources are included on the Massachusetts Scenic Resources Inventory. The Community Vision Forums for the 2003 Master Plan identified several other important scenic resources including the Krochmal Farm on South Street, Trull Brook, East Street, the Livingston Street recreation facility, mature trees along older roads and public art like Mico Kaufman’s sculptures.

38 Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce [online], [cited 31 December 2002]. Available from the World Wide Web at < <http://www.greaterlowellchamber.org/tewksbury.asp>>

Preservation Efforts

Tewksbury State Hospital is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, but Tewksbury has not adopted additional federal historic districts or local historic districts under M.G.L. c. 40C. There are voluntary private efforts to protect individual historic homes and churches. Throughout the town, there are well-preserved structures and ongoing restoration projects. Listing on the National Register does not protect buildings from inappropriate alteration or demolition. However, it is a potential way for investors to finance historic preservation through tax credits. The most protective regulatory tool in Massachusetts is a local historic district, typically administered by an appointed historic district commission. A local historic district consists of one or more properties, which means that communities may place an isolated, historically significant building under the same protective umbrella that usually applies to districts of several properties.

Another very important preservation tool is the demolition delay bylaw the town adopted in 1995. The bylaw gives residents time to review any proposed demolitions of historic structures and to review alternatives to destruction of the resource.

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Table 2. Historic Buildings and Landmarks in Tewksbury

Name	Location	Date
Abram Mace House	219 Old Main St.	1780
Ames Castle	Catamount Road	c. 1800s
Benjamin Burtt Homestead	1304 South Street	1800
Brown Homestead	1202 Main Street	1800
Captain Trull Monument	Corner of River and Trull Roads	
Centre Burial Ground	East Street	c. 1850
Chandler House	1269 Main Street	1777
Clark House	912 Shawsheen Street	1780
Colonel Russell Mears House	592 Main Street	1780
Cyrus Battles House	1002 North Street	
Davis Carter House	1574 Main Street	1780
Dunn House	687 Shawsheen Street	
Flemings Homestead	922 North Street	1800
Foster School	Main Street	1894
George Trull House	1515 Andover Street	1878
Gerald Carrigg House	574 Chandler Street	
J. Carter House	142 Carter Street	
Jefferson Soap Factory Site	Main Street	
Jonas Clark Homestead	20 Fiske Street	1820
Kendall Homestead	Kendall Road	
Livingston Homestead	518 Kendall Road	

Maillet Farmhouse	728 Whipple Road	1800
Melvin Rogers Home	272 Whipple Road	
O.R. Clark Homestead	1400 Andover Street	1800
Oblate Novitiate	Chandler Street	1883
Old Railroad Bridge Ruins	Shawsheen River south of Shawsheen Street	
Olive Roberts Farmhouse	360 North Billerica Road	
Original Parsonage	1448 Andover Street	1846
Osterman's Dairy	98 North Billerica Road	1872
P. Livingston House	166 French Street	
Patten's Greenhouse	North Street	1887
Paul O'Laughlin House	721 Shawsheen Street	
Powder Mill Explosion Site		1900
Preston Homestead	107 Pleasant Street	1775
Rev. Jacob Coggin Homestead/Sycamore Hall		
	1039 Main Street	1806
Rev. Spaulding Homestead	60 East Street	1736
Robert Rauseo House	682 Chandler Street	
Saw Mill Site	Shawsheen Street	
Shawsheen Cemetery	Corner of Main and Shawsheen Streets	c. 1714
Tewksbury Country Club	1880 Main Street	
Tewksbury State Hospital	East Street	1854
The 911 Memorial	Tewksbury Public Library, Main St.	
The Battles House	1002 North Street	1742
The Brown Tavern	993 Main Street	c. 1740
The Colonel Russell Means House	592 Main Street	1780
The Crosby Canning Factory	922 Whipple Road	

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Table 2. Historic Buildings and Landmarks in Tewksbury

Name	Location	Date
The Ella Fleming School	Andover Street	1744
The Enoch Foster House	43 Dewey Street	
The First Baptist Church	1500 Andover Street	1843
The G. French Homestead	27 Carter Street	c. 1800
The George Lee House	53 Lee Street	1805
The Hardy Homestead	496 Main Street	1740
The Jonathan Clark Homestead	Andover Street	1800
The Life Farmer Homestead	1472 Andover Street	1744
The Marshall Homestead	379 Pleasant Street	1728
The Pike House	464 Main Street	
The Second George Lee House	Corner First and Lee Streets	c. 1850
The Stone House	55 East Street	c. 1850
Town Common	Main Street	1891
Widow Bailey House	219 River Road	1800
World Wars Monument	Main Street	

Source: Tewksbury Open Space and Recreation Committee, Open Space and Recreation Plan, 1998-2003;

Beverly Bennett, Tewksbury Historical Commission, 2003, Planning Board 2006.