



## CHAPTER 8 – HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

The first formal historic preservation measures undertaken in Lenox date to 1971 when The Mount was listed on the National Register of Historic Places and also designated as a National Historic Landmark, the nation's most prestigious historic recognition. The Lenox Library was listed on the National Register in 1973 in a nomination prepared by the Berkshire County Historical Society. In 1975 Lenox Village was designated by the Town as a local historic district through the adoption of a bylaw in accordance with the Massachusetts Historic Districts Act, an early and laudable step in the preservation of Lenox's key historic resources.

These early measures were followed by additional National Register nominations in the 1980s, including Lenox Academy and the Church on the Hill (1982), Elm Court (1985 – the property is mostly in Stockbridge), and the Lenox Railroad Depot (1989). In 1987/88 a comprehensive historic resource inventory was undertaken for the Town with the assistance of the Massachusetts Historical Commission, a significant step which began the incorporation of Lenox historic resources into Town planning processes.

Chapter 3, *Planning Context*, reviews the history of planning in Lenox including discussion of the Town's planning documents and bylaws and the degree to which they recognize and protect historic resources. Chapter 6, *Planning and Land Use*, includes specific recommendations for strengthening historic preservation in Town planning documents, bylaws, and growth management processes.

Going beyond general planning, Chapter 8 reviews measures specific to historic preservation in Lenox, including the identification and recognition of historic resources, role and responsibilities of the Historical Commission, administration of the Lenox Village Historic District, and care of historic properties owned or managed by the Town.

Lenox's local historic preservation program is part of a nationwide program for historic preservation using nationwide standards and methodologies. This nationwide program is discussed in Appendix B of this preservation plan. Its philosophical basis is discussed in Chapter 4, *Preservation Approach*, and is central to historic preservation activities in Lenox.

**The most important historic preservation activity happens at the local level, where local residents, officials, and volunteers know their communities, histories, and historic resources best.**

At the national level, the nationwide historic preservation program is led by the National Park Service. At the state level, the program is led by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. In Lenox, at the local level, the program is led by the Lenox Historical Commission. The Berkshire Regional Planning Commission provides regional planning support to Lenox including with respect to historic preservation. It is important that these relationships be understood as an interconnected and coordinated local, regional, state, and national system.

The most important historic preservation activity happens at the local level, where local residents, officials, and volunteers know their communities, histories, and historic resources best. The most important historic preservation activities are undertaken by private property owners in the care and maintenance of their historic buildings and landscapes. Local government, however, plays a critical role in the identification of resources and in providing protections through the administration of routine governmental regulatory and planning processes.

Chapter 8 describes the basic components of Lenox's historic preservation program and outlines priorities for its actions for the coming years. Key goals for historic preservation in Lenox, as stated in Chapter 4, are to make historic preservation central to Lenox's identity and quality of life and to fully integrate historic preservation values and considerations into every aspect of Town programs and processes.

## **HISTORICAL COMMISSION**

The Lenox Historical Commission is responsible for leading and orchestrating the local historic preservation program for the Town. Its members are appointed by the Select Board. According to its Town-designated mission statement, the Historical Commission was established by a Town bylaw to:

- Preserve and protect the historic assets of Lenox;
- Record (through surveys) the historic assets of the Town;
- Assist any Town board when asked;
- Educate the citizens about their historical heritage through exhibits and lectures;
- Make public records available to anyone who asks, including scholars, historians, town boards, researchers, historic preservationists, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the National Register of Historic Places; and
- Assist those wanting to place their buildings on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Role and Responsibilities**

Designated under Chapter 40, Section 8D of the Massachusetts General Laws, the Historical Commission is responsible for communitywide preservation planning in Lenox. The Commission is an advisory body to the Select Board and other Town boards, commissions, and committees and must be proactive in its mission of preserving and protecting historic resources in Lenox.

The Lenox Historical Commission has the responsibility to identify historic resources significant to the Town's history and character and to encourage and promote their recognition, preservation, and appropriate treatment. The Historical Commission addresses this responsibility by overseeing and coordinating the implementation of the Town's local historic preservation program as outlined in this plan.

The Historical Commission should participate actively in Town governance and be integral to Town activities, policies, and programs. As an advisory body, the Historical Commission should make sure that other Town entities have the information and guidance they need to make informed decisions about actions that may have an impact upon historic buildings, structures, landscapes, and sites.

The Historical Commission should work closely with Select Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals. It should work closely with other Town commissions, committees, and staff that are likely to have an impact on the physical character of the community. It should make recommendations to these bodies on issues related to historic preservation and advocate for the appropriate treatment of historic resources.

Based upon its responsibilities and the goals and strategies outlined in Chapter 4, the roles and responsibilities of the Historical Commission are organized under five topical headings discussed later in the chapter:

- Inventory, Documentation, and Designation;
- Monitoring of Historic Resources;
- Information and Guidance to Boards and Commissions;
- Design Review; and
- Public Outreach.

**8.1 Organize the Lenox Historical Commission to take responsibility for the overall leadership and coordination of the Town's historic preservation program as outlined in this preservation plan.**

**8.2 Prepare a work plan for the year crafted within the capabilities of the appointed membership of the Historical Commission. Include elements related to each topic of this chapter and each chapter of this preservation plan. Assess the progress in execution of the work plan at monthly meetings and make adjustments as necessary.**

**8.3 Organize Historical Commission members to engage and maintain relationships with Town boards, commissions, and committees and their activities.**

**8.4 Prepare an annual report to the Select Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals reviewing the condition of historic resources in Lenox.**

Above all, the Historical Commission must maintain a proactive stance in taking responsibility for the leadership of historic preservation initiatives in Lenox. In undertaking this task, the Historical Commission must have members who are

**The Historical Commission should participate actively in Town governance and be integral to Town activities, policies, and programs.**

willing and able to be active participants in Town affairs. (*Actions of the Historical Commission and its members.*)

### **Responsibilities of Historical Commission Members**

Like most towns in Massachusetts, local government in Lenox is comprised largely of volunteers drawn from a relatively small group of residents who are committed to community service and betterment and willing to dedicate valuable time to community affairs. Many Town volunteers serve on multiple boards, commissions, and committees, and they often rotate to different roles over the years. Lenox boards, commissions, and committees are fortunate in having coordinated and competent staff support, including a Town Manager, Town Planner, Building Commissioner, and others.

The Town's volunteer corps and staff, however, have limited capacity and time such that the tasks being undertaken by boards, commission, and committees must be organized, prioritized, and targeted to what can reasonably and realistically be achieved.

Lenox's Historical Commission members are volunteers appointed to the commission by the Select Board. Over the years, the Historical Commission has had a strong group of members with interest in history, historic preservation, and community character. Since the early 1970s, the commission's members have organized and completed a great deal of substantive work. In many instances, work of the Historical Commission has been supported by members and activities of the Lenox Historical Society as well. Like that of other Town boards, commissions, and committees, the work of the Historical Commission must be tailored to the capabilities of its members and the amount of time they have available.

With those limitations in mind, the expectations and responsibilities of members appointed to the Historical Commission should be clearly delineated. A written summary of responsibilities should be prepared to which each member should be expected to agree and commit themselves. Members should not be expected to over extend themselves—tasks can be assigned to every level of potential active participation, and every level of participation is appreciated. But members should be expected to be actively engaged and willing to commit to work assignments to the extent they are able.

Historical Commission members should become informed about Lenox history and the Town's historic resources. Subcommittees should be formed to undertake the tasks outlined in this chapter and additional volunteer assistance should be recruited from residents as necessary and possible. Work should be undertaken in close cooperation with the Lenox Historical Society. It is anticipated that a number of the longer term survey projects outlined in the chapter could be initiated by Historical Society members with professional support.

The regular monthly meetings of the Historical Commission should be used to review the status of ongoing projects, address issues of concern, and determine courses of action when needed. Meeting agendas should be prepared that are organized by topic and project. The annual work plan recommended above

**Members should be expected to be actively engaged and willing to commit to work assignments to the extent they are able.**

should be crafted to (1) maintain ongoing relationships and monitoring of Town affairs and (2) undertake special designated projects as possible.

With the assistance of staff, the Historical Commission should maintain a spreadsheet with a running list of projects and issues under consideration by Town boards, commissions, and committees affecting historic resources. Include land development and subdivision projects under review by the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board. Note the status of each project and dates by which action of the board is required and the dates by which information and support from the Historical Commission is needed.

Organize assignments for members for the ongoing work of the Historical Commission. Assign specific members to be liaisons to other Town boards, commissions, and committees. Assign members to follow developments related to particular projects of interest or concern.

Subcommittees should be created for long term projects and special issues that require sustained work over a period of time. Consider establishing subcommittees for each of the six topical headings outlined earlier in this section and discussed further below.

Expect members to become educated about historic preservation best practices and to attend periodic training sessions when available. Expect members to participate in the monitoring of historic resource issues and conditions, to be engaged in Town affairs, and to be effective ambassadors and advocates for preservation and the appropriate treatment of Lenox's historic resources.

## INVENTORY, DOCUMENTATION, AND DESIGNATION

As discussed in Chapter 2, a townwide historic resource inventory was prepared for Lenox in 1987/88. Additional inventory work was conducted in the 1990s. Inventory work included the preparation of survey forms in accordance with Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) methodologies and standards.

Inventory forms and data were compiled by the MHC and have been made available online on the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Management System (MACRIS), through which survey forms may be downloaded. Surveyed sites are incorporated into the MassGIS data mapping system and into the MHC's own public, web-based GIS, MACRIS Maps (<http://maps.mhc-macris.net/>).

The Town's historic resource inventory is an essential historic preservation tool in support of community planning in Lenox. Survey forms are made available in Historical Commission and Land Use Department files in both digital and paper formats. Survey forms could be made available publicly through the Historical Commission's page on the Town's website as well. Lenox's historic resource inventory should continue to be upgraded and improved as an *ongoing priority*; particular issues and needs with respect to the inventory are outlined below.

**8.5 Continue to inventory and improve documentation on historic resources in Lenox. Maintain physical and digital files with survey information and photographs for each historic property in Lenox. Make available and integrate**

**The Town's historic resource inventory is an essential historic preservation tool in support of community planning in Lenox.**

**the Town's historic resource inventory into Town planning documents and Geographic Information System (GIS) by lot number.**

Physical and digital files should be maintained for each historic property in Lenox with information that can be provided to planners, the Planning Board, and the Zoning Board of Appeals for properties as needed. Additional historical, survey, and photographic information to that of the MHC survey forms should be compiled in the files as well. As an *immediate priority*, the historic resource inventory should be incorporated into the Town's GIS system by lot number rather (than street address) to facilitate its use in planning for the Town. This could easily be accomplished by adding lot numbers to the existing historic resource inventory data spreadsheet. *(Actions to be undertaken by the Historical Commission with staff support.)*

**8.6 Retain a qualified professional consultant to assist the Historical Commission with the planning and implementation of historic resource inventory projects.**

The assistance of a qualified professional consultant is necessary to continue work on completing the Town's historic resource inventory. As noted below, the current inventory is incomplete and both short term and long term projects are needed. Work can be undertaken in phases as time and funding are available.

Work on the upgrading of MHC Form B's, preparation of a Form A, and preparation of a National Register nomination for Lenox Village was undertaken by a professional consultant working in phases over a number of years. Local historians assisted with the research. A similar approach should be undertaken in planning and implementing the inventory initiatives suggested below.

Funding for ongoing inventory work should be allocated on an annual basis through a portion of the Town's Community Preservation Act funds for historic preservation. Matching funds should be sought from the Massachusetts Historical Commission survey and planning grant program. As discussed below, Lenox can increase the amount of funding available through MHC by qualifying for its Certified Local Government program.

Local historians associated with the Lenox Historical Society, who have assembled a great deal of background information on the Town's historic properties, can assist the professional consultant with research.

**8.7 As a long term project, continue to upgrade older survey forms in the Town's historic resource inventory in accordance with the standards established for survey forms for Lenox Village in 2011/12.**

The original survey forms prepared for Lenox in the 1980s and 1990s included limited information on each site—the individual MHC survey forms were incomplete. In 2011/12, Historical Commission and Historical Society members, with professional support, significantly upgraded many of the survey forms associated with buildings in and around Lenox Village. The revised forms were very well done and provided the basis for preparation of a MHC Form A - Area and a National Register Historic District nomination for the village in 2017/18.

The remainder of the Town's existing survey forms should be upgraded to the level achieved during the 2017/18 work. This could be a long term project undertaken by Historical Commission and Historical Society members and other interested volunteers specifically recruited for the project. The volunteers should fill out the new survey forms with information as available and updated photographs. All historic resources on a property should be noted and documented.

This work should be undertaken in consultation with and under the guidance of a professional historic preservation consultant, discussed further below. Periodically, the consultant should review and finalize completed forms prepared by the volunteers and submit them to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for inclusion in the statewide inventory and MACRIS. *(Actions to be undertaken by the Historical Commission with staff support.)*

**8.8 As a short term priority, undertake a reconnaissance survey of historic resources in the eastern and northern portions of Lenox to identify resources that have not previously been inventoried. Create files with photographs for each resource and link the reconnaissance survey to the Town's GIS database. Prepare MHC survey forms for each resource as a longer term project.**

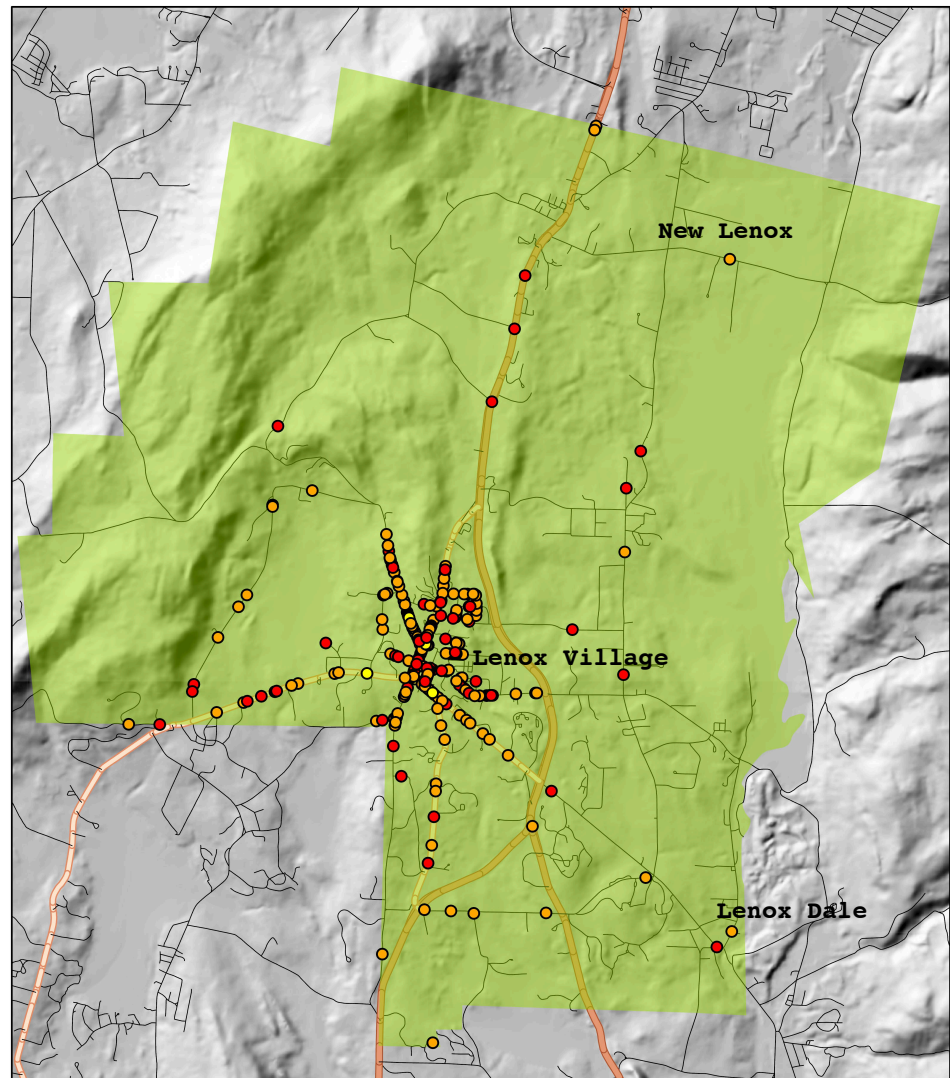
The 1987/88 inventory focused on resources in and around Lenox Village and included most of the Cottage Era resources in the southern portion of the Town. A number of resources in the eastern and northern portions of Lenox were not included, many of which relate to Lenox's early nineteenth century agricultural era. Lenox Dale was also not surveyed, with only a few key buildings included in the inventory.

These significant gaps in the Town's inventory should be filled. The identification of missed resources in the east and north of the Town should be a priority project and can be initiated in the short term by volunteers by undertaking a reconnaissance survey and by the review of aerial photographs using Google Earth.

In more developed communities, it is often advisable to have a Survey Plan prepared by a professional consultant to outline how to complete a townwide inventory. Lenox, however, is less developed and less complicated. It will be a relatively simple task for volunteers to initiate a preliminary reconnaissance survey for un-surveyed portions of the town. Professional guidance can be sought in the process. Local volunteers have demonstrated the capability for this work.

In undertaking the reconnaissance survey, historic maps should be used to begin to identify resources not included in previous surveys, concentrating on areas along East Street and in the northern portion of the Town. Working in teams, volunteers should drive the streets identifying missed resources from all periods and marking their locations and street addresses on lot maps of the Town.

A spreadsheet should be created listing each historic resource identified by lot number and street address. List the historic name of the property if there is one, and create columns on the spreadsheet noting the type and the estimated period/date of the resource. The spreadsheet should be linked to the Town's GIS as a layer in its database so sites can be mapped and coordinated with planning activities.



#### Legend

Historical Resources	Lenox Town Boundary
● Pre-1860	Routes
● 1861 - 1920	— Roads
● Post 1921	— State Route
● No date available	— US Highway

March 2018

0 0.25 0.5 1 1.5 2 Miles



***Map of inventoried historic resources by street address. Most of the resources are located in the vicinity of Lenox Village. A number of historic resources in the east and north of the Town as well as in Lenox Dale have not been inventoried.***

A photograph of each resource should be taken from the public way, and an aerial photograph of each site should be downloaded from Google Earth. Physical and digital files should be created for each property with resources. While many of the missing resources appear to date from the early and mid nineteenth century, other later resources are present as well and should be identified.



Most important for the *short term* is (1) the identification of missed resources, (2) the inclusion of information on the resources in Town planning data for use in planning initiatives, and (3) the identification and monitoring of threatened resources, discussed further below.



***Many of the historic resources that have not been inventoried are related to Lenox's early-to-mid-19<sup>th</sup> century agricultural era.***

As a longer term project, complete MHC survey forms should begin to be prepared once the full extent, number, and locations of missed resources are identified. This work should be coordinated with the updating of older survey forms discussed under Recommendation 8.6 above and could take precedence over that work.

Like the updating of older survey forms, volunteers should begin the work by researching and filling out available information on the Form B for each property. This preliminary information should then be provided to a professional consultant, who should confirm and update the preliminary reconnaissance survey and prepare the Form Bs for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Work can be completed on a rolling basis as time and funding permits. *(Action to be undertaken by the Historical Commission.)*

**8.9 As a short-to-mid-term priority project, undertake a comprehensive inventory of historic resources in Lenox Dale by a qualified professional consultant.**

As a *short-to-mid-term priority* project, an inventory of historic resources should be undertaken for Lenox Dale by a professional consultant. The inventory for Lenox Dale should be a priority project and should be begun in the short term. It is estimated that approximately 120 properties need to be surveyed, which can be completed as time and funding permits.



***Historic resources in Lenox Dale that have not been inventoried include historic workers' housing such as this multi-family residence in neighborhoods that retain a high degree of historical integrity.***

As an initial step, volunteers should research and assemble available historical information for each property to the extent possible. An application should be made to the Massachusetts Historical Commission for a survey grant through which a professional consultant could be retained to undertake the inventory of Lenox Dale and the preparation of Form B's for submission to the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

Upon completion of the inventory and in consultation with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, consideration should be given to preparation of an Area Form –A for Lenox Dale as a whole by a professional consultant as was completed for Lenox Village. As a possible alternative or in addition, the professional consultant could prepare a National Register Historic District nomination for Lenox Dale as outlined in Recommendation 8.11 below as is being completed for Lenox Village. *(Action to be undertaken by the Historical Commission.)*

Key aspects of the inventory projects discussed above are prioritized as follows:

1. Incorporate existing surveyed sites into the Town's GIS system by lot number (8.5 above);
2. Reconnaissance survey of the eastern and northern portions of the Town (8.7 above);
3. Comprehensive inventory of Lenox Dale (8.8 above);
4. Preparation of survey forms following up on the reconnaissance survey of the eastern and northern portions of the Town (8.7 above);
5. Upgrade of older survey forms (8.6 above).

The long term goal is to assemble a comprehensive inventory of historic resources throughout Lenox that can be used in planning for the Town.

### **Multiple Property Documentation Form – The Cottage Era**

Lenox's Cottage Era historic resources span about six decades from 1870 into the 1920s. Their peak period of development was the first decade of the twentieth century. Geographically, Cottage Era resources are spread primarily across southern Lenox and adjacent portions of Lee and Stockbridge. The resources include many types of buildings and landscape features comprising the Great Estates and their support structures.

Because of their significance, number, and geographical distribution, it is recommended that a National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form be prepared by a professional consultant to document the Town's Cottage Era resources. This is recommended as the next primary consultant project for historic preservation in Lenox following the inventory of Lenox Dale outlined in Recommendation 8.8 above. In initiating this work, an owner of a Cottage Era property interested in being listed on the National Register should be recruited around which the documentation form can be prepared. The benefits of being listed should be considered.

The Multiple Property Documentation Form is worth undertaking to better understand and promote the preservation of Cottage Era resources. Information from the documentation can be used to support appropriate preservation treatments when properties are proposed to be developed and are under review by the Zoning Board or Planning Board.

#### **8.10 Prepare a Multiple Property Documentation Form for Cottage Era historic resources in Lenox as a priority consultant inventory project.**

Multiple Property Documentation Forms are used to document groups of historically related significant properties. The form identifies the themes, trends, and patterns of history shared by the properties which are described as the **historic contexts** of the resources and the **associated property types** that represent them.

The historic contexts and property type information for the Cottage Era will not only establish the significance and association of the resources but will also support the preservation and interpretation of the Cottage Era landscape in Lenox. Cultural landscape methodologies should be used for landscape components of the documentation (see Chapter 7).

The Great Estates of the Cottage Era created a distinctive pattern on the landscape. Their resources included not only the mansions ("cottages") for which they are best known, but also pastoral designed landscapes with gardens; carriage drives; scenic views; gate structures, walls, and fences; pastures and fields for sheep, cattle and horses; carriage houses, stables, greenhouses, farm, and other support buildings; and on-site residences for staff.

Aside from the estates and large mansions, many smaller but still substantial homes were built during this period as well, including suburbs immediately surrounding Lenox Village but not included within the village's National Register



Historic District nomination boundaries. Clusters of workers' homes separate from but serving the Great Estates were constructed beyond the historic district as well.



***Cottage Era resources include many types of building and site features such as this agricultural outbuilding.***

The Multiple Property Documentation Form can be used to simultaneously document the wide array of thematically related historic properties and resources by type without first identifying each individual contributing resource. Individual contributing resources can be identified later; the information included in the form helps establish the significance and context of properties and resources that may be documented in the future.

The form streamlines the method of organizing information collected in surveys and research for documentation and preservation planning purposes. It facilitates the evaluation of individual properties by comparing them with resources that share similar physical characteristics, patterns of development and use, and historical associations.

It is recommended that the Multiple Property Documentation Form for Cottage Era resources in Lenox be undertaken as the Town's next primary consultant inventory project following completion of the National Register Historic District nomination for Lenox Village. The project could be funded through grants and/or Community Preservation Act monies. It could be undertaken as a joint project with the Towns of Lee and Stockbridge. *(Action to be initiated by the Historical Commission.)*



*Lenox Dale, the Town's historic industrial village, should be professionally recognized through nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.*

### **National Register Nominations**

In the short term, approval of the recently submitted National Register Historic District nomination for Lenox Village should be completed. Review by the Massachusetts Historical Commission followed by review and approval by the National Park Service is required and could take over a year to complete.

In the future, following completion of the inventory work outlined above, the preparation of National Register Historic District nominations for Lenox Dale and for Cottage Era resources should be considered, similar to the nomination recently completed for Lenox Village.

**8.11 As a short term priority, complete the approval process for the National Register Historic District nomination for Lenox Village by the Massachusetts Historical Commission and National Park Service.**

**8.12 As longer term projects, consider the preparation of National Register Historic District nominations for Lenox Dale and for Cottage Era resources in Lenox.**

The inventory of historic resources in Lenox Dale discussed above, which is a priority project, will provide the basis for a future National Register Historic District nomination for the village. The Multiple Property Documentation Form for Cottage Era resources discussed above, will provide the basis for a future National Register Historic District nomination within the southern portion of the Town and preferably extending into Lee and Stockbridge.

The two projects would elevate the recognition of Lenox Dale and of Lenox's Cottage Era history and will enhance community identity, sense of quality and quality of life, and marketing and promotion of the Town. Together, they will

**Listing on the National Register of Historic Places is purely an honorary recognition and does not place any obligation or restrictions on property owners.**



complement the National Register Historic District nomination prepared for Lenox Village.

Listing on the National Register of Historic Places is purely an honorary recognition and does not place any obligation or restrictions on property owners. Designation as a National Register Historic District does not give the federal, state, or local government any ownership or regulatory controls with respect to private property.

Listing does, however, bestow official professional recognition to the historical significance of a property. Additionally, it can help protect a property from certain types of federal and state governmentally funded or licensed actions. It also enables property owners to make use of federal and state rehabilitation tax credits for qualified rehabilitation work. National Register nominations for Lenox Dale and for Cottage Era resources would be prepared by professional consultants and could be supported through grants from the Massachusetts Historical Commission in combination with Community Preservation Act funding. *(Actions to be initiated by the Historical Commission when appropriate.)*



*The condition of historic residence along Route 7/20 is of concern and should be monitored.*

## MONITORING OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Historical Commission should undertake an ongoing, long term program of monitoring the condition of historic resources throughout Lenox and identifying threats to their integrity. Monitoring involves both being aware of activities that are being undertaken throughout the Town on an ongoing basis and undertaking a systematic process of review and documentation.

**8.13 Maintain an ongoing awareness of activities that are being undertaken throughout Lenox that might negatively impact the preservation and integrity of historic resources.**

**8.14 Undertake a systematic, long term program of monitoring the condition of historic resources throughout Lenox.**

Maintaining awareness is as simple as staying informed about local affairs; the activities of Town staff, boards and commissions; development projects; and other things that are happening. A long term program of monitoring threats to historic resources in Lenox is not complicated given the relatively small size of the Town and the visibility of most historic resources.

The inventory projects and updating of survey forms outlined in Recommendations 8.5 through 8.9 above provide a mechanism for initiating a monitoring program in Lenox. As inventory work is being undertaken and forms are being upgraded, note the condition and integrity of the historic resources being documented, flagging resources of concern. Monitoring should also be undertaken as Historical Commission members participate in reviewing and advising about land development, subdivision, and other Town-related projects. Monitoring can also be done as members drive the roads in the course of their private day to day activities.



***Damage to the roofing of a vacant historic farmstead that should be repaired. Such damage is typical of demolition by neglect and could cause the entire building to be lost.***

Over the long term, after inventory work is completed, a more structured and systematic approach to monitoring should be considered, such as a program to review and photograph surveyed resources Townwide on a ten-year cycle. The Town can be divided into sectors to be monitored each year during the cycle. Photographs and review notes should be added to the files of properties monitored. *(Actions to be undertaken by the Historical Commission.)*

### **Endangered Resources**

Properties with threatened and endangered resources should be compiled on a list, frequently monitored, and reviewed at Historical Commission meetings on an ongoing basis. Where resources are in danger of demolition by neglect, Town officials should be informed so that action can be taken before the resources are lost.

**8.15 Maintain a threatened and Endangered Properties List and monitor properties for which action may be needed to prevent demolition by neglect.**

**8.16 Develop a working relationship with the Lenox Building Commissioner and Town Manager in developing actions to respond to and prevent demolition by neglect.**

The Endangered Properties List maintained by the Historical Commission and staff should list all properties about which issues and concerns are noted and actions may be needed. The list should be prepared as a spreadsheet and include the property name (if any), street address, lot number, notes on the issues of concern, and date last monitored. Properties can be organized according to level of concern—immediate threat, mid-term threat, potential long term threat. The list should be reviewed and updated at each Historical Commission meeting and any actions that may need to be taken assigned.

The Historical Commission should work with the Building Commissioner and Town Manager to develop protocols to address issues of concern. The protocols need to be approved by the Select Board because, in extreme cases, Town resources and potential legal actions may be required. The protocol may involve:

- Initial informal contact with a property owner by the Building Commissioner that an issue has been observed and documented with a request that it be addressed.
- Formal notification letter from the Building Commissioner of a violation with an expected timeframe within which it should be addressed with follow-up.
- Formal notification letter from the Building Commissioner that the violation has not been addressed and that the Town is prepared to take further action that may involve legal measures.
- Specific follow-up action by the Town tailored to the particular issues and circumstances. Actions should be formally approved by the Select Board. They may include having Public Works staff enter the property to install needed repairs to make the building safe from further deterioration. A



lien may then be placed on the property for the cost of the work plus penalties.

These are the types of actions described in an Affirmative Maintenance Bylaw, which is discussed in Chapter 6. The Historical Commission should work with the Building Commissioner in writing and adoption of an Affirmative Maintenance Bylaw. Similar bylaws passed by the municipalities should be researched, language for a bylaw tailored to Lenox's issues and needs should be crafted, and public support should be built such that the bylaw could be introduced and passed at Town meeting. During the interim, the Select Board should take needed action on a case by case basis for public safety in preventing demolition by neglect.

**8.17 Work with the Building Commissioner on a draft Affirmative Maintenance Bylaw and stake steps toward its adoption through consultation with other boards, committees and commissions and education of the general public on its purpose and need.**

The level of work necessary to prevent further deterioration by the property owner or by the Town may be minimal and should not be required to be a full or final repair. It should, however, be of high enough quality to be long lasting, in case full repairs will not be undertaken promptly. Temporary repairs should be undertaken in a manner that has no adverse effect on historic features or materials.

In some cases, buildings have been identified that are too far deteriorated to be recovered. Such buildings should be listed in a special category on the Endangered Properties List, and measures should be taken to document the buildings in photographs and, if possible, sketches or drawings, before they are lost. Any features on-site that can be preserved should be identified. *(Actions to be undertaken by the Historical Commission in association with Town staff.)*

**Demolition Delay**

As discussed in Chapter 6, the Historical Commission and Planning Board should work toward adoption of a Demolition Delay Bylaw by Town residents to provide a tool of last resort to help prevent the loss of historic buildings.

Massachusetts law allows for the review of permit applications for the demolition of buildings within a municipality to determine whether the subject building is historically significant and should not be demolished but should be preserved. Through a Demolition Delay Bylaw, a proposed demolition can be delayed to provide time during which alternatives to demolition can be explored, developed, and implemented. A delay period of twelve months is recommended. Demolition Delay Bylaws have been enacted by many Massachusetts towns experiencing development pressure and are common within the eastern portion of the state.

Demolition Delay Bylaws are enacted under the General Bylaws of a town, rather than the Zoning Bylaw, and permit review is undertaken by the town's Historical Commission. Buildings affected may include any building within the town which is fifty years or more old and which has been determined by the Historical

Commission to be significant based on established criteria. Lenox could begin by creating a list of specific buildings subject to a Demolition Delay Bylaw.

**8.18 Work to gain approval of a Demolition Delay Bylaw by working with Town boards, commissions, and committees to demonstrate its need and benefits and by consulting the general public on its use as a tool to encourage preservation of community character.**

The Demolition Delay Bylaw is an important tool in the preservation of threatened historic resources, and it is wise to have it on hand in case it is needed to prevent loss of a valued historic resource to development. It is a last line of defense. Public support should be built for adoption of the bylaw through the work of the Select Board, Planning Board, Historical Commission, and Zoning Board of Appeals.



*This abandoned historic building along Kemble Street will be lost.*

## INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

The Historical Commission should participate actively in local governance and be integral to government activities, policies, and programs in Lenox. The Historical Commission is an advisory body to the Select Board and other boards, commissions, and committees on issues affecting historic resources and community character. The Historical Commission should make sure that other governmental entities have the information and guidance they need to make informed decisions about actions that may have an impact upon historic buildings and landscapes.

**8.19 Provide information, guidance, and advice to the Select Board and other Town boards, commissions, and committees on issues related to historic preservation and community character.**

**8.20 As a short-term priority, participate actively in the preparation of the new Master Plan for Lenox being undertaken. Collaborate with the Select Board and Planning Board on follow-up actions in implementation of the Master Plan.**

As noted earlier in this chapter, Historical Commission members should be assigned as liaisons to each Town board, commission, and committee. The Select Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals are most critical. The Conservation Commission and Environmental Committee are also important and often have areas of mutual and overlapping interest with respect to historic buildings and landscapes. The Historical Commission should provide close support to the Historic District Commission.

Historical Commission members should attend every meeting of the entities to which they are assigned as liaisons and be aware of their activities and any potential issues involving historic resources. When potential issues are identified, Historical Commission members should speak up at meetings, report back to the Historical Commission for consideration and action, provide background information on the resource or issue, provide recommendations on the issue or action, and actively advocate on behalf of historic preservation interests.

Active engagement in Town activities, processes, and programs is the Historical Commission's most important and potentially consequential responsibility.  
*(Actions to be undertaken by the Historical Commission.)*

**Active engagement in Town activities, processes, and programs is the Historical Commission's most important and potentially consequential responsibility.**

## **DESIGN REVIEW**

The Historical Commission should be an active participant in the review and approval of proposed land development and subdivision projects by the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board. The review of land development and subdivision projects should be a priority activity of the Commission. Work in close communication with the Town Planner and maintain an ongoing list of projects under review with dates by which Zoning Board or Planning Board decisions are anticipated or required.

**8.21 Undertake a review of every land development and subdivision project and provide information, guidance, and recommendations to the Zoning Board of Appeals and Planning Board in their review and approval process.**

**8.22 Employ the assistance of an on-call professional historic preservation consultant to provide advice and recommendations to the Historical Commission and other Town boards, commissions, and committees when appropriate in the review of projects involving historic resources.**

In addition to designating a liaison and attending Zoning and Planning Board review meetings, the full Historical Commission should review every land development and subdivision project to (1) identify historic resources on the property and/or adjacent properties and (2) identify any anticipated impacts on those resources. Information on resources should be provided to the Zoning Board, Planning Board, property owners, and professionals involved in the project.

Where historic resources are impacted by a project, the Historical Commission should provide input and guidance at Zoning Board and Planning Board meetings and should provide a written report with information and recommendations on the project for consideration by the boards in their deliberations.

A professional consultant should be employed on an on-call basis to assist the Historical Commission in providing advice and recommendations. The professional consultant should also be retained to provide professional input and recommendations directly to the Zoning and Planning Boards at their meetings to reinforce the guidance of the volunteer Historical Commission. It would be desirable that the professional consultant used by the Historical Commission be the same as that used by the Historic District Commission, discussed in Recommendation 8.25 below. The consultant could also provide support for the inventory work discussed in Recommendations 8.6 through 8.8 above, although preservation consultants experienced in design are not often the same as those experienced in inventory processes.

The Historical Commission should actively lobby for the preservation and appropriate treatment of historic building and landscape resources in new development projects. *(Actions to be undertaken by the Historical Commission.)*



***Lenox's commercial corridors and residential areas will continue to develop and will impact historic buildings and landscapes. Historic resources should be incorporated into proposed new development projects.***

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH**

General educational programming on Lenox history and historic places is discussed in Chapter 9, *Interpretation and Outreach*, and can be provided by Lenox's historical and cultural attractions. The Historical Commission should consult with these entities and, in association with the Lenox Historical Society and Lenox Chamber of Commerce, coordinate public programming that can be provided to residents and visitors on a seasonal basis. Public programming on Lenox history should be considered an attraction and part of the Town's schedule of events, no matter which organization is conducting it.

**8.23 Work with the Lenox Historical Society and Lenox Chamber of Commerce in coordinating and publicizing public programming on Lenox history and historic places by the Town's historical and cultural attractions.**

**8.24 Maintain a digital library of information and technical assistance for property owners on the maintenance and appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscapes.**

The Historical Commission should focus on providing information to property owners on building maintenance and the appropriate treatment of historic resources. This can be done through a link on the Historical Commission page of the Town's website and, if there is interest, through periodic public workshops. This information and potential public workshops should be provided in association with the Historic District Commission. (*Actions to be undertaken by the Historical Commission.*)

## **HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

The Historic District Commission in Lenox reviews proposed construction projects, improvements, and new signage requiring building permits within the Lenox Historic District, a local historic district encompassing the core area of Lenox Village. The historic district was established in 1975 through a Historic District Bylaw in accordance with Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40C and has been instrumental in preserving historic resources and historic character in the village over the past forty-three years.

As sometimes occurs, conflicts and differences of opinion have been manifest in the review of some projects, pitting the need for flexibility for business uses against the preservation of historic buildings and building fabric. Such differences resulted in the recent loss of a late nineteenth century building in order to accommodate the needs of a valued local business. Some local business advocates consider the local historic district a nuisance, while preservation advocates are dismayed by the lack of consideration for historic character.

**Lenox Village cannot afford to lose any more historic buildings.**

Both sides have strong arguments, and a balance must be sought. Fundamental to the need for a local historic district is the role of historic character in Lenox identity and attraction to visitors. *Lenox Village cannot afford to lose any more historic buildings.* At the same time, the viability of local businesses must be assured. Such issues are addressed by local historic districts across the state on a routine basis while maintaining historic preservation standards.

## **Preservation Principles and Treatments**

Design principles and treatments for historic preservation are well established and have been successfully applied by communities and designers across the country for a half century. Preservation treatments are briefly outlined in Chapter 4 of this preservation plan, *Preservation Approach*, along with a discussion of the most commonly referenced principles for design in historic preservation, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. Appendix B of this plan, *National and State Historic Preservation Programs*, outlines some of the background related to the development of preservation practice that led to the establishment of principles and treatments. A great deal of additional



information is available online through the National Park Service website, including rehabilitation guidelines for buildings and landscapes.

Based upon these nationally accepted standards, Lenox prepared a set of *Lenox Historic District Guidelines* in 2005 that were revised and updated in 2017. These design guidelines were prepared for use by property owners and designers in the planning and design of their projects and for the Historic District Commission in design review and approval. The guidelines outline the:

- Review process and requirements,
- Purpose of the historic district in preserving the historic character of the village,
- Overall general preservation and design principles, and
- Specific principles and approaches organized under thirty-three topics.

The thirty-three topics with specific statements on design guidelines range from general topics such as new construction, additions, and demolition to the approach to treatment of specific types of building and site features such as awnings, doors, siding, and windows.



***Historic residentially scaled and adaptively reused commercial buildings along Church Street.***

The *Lenox Historic District Guidelines* are general in much of their language but are sufficient to establish the desired approach to preservation and treatment within the historic district. The guidelines allow for flexibility and interpretation and must be applied to the individual resource and circumstances at hand, which is the purpose of the design review process. The guidelines would benefit from photographs illustrating acceptable and unacceptable examples. Rather than revise the guidelines again, in the short term, such illustrations could be obtained by using visual guidelines from other local historic districts as an additional resource to review.

**8.25 Obtain models of historic district design guidelines from other communities to provide photographic illustration of acceptable and unacceptable examples of design principles to supplement the guidance provided in the *Lenox Historic District Guidelines*.**



*The commercial building in the foreground on the left was constructed in 1973 and is one of several contemporary buildings within the historic district. The building on the opposite corner, by contrast, is the First County Courthouse, originally constructed in 1791 and later moved to this site and greatly modified—an example where change has added to the character and significance of a historic building. Note the replica Westinghouse streetlamps.*

Central to the review of proposed projects in the village are the concepts of **authenticity** and **integrity**, discussed in Chapter 4 with respect to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. An important goal in the review of any proposed project is the preservation of authentic building fabric and features. The issue is about authenticity, not historical appearance, just as an antique chair has great value because it is the real thing, while a replica of an antique chair has much less value. The preservation of authentic historic building fabric should be of primary concern in project review.

Integrity relates to the degree to which any individual building retains its authentic building fabric and features. In Lenox Village, some buildings have a very high degree of historical integrity, particularly along Main Street, while other buildings have a lower degree of integrity, particularly along Church Street. The recent National Register nomination for Lenox Village provides some information on the levels of integrity for buildings in the village.

Buildings with high integrity can generally accommodate very little change, while buildings with low integrity can often accommodate a considerable amount of change. For each proposed project under review, the level of integrity of the

historic building under review should be assessed. Authentic building fabric and features related to that integrity should be preserved to the maximum extent possible, while changes to buildings with low integrity should be allowed. Some uses cannot be accommodated in a historic building without significant adverse effects. Assessment of authenticity, integrity, and the degree of change that a historic building can accommodate must be made on a case by case basis.

Two other topics addressed by the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards* and discussed in Chapter 4 are related to past changes made to a building and new design. Past changes made to a building during different periods of the Town's historical development are often historically significant and should be retained. It is usually not desirable to restore a building to an earlier period by removing later changes unless those changes are of poor quality or truly compromise the building's historical integrity. Most historic changes contribute to the character of a building and are a record of its and the village's changing uses.



***This commercial building was constructed in 1980 on an interior site within the district. Its appealing design is compatible with the materials, scale, form, and character of surrounding historic buildings.***

New design within the village should be contemporary but sympathetic to and compatible with its surrounding context—its neighboring buildings. Historic replications, reconstructions, and facsimiles should be strongly discouraged because they compromise the authenticity of the village—they are fakes, and usually not very good ones. This principle is true for buildings as a whole and for features related to a specific building. Good contemporary design speaks of its own time while relating to its historic neighbors. This is why the *Lenox Historic District Guidelines* refer to massing, scale, proportions, and materials rather than to specific historic styles or features.

It is important that the conflicts experienced within the Historic District Commission be addressed in a systematic and mutually respectful way such that



the historic district processes can flow more smoothly and successful outcomes can be achieved. This can be addressed by providing additional support and assistance from individuals experienced with work in historic districts.

Going forward, it is recommended that a historic preservation professional be retained as a consultant to guide and assist the Historic District Commission in the review of significant projects that may impact historic buildings. Additionally, guidance and training should be provided to Historic District Commission members and property owners within the historic district on preservation principles and treatments. *(Action of the Historic District Commission and Historical Commission with staff support.)*

**8.26 Retain a professional historic preservation consultant to assist the Historic District Commission in the review of projects involving changes to historically significant buildings within the Lenox Village local historic district.**

**8.27 Provide periodic workshops on historic preservation principles and treatments to members of the Historic District Commission and property owners.**



***A preservation consultant can assist HDC members in determining the level of authenticity and integrity in a building and the degree to which it can accommodate change.***

The recent National Register nomination and historic resource inventory should be consulted to help determine the historical development and significance of buildings that are under design review. The professional consultant can help the Historic District Commission determine the building's level of integrity, identify authentic building fabric, provide information and recommendations on the degree of change the building can accommodate, and the appropriate treatments for historic building fabric. *(Actions of the Historic District Commission with support from the Historical Commission and the Town.)*

**8.28 Establish a Signage Review Subcommittee of the Historic District Commission with the Historical Commission to work with business owners and to review and approve sign permit applications within the historic district.**

The design and review of signage has been a particularly thorny issue and has taken up much of the time of the Historic District Commission. Some members are uncomfortable reviewing the signage proposed by their neighboring businesses and unsure of how to apply signage standards. It has been suggested that a special subcommittee of the Historic District Commission be established specifically to address and expedite signage review. Subcommittee members would be versed in signage issues and standards and would be able to meet quickly to advise, review, and approve sign permit applications (*Action of the Historic District Commission and Historical Commission.*)



***Appealingly scaled signage and outdoor displays of products and flowers add to the character and vitality of the streetscape.***

Finally, it is suggested that interpretation and programming on the history and historic resources within Lenox Village will help strengthen knowledge and interest in the preservation of historic buildings within the district. The importance of the historic character of Lenox Village to the economy of the Town, as discussed in Chapter 5, should be emphasized.

**Future Local Historic Districts**

It is possible that additional local historic districts could be designated in Lenox in future years, though the limited degree of threat, current discord within the Lenox Village district, and general lack of public support at present make the designation of proposed new local districts unlikely.

In the future, the existing Lenox Historic District could be expanded beyond the core commercial area that it now includes. Local historic districts should also be considered for Lenox Dale and the Cottage Era resources in the southern portion of the Town. Public support for historic preservation should continue to be built over time to make such designations possible in the future.

**8.29 Over the long term, consider expanding the existing Lenox Historic District to include the entire village, especially the areas along Main Street that might be subject to future development. Consider establishing local historic districts in Lenox Dale and for the Cottage Era resources in the south portion of the Town.**

*(Action of the Town and local property owners.)*

## COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT

The use of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) in Lenox is discussed in Chapter 3 of this plan, *Planning Context*, with respect to existing bylaws. Lenox adopted a Community Preservation Act Bylaw in the Spring of 2008 and has used CPA funding to support local historic preservation, open space and recreation, and affordable housing projects in the Town. CPA funding is particularly important to historic preservation in Lenox but can also be relevant to historic resources associated with open space conservation (historic landscapes) and affordable housing (use of historic buildings or housing in historic contexts).

**8.30 Continue to use Community Preservation Act funding to support historic preservation in Lenox. Consider broadening the range of potential projects eligible for CPA funding.**

Lenox should continue to use CPA funding to support historic preservation townwide. The Town's most direct use of CPA funding has been for brick and mortar rehabilitation projects for historic buildings owned by non-profit cultural institutions and the Town. *The use of CPA funding to support preservation and rehabilitation work on buildings owned by cultural institutions is an important way in which the Town can support those institutions and the Creative Economy as outlined in Chapter 5.*

In addition, Lenox has used CPA funding for the purchase of historic properties, most significantly the purchase of the Lenox Library. Other similar purchases of both historic buildings and historic landscapes should be considered in the future as appropriate.

Other types of historic preservation projects should be considered for funding as may be eligible under the CPA program. Specifically, consider:

- Annual appropriations from the historic preservation fund for the ongoing survey and designation of historic properties with assistance from a professional consultant as outlined earlier in this chapter. Matching funds may be obtained from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (see the discussion of Certified Local Government designation below).

- An emergency stabilization fund for preservation work on threatened historic buildings in which the Town would be reimbursed.
- A revolving loan fund for rehabilitation work on private sector buildings in which the Town could also obtain preservation restrictions on the historic building or landscape.
- Creative funding options that combine open space acquisition or affordable housing solutions with historic preservation initiatives.

Other creative possibilities should be explored within the eligibility requirements of the CPA program.

## CERTIFIED LOCAL GOVERNMENT

It is strongly recommended that Lenox become designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG) by the Massachusetts Historical Commission in order to recognize the Town's historic preservation achievements and benefit from CLG program assistance.

The Certified Local Government program is a federal program administered by the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) in partnership with the National Park Service. Each year, 10% of the federal funds provided to the MHC are required to be offered as grants to local municipalities that have qualified as Certified Local Governments (CLGs). There are currently twenty-five CLGs in Massachusetts.

By becoming a CLG, Lenox would have a higher likelihood of receiving a yearly allocation of historic preservation grant funding for survey and other work as recommended earlier in this chapter. The Town would also be eligible to receive technical assistance from the MHC that is not available to non-CLG communities. In contrast, by not being a CLG, Lenox competes with about 300 other municipalities across the Commonwealth for funding and technical assistance.

### **8.31 Become designated as a Certified Local Government by the National Park Service and participate in the MHC's statewide Certified Local Government program.**

Becoming a CLG demonstrates a community's readiness to take on preservation projects and be successful when seeking other opportunities for community revitalization and development using local historic assets. Lenox already meets the most important requirement in becoming designated as a CLG by having adopted a local historic preservation bylaw and administering a local historic district. Becoming a CLG is a priority action and a critical next step in support of the other recommendations in this chapter. *(Action of the Historical Commission with approval of the Select Board and support from Town staff.)*

## PRESERVATION ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION

It is recommended that residents interested in historic preservation consider forming a local preservation advocacy organization. Such an advocacy organization, perhaps called *Preservation Lenox* or something similar, would be a small non-profit organization that could promote historic preservation from the private sector, without the restrictions binding governmental entities such as the Historical Commission or Historic District Commission. The organization could advocate for historic preservation at public meetings and undertake private sector initiatives, building its capacity over time.

### **8.32 Create a local preservation advocacy organization to provide Lenox with a non-profit partner that can address historic preservation issues through private sector initiatives.**

A proposed *Preservation Lenox* would be capable of undertaking pro-active private sector preservation activities within the Town. It could start small with minimal or no funding and build its capacity over time. Some of its potential initiatives might be eligible for CPA funding.

Among its activities, it should advocate for historic preservation issues and undertake historic preservation projects where possible. For instance, it could purchase threatened historic preservation properties and resell them with preservation restrictions to responsible buyers.

In forming an advocacy organization, founders should consult with organizations throughout the town in developing a vision, role, and guiding principles for the initiative. They should cultivate a leadership group that can provide guidance and a basis for future financial support. Identify a Board of Directors with a strong interest in historic preservation and good relationships with the network of town interests that will be important to success.

Draft mission and vision statements, bylaws, and a set of guiding principles should be prepared. Consult with potential partnering organizations for guidance and support. Conduct public meetings to gather input on the initiative and its potential activities. Cultivate relationships with organizations and entities sympathetic with its mission, such as Housatonic Heritage, Berkshire Natural Resources Council, Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary, and Lenox Land Trust.

In the beginning, the group can function on an informal, ad hoc basis. When ready, the organization should file for incorporation as a 501c3 non-profit organization.

The advocacy organization should be a bipartisan, private sector entity working to build community consensus around historic preservation issues. It should be professional in all its actions and should carefully maintain a reputation as an honest broker upon which other organizations and the public can depend. It should maintain good working relationships with Town boards, commissions, and committees. The Falmouth Preservation Alliance in Falmouth, MA is a possible model. (*Action of interested individuals in the private sector.*)

## TOWN-MANAGED HISTORIC PROPERTIES

The Town of Lenox owns and manages a number of historic buildings and landscapes including several of the most historically significant resources in the Town. Historic buildings owned by the Town include:

- Lenox Library (1815-16, LEN.21), originally constructed as the Second Berkshire County Courthouse, individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972;
- Lenox Academy (1802-03, LEN.15), individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987;
- Lenox Town Hall (1901, LEN.25);
- Lenox Fire House (1901, LEN.26);
- Lenox Community Center (1923, LEN.35), originally constructed as the Lenox Brotherhood Club;
- Center School Building (1935, LEN.441); the building is rented to a private business operating a daycare center;
- Historic house at Edith Wharton Park (undated, LEN.E) the park is jointly owned with the Town of Lee and the building is located on the town line.

All of the Town-owned historic buildings except the house in Edith Wharton Park are located in Lenox Village and are included in the National Register Historic District nomination being prepared for the village. All of the village buildings are also within the Lenox Historic District (local historic district) except for the Center School Building.

Historic properties owned and/or maintained by the Town include:

- The Church on the Hill Cemetery (1770, LEN.B/LEN.801), individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places along with the church in 1982;
- Mountain View Cemetery (1931, not inventoried);
- New Lenox Cemetery (c1776, not inventoried);
- Lilac Park (1908, LEN.916);
- Kennedy Park (1902, not inventoried); site of the former Hotel Aspinwall which was constructed in 1902 and burned to the ground in 1932;
- Edith Wharton Park (1902, LEN.E) the park is jointly owned with the Town of Lee; according to the Massachusetts Historical Commission MACRIS data spreadsheet for Lenox, the property is included within both the National Register and National Historic Landmark listings for The Mount.

The Town also maintains property along streets within the public right of way. A number of significant historic markers and other resources are located within the right of ways, particularly within Lenox Village. They include:

- Patterson-Egleston Monument, Main and Walker Streets (1892, LEN.916);
- Directional Monument, Walker and Kemble Streets (1902, LEN.921);



## HISTORIC PRESERVATION PROGRAM

- Emma Stebbins Memorial Trough, Triangle Park, Main and Clifford Streets (1884, LEN.901)
- Fanny Kemble Marker, Bishop Estate Road (undated, LEN.902);
- Westinghouse Streetlamps (1905, LEN.903) the lamps are located along a number of streets within the village, including Kemble Street and Yokun Avenue; in some cases, only portions of the streetlamps remain;
- Lenox Furnace Monument, Lenox Dale (contemporary, not inventoried).



***Lenox Library, the 1815-16 former Second County Courthouse, is among the most significant historic buildings owned by the Town.***

### **Management, Maintenance, and Stewardship**

The Town Select Board has overall responsibility for the management of Town-owned properties, and this management is under the direction of the Town Manager. The Department of Public Works maintains most Town properties and undertakes management of major maintenance and construction projects for both buildings and landscapes. The Town's Permanent Building Committee, a volunteer committee, plans for major capital projects under the direction of the Town Manager and makes recommendations for approval to the Select Board.

The Department of Public Works has a Cemetery Division that manages and maintains the three historic cemeteries owned by the Town. Rules and regulations have been established for the sale of lots within the cemeteries (available to residents of Lenox only) and for the location and character of monuments and other memorial features. The Historical Commission often consults with the Cemetery Division on preservation maintenance issues, and a number of historic preservation grants have been obtained for conservation work

on headstones and other features. The Cemetery Division also maintains the public parks and spaces in Lenox Village and Lenox Dale.



***In addition to historic cemeteries, DPW's Cemetery Division cares for other public spaces that include a number of historically significant features.***

Several Town properties are under the supervision of separate volunteer committees and commissions, which oversee routine maintenance, contract independently for small projects, and are involved in planning for major projects.

- The Academy Building Trustees are responsible for management of Lenox Academy;
- The Community Center Board is responsible for management of the Lenox Community Center and also oversees programs and events at most Town parks;
- The John Drummond Kennedy Park Restoration Committee is responsible for management of Kennedy Park; and
- The Conservation Commission is involved in management of Edith Wharton Park.

In general, the historical significance and character of Town-owned historic properties is well appreciated, and the properties are well maintained. Occasionally issues and concerns arise which are often brought to public attention by observant residents, often members of committees and commissions.

The Town of Lenox should be a model in the stewardship of its historic buildings and landscapes. This is particularly so because of the importance of the Town's historic character to its identity and economy. It is also important due to the particular significance of the resources in its care.



**8.33 The Town of Lenox should be a model for the stewardship of its historic buildings and landscapes. Incorporate historic preservation principles, processes, and conservation treatments into capital planning projects, site management, and site maintenance.**

**8.34 Collect information on *best practices* in preservation treatments and maintenance practices for the types of resources and issues being addressed. Make the information available to planning and maintenance staff and encourage its use.**

**8.35 Retain a historic preservation consultant on an as-needed basis for advice on preservation and conservation treatments. The consultant could be the same used by the Historic District Commission and Historical Commission to assist in their project reviews. Retain professionals to prepare construction documents for projects being undertaken.**

**8.36 Provide preservation and conservation training to Town construction and maintenance staff through workshops, videos, and on-site consultations.**

Information and resources on the appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscapes have been developed by preservation professionals and organizations over decades with application in many historic preservation projects. Most important are the preservation principles outlined in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and their related guidelines discussed in Chapter 4.

Additionally, literature on conservation practices for various types of materials, features, and conditions has been assembled and made available online. The most common source of information on conservation treatments are the *Preservation Briefs* prepared by the National Park Service's Technical Preservation Services (NPS 2018, *Preservation Briefs*). *Preservation Briefs* are available on fifty different subjects ranging from general topics such as cultural landscapes, new building additions, and accessibility to specific information on materials and features such as windows, siding, and roofs.

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has prepared guidance for the management of historic cemeteries. The 2009 publication *Preservation Guidelines for Municipally Owned Historic Burial Grounds and Cemeteries* provides information on the historical background, preservation planning, recommendations for management, and case studies for cemeteries (DCR 2009). The 2011 publication *Terra Firma, Putting Historic Landscape Preservation on Solid Ground, A Guide to Identification and Protection* commemorated the tenth year of DCA's Massachusetts Historic Cemetery Preservation Initiative and reviews issues and best practices as they have evolved (DCR 2011). In addition, the National Park Service has a *Preservation Brief* on the preservation and treatment of historic grave markers. (*Actions to be endorsed by the Select Board and directed by the Town Manager for DPW staff and relevant committees and committees.*)



**18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century headstones at the Church on the Hill Cemetery.**

### **Historic District Commission and Historical Commission Oversight**

New construction projects that are undertaken on Town-owned properties within the Lenox Historic District should be reviewed by the Historic District Commission in accordance with its normal practices. Additionally, the Historic District Commission should monitor the condition, maintenance, and treatment of Town-owned buildings and landscapes within the village on an ongoing basis.

**8.37 As part of the ongoing monitoring of historic resources townwide, monitor the condition and treatment of Town-owned historic buildings and landscapes.**

**8.38 Engage with the Department of Public Works and Town commissions and committees involved in the management of Town-owned historic buildings and landscapes for information, consultation, and advice on the stewardship and treatment of resources.**

The Historical Commission should monitor Town-owned properties as well. In its outreach to Town entities, commissions, and committees, discussed earlier in this chapter, the Historical Commission should be alert for issues and the planning of projects related historic buildings and landscapes and should proactively provide information and input where it can.

The digital library of information on the maintenance and appropriate treatment of historic buildings and landscapes discussed in Recommendation 8.20 above should include information relevant to managers and staff of Town-owned historic properties. *(Action of the Historical Commission)*