A Vision for Durham

> "We shape our buildings; thereafter, our buildings shape us." - Winston Churchill

In Durham, we recognize that our historic resources contribute strongly to our quality of life and sense of place. Durham's small New England town character and its traditional historic architecture were identified in the May 2011 Master Plan Survey as among the most important characteristics to the town's residents. Through surveys conducted online and during a public forum in April and May 2013, the community envisioned a town where older buildings are preserved and repurposed, and preservation of significant historic resources exemplifies local pride. The Historic District Commission/ Heritage Commission are the primary protectors of this vision, ensuring that historic and archaeological resources are given due consideration in planning decisions. The Town of Durham's commitment to preservation is marked by these three milestones:

The vision promoted by the town's residents includes ways for neighborhoods, town departments, and community members to work together to ensure that Durham's historic resources continue to connect people with the nearly 400 years of heritage surrounding them. In this vision, awareness of the historic district and its importance are widespread.

"The Falls," a mural by revered local artist John Hatch depicting Durham's historic and bustling historic shipbuilding industry during the 18th and 19th centuries, painted 1954.

Executive Summary

This master plan represents the first time that Durham's historic resources are being honored and recognized with their own chapter. This chapter begins with a vision for the future of the town's historic resources, which was compiled from public input provided during the planning process. In order to understand the context of Durham's many and varied historic resources, a short historical narrative describing the development of the town is included in this chapter, followed by descriptions of physical resources categories that group resources according to neighborhood or property type. Special attention is afforded to the local historic district, which was created nearly 40 years ago. The last three sections of the chapter focus on ways in which these resources can be protected and enjoyed into the future. An examination of the major issues and challenges that threaten the preservation of these resources is followed by a summary of the many tools available to help face these challenges. The chapter concludes with the presentation of five major goals, with several specific activities under each goal, which synthesize the issues and tools into actions that will help achieve the community's vision. The public's input was key to the compilation of this chapter, and included a public forum, online surveys, and a series of interviews with Durham residents and public figures.

The **Historic District/ Heritage Commission** is made up of seven members who serve in both capacities as the HDC and the Heritage Commission:

- The HDC serves as the steward for the preservation of the Historic District
- The Heritage Commission works with the Planning Board, other land use boards, and other community entities to maintain the small town character of Durham, ensuring that areas beyond the Historic District respect the heritage of the surrounding area.

Several appendices are included with this chapter, beginning with Appendix I, the local historic district's "Guide for Property and Business Owners." Other appendices include ordinances specific to Durham's historic resources, public survey results, and an extensive list of additional references regarding Durham history, best practices, information for homeowners of older properties, and architecture.

Durham's Heritage and Legacies

The settlement of Durham has always been closely tied to its water resources. Native Americans lived in this area as early as 11,000 years ago, using the Oyster River (called "Shankhassick" by the Native Americans) and the Lamprey River for fishing and catching eels, as well as transporting their boats down to Little Bay. Well-drained soils and bedrock outcrops accommodated shelter, and fresh water streams, wetlands, and woodland attracted a variety of animals suitable for hunting. When European traders started exploring and mapping the New England coastline, they too saw the potential of the area's natural resources of fish and timber, which could be transported by the inland waterways to ships bound for Europe and the Caribbean.

Valentine Hill and General John Sullivan were both pivotal figures in Durham's history. For more information about these two men, see:

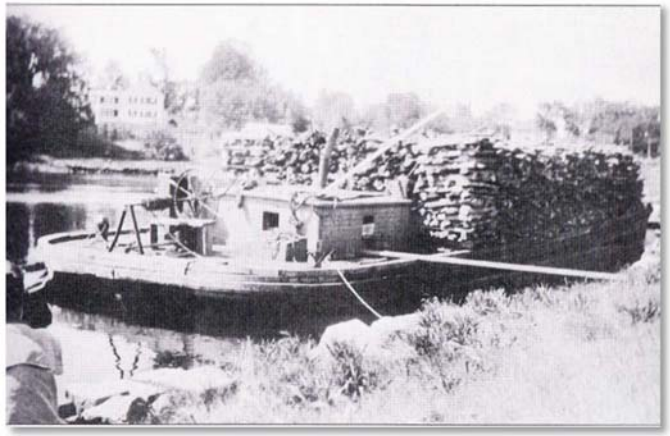
- Everett S. Stackpole, History of the Town of Durham, New Hampshire
- Durham Historic Association, *A Walking Tour*
- William E. Ross and Thomas M. House, Durham: A Century in Photographs (Images of America series)

Details about these publications are provided in the Bibliography section of the chapter.

Durham was originally known as the Oyster River Plantation, and was at that time part of the town of Dover. During its first 100 years the settlement was also referred to as Oyster River Parish and Oyster River Falls. The lowest falls of the Oyster River, at the head of the tide, became the center of the village after 1651 when the first sawmill was built there. Valentine Hill and Thomas Beard were granted the mill rights at the lowest falls by the town of Dover, along with a 500-acre land grant. The falls' location on the tidal river made the village an important vantage point for early shipping and trade. The 500-acre land grant, to the west of the falls, included much of the Durham Historic District, and it is thought that an early Hill homestead is preserved within the "Three Chimney's Inn" on Newmarket Road. In 1655, Hill received authorization to dig one of the earliest canals in New England to

bring water from the Lamprey River to the Mill Pond via the Long Marsh. In 1665, he built the first meeting house for Oyster River Plantation, on the south shore of the tidal Oyster River midway between the falls and Little Bay.

During the next century the first meeting house would be replaced by two others, in 1716 and 1792, situated on a hill near the falls, where the monument to General John Sullivan now stands. A town pound was built in 1709 nearby; the present structure at the intersection of Newmarket Road and Durham Point Road dates from 1808. The public landing was established east of the falls on the north shore of the Oyster River in 1701 near the ancient fording place. Durham separated from Dover and was incorporated as a town in 1732, and originally included parts of present-day Madbury, Lee, and Newmarket.



GUNDALOW – A shallow, wide boat for carrying cargo that was specific to this region. They were used into the early 20th century. *Image courtesy of Durham Historical Association*

In the late 17th century, tensions between the British settlers and Native Americans escalated, exacerbated by conflict between England and France. Several attacks by Native Americans against local settlers culminated July 18, 1694 with the Oyster River Massacre. Much of the settlement was destroyed; houses, barns and crops were burnt and cattle killed, people were killed or carried captive to French Canada and held for ransom.

Nearly a century later, Durham resident General John Sullivan gained fame for his support of the Revolutionary cause. He served as a delegate to the First Continental Congress in 1774 and was instrumental in the capture of powder and arms from Fort William and Mary at New Castle (now Fort Constitution), the first military action of the Revolutionary War. Later, he would serve under George Washington in many of the Revolutionary War's best-known campaigns. General Sullivan also served as the president, or governor, of New Hampshire and as a U.S. Federal Judge.

After the Revolutionary War, Durham continued to prosper, and gundalows carried goods to and from Portsmouth Harbor. Durham's main industry was shipbuilding for nearly 50 years near the landing below the falls. Merchants and shipbuilders made Durham their home, taking advantage of the area's abundant lumber and its proximity to Portsmouth by water. The contributions of 19th century shipbuilder Joseph Coe extended beyond his business enterprise. Coe built several modest houses on Broth Hill for his workers, as well as a distinctive brick Federal style commercial building which was purchased by Durham in 1840 to be used as the Town Hall. The building was later used for the District Courthouse. The 1794 Piscataqua Bridge was built, connecting Fox Point in Newington with Cedar Point in Durham. The First New Hampshire Turnpike (NH Route 4) was constructed shortly after, linking Portsmouth and Concord, making Durham a busy crossroads for east-west traffic as well as the north-south stage lines between Dover, Exeter and Boston.

Durham was an ideal location for shipbuilding, because the sawmills in Durham were so accessible – the river was shorter and deep enough for ships to reach the falls at most tides (The river silted in after the reservoir was built upstream in 1934).

The arrival of the railroad in 1841 resulted in less reliance on road and water transport, and after the Piscataqua Bridge was destroyed by ice flows in 1855, a decline in business activity in Durham. As the railroad grew more prominent, the town center shifted from the Mill Pond falls westward toward the railroad depot on Main Street. At the same time, Durham's major industries began to evolve, as the Oyster River flowage was not large enough to support mills of the type built at Dover and Newmarket before the Civil War. The larger Lamprey River provided water power for the T. H. Wiswall Paper Company, one of only two manufacturers of wallpaper in NH, as well as machine shops and sawmill. The Wiswall Paper Company operated from 1853 to 1883 (when it burned down). At

nearby Packers Falls, the Newmarket Manufacturing Company operated machine shops. During this time Durham continued its agricultural traditions, shipping hay, milk and apples to Boston by rail.
After the Civil War, brickmaking activity escalated along the local rivers, as loads of brick were shipped out to build cities up and down the coast. Local farmers struggled in the competitive environment created by the vast farms to the west of the Appalachians. The Grange movement was born for the benefit and support of local farmers during this time. Durham's scenic rural atmosphere attracted summer boarders who arrived by train from the city and enjoyed the bay, rivers, fields and woods for fishing, hunting, and boating.

In 1890, Durham resident Benjamin Thompson bequeathed his farm and other assets to the state "to promote the cause of agriculture", on condition that the College be relocated from Hanover to Durham. As a result, the College moved from Dartmouth to Durham in 1893, and was renamed as the University of New Hampshire (UNH in 1923. The college grew slowly; the total number of enrolled students reached 100 seven years later, and 199 students graduated in 1926. Total student enrollment reached 2,000 after World War II. After the War, an influx of students and faculty spurred new residential developments and the expansion of the campus to occupy more farmland and open space throughout Durham.

Known for its active community involvement, Durham famously defeated an oil refinery proposed by Aristotle Onassis in 1974, and voted to transition to a Council Town administration in 1987. Today, the continued community engagement exercised by Durham's residents recalls the town's colonial roots, when an enterprising group of families created the settlement of Oyster River Plantation.

The Town of Durham's commitment to preservation is marked by these milestones:

- 1975 – Historic District Commission and Historic District established through the zoning ordinance.
- 1995 – The Town of Durham achieves Certified Local Government status
- 2000 – The Town of Durham approves a Master Plan, including a chapter about Environmental and Cultural Resources
- 2006 – Heritage Commission established by Town Council

A Time-
when Oyster River town became Durham,
a village was built on a hill,
above a falls and mills by a pond and road.
When strangers became settlers,
And settlers inhabitants,
And graveyards paid ancestral due.

A Community-
of young and old,
and in between,
in house-dappled woods,
and clapboard kingdoms, bought and sold,
not too old, "Yes, Ma'am," but certainly historic,"
off the Dover Road.

-excerpts from "Durham, New Hampshire: A 250th Anniversary Poetic Commemoration" by Douglas Lanphier Wheeler, 1982

Durham's Historic District

The Durham Historic District is both a local historic district, under the oversight of the Historic District Commission, and a National Register-listed district. The boundaries of the two districts are nearly identical. While the district's National Register status is non-regulatory, its status as a local historic district means that changes to the district are regulated by the Historic District Commission, as laid out in Durham Zoning Ordinance – Article XVII. The district contains dozens of properties of architectural and historic significance to the town, dating from the earliest settlement of Oyster River Falls and through the early 20th century. The district's roots in the early days of settlement have resulted in pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and a village feel, and the early designation of the local historic district in 1975 is a testament to the commitment by Durham residents to their historic resources.

Residential, municipal, institutional, and industrial resources are all contained within the district, which is centered on the falls and runs approximately west and south from the intersection of Main Street and Newmarket Road. A portion of Valentine Hill's house is reported to have been incorporated into the Ffrost Sawyer Tavern (now the Three Chimneys Inn) at 17 Newmarket Road. The General John Sullivan House at 23 Newmarket Road (c. 1740) is a designated National Historic Landmark, representing the colonial Georgian style along with the Samuel Yeaton House on Old Landing Road (1789), "The Ledges" at Newmarket Road and Durham Point Road (c. 1750), and several other pre-Revolutionary War houses, such as the Lt. Col. Winborn Adams House at 22 Newmarket Road (c. 1750), located primarily on or near Newmarket Road.

Oyster River Bridge looking south, 1910. Image courtesy of Durham Historical Association.

The post-Revolutionary War Federal style is more widespread within the district, including residences such as the Joshua Ballard House at 28 Main Street (c. 1790) and the house at 6 Main Street that was once used as a library (c. 1800), along with the former Courthouse at the turn of Route 108 with its distinctive curved façade (c. 1825). This latter structure was built as a mercantile store and warehouse by shipbuilder Joseph Coe. The Town purchased the building from him in 1840 for a Town Hall. It is now home to the Durham Historic Association and Durham Recreation Department. Also from this time period is the stone Town Pound, which replaced an earlier structure in 1808. At the south end of the district, a group of four small houses on Broth Hill were also constructed by Joseph Coe.

Main Street and Newmarket Road, c. 1896. Image courtesy of Durham Historical Association.

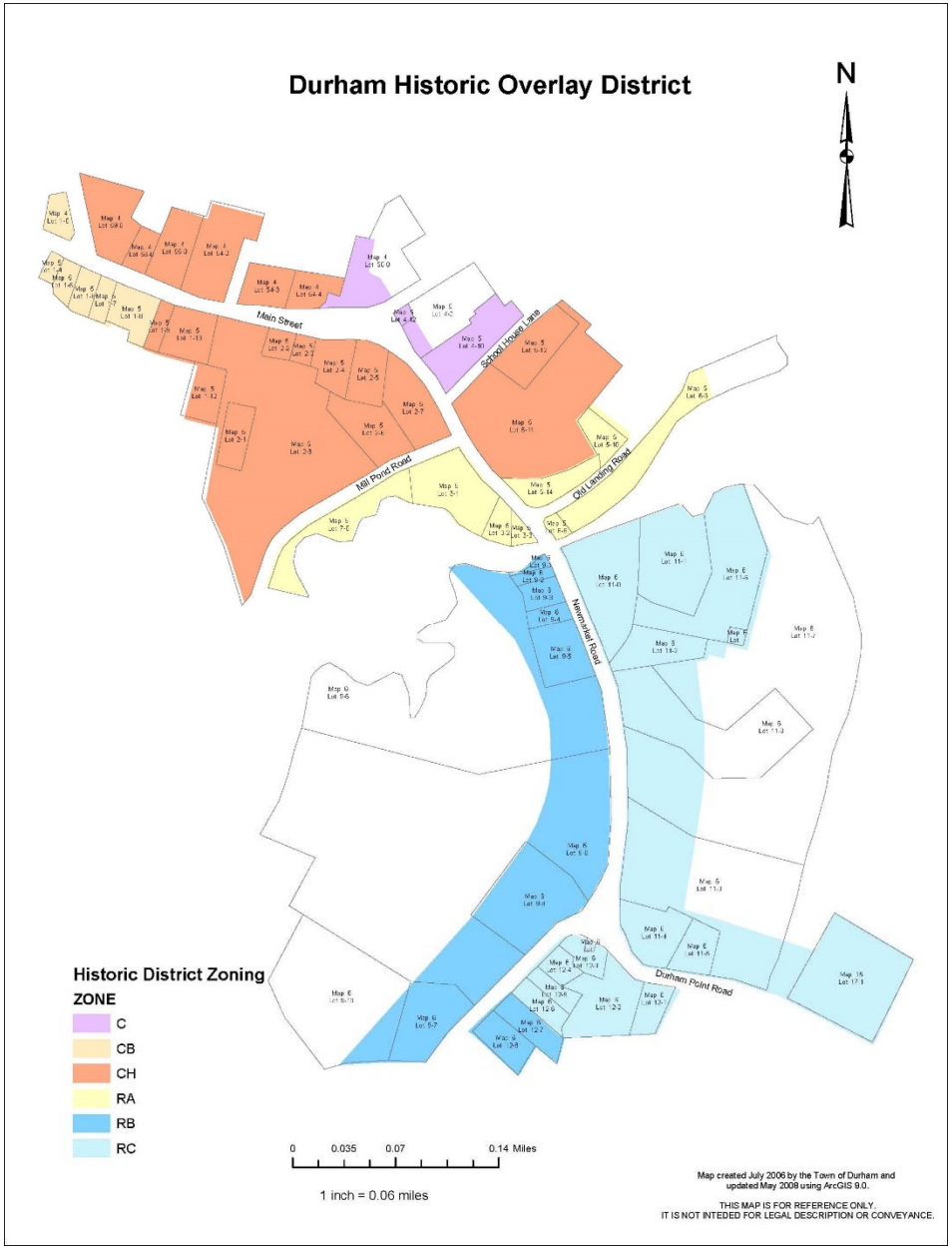
Mid-19th century revival architectural styles are not seen in large numbers in Durham, yet the district does have some notable examples, including the Greek Revival Durham Congregational Church on Main Street (1848-1849) and the less stylized, vernacular Moriarty House at 8 Durham Point Road (c. 1850). The Scammell Grange Hall was first built during this period as a one-story schoolhouse (c. 1860). Although the brackets along the roofline reflect the original Italianate style, the school was extensively renovated to serve as the grange in 1893. Representing the early 20th century are a few vernacular houses on Main Street near the Newmarket Road intersection, and several updates to older houses throughout the district, most notably at "Red Tower," the c. 1790 Blydenburgh house that received a Colonial Revival treatment in c. 1895 by well-known Durham philanthropist Hamilton Smith. In 1913, Hamilton Smith's stepdaughter Edith Angela Congreve Onderdonk financed the construction of an Ambursen dam (Mill Pond Dam on the Oyster River) in memory of Hamilton Smith.

Since the district's original documentation in 1980, several 20th century buildings that were considered not to contribute to its importance at the time have since become part of the evolving story of the village district, and may now prove to be worthy additions to the list of contributing buildings. These include the house at 26 Newmarket Road (1917), St. George's Episcopal Church on Main Street (1954), and the Post Office at the corner of Main Street and Madbury Road (1958).

The tables below list buildings in the Durham National Register District (established 1980*) that are considered to be contributing structures, i.e. those that retain significant architectural integrity and met the 50-year age threshold as of 1980. Here are examples of some of the most iconic structures in the district, for a map of their locations see Appendix II.

Property	Location	Date Built
Joshua Ballard House	28 Main Street	c. 1790
Ebenezer Smith House	20 Main Street	c. 1785
Valentine Smith House	18 Main Street	c. 1740
St. George's Episcopal Church Rectory	15 Park Court	c. 1895
Federal style house	10 Main Street	c. 1800-1810
Richardson House	8 Main Street	c. 1780-1800
Federal style house	6 Main Street	c. 1800
Federal style house (extensive early 20th c. renovations)	39-41 Main Street	c. 1800-1810
Scammell Grange	37 Main Street	c. 1860
Federal style house (extensive early 20th c. renovations)	35 Main Street	c. 1800-1810
Vernacular house	29 Main Street	1897
Bungalow house	27 Main Street	1907
Federal style house	25 Main Street	c. 1800
Federal style house	21-23 Main Street	c. 1800
"Red Tower"	19 Main Street	c. 1895
"Red Tower" stables (now residence)	Smith Park Lane	c. 1895
Community Church of Durham	17 Main Street	c. 1848-1849
Vernacular house	Smith Park Lane	c. 1750
Vernacular house	15 Main Street	Early 20th c.
Vernacular house (extensive c. 1910 renovations)	9-11 Main Street	c. 1860
Federal style house (extensive 19th and 20th c. renovations)	5-7 Main Street	c. 1800
Federal/Greek Revival style house (extensive 20th c. renovations)	1-3 Main Street	c. 1830
Lydia Simpson House ("The Parsonage")	10 Newmarket Road	c. 1830-1840

Property	Location	Date Built
Runlett House	14 Newmarket Road	c. 1750-1770
Durham Town Hall (Courthouse)	Main Street and Dover Road	c. 1825
Durham Town Offices	13-15 Newmarket Road	c. 1860
School House Lane Cemetery	School House Lane	c. 1796
ffrost Sawyer Tavern/ Valentine Hill House (now the Three Chimneys Inn)	17 Newmarket Road	c. 1649
Samuel Yeaton House	17 Old Landing Road	1789
Winborn Adams House	20 Newmarket Road	c. 1750
James Paul House	24 Newmarket Road	c. 1830-1840
"Red School House" (now residence)	Newmarket Road	c. 1790
General John Sullivan House	23 Newmarket Road	c. 1740
John Mighell House	25 Newmarket Road	c. 1690
John Sullivan Monument	Newmarket Road	1894
"The Ledges"	Newmarket Road	c. 1750
Heald House	3 Durham Point Road	c. 1760-1770
Palmer House	7 Durham Point Road	c. 1760-1770
Moriarty House	8 Durham Point Road	c. 1830-1840
Mark Willey House	4 Durham Point Road	c. 1770
Town Pound	Newmarket Road and Durham Point Road	1808
Polk House	47 Newmarket Road	c. 1800
Hersey Trust House #1	49 Newmarket Road	c. 1800
Hersey Trust House #2	51 Newmarket Road	c. 1800
Fitzgerald House, 53 Newmarket Road	53 Newmarket Road	c. 1800
Lenharth House, 55 Newmarket Road	55 Newmarket Road	c. 1760
Prince House, 17 Durham Point Road	17 Durham Point Road	c. 1790
Oyster River Dam/ Mill Pond Dam - subsequently considered contributing	Newmarket Road	1913



Durham Local Historic District Overlay Map

The Passage of the Delaware, 1819. Thomas Sully, American (born in England), 1783-1872. This famous depiction from the Revolutionary War of George Washington leading his troops across the Delaware River for a surprise attack on the British troops in Trenton, includes one of Durham's own. That is General John Sullivan, with the plume in his hat, seated on the horse on the right. Also shown are General Henry Knox, waving his sword, and General Nathaniel Greene, mounting his horse.

Oil on canvas. 372.11 x 525.78 cm (146-1/2x207 in.). Image courtesy of Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Gift of the Owners of the old Boston Museum, 03.1079. Photograph © to be published 2015.

Durham's Historic Resources

Durham's long history of pre-contact and European settlement have resulted in the town's wide variety of historic resources both within and without the district, ranging across building types and time periods. Durham is fortunate in that many buildings, sites, and features are extant, having been recognized and preserved as an important connection to the past. Community input identified several categories of resources that are significant to the town's heritage, reflecting the full range of Durham's history. Each of these categories represents a building type, historical theme, or chronological period that has been important in the town's development. Each category presents a historic preservation opportunity, including resources that have long been recognized for their significance, as well as those that are just starting to gain the recognition they deserve. A full list of properties that currently have documentation on file at the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources appears in Appendix I.

ELIGIBLE FOR THE NATIONAL REGISTER – This means a property or district has the qualities and physical integrity that allow for potential listing in the National Register, and it has been determined eligible by the NH Division of Historical Resources, usually for planning purposes. However, the property is not formally listed in the National Register and often, no nomination form has been prepared.

Neighborhoods and Enclaves

Durham contains several distinctive neighborhoods and small collections of buildings. Durham is especially rich in architecturally significant concentrations of buildings associated with 20th century growth and development, which is fast becoming an important historic resource category as these neighborhoods evolve and change.

Faculty Neighborhood (unsurveyed)

This fascinating neighborhood is located on the west side of the Oyster River and the Mill Pond, forming a loose grid of streets south of the intersection of Faculty Road and Mill Road. UNH planned this neighborhood between the 1940s and the 1960s when student enrollment was on the rise following World War II. Specifically developed for its growing number of faculty, the neighborhood has a suburban feel, with back and side yards, consistent house setbacks along each street, and several now-mature trees that provide a more tranquil setting than the adjacent bustling campus. UNH originally sold these lots to its faculty at moderate prices, with covenants specifying that the houses could only be sold to other university-affiliated residents. These covenants were removed during the 1970s. Contained within this neighborhood are several impressive houses associated with artists who were recruited for the UNH faculty by local architect and artist David Campbell. He also designed several of their homes in this neighborhood, which have mid-century modern features such as compound, asymmetrical layouts; low, overhanging roofs with varying rooflines; long horizontal bands of windows; deeply recessed entries; shade structures; and landscaping featuring open terraces and decks. Of particular interest is one of the earliest Campbell designs for well-known ceramicists Edwin and Mary Schiere. The 1941 house features a butterfly roof, a custom-designed studio, and a patio inlaid with some of the couple's famous mid-century modern tiles. Other Faculty Neighborhood houses feature similar mid-century modern details, which are likely also Campbell designs. The balance of the neighborhood is filled out with more traditional mid- and late-20th century styles, with split-level and ranch layouts, along with a pre-UNH farmhouse, a 1980s bermed house, and the recently National Register-listed Smith Chapel on the eastern edge. This combination of houses, developed specifically for university affiliates, is significant in the joint histories of both Durham and UNH.

Faculty Neighborhood, c. 1950. Garden Lane is in the foreground. Image courtesy of Durham Historical Association.

Madbury Road/ Bagdad Road/ Edgewood Road (unsurveyed)
This area is roughly triangular in configuration, and is similar in feel to the yard-friendly suburban Faculty Neighborhood with its tree-lined streets. Although it doesn't appear that UNH had a direct hand in the establishment of this neighborhood, it is likely that the 1920s expansion of the campus as it became the University of New Hampshire led to the neighborhood's development. The area was developed c. 1920 – 1940 on land once occupied by the large Ebenezer Thompson farm. The streetscapes in the Madbury Road area are slightly more densely developed, with a variety of two-story early 20th century single-family homes. Dutch Colonial, Tudor Revival, and Craftsman architectural elements are abundant, including several gambrel roofs, wide over-hanging eaves, and full-width porches. This well-preserved early 20th century neighborhood is a recognizable asset to the town.

Mathes Terrace (unsurveyed)
At the entrance to the Madbury Road area is a particularly distinctive enclave of five American Foursquare houses, in a small cul-de-sac. The American Foursquare is a house type that lent itself to a number of early 20th century styles, and is notable for its square floor plan and hipped roof with a similarly-hipped roof center dormer. This house form was common into the mid-20th century. Although changes have been made over the years, including modern cladding materials and additions to accommodate commercial uses, this small concentration of houses retain its special character.

Wiswall Falls (National Register expansion under review)
Although the industrial history of this area is well-documented, the housing associated with the manufacturing company has only recently become the subject of further study, and a recent expansion of the National Register district includes the extant residential village. Directly across the road from the site of the mill are houses, walls, and foundations related to those who worked at the complex. Most prominent is Thomas Wiswall's own 2 ½-story Italianate house (c. 1860), one of the very few examples of this style in Durham. The mill owner's house is accompanied by Greek Revival style houses for employees of the mill, and cellar holes and stone foundations indicate the former locations of houses that have been removed. The associated 1912 dam and the abutments of a former stone bridge are also considered important to the industrial history of this location.

Agricultural Properties
While the north portion of Durham is characterized by the UNH campus and small-town commercial and residential areas, south of the Oyster River the setting becomes much more rural. One of the character-defining elements of this area is the farmstead, several of which are still discernable even when the house and outbuildings are no longer associated with their surrounding fields. The stone walls that once divided fields and pastures can still be found throughout the entire town, with many stretches of well-maintained walls.

The most remarkable concentration of historic farmsteads occur in the area surrounding Bennett Road, Longmarsh Road, and Newmarket Road, which was identified as a National Register-eligible rural district in 2010. This area has been farmed since the 17th century, shortly after the settlement of the Oyster River Plantation along the river. The area's current farm boundaries are similar to the farm boundaries as they existed at that time.

The farms here retain historic houses, barns, and outbuildings, as well as fields that are often visible from the road, open woodland, and extensive series of stone walls. The relationships between the farm buildings and their settings are still intact, along with individual features such as cellar holes, family burial plots, and farm roads. This area also tells an immigration story, as nearly all of the farms were owned and operated by communities of French-Canadian, Polish, and Irish families during the early 20th century. The area's proximity to Newmarket provided opportunities for immigrant family members to farm and earn money by employment in that town's mills, while maintaining farms in Durham.

Other farmsteads, complete with carefully maintained and mowed fields, are located along and near Packers Falls Road. Entering Durham from Portsmouth and Newington, the popular Wagon Hill Farm greets locals and visitors coming from Dover. Near the south boundary of the town, the farmstead at 313 Newmarket Road has been determined eligible for the National Register and features a high-posted cape farmhouse (possibly mid-19th century), barns, and workshop.

Archaeological Sites

Oyster River Falls, one of the earliest settlements in New Hampshire, presents the potential for significant finds related to the post-contact European settlement of the area as well as the highly-charged transitional period when Native Americans and European settlers tried unsuccessfully to maintain their ways of life concurrently. There are 21 recorded archaeological sites in Durham that have been filed at the NH Division of Historical Resources. No comprehensive survey had been conducted in the town (spring 2014), covering the town's pre-contact and post-settlement history.

T.H. Wiswall Paper Company mill, c. 1880. *Images courtesy of Durham Historical Association.*

Among the best-known archaeological sites is Wiswall Falls, where the former T.H. Wiswall Paper Company mill site is marked by a series of interpretive panels adjacent to the 1912 concrete dam. This mill site is also listed in the National Register as the largest and most intact remnant of Durham's industrial past. Other archaeological sites represent a variety of pre-contact and post-contact sites, although the latter tend to be more heavily documented due to recent systematic excavations. The SCRAP field school (State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program) conducted excavations for three summers at the site of the Field-Bickford Tavern on Durham Point, a very early garrisoned house that survived the 1694 Oyster River Massacre and may be the oldest colonial site excavated in the state. The field school was associated with the Oyster River Environs Archaeology Project, which also studies this formative period when people first settled in New Hampshire, as well as the lives of the Native Americans who lived along the river they called "Shankhassick." "The Lost Campus: The Archaeology of UNH" course taught through the Anthropology Department at UNH provided an opportunity for students and experienced faculty to work together on hands-on investigations of the sites and events that shaped the campus and the wider community. Participants have excavated the original train depot, which was located in the middle of the original campus before the railroad was re-aligned in 1912; the site of the residence of Charles Holmes Pettee, a former professor and dean; and the site of army barracks set up on the campus during World War I.

At this time, pre-contact sites in Durham are less well-documented, but the town's geological and geographical advantages suggest a good potential for undiscovered sites.

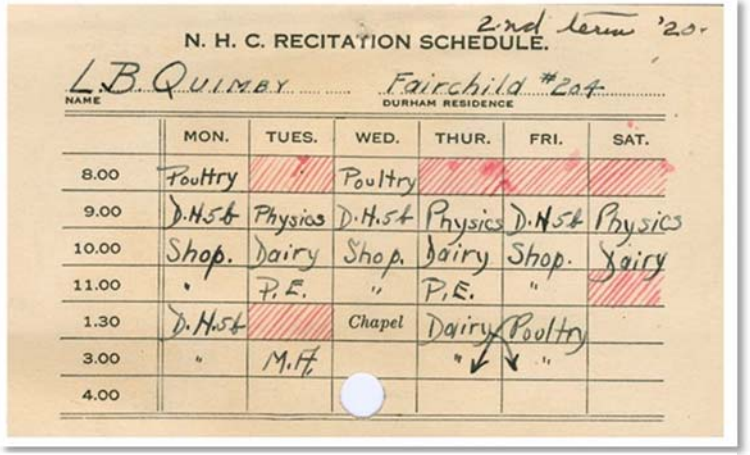
University of New Hampshire Campus

The first buildings on the campus were built in 1892, in anticipation of the opening of the school in 1893. This historic core consists of Thompson Hall, Conant Hall, Nesmith Hall, Hewitt Hall, and a non-extant College Barn that burned down shortly after construction. Thompson Hall is the hallmark building of the campus, a Romanesque Revival style building sited on a small hill, featuring a central bell tower that can be seen from much of the main campus. It is individually listed in the National Register. Although buildings were added steadily over the years, a major building campaign in the 1920s and 1930s, when the college became the University of New Hampshire, established the Georgian Revival style that distinguishes much of the campus. The campus's appearance during this period was largely due to the highly influential Eric Huddleston, who was brought to Durham to lead the architecture program, and who, as Supervising Architect designed or renovated nearly two dozen campus buildings.

The 1892 graduates of the NH College of Agriculture, still located in Hanover, were so eager to have a connection to the new campus in Durham that they chose to have their graduation in the College Barn, which was still under construction.

A traditionalist by nature, Huddleston sought a unified design for the campus, through common materials, scale, and form. Public amenities such as the Hamilton Smith Library and the University Pool helped connect the university to the larger community. During the mid- and late-20th century, large dormitory and classroom buildings helped define the building program as the student body increased. One of the most notable buildings is the 1968 New England Center for Continuing Education, a joint venture of the six New England state universities, designed by noted architect William Pereira. Set into a heavily wooded area, the tall vertical elements of the mid-century modern building are tempered by green bricks and expanses of glass that reflect the landscaped setting around the building.

The 2012 master plan for the university emphasizes reuse of its existing buildings in the future, citing a plateau in student enrollment and an appreciation of its architectural legacy. The campus reflects the careful planning associated with the school's exponential growth over the last century from its beginning as an agricultural college.



N. H. C. RECITATION SCHEDULE. 2nd term '20

NAME L.B. Quimby DURHAM RESIDENCE Fairchild #204

	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THUR.	FRI.	SAT.
8.00	Poultry		Poultry			
9.00	D.H.St	Physics	D.H.St	Physics	D.H.St	Physics
10.00	Shop.	Dairy	Shop.	Dairy	Shop.	Dairy
11.00	"	P.E.	"	P.E.	"	
1.30	D.H.St		Chapel	Dairy	Poultry	
3.00	"	M.H.		"	"	
4.00						

1919 New Hampshire College student schedule. Image courtesy of Bridget Finnegan, UNH.

Other Important Properties

Although the full extent of Durham's historic resources cannot be captured here, there are a few additional properties that don't easily fit into the above resource categories, but warrant mention.

Dams

There are several extant dams in Durham, which testify to the significance of water power to the town for nearly four centuries. Among the extant dams are:

- Oyster River Dam (Mill Pond Dam) at the site of the first mill at Oyster River Plantation, which was rebuilt by the Smith family in 1913. This is a well-preserved example of an Ambursen-type dam, with its characteristic open buttresses and spillway, which guides the water over a lip at the top of the dam. Although Ambursen dams were once quite popular across the country, this is the earliest intact example in New Hampshire. In addition, the dam is one of many examples of the Smith-Onderdonk family's philanthropic donations that shaped both the Town of Durham and the UNH campus. The dam is a contributing property to the Durham Historic District, is listed in the State Register, and is eligible for the National Register as an individual resource.
- The 1912 Wiswall Dam was constructed by the Newmarket Electric Light and Power Company on the Lamprey River, at the site of the former Wiswall Paper Company mill dam. It is currently owned by the Town of Durham, and the 1.5 mile long impoundment currently serves Durham's water system. This concrete gravity dam has been altered recently by raising the wing walls and dike, adding a fish ladder, and replacing the gates, but it remains a significant historic resource. Remains of a 19th c. timber crib dam are located nearby, and the foundation of the historic saw mill and the mill race are visible on the east side of the current dam. This resource is listed in the National Register.
- A 1934 dam on the Oyster River in College Woods was constructed to collect water for the growing population of Durham and the university. It is accompanied by a water treatment plant, and the facility is the largest source of drinking water for UNH and the downtown area north of the Oyster River.

Smith Chapel

This small, charming Gothic Revival stone chapel and family cemetery represents another contribution by the Smith-Onderdonk family, and was recently listed in the National Register as part of a community effort to restore the building. This private chapel was located on the edge of the Smith estate, and was constructed in memory of Hamilton Smith upon his death in 1900 by his

wife, Alice Jennings Congreve Smith. Despite being more than 100 years old, the chapel retains nearly all of its exterior and interior features, including stained glass windows, a wood chancel screen, and an altar table.

Highland House

This 19th century farmstead on Bennett Road served as a summer boarding house during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Durham's proximity to the coast and Boston made it a popular destination, and several local farm owners opened their houses to summer boarders during this time. The Highland House featured wide, wraparound porches, a gazebo on an island in the Lamprey River, and additional inn and shop buildings west of Packers Falls Road, which kept guests entertained as the family continued to operate the farm. The farm and its land donated to UNH in the 1970s, but the farm house is currently undergoing restoration by a private party, who now owns the buildings, into a bed and breakfast with potential plans to develop a large outbuilding into a small function hall. That outbuilding had been a cider mill, and later included a dance floor and dormitory rooms on the second floor.

"There are things happening *today* that will become part of the history of Durham." – Peter Stanhope, HDC Chair

Issues and Challenges

Sometimes the very assets that set Durham apart embody the town's biggest hurdles. The challenges facing Durham's historic resources are often complex. Issues can be multi-faceted, and affect several community topics at once, such as natural resources, agriculture, energy, and planning.

Durham Historic District: Knowledge and Branding

Durham's historic district has the distinction of being both a National Register historic district and a local historic district. As a National Register district, it is recognized that the area is a significant historical resources, and allows the owners of income-producing properties to pursue certain federal tax incentives for rehabilitation. National Register status conveys limited protection to the district, associated with adverse effects from federal or state projects. There is much more oversight and protection of the district due to its status as a local historic district, however. This designation mandates that several categories of proposed changes in the district are reviewed for approval by the Historic District Commission.

The local historic district and the Historic District Commission (HDC) that oversees it were established in 1975, quite early compared to many other municipalities that have such districts. The HDC has overseen changes to the district, and has sponsored occasional programs highlighting its history. Owners of property in the district are required to obtain a Certificate of Approval from the HDC for new construction and additions, demolitions, alterations, and relocations to/of any property.

Despite efforts to reach out to property owners, the production of a district walking tour brochure during the 1990s, and two signs announcing the historic district's presence on Main Street, knowledge about the district remains limited. In a survey posted on the town's Friday Updates e-newsletter, more than half of the respondents admitted having little or no knowledge about the historic district. Periodically, a property owner or project proponent completes a renovation within the district, or is several phases into a project, before a Certificate of Approval is sought. These situations often result in higher expense and delayed schedules, and sometimes inferior projects, as the HDC struggles to work with the property owner or developer to find a solution "after the fact."

Absentee Landlords/ Property Maintenance

The advantages of being a college town include a well-educated, active, and vibrant community; a predictable revenue stream for local businesses; and institutional partnership opportunities. Unfortunately, those benefits come with a series of challenges, not least of which is the desire to house students throughout the town beyond the campus. When the school first moved to Durham in 1893, both the town and school administrators had difficulty providing housing for the small student body; this challenge continues in one form or another. The neighborhoods near the campus are full of buildings of historic significance, which contribute to the historic district or help define a neighborhood's historic character. However, student rentals in these neighborhoods are owned by people who do not live in their own buildings and who have no stake in the local community, in order to maximize rental profits from students. One of the frequent results is a cycle of deferred maintenance. Students

"The Town of Durham finds that:
1) Much of Durham reflects 18th, 19th, and 20th century architectural styles as it has evolved over time from a small village. The town contains a handsome, historic core that embodies a fine architectural tradition, a colorful history, and much visual appeal.

2) Preserving and enhancing this area is essential to maintaining the character and identity of our community."

Durham Site Plan Review Regulations, Subsection 9.16 Architectural Design

are in ready supply, so landlords have little incentive to perform routine maintenance, much less renovations and upgrades of their properties. Meanwhile, occasionally students who are living on their own for the first time might be less sensitive about the damage their actions can have on a property, leading to an accelerated rate of deterioration. This situation affects nearby property values and quality of life. A recently-established housing inspection ordinance requires landlords to undergo a biannual inspection, and address issues that are not up to code standards. This ordinance will help slow the cycle of deferred maintenance and stem important safety concerns, but will not necessarily help retain a house's historic character.

"This pretty New Hampshire seacoast-area town is consistently ranked as one of the best places to live and to raise a family in the nation; last year CNN Money also rated Durham No. 2 on its list of top places for 20-somethings to call home. **No wonder: the friendly, tight-knit community boasts historic homes and buildings, quiet neighborhoods, and plenty of picturesque places for outdoor adventures**."

Diana Bair and Pamela Wright, "Durham, N.H., is a great place for the young at heart," *Boston Globe*, March 18, 2014.

Combined role of the Historic District Commission/ Heritage Commission

The members of the HDC also serve as members of the Heritage Commission (HC), which advises town administrators and commissions on issues and planning practices that affect historic resources. Commissioners can find it challenging to switch between their regulatory roles as direct overseers of the historic district, to their advisory role as members of the HC. Being members of both commissions requires a high degree of background knowledge about the full range of Durham's historic resources. There is an opportunity to expand the knowledge of the commissions' members through education, training, and a full library of available resources.

Edith Congreve Onderdonk, stepdaughter of Hamilton Smith who financed the 1913 Oyster River Dam in his memory. *Image courtesy of Durham Historic Association*

Campus and Student-Based Development vs. Small-Town New England Character

Town-gown tensions are not confined to housing problems in the neighborhoods. As the premier public university in the state, UNH has grown exponentially in terms of enrollment and program offerings. During the school year, the number of students rivals or exceeds Durham's resident population, and an increased catalog of classes requires more facilities for classrooms, offices, and research. Expansion of the campus, and recent private development of large private student housing complexes have caused concern among residents that the small-town character that has historically defined Durham is endangered. This concern is not peculiar to UNH and Durham; UNH professor Blake Gumprecht documented similar relationships between municipality and institution throughout the United States in his book The American College Town, and officials from Plymouth have reported similar tensions between town and university.

UNH is part of the University System of New Hampshire and consequently is largely autonomous; it does not come under the jurisdiction of the Town of Durham. Although local regulations such as zoning and building permits do not apply to University projects, NH State RSA 674:54 requires that any planned substantial changes in use, major construction, or development of land must be submitted to the Durham Planning Board 60 days before construction starts. This law is intended to allow time to host a public hearing and solicit non-binding input from the community. In its 2012 Campus Master Plan, UNH recognized that student enrollment appears to have reached a plateau and fiscal resources are decreasing; therefore the focus of future projects will be on the renovation and reuse of existing buildings rather than new construction. Regarding UNH's historic resources, as a state entity the university is required to submit many of its projects to the Division of Historical Resources for review (RSA 227-C:9)and some projects may require consultation with local entities like the Heritage Commission. Durham has an organized, active community network, and

people generally prefer to learn about and comment on projects during the early stages. The university and town maintain a positive relationship with shared goals and most UNH projects are not contentious. However, the difficult projects often remain at the forefront of people's minds.

Another issue is the pattern, typical in college towns, of students bypassing older housing stock in favor of large new private developments specifically oriented to their demographic. New developments have several benefits: they are constructed with student needs and amenities in mind; they avoid conflicts within older, established family neighborhoods; it is easier for police and other authorities to maintain relationships with large concentrations of students; and private developments bring greater tax revenue. However, for a town like Durham, appreciated for its village and rural settings, large apartment complexes may be out of scale, dwarfing the nearby 18th, 19th, and 20th century buildings. Also, locating them outside of the dense village area threatens the agricultural and rural settings, and raises concerns among residents about the ability of the town's infrastructure to support hundreds of new beds.

Tools and Resources

There are a number of entities, initiatives, and programs that promote the thoughtful preservation of historic resources on the local, state, and national level. In addition, tools specifically designed for other resource categories, such as natural and energy resources, may support preservation of historic resources as well. A summary of several of these tools is included here. While the tools presented here are not comprehensive, they are the tools that can best address the specific issues and challenges identified in Durham. An extensive list of resources can be found in the chapter's appendices.

DURHAM HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT
Durham Zoning Ordinance – Article XVII
175-90. Purpose.

The purpose of the HOD is to preserve and promote the historic, cultural, educational, economic, and general welfare of the community by:

A. Preserving structures, places, and properties that reflect elements of the cultural, social, economic, and political heritage of the Town;
B. Promoting the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of structures and places o historical, architectural, and community value as well as vistas of significance within the HOD;
C. Conserving property values in the HOD;
D. Protecting and enhancing the attractiveness of the HOD;
E. Promoting the use of the HOD for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the Town.

Image (background left): Ebenezer Smith House HABS, http://www.loc.gov

<u>Local Resources</u>
Most important for the protection of historic resources are the tools available at the town level. Durham has actively pursued policies and initiatives to preserve historic resources and promote responsible development.

Historic District Commission/ Heritage Commission (HDC/ HC)

The HDC and the HC consist of seven members who serve on a joint commission. They are appointed by the Town Council and charged with promoting the preservation of historic resources, and overseeing the maintenance of Durham's historic character throughout the town. Members must be residents of Durham, and the commission includes one member of the Town Council and one member of the Planning Board. Each appointment is for a three-year term. The HDC/HD has a number of powers and duties, including the review and approval of Certificates of Approval within the district; identification and nomination of significant historic resources to the National and State Registers of Historic Places; educating Durham administration, staff, and residents about the history and buildings of the town; and advising other local boards about projects and issues that involved the town's heritage and historic resources. The HDC was created in 1975, and assumed the duties of an HC in 2006.

DURHAM HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT
Durham Zoning Ordinance – Article XVII
175-91-B.

Powers and Duties. The HDC shall have the following powers and duties:

1. Review and approve, approve with conditions, or deny applications for Certificates of Approval.
2. Call upon Town staff, citizens, abutters to applicants, and professionals, as it sees fit, for input, consultation, and recommendations on matters before the Commission.
3. Conduct small area or community-wide surveys of historic, architectural, and cultural resources.
4. Nominate structures and districts for listing in the New Hampshire State Register of Historic Places and National Register of Historic Places and review all proposed National Register nominations within the Town; keeping a record of all properties that are included in local historic districts, listed in the National Register, or determined eligible for National Register listing.
5. Prepare historic resources components of local master plans and ensure that the impacts on historical resources are considered at every level of local decision-making.
6. Advise other elements of local, state, and federal government regarding, and advocate on behalf of, the identification, protection, and preservation of local historical, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources.
7. Consult on applications for zoning amendments, variances, conditional uses, and other approvals affecting property in the historic district.
8. Investigate and recommend to the Planning Board and Town Council amendments to these provisions and appropriate areas for designation as historic districts.
9. Act as a liaison between local government and individuals or organizations concerned with historic preservation.
10. Educate municipal officials, property owners, the public, and individual members of the Commission about the historic district and historic preservation.
11. Participate in informational, advisory, and policy setting meetings about historic preservation issues, historic district commissions, and Certified Local Governments.
12. Develop and administer a system of markers and monuments recognizing individual properties in the district and acknowledging special contributions toward historic preservation by members of the community.
13. Develop and submit an annual request for funds to the Town Council.
14. Subject to the availability of funds, the Commission may employ clerical and technical assistants and retain consultants as needed.
15. Adopt, and from time to time amend, rules and regulations that are consistent with the intent of this article and appropriate state statutes.
16. Coordinate with other Town boards in the review of items, such as lighting or parking areas, which might also be subject to review by those boards.
17. Undertake any other appropriate action or activity necessary to carry out its mission as embodied in this section.

DURHAM HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT
Durham Zoning Ordinance – Article XVII
175-94. Purview Of Board.

A. Activity Within the Historic District Overlay District Subject to Review. Approval of the HDC is required for the following activity respecting structures within the HOD:

1. Modifications to the exterior architectural appearance of the property including erection of new structures, additions to existing structures, alterations to existing structures, demolition of existing structures or portions of existing structures, or relocation of any structure into, out of, or within the HOD

2. Installation, modification, or removal of exterior freestanding lighting structures.

3. Erection, alteration, or removal of any kind of wall, barrier or fence.

4. Installation of pavement or other impervious or semi impervious material on the ground or establishment of any parking or driveway area.

5. Installation of any new roofing material; provided that where failure to repair a roof will result in immediate damage to the structure the Code Enforcement Officer may grant approval for emergency temporary repairs and immediately notify the HDC of such action.

6. Signage (excluding political, contractor, and real estate signs), banners, flags, and similar displays, except for those of a temporary nature, i.e. those for which approval from the Town has been received to allow for display not to exceed two weeks at any one time.

7. Removal or destruction of any healthy tree with a diameter at breast height of 12" or more.

8. Any substantial change in topography (cuts and fills).

Elements Subject to Review

Approval from the HDC is required for any activity affecting the exterior architectural appearance of a building and other site changes within the district (except for exempted activities specified in the ordinance) including the following:

- the erection of new buildings;
- additions to existing buildings;
- alterations to existing buildings;
- demolition of existing buildings;
- relocation of a building;
- signs and lighting;
- walls and fences;
- driveways, parking, and paving;
- removal of 12" diameter trees

THE REVIEW PROCESS

An application for a **Certificate of Approval** must be submitted to the Durham Historic District Commission through the Planning Department, no fewer than 10 calendar days prior to a regular Commission meeting.

The HDC meets on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers in Town Hall.

Once an application is submitted, the applicant will be placed on the agenda for the next regular meeting after the deadline. The Commission seeks to take action as soon as possible, which can be in one meeting if all of the necessary documentation and information is submitted in time. It is not required that applicants hire an architect. However, it may be difficult to provide appropriate drawings and to meet the objectives of the district without the use of an architect, particularly where new construction or additions are involved.

The HDC follows a set of criteria laid out in the ordinance when reviewing projects. All existing conditions are considered to be "grandfathered" and property owners are never required to bring any existing property into conformity with the ordinance. It is only when a property or business owner initiates a project that the proposal comes before the HDC, and only for the review of elements proposed by the property owner.

Applicants need to submit only those materials that the commission determines are necessary to conduct an appropriate review. On small or straightforward projects submission of the application form and one or more sketches drawn by the applicant may be sufficient.

Applicants are encouraged to talk with the Planning Department prior to preparing an application package to get a sense of which of the items below are not needed. The application package may include any or all of the items listed below as stipulated by the HDC:

1. **Application Form.**
2. **Elevations.** Elevation drawings to scale of each affected facade of the building clearly depicting existing conditions and proposed work.
3. **Details.** Detail drawings of appropriate elements (such as the balustrade for a handicap ramp).
4. **Plans.** Site plans drawn to scale clearly depicting existing conditions and proposed work.
5. **Photographs.** Photographs of the building, where impacted.
6. **Samples.** Material sample (such as a brick or the actual window), swatch (such as a piece of the proposed awning in the actual color), color boards, and/or manufacturer's cut sheet of materials to be used, as appropriate.
7. **Other Items.** Any other items which the Commission may reasonably need to conduct its review.

There are no application fees for the review. The historic district ordinance and application forms can be accessed via the Town's website.

Certified Local Government Program (CLG)
This nationwide initiative by the National Park Service requires that each State Historic Preservation Office reserve a minimum of 10% of its federal funding for grants directed at preservation activities in CLG municipalities. Each CLG has specific responsibilities, which are carried out by the town and its Heritage Commission or its Historic District Commission. Durham has demonstrated its commitment to preservation by participating in the CLG program, which promotes funding, technical assistance, and sustainability. At the state level, NHDHR defines the CLG program as a partnership between municipal governments and NHDHR "to encourage and expand local involvement in preservation-related activities." This also presents the opportunity to apply to the Division of Historical Resources for matching grants, in order to fund a variety of activities. Durham became a CLG in 1995, and is one of approximately two dozen CLGs currently in New Hampshire.

Durham Historic Association (DHA)
Founded in 1851, the DHA serves as the local historical society and repository of materials related to the history of Durham. Housed in the iconic curved Federal style former Courthouse within the historic district, the organization maintains an extensive collection of documents, photographs, books and ephemera, along with dolls, agricultural tools, and an 1875 hearse. The DHA is used as a source for archival and genealogical materials for people researching their families, houses, and the history of Durham. The DHA is in the beginning stages of cataloging and scanning its items into a computer-based system, with the goal of making the digital collection available online.

<u>State and Federal Resources</u>

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register)
The National Register was created in 1966 and consists of properties that are considered historically and/or architecturally significant on the local, state, or national level. These properties include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that contribute to the historical and cultural understanding of our heritage. In order to be eligible for the designation, properties must meet certain requirements and be approved for listing by the National Park Service. Inclusion in the National Register does not automatically protect a property; the only historic that directly affect National Register properties are those which involve state or federal permits, approvals, licenses, or funding. For private owners, the listing of a property in the National Register can also mean eligibility for federal historic tax credits, for the rehabilitation of an income-producing property.

State Register of Historic Places (State Register)
The New Hampshire State Register recognizes resources that "are meaningful in the history, architecture, archaeology, engineering or traditions of New Hampshire residents and their communities." The criteria for listing in and its level of protection are similar to those for the National Register, but are specifically focused on resources that tell the story of New Hampshire. State Register properties in public ownership may qualify for state funding for preservation (when funds are available), and listed properties can benefit from flexibility with building and safety codes.

PRESERVING HISTORIC FARMS

Many in the Seacoast area have been to Emery Farm to pick blueberries or wander the corn maze. This site is on Route 4 is one of the oldest continually operating farms in the country, and has been run by 11 generations of the same family since 1655. In 2006, 60 acres of the farm was put under protection as open agricultural space by conservation easements granted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program and the Town of Durham.

Image (background) courtesy of UNH

20% Federal Historic Tax Credit

Federal historic tax credits are available for owners of income-producing properties listed in the National Register, who choose to rehabilitate their properties. This tax credit equals up to 20% of the amount spent in a certified rehabilitation of a historic building listed in the National Register, either individually or within a historic district. The proposed work must meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, which guide the preservation of a building's character-defining features while allowing the flexibility necessary to adapt the structure for a new use. These tax credits can prove particularly beneficial for the rehabilitation of structures that are currently under private ownership or which have significant private investment. Several historic tax credit projects in Rochester, Newmarket, Dover, and Northampton range in rehabilitation cost from $200,000 to more than $23 million.

10% Federal Historic Tax Credit

The 10% rehabilitation tax credit is similar to the 20% tax credit, but has less stringent requirements. It may be applied to projects for buildings placed into service before 1936 that are not listed in the National Register. The project must involve a non-residential, income-producing activity, and it is required that a certain percentage of existing walls and framework remain in place at the conclusion of the work. This tax credit can assist in the rehabilitation of buildings identified as culturally significant to the community, but which may not meet the qualifications for the 20% historic tax credit.

Neighborhood Heritage Districts (NHDs)

One of the fastest-growing categories of preservation tools, NHDs protect the historic character of certain neighborhoods but are often less restrictive than local historic districts, allowing greater flexibility for exterior alterations. These districts often have the same benefits of local historic districts, potentially controlling demolition, encouraging restoration and rehabilitation, and preventing oversized development. However, NHDs also recognize the diversity in some neighborhoods, and encourage contemporary design. The focus of protection is on the neighborhood level, rather than on specific building details. The community itself determines the special terms of NHDs, setting their own standards for the neighborhood they live in. Although the concept of NHDs is relatively new to New Hampshire, having been introduced in 2008 as a tool under the provisions of RSA 674:21, NHDs are becoming popular throughout the country. Among the municipalities instituting NHDs are two that are facing similar town-gown issues - Cambridge, Massachusetts and Chapel Hill, North Carolina. In many cases, and perhaps most appropriately for Durham, NHDs are initiated by the residents in a specific neighborhood who are concerned about recent incompatible developments in their own neighborhood.

REINVENTING AN OLD BUILDING. . . AGAIN

This handsome building is located on Main Street within the historic district, and served the residents of Durham for well over 100 years. Constructed in 1860 as a one-room schoolhouse, it was purchased in 1893 by Scammell Grange #122 as a meeting hall. The building was used as a community center at the end of the 20th century, and it sat empty for several years after being purchased by the town in 1982. In 2012, the building was rehabilitated into a mixed-use commercial and residential property, which involved moving the entire building forward to a prominent position along the sidewalk and building a large, but unobtrusive, addition at the rear. The project was awarded a "Best Adaptive Re-use Award" by the New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and Plan New Hampshire.

INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS

Sometimes, a significant building simply cannot be saved. The Israel Demeritt-O'Kane House, a two-story Federal style house with a large center chimney, was built in 1808 and was recently dismantled. This was no ordinary demolition, however.

The house was taken apart piece-by-piece and fully documented by Preservation Timber Framing, a well-respected preservation carpentry firm founded by a UNH graduate and based in Berwick, Maine. Details such as original crown moldings, chair rails, window sash and shutters, and fireplace mantels have all been meticulously preserved. The house, in its entirety, is stored at Preservation Timber Framing and is currently for sale for complete reconstruction.

In 2001, the NH state historian, Jim Garvin, reported that this house "is the best example so far identified in Durham of a two-story, center chimney house in the federal style.

Images courtesy of Preservation Timber Framing

Section 106 (NHPA 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470))

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties. Under Section 106, projects that involve federal funding, approvals, or permits must undergo the Section 106 process. This identifies historic properties that may be affected by the project; evaluates how the project will affect these properties; and most importantly, identifies ways to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects of the project to identified historic properties. Adverse effects are defined as those that alter the characteristics of a property that make the property eligible for inclusion in the National Register. Agencies or their designees are required to submit proposed Section 106 projects to NHDHR for a determination of potential effects, and federal agencies are required to consider public input. As a CLG, the town is asked to participate in this process with NHDHR.

State Conservation and Rescue Archaeology Program (SCRAP, RSA 227-C:4&10)

The oldest program of its kind in the country, SCRAP brings the staff of the Archaeology Bureau of the Division of Historical Resources directly into communities, offering training, workshops, and field schools to residents and students. Archaeological sites can fill in substantial blanks in a community's history. For several years, SCRAP conducted a field school at the Field-Bickford Garrison on Dover Point, illuminating the first period of the Oyster River Village settlement. Archaeological sites are threatened by damage from development, looting, and ground disturbance. Once a site is disturbed, its ability to yield meaningful information and knowledge is diminished.

Demolition Review Ordinance (Demolition Delay)

Demolition delay provides a period of time before a significant building is demolished, so that alternatives can be explored. These ordinances generally cover an entire town, providing a measure of protection to historic resources located outside of local historic districts. The categories of buildings protected under such an ordinance and the time period of the delay itself vary, but often include buildings that are over 50 years old with local significance, and often cover periods of 30 days to 18 months. This policy has three goals: establish a waiting period prior to demolition during which alternatives to removal can be properly considered; allow opportunity for comment by members of the public; and help ensure that re-use plans are developed before demolition commences. A demolition delay ordinance can also include the HDC/HC approval of new building plans as part of the demolition permit approval process. This provides the opportunity for the HDC/HC to consider the effects on historic resources of both the demolition of existing buildings, and their replacement with new construction. The delay does not necessarily represent a significant obstacle in the timeline for developers and property owners, but allows the HDC/ HC, project proponents, and the public to understand the ramifications of each alternative.

New Hampshire Preservation Alliance Assessment Grants
These matching grants are available to non-profit organizations and municipalities for projects such as building and site assessments by qualified professionals, as part of the planning process for at-risk resources. One of the grant programs is funded through the New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), providing matching grants up to $4,500. A smaller mini-grant program provides up to $500 to entities seeking professional advice regarding a proposed project.

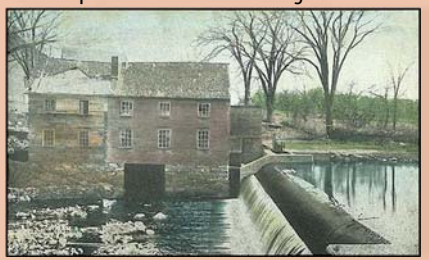
Barn Assessment Grant Program
Also administered by the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, this historic barn matching grant program assists in the maintenance, restoration, or reuse of historically significant barns over 50 years old. Barns that still fulfill an agricultural role are given additional consideration, but grants may be used for activities ranging from general maintenance to planning studies examining the income potential of future business uses for the structure.

Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive (RSA 79-E:8)
This state law allows towns to grant up to five years of property tax assessment relief to owners of properties undergoing rehabilitation or new construction that provide a substantial public benefit. Durham has adopted this program and, to date, has used it for three projects in town, including two new buildings. One of the activities under "Public Benefit" is the substantial rehabilitation of a historic property that ". . . enhances and improves a structure that is culturally or historically important on a local, regional, state, or national level, either independently or within the context of an historic district, town center, or village center in which the building is located." The statute allows for up to an additional four years of tax relief for properties listed in, or eligible for, the National or State Registers that are undergoing rehabilitations in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Durham adopted this program in 2011, with local objectives including the revitalization of abandoned structures, a pedestrian-friendly environment, and mixed-use developments.

New Hampshire Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP)
LCHIP is an independent state authority that makes matching grants to New Hampshire communities and non-profits to conserve and preserve New Hampshire's most important natural, cultural and historic resources. Over 200 grants have been awarded thus far, protecting nearly 150 historic properties and conserving more than 260,000 acres of land. Municipalities, counties, and certain non-profit organizations are eligible to apply for funding. In addition, the LCH register contains a list of projects in New Hampshire, whether they are eligible for LCHIP funding or not, to be shared with legislators and organizations in order to illustrate the needs of the state's cultural resources.

MARKING A CENTENNIAL

When the Oyster River Dam was threatened with removal in 2008, nearly 200 people attended Durham's public information meeting.



After much debate, the Town Council voted to save the dam, which is a defining feature of the town. The dam marks the place where Oyster River Village began, when Valentine Hill first established his mill in the 17th century. Since then, other mills have been lost, but the dam was always rebuilt. The current 1913 dam was financed by Edith Congreve Onderdonk in memory of her stepfather Hamilton Smith, continuing a long history of family philanthropy in Durham. The dam is the oldest New Hampshire example of an Ambursen-type dam, which is distinguished by the evenly-spaced buttresses visible at low water levels. Durham celebrated the dam's 100th birthday in 2013, and in early 2014 the dam was added to the State Register of Historic Places.

Image: Wikipedia Commons, CC 2.0

Goals and Recommendations

The Historic District Commission/ Heritage Commission, with input from the public, identified five key goals to pursue in order to protect and enhance Durham's historic resources. Accompanying each goal are several objectives and action items that represent steps for meeting each goal, address the issues that inform them, and fulfill the responsibilities of a Certified Local Government.

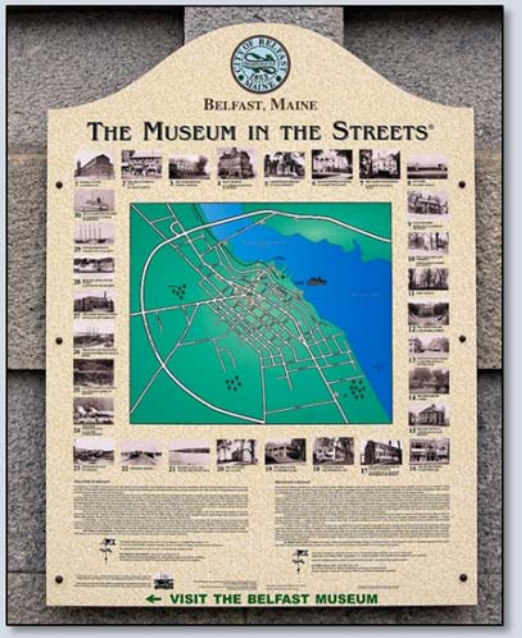
Photographer (headings): Michael Behrendt

1. Brand and Promote the Durham Historic District

The historic district is Durham's most prominent historic resource, but public knowledge of the district's history and significance is limited among the majority of Durham's residents and visitors. It is desirable to raise the level of the awareness and thereby the appreciation for this important resource.

a. *"Museum in the Streets"* – The historic district is announced by two understated signs, which can be easily missed by both pedestrians and drivers. There is no explanation of the district along the street itself. As a result, the meaning of the historic district (and even the fact that Durham has a historic district) is not evident. The Museum in the Streets program was founded to address similar issues, bringing history out of the archives and onto the sidewalk. The program takes the elements of a walking tour brochure and incorporates the information, stories, photos, and images into a set of interpretive panels along a prescribed tour path. More than two dozen Museum in the Streets exhibits have been installed in Maine, Connecticut, New York, Michigan, Minnesota, France, and Italy. This approach attracts interest from pedestrians and encourages people to linger in the area, which can benefit local businesses in the adjacent commercial core, and may be especially advantageous given the recent designation of Route 108 as a scenic byway. There are pre-designed templates for the panels and a process to develop an appropriate interpretive program, a more flexible independent exhibit format based on the same principles could be instituted in Durham. The existing walking tour brochure produced by the DHA and UNH's Kellogg Program Office in 1992 could form the basis for this undertaking.

b. *Historical Markers for Houses* – Research and facilitate a process for property owners to acquire attractive, inexpensive plaques for their houses.



Photographer: Flickr user Timothy Valentine, CC 2.0

c. *Guide for Property Owners* – Durham recently adopted architectural standards that apply throughout the core zoning districts, addressing issues like scale and massing in renovations to existing buildings and new construction. Similar documents have been helpful in historic districts, addressing owners' questions and offering design guidance that streamlines the review process. Producing a guidelines document for residential and commercial property owners in the district can serve as an important resource for these owners while advertising the district itself. Durham has developed several such brochures which could be expanded upon.

Photographer: Flickr use Carol, CC 2.0

2. Preserve and maintain sites and structures that serve as significant visible reminders of the town's social and architectural history

a. *Demolition Delay* – The institution of a demolition delay ordinance can help ensure that there is adequate time to explore alternatives to demolition of significant buildings or that a viable, appropriate replacement is agreed upon. Responses to surveys taken during the planning process indicated that there is support for establishing a demolition delay ordinance in Durham, which would consider buildings located outside of the local historic district (where proposed demolition is already reviewed by the HDC) and prioritize the buildings that are preferably preserved due to significance and physical integrity. Durham should explore establishing a demotion delay ordinance, with a time period of at least three months before a demolition permit is issued for worthy buildings. This ordinance should include a provision for HDC/HC approval of new building plans as part of the approval process for demolition permits.

b. *Seminars and Workshops* – Maintaining an older house or apartment building can be challenging. Many contractors are uninformed about how to approach maintenance and renovations in the historic buildings in Durham, and many property owners lack the knowledge to assess the choices presented to them. This situation can result in higher expenses that discourage property maintenance and improvements. There is an opportunity for the HDC/HC to help bridge this knowledge gap by hosting information sessions centered on topics such as appropriate materials, roof replacement, energy efficiency, or common problems with homes dating from a specific time period. Partnership with the Durham Landlord Association, whose members account for 20-30% of off-campus housing in the town, will help

MILLS SCENIC BYWAY

In May 2014, Route 108 (Dover Road and Newmarket Road) in Durham was included in the new Mills Scenic Byway, which highlights the cultural history of the mill villages of the Lamprey River and Oyster River, as well as the nearby Bellamy River, Salmon Falls River, and Cocheco River.

both the landlords and property owners struggling to maintain their properties, and allow the HDC/HC to extend its role as a resource for the community.

c. *Financial Incentives* – Rehabilitating and restoring historic properties can be expensive and daunting for individual building owners, even when it is their preferred choice. Incentives such as property tax relief or small grants make such an investment more attractive, and received widespread support in the public surveys. Exploring establishing a grant program to fund small projects like window restoration, may be helpful to property owners while providing long-term benefits to the town.

d. *Agricultural Easements* – Agriculture has always been an important component of Durham's heritage. As farmland disappears due to financial and development pressures, it is valuable to identify farmsteads that are part of Durham's story. Protecting historically significant farms with agricultural easements or accepting donations of land would provide benefits to property owners, while maintaining the open, rural landscapes which have historically defined a large portion of the town.

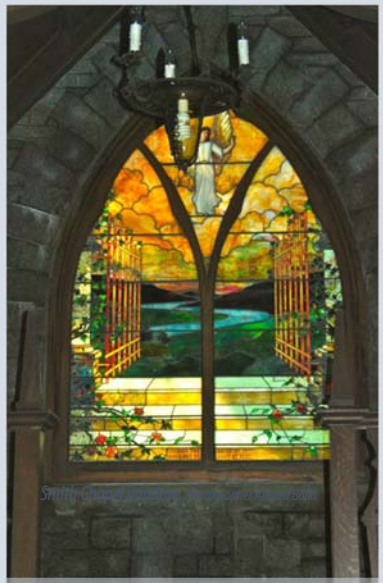
e. *Historic Tax Credits* – To date, there has been no utilization of the federal historic tax credit program in Durham, despite the number of National Register listed or eligible properties. One of the obstacles to using tax credits is the complexity of the process for individual property owners or small developers to undertake. Successful historic tax credit projects have been carried out in nearby municipalities, and there is an opportunity to take advantage of the knowledge gleaned by the proponents of these projects. The HDC/HC may be able to host informational seminars and assist (or arrange assistance) in the preparation of inventory forms and National Register nominations for properties that are not currently listed.

3. Educate the Community about Durham's Heritage and Resources

a. *Develop Co-Sponsored Programming* – In the past, programs such as a tour of the historic district and the centennial celebration of the Oyster River Dam have attracted a wide variety of residents. There is substantial potential to work with other local entities to host programs that address Durham's complex history, while reaching newer and broader audiences.

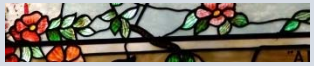
i. Town Commissions and Departments – We should continue to coordinate with the Parks and Recreation Department and the Cemetery Commission to develop programs that link Durham's historic resources with its recreational and natural assets. This introduces several possibilities for interactive programs, which received much interest by survey respondents: organized picnics at the mill pond can incorporate a discussion of the industrial history of the surrounding setting; bike tours along the Lamprey River can introduce riders to the history of the small mill villages; a presentation on current oyster farming can introduce historic farming practices at Durham Point; a tour of easily-accessed cemeteries and family burial grounds can offered to families at Halloween; and a treasure hunt through a neighborhood can encourage outside activity while promoting neighborhood history.

ii. UNH –There are several UNH professors who were, and are, pioneers in their chosen fields of study while living in and serving Durham's neighborhoods. Current faculty and staff could assist with exhibits, lectures, tours, or blog posts to advance the level of understanding in both communities. Potential subjects include Eric Huddleston, who defined the current vision of the UNH campus while designing homes and schools throughout Durham and the state, and Mary and Edwin Scheier, important ceramicists who worked and taught at UNH while adding their own decorative touches to their house in the Faculty Neighborhood.



b. *Build the HDC/HC Resource Library*– As the primary proponent and advocate for Durham's historic resources, the HDC/HC may be called upon to fill many roles, including answering questions regarding old windows, evaluating the significance and integrity of a house, or explaining complicated preservation terminology. Having an established set of resources regarding building and preservation topics would assist the HDC/HC in its role. Building a reference library and making it available on the Commission's website could reduce time spent researching a question, and allow residents and project proponents access to resources they may not already be aware of. Potential topics include weatherizing older buildings, guides to architectural styles, explanations of historic preservation laws, studies comparing building materials, and the financial benefits of local historic districts.

c. *HDC/HC Member Guidebook and provide education and training for its members* – There is an opportunity to enhance the education of the HDC/HC itself, especially new and prospective members. The members of this commission serve on a voluntary basis, and the level of knowledge about historic buildings and how to carry out the responsibilities of the HDC/HC can vary widely. There is an opportunity to develop specialized training for members of the HDC/HC, and several municipal historical commissions have developed a guidebook for members. The Division of Historical Resources can assist with training opportunities and the compilation of necessary materials.



d. *Continue to Develop Relationships with UNH Students* –UNH students have worked in the town post office, served as volunteer fire fighters, volunteered as crossing guards, and helped to map the town's gravestones. The availability of amenities on campus has reduced much of the interactions between the community and the students, but there are possibilities to reach out to students in ways that will help them appreciate the historic town they live in. For example, the university publishes an annual "Community Guide: An Off-Campus Student Resource Booklet," with information about local businesses and tips on how to develop a good relationship with neighbors. The town could produce a short history of off-campus neighborhoods or a "top ten list" about Durham history in this booklet. Adding interesting facts about Durham's history to dining hall tentcards may also reach students who spend much of the year on campus, but don't reside in the town. The use of online resources can also be an important connection to students, such as a blog covering important historic buildings and events, or an Instagram account of photos highlighting the beauty and importance of the town's historic resources. Once the DHA's digital collections are available online, the use of QR codes on buildings or in publications can provide a direct link between the town's historic buildings and streetscapes, and the objects and documents that tell their stories. UNH students can assist in research projects affecting historic resources in town, or special HDC/HC projects.

e. *Coordinate with Local Institutions* – The Town can reach out to Oyster River students, the Durham arts community, and the Art and History Departments at UNH to educate residents about resources and for collaborative programming. For example, several classrooms in New Hampshire have assisted with the creation of Valley Quests, a series of place-based treasure hunts similar to geocaching, designed by and for schoolchildren to explore and appreciate their surroundings. They have proven to be a great way to link important places and the diverse people who call these places home.

4. Preserve the character of the neighborhoods of Durham

a. *Neighborhood Heritage Districts* – Durham is home to several architecturally and historically distinctive neighborhoods dating from the early and mid-20th century. As described earlier in this document and in the appendix, Neighborhood Heritage Districts can be effective to protect such neighborhoods against incompatible changes, where creation of a more restrictive historic district would not be suitable to the character of the neighborhood nor acceptable to the residents. If the community observes threats to such neighborhoods in the future, use of this tool could be explored.

b. *Encourage Owner Occupancy* – The large number of absentee landlords can have harmful effects on historic resources. While recent policies such as a housing inspection ordinance for rental properties address the physical maintenance of properties, policies that encourage owner occupancy for rental properties enhance the likelihood of property upkeep. Programs such as home maintenance seminars and resources for purchasing first homes can be developed in conjunction with the Code Enforcement Office and Planning Board to accompany such goals. The New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority, which promotes, finances, and supports affordable housing in the state, is also an important partner and resource for encouraging this endeavor.

5. Identify and inventory sites, properties, and areas that are significant to the history of Durham

a. *Survey Undocumented Neighborhoods* – One of the roles of the Heritage Commission is to survey and inventory properties that have not been previously recorded for their historic and architectural importance. The 2011-2015 State Preservation Plan indicates that survey is a top priority for current grants, demonstrating state-level support for such endeavors. The Faculty Neighborhood and Madbury Road/ Bagdad Road/ Edgewood Road Neighborhood (including Mathes Terrace) are excellent examples of survey subjects, which would enhance Durham's knowledge of its early 20th century resources and could be an early step in the examination of possible future Neighborhood Heritage Districts.

b. *Town-wide Archaeological Survey* – As one of the earliest European settlements in New Hampshire, Durham has been the subject of archaeological investigations exploring early European and Native American relations. A town-wide survey of archaeological sensitivity and resources has never been pursued, although the town's natural and geographical advantages make it a likely location for pre- and post-contact archaeological sites. Knowing a project site's archaeological sensitivity early in the planning process can benefit developers and state and local agencies by avoiding costly surprises and delays later.

c. *National and State Register Nominations* – In addition to surveys, the preparation of National and State Register nominations is a vital tool for documenting the buildings and districts that have shaped the history of Durham. A recent National Register nomination for the Smith Chapel and an updated nomination form for the Wiswall Falls Mill Site have helped explain the complex social history of the town. This story can be enhanced by sponsoring the preparation of a nomination form for the Newmarket and Bennett Roads Farms Historic District, based on the detailed 2010 inventory form prepared for the Division of Historical Resources, which would highlight the nearly 400-year history of agriculture in Durham as well as the history of early 20th century immigration into the town.

d. *Durham Historic Association Cataloging Project* – Inventory includes the documentation of, and accessibility to, the archival collections associated with these properties. DHA has an extensive collection of objects, documents, photos, and ephemera, which is of value to historic research. The DHA is cataloging and imaging the materials into a database that will eventually allow people from all over the world to view the records online. As this project is in the beginning stages, the support of volunteers, interns, or professional archivists will help complete this project.

e. *Cemetery Survey* – The students of Oyster River Middle School have been working with the Department of Public Works to map the town's cemeteries in GIS. This ambitious project to map the 60+ public and private burial grounds in the town teaches important geocoding skills while providing an importance service to the town. The mapping could also serve as the foundation for an inventory project documenting the burial practices and final resting places of Durham's well-known families.

Pointers to Other Chapters

The issues and challenges faced by Durham's historic resources often reflect those faced by other resources in the town, and activities intended to enhance one category of resources can have a positive or negative effect on other categories.

Economic Development

- Work with developers to encourage projects that are both financially feasible and respect their historic surroundings.

- Emphasize the link between historic resources and successful investment opportunities

Downtown and Commercial Core

- Having the local historic district adjacent to the commercial core means there is a lot of potential to mutually benefit one another. We can explore ways to encourage longer visits by people who enjoy both the historic atmosphere and the nearby amenities.

Natural Resources

- Historic resources are not just about buildings, they are landscape features and settings that still attract Durham's residents today, just as they attracted Native Americans and early European settlement centuries ago. Efforts to save Durham's natural resources, and promote their responsible use, reverberate in the ongoing heritage of the town.

Agricultural Resources

- Support the concept of a working landscape by teaming with local entities and organizations to preserve Durham's farmland.

- The evolution of farming tools and methods teaches the community about one of its most important industries. There are opportunities to coordinate with local farms to educate people about where their food comes from.

Recreation

- Encourage the incorporation of a historical component in town-sponsored recreational activities.

Energy

- Work with owners of historic properties to encourage the use of appropriate materials to make buildings more energy-efficient. Provide information on costs, statistics, suppliers, and local contractors and craftsmen.

- Encourage the use of innovations such as urban/rooftop gardening and solar panels in a way that respects the historic buildings and streetscapes. There is a growing body of literature about how to accomplish this, illustrated with successful examples.

Community Character

- Several characteristics that define Durham's communities are significant to the history of the town and its neighborhoods. Encouraging initiatives such as pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, walkability, and livability are shared goals.

- The small-town character that is important to Durham's population is inextricably tied to the scaling, density, and design of the historic buildings that are found throughout the town.

Housing and Demographics

- Work with UNH, developers, and zoning to identify ways to address the housing needs of current and future students in ways that respect both the historic district and the rural landscape of the town.

- Encouraging the diversity of the population with housing that is affordable across the spectrum is crucial to the future of Durham's historic resources. Community pride begins with pride in one's own property, no matter its age.

Photograph courtesy of Durham Historic Association

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Interviews

Andrea Bodo, Durham Historic District Commission/ Heritage Commission

Julian Smith, Durham Town Council

Bruce Bragdon, Cemetery Commission

Nancy Sandberg, Durham Historic Association

Janet Mackie, Durham Historic Association

Douglas Bencks, University Architect and Director of Campus Planning

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