

CHAPTER VII - HISTORIC RESOURCES

INTRODUCTION

The quality of future planning can be enhanced in many ways by an appreciation of a community's past. Although Hudson's historic resources are overshadowed by the tremendous amount of new construction which has occurred over the past several years, the historic buildings and sites which survive play a critical role in defining the town's character and connecting the present with the past. Like many environmental resources, historic resources are precious, fragile, and nonrenewable and may be lost without awareness, respect, and adequate protection. Hudson's historic resources also play an important role in contributing to the rural and small-town character valued by so many Hudson residents. Further, the largest remaining concentrations of historic buildings and sites in Hudson are located in areas that have the greatest potential to develop into the defined Town Center that is one of the key goals of the Master Plan (see Chapter I – Community Vision and Goals). These areas include the Taylor Falls Bridge area and Hudson Center together with Benson Park. Each of these areas is described in greater detail on the following pages.



Hills Memorial Library – one of Hudson's most notable historic buildings

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The Town of Hudson was formerly part of the Town of Dunstable which was chartered in 1673 as an outpost of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Parts of the old township broke away as separate entities beginning about 1730. Hudson was known as Nottingham West from 1746 until 1830 when residents petitioned the General Court for a name change to avoid confusion with another Nottingham, New Hampshire. The settlement of what is now Hudson began about 1710. Early on, three houses were built by the Blodgett, Taylor, and Hills families in the garrison style to withstand Indian attacks within a half

mile of the Merrimack River. Settlement in town did not begin in earnest, however, until the end of Lovewell's War in 1725, and by 1733 there was a settlement of about ten families on the Joseph Hills Farm and some eight families near the Musquash area.

The first meetinghouse was built in 1733 on the road leading from Dracut to Litchfield (later Musquash Road). When the boundary between New Hampshire and Massachusetts was established in 1746, the meetinghouse was no longer in the center of town, so the citizens voted to build a new meetinghouse near Blodgett Cemetery in 1748. The 1733 meetinghouse given to Rev. Merrill and he continued services there. It was later given to the neighboring Town of Pelham. Meetings continued to be held at the second meeting house until 1778 when it was voted to hold future meetings at the Rev. Mark Strickland's house (aka North Meeting House). The North Meeting House, located in Hudson Center, was built by the Presbyterians in about 1771. It was occupied as a house of worship by the Presbyterians, Congregationalists and lastly by the Baptists. It was deeded to the town by the Baptists in 1842. Town meetings were held here until 1857, when built on new town hall on the same site. All town meetings were held here until 1939. Town meeting was held in H.O. Smith School until 1963, and then several other school sites.



Tenney Family Tomb in Hudson Center

Prior to the construction of the Taylor's Falls Bridge across the Merrimack River from Nashua to Hudson in 1827, one of the earliest and busiest ferries was established in 1729 at Cummings Farm in Hudson, running to a spot near the mouth of the Nashua River. At least two other ferries linked Hudson to Nashua including the Hills Ferry in the northern part of town and Little's Ferry at South Nashua.

Hudson Center developed rapidly in the late 18th and early 19th Century after the Presbyterian Church or North Meetinghouse was erected in 1771. By 1834, Hudson Center was the primary village center of the town. It contained a tavern, three small stores, a meetinghouse, a physician and eight or nine

residences. Other than the small concentration of buildings at Hudson Center, there were no other village centers in town. The construction of several new buildings, including the Hudson Baptist Church in 1841 and the Town House in 1857 reinforced the importance of the village at the center, although by this time the importance of the Center was beginning to wane.

The area known as Hudson Bridge, at the eastern terminus of the Taylor's Falls Bridge, had begun to develop as a commercial center as early as 1837, when a store was established there, and continued to develop rapidly during the mid-19th Century due to its proximity to the industrial city of Nashua. By the early 20th Century, the business center of the town had moved from Hudson Center to "The Bridge". The post office moved to the Bridge area in 1910 and the town library moved to the Hills Memorial Library in 1909. The Hudson Volunteer Hose company constructed a hose carriage house at the Bridge in 1892. Library Park and the rest station was established in 1911 for those awaiting the electric cars at the southeast corner of the park. The advent of the electric railways in Hudson in 1895 simplified commuting to the mills in Nashua and accelerated the evolution of Hudson as a bedroom community for Nashua.

Agriculture continued to play a major role in the local economy well into the 20th Century. Local farms included both mixed family farms and larger production operations, primarily poultry, apples, and dairy. The U.S. Census indicates that there were 172 farms in Hudson in 1880, ranging from five to more than five hundred acres. In the early 20th Century, Hudson still retained many dairy farms, market gardens and extensive orchards. Even those who worked in Nashua or other urban centers typically kept small gardens and a few chickens.

The poultry industry was particularly significant in the early to mid-20th Century. The Jasper farm grew to become one of New England's largest breeding farms and Grant Jasper became one of the leaders of the New England poultry industry. At its peak, the farm contained over three hundred acres, eighteen large hen houses, and more than 200 portable brooder houses and range shelters. The daily production was more than 25,000 eggs.

Lowell Road illustrates Hudson's transition from agricultural community to suburban town. In the 1920s there were about twenty-five farms along the road but by the 1960s only half as many remained. As of 2020, there are only a handful of agricultural operations town wide. The construction of the Sagamore Park Bridge in 1974 brought new volumes of traffic to Lowell Road and much of the remaining farmland soon gave way to commercial strip development and lesser amounts of industrial development.

The building boom of the 1970s and 1980s, spurred in part by the availability of public sewer and water services, has changed the mix of housing in town, increasing the proportion of multi-family housing, particularly duplexes, while decreasing that of single-family houses, particularly those of a historic nature. Several large industrial complexes have been built on Route 111, near the Windham town line, while commercial development has been concentrated along major routes such as Lowell Road, Derry Road and Route 111. Much of the eastern portion of town continues to be more rural in character.

SIGNIFICANT LOCAL HISTORIC RESOURCES

Many of Hudson's historic resources are clustered in the two historic village centers, Hudson Bridge and Hudson Center. Although these areas comprise the most notable concentrations of historic resources in town, there is hardly an old road in town where an historic homestead or mill site cannot be found. Hudson's old roads still in use include Bush Hill Road, Derry Road, Kimball Hill Road, Lowell Road, Pelham Road and Robinson Road. The following is a summary of some of Hudson's most important historic resources.

Hudson Center

Furthered by its central location in town, Hudson Center developed rapidly in the late 18th and early 19th centuries as previously noted. It was situated approximately two miles from the current Taylor's Falls Bridge in the area of Route 111 and Greeley Street. Construction of the Presbyterian Church or North Meetinghouse in 1771 provided an impetus for further development. The church was erected on the site of the present Town House (Wattanick Grange Hall). A town common and burying ground were laid out several years later.

A cluster of buildings was constructed in the 1840s and 1850s in the then-popular Greek Revival Style. These include the Hudson Baptist Church (1841), the Greeley House next to the church (c.1840) and the Town House (1857). The Hudson Center School was constructed in 1908 along with several houses over the years. The Old Hudson Center Cemetery, which dates to 1778, can still be seen at the junction of Kimball Hill Road and Center Street. The Route 111 bypass of the 1960s, however, resulted in the relocation of several structures in Hudson Center and in the taking of a large part of the town common. A proliferation of commercial activity just west of Hudson Center and industrial areas to the east has isolated Hudson Center in recent decades, though another significant concentration of historic buildings and sites is located nearby in what is now known as Benson Park.



Town House (Grange Hall) in Hudson Center

Benson Park

The 166-acre Benson Park was once a popular amusement park and zoo called Benson's Wild Animal Farm which was in operation from 1924 to 1987. In 1992, the State of New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) purchased the land as a wetlands mitigation site. The site was later sold to the Town, but the deed included Historic Preservation easements encompassing a 1.7-acre area around the Hazelton Barn (which dates back to an 18th century farm) and an approximately one-acre area around the Office and Kitchen which was built for the Wild Animal Farm in the 1930s. Under the conditions of these easements, the Town is required to preserve and maintain these structures together with the B&M Railroad Depot which dates to the late 19th century. Other significant structures remaining on site include the Elephant House, The Gorilla House and the Old Woman's Shoe.

To better connect Hudson Center to Benson Park, improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along Center Street, including a signalized pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection of Kimball Hill Road, Greeley Street and Central Street should be pursued, thereby bringing together two of Hudson's most important historic and cultural areas and creating the semblance of a town center for Hudson (see Chapter V-Transportation).



B&M Railroad Depot at Benson Park

Hudson Bridge



Historic Home on Maple Street

The area which developed adjacent to the Taylor's Falls Bridge crossing the Merrimack River became the dominant center in the late 19th and early 20th Century. The original bridge was built as a 16-foot wide covered toll bridge in 1827. It was not until the arrival of the electric railway in 1895 that a densely populated area had been settled at the bridge crossing.

Examples of a wide variety of architectural styles popular at the turn of the Century are visible in the houses and other buildings in this area. The Hills Memorial Library (pictured on page 1), dating to 1909, is a unique structure combining native stonework and Tudor style influences. Other significant structures include the Sanders House, a landmark Victorian house on Derry Street at Library Park and a group of related rowhouses that also face Library Park. Improved pedestrian accommodations in this area, especially additional crosswalks to access Library Park, would significantly enhance the role of the Bridge area as Hudson second town center.



Kimball Webster School Building

Other historic and potentially historic buildings and sites are scattered throughout Hudson and can be found on most old town roads. In some cases, historic sites are found in off-road forested areas such as the remains of the Deacon Merrill Homestead in the Musquash Pond Conservation area. This site includes the remains of a house, well, barn, and corral built in the early 1700s for the Merrill family, who were among Hudson's earliest European settlers. The landmark Hills House, shown above, is located on Derry Road across from Alvrine High School. Another important building, the Alvrine Chapel, is also located nearby.



Hills House



Alvrine Chapel

Some of Hudson's oldest historic sites are cemeteries. These include the following:

- Ford Cemetery: (1735-1966), Musquash Rd.
- Blodgett Cemetery: (1749-1982), Pelham Rd.
- Old Hudson Center Cemetery: (1778-1850), Central St. & Kimball Hill Rd.
- Senter Cemetery: (1759-1907), Old Derry Rd.
- Poor Farm Cemetery (also known as Cemetery of the Unknown): (1828-1870), Twin Meadow Dr.

Hudson's historic cemeteries are depicted on Map VII-2.



Old Hudson Center Cemetery

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the Nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. Established by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and administered by the National Park Service within the Department of the Interior, the Register lists properties of local, state and/or national significance in the areas of American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. Resources may be nominated individually, or in groups, as districts or as multiple resource areas and must generally be older than 50 years.

The primary benefit of National Register listing is the recognition it affords and the appreciation of local resources which is often stimulated through such recognition. The National Register also provides for



G.O. Sanders House

review of effects which any federally funded, licensed, or assisted project, most notably highway projects, might have on a property which is listed on the Register or eligible for listing. Register standing can also make a property eligible for certain federal tax benefits (investment tax credits) for the rehabilitation of income-producing buildings and the charitable deduction of donations or easements.

Contrary to many commonly held beliefs, National Register listing does not interfere with a property owner's right to alter, manage, dispose of, or even demolish his property unless federal funds are involved. Nor does National Register listing require that an owner open his property to the public.

A National Register district must have the approval of the majority of property owners in the district. For a single, privately owned property with one owner, the property will not be listed if the owner objects. National Register listing can be an important catalyst to change public perception and increase historic

awareness but cannot prevent detrimental alterations or demolition. Yet, it remains an important first step toward historic awareness, respect, and protection. Statewide there are nearly eight hundred National Register listings.

Thirty-two individual buildings or sites and five districts in the region are listed on the Register. Properties listed on the National Register in Hudson are shown in Table VII-1, and properties that could potentially be listed on the National Register are shown in Table VII-2.

**Table VII-1.
Hudson Properties Listed on the
National Register of Historic Places**

Name of Property	Address	Date Listed	Ref#	Architects/Builders
Hills House	211 Derry Road	4/8/1983	83001141	Ripley, Hubert G.
Hills Memorial Library	16 Library Street	6/7/1984	84002812	Ripley, Hubert G.
Sanders, G.O. House	10 Derry Street	2/27/1986	86000277	Sanders, George O.

**Table VII-2.
Properties Having the Potential to be Listed on the
National Register of Historic Places**

Name of Property	Address
Benson's Wild Animal Farm	Central Street. & Kimball Hill Road.
Davis-Cohen (Morrison) House	101 Bush Hill Road
Hudson Baptist Church	236 Central Street
Baptist Parsonage	234 Central Street
Smith-Walch-Sinkiewicz House	79 Greeley Street
Hudson Center School	10 Kimball Hill Road
Bartlett-Charbonneau House	2 Old Derry Road
Hills-Murray House	20 Old Derry Road
Hudson Townhouse/Wattannick Grange	2 Windham Road
Old Derry Road Historic District:	Houses at 34-36, 48, 53, and 62-66 Old Derry Road and No. 9 Schoolhouse at 82 Old Derry Road

Note: The list of properties with the *potential* for listing on the National Register is not all inclusive but is based on evaluations by the NH Department of Transportation for the Hudson-Nashua Circumferential Highway Project.

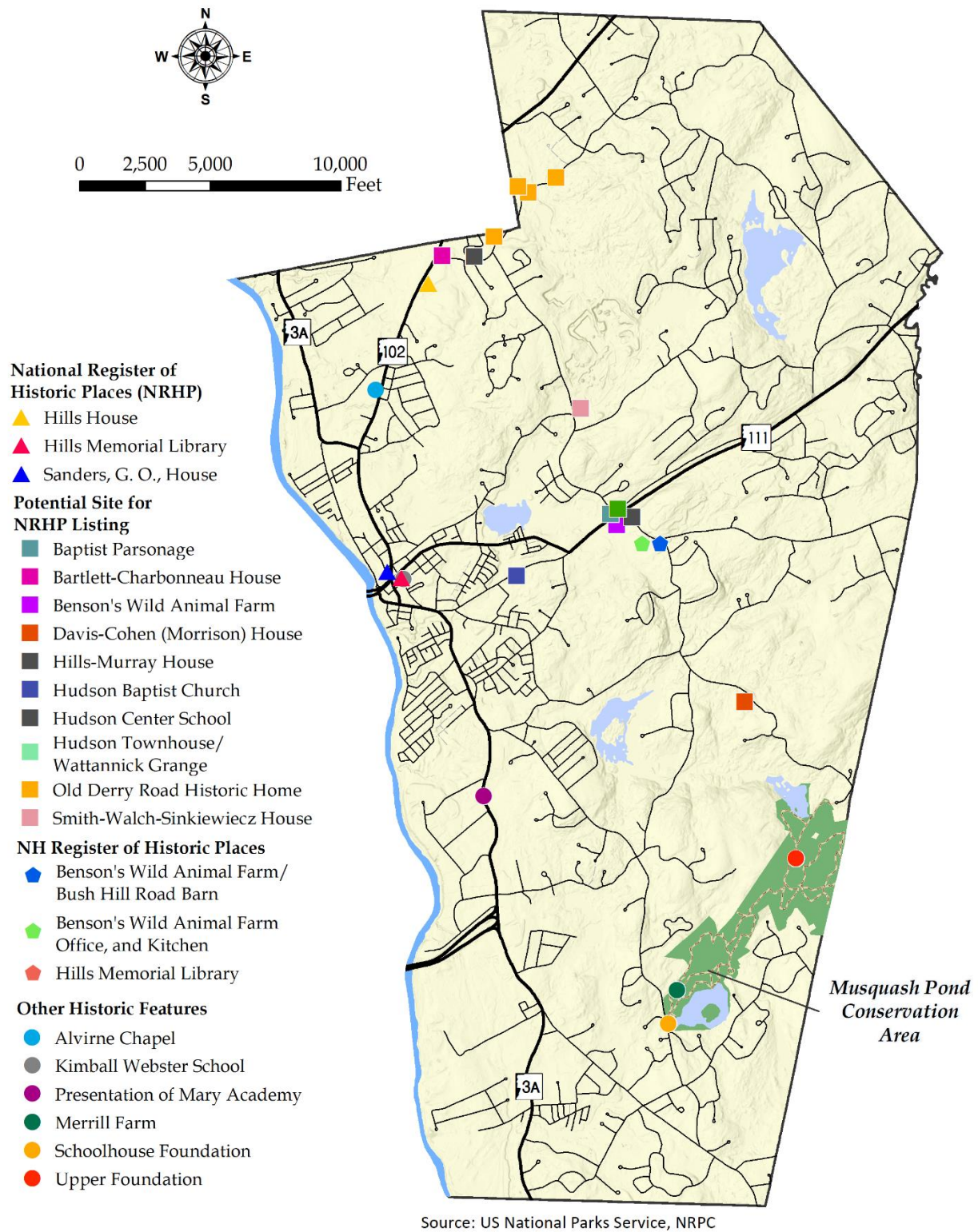
State Register of Historic Places

The State of New Hampshire Register of Historic Places program encourages the identification and protection of historical, architectural, archaeological, and cultural resources. The program provides for listing to encourage awareness of the historical significance of the listed structure but does not mandate protection. Benefits of listing include public recognition, consideration and advocacy in the planning of local and state funded projects, qualification for state financial assistance for preservation projects (i.e., LCHIP) and special consideration or relief in the application of some access, building and safety code regulations. Listing takes place through application to the NH Division of Historic Resources. All buildings listed under the section on the National Register may be appropriate for listing under the state program. Two of the remaining structures on the Benson's Property are listed on the NH State Register, as well as the Hills Memorial Library (see Table VII-3).

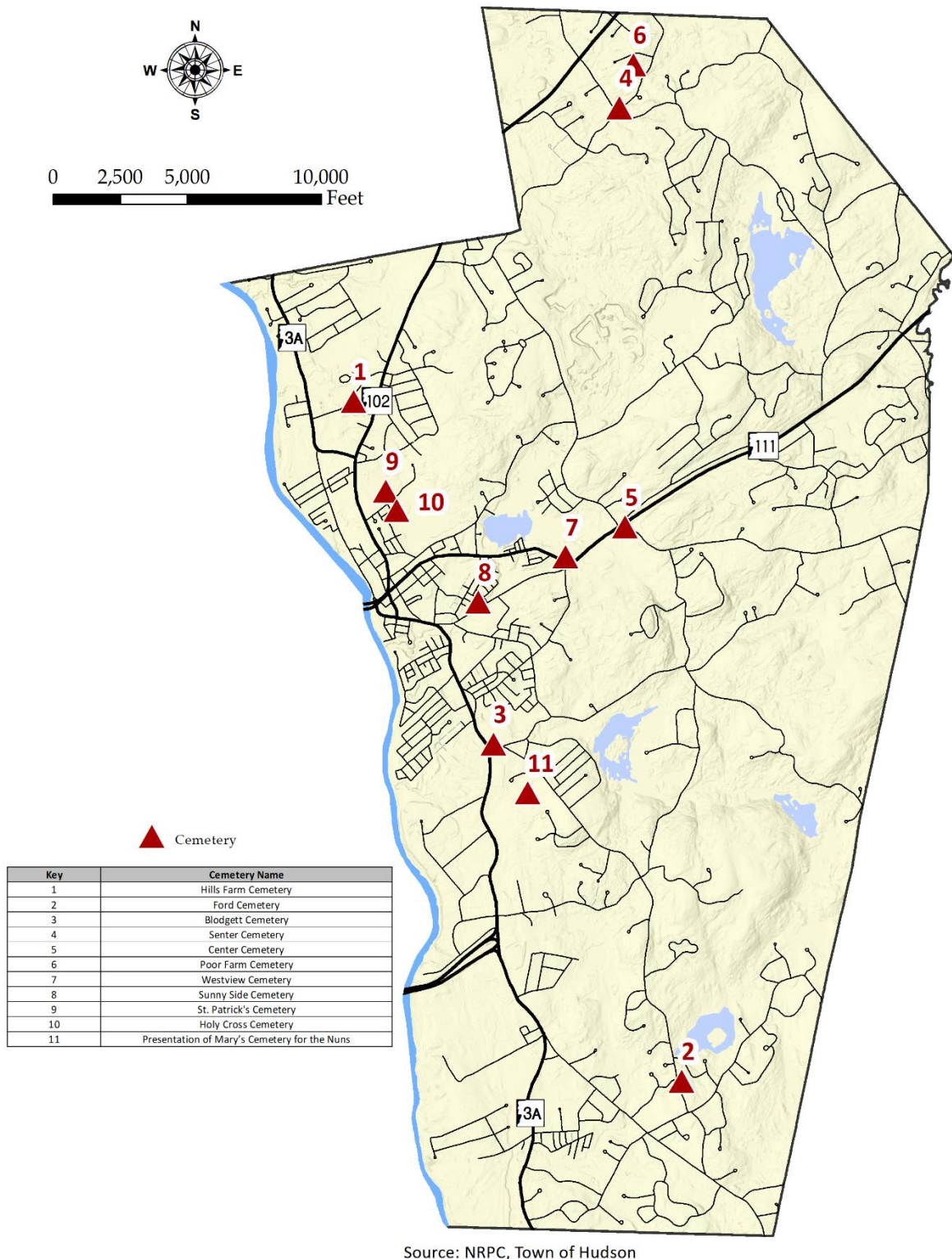
Table VII-3.
Hudson Properties Listed on New Hampshire Register of Historic Places

Name of Property	Address	Date Listed	Listed on National Registry
Benson's Wild Animal Farm, Bush Hill Road Barn	27 Kimball Hill Road; int. Bush and Kimball	4/29/2002	No
Benson's Wild Animal Farm, Office, and Kitchen	27 Kimball Hill Road; int. Bush and Kimball	4/29/2002	No
Hills Memorial Library	18 Library Street	4/30/2012	Yes

Map VII-1: Historic Resources



Map VII-2: Historic Cemeteries



TOOLS FOR ENHANCEMENT AND PROTECTION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

There are various methods that can be used to encourage the preservation or restoration of historic resources. These include: 1) historic resources survey; 2) National Register of Historic Places; 3) local historic districts; 4) the Certified Local Government (CLG) program; 5) local heritage commissions; 6) historic building rehabilitation federal tax credits; 7) historic markers; 8) easements; 9) protection of archeological areas; 10) Scenic Road designation; 11) innovative land use controls; and 12) building code provisions.

Historic Resources Survey

Preservation through documentation is the most basic and essential of preservation strategies. There are several reasons for undertaking an historic resources survey. In addition to providing a permanent written and photographic record of a town's architecture, a good inventory is the foundation for other preservation tools. It can be of service to the historic district commission and can be used to prepare nominations for listing of historic structures in the National Register of Historic Places. Data gathered in a survey may encourage a greater appreciation of historic structures and sites by local citizens. Historic resource assessments are also necessary for accomplishing environmental reviews required in projects receiving federal funding, such as highway projects. As the beginning of a comprehensive historic preservation strategy, information gathered should act as a firm foundation for future decision making, by identifying buildings suitable for and worthy of preservation and/or rehabilitation.

A complete historic resources survey can help a community weigh proposed actions more carefully, so that it does not inadvertently expend its long-term assets in realizing immediate objectives. If a comprehensive town-wide survey is not feasible, Hudson would be wise to identify the historic resources and areas which may be impacted by future road improvements.

Historic Structures Report

The purpose of a historic structures report (HSR) is to develop an understanding of a building's physical history and condition, and provide specific, useable information for implementing a treatment plan. Buildings that are important in the history of a community have potential to continue to serve that community in many ways after its original function is no longer viable. An HSR is a tool that analyzes that potential for the multiple values that a building represents, taking into consideration the meaning, use and cost to maximize the benefit to the community. Examples of HSR reports can be found on the Town's website for the Hazelton Barn, former B&M Railroad Depot, and the Kitchen & Office building at Benson Park.

Local Historic Districts

The term "historic district" can refer either to a historic district established by Town Meeting vote, previously discussed, or to a National Register Historic District. Both are useful preservation tools but differ in the way in which they are established and the protection they afford. A historic area may be both a locally designated historic district and a National Register District. Several communities within the region, including Amherst, Hollis, Mont Vernon, and Nashua have enacted local historic district ordinances.

The most comprehensive preservation tool available to local governments under New Hampshire state law is the creation and administration of a local historic district (RSA 674:45). The purpose of a historic district is to protect and preserve areas of outstanding architectural and historic value from inappropriate alterations and additions which might detract from an otherwise distinctive character. Historic districts should not attempt to "freeze" time but should preserve what is significant to a district while accommodating change and new construction in accordance with regulations based on a local consensus.

Historic districting can be an effective technique for protecting the character of an area. Unlike zoning which focuses on land use, a historic district emphasizes exterior appearance and setting. Yet unlike site plan review, historic districts allow officials to exercise authority over construction and alteration of single-family dwellings, however, buildings alone need not comprise a district. Effective district preservation should involve streetscapes, landscapes, contributing views and viewsheds as well as buildings. It should be noted that historic districting is not an appropriate method for protecting all historical resources in an area, especially where properties are widely scattered. Historic districting also may not be the most effective means of protecting a significant land area, but districting can be effectively combined with other techniques.

Certified Local Government (CLG) Program

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 provides for matching grants-in-aid to the states from the Historic Preservation Fund for historic preservation programs and projects. Federal law requires that at least ten percent of each state's Historic Preservation Fund grant be designated for transfer to eligible local governments that apply for the money. A local government can participate in the program once the State Preservation Office certifies that the community has established its own historic preservation commission, district and a program meeting certain federal and state standards. Matching grants are made each year to certified local governments for survey and planning projects, including preparation of National Register nominations and historic resource surveys. Currently, the CLG program represents the only source of state funds available for communities interested in preservation planning. In the Nashua Region, the only communities designated as CLGs are the City of Nashua and the Towns of Amherst and Hollis.

Local Heritage Commissions

In 1992, the Legislature enacted RSA 674:44-A to enable towns or cities to establish heritage commissions "for the proper recognition, use and protection of resources, tangible or intangible, primarily man-made, that are valued for their historic, cultural, esthetics or community significance within their natural, built or cultural contexts."

RSA 674:44-B defines the power of the commission and authorizes the acquisition of property in the name of the town. Heritage commissions may, if authorized by the Town assume the composition and duties of historic district commissions or the municipality may choose to maintain separate and distinct commissions. If separate, the heritage commission is advisory to the historic district commission, the planning board, and other local boards.

The Town may appropriate funds and the proper handling of these or other related funds as specified in the statute. The makeup of members is like other local boards, and a planning board member may be a member of the heritage commission. The requirements for meetings, disqualification of a member, the abolition of heritage commissions, effect of abolition, and the transfer of documents are the same as for other local boards. The statute also amends the historic district statutes to incorporate references to cultural and community values as a public purpose and authorizes the creation of more than one district in a municipality.

Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

The Federal Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit (HTC) was formally introduced by Congress in 1979. Previously, there was a 10% credit for non-residential buildings in service prior to 1936 and a 20% credit for structures that the National Park Service has deemed as historic. New Tax Legislation signed at the end of 2017 (Public Law No: 115-97) has eliminated the 10% credit.

To qualify for the 20% tax credit, the building must a certified historic structure per the National Park Service. The structure must be used for a business or other income-producing purpose, and a substantial amount of the tax credit must be spent on rehabilitation of the building.

The investment tax credits provide some incentive to rehabilitate older buildings instead of undertaking new construction. Unfortunately, because these credits do not cover privately owned, non-income producing residences which constitute most of Hudson's resources, their use in Hudson is somewhat limited. Larger structures with income-producing potential could benefit from the use of the credits, which would also ensure the sympathetic rehabilitation of the buildings.

NH Historical Highway Markers

Markers are an easy, inexpensive way to tell both residents and visitors about significant people, places, and events in a community's past. The State Marker Program was originated by the New Hampshire Legislature in 1955. The aim of the program is the erection of appropriate markers designating events, people, and places of historical significance to the State of New Hampshire. Communities who would like to be considered for a marker submit a request for consideration by the State Highway Department and Division of Historical Resources. There is generally no cost involved for a marker on a state-maintained road. There is a charge of \$1,100 for a marker on a private road. Statewide there are approximately 260 historical markers. Few have been erected in NRPC communities with only one in Amherst, one in Mason, two in Merrimack, one in Milford and one in Pelham. Hudson does not currently have any State markers.

The sole purpose of the marker program is recognition. The program is non-restrictive; it does not protect historic sites nor does it obligate owners in any way. The criteria which apply to marker selection are also much less stringent than those for getting a property listed on the National Register. A marker may be used to point out historic sites that have changed considerably over time or even to commemorate events for which there is no standing evidence, anything which has historical significance to a community. For the simple recognition of a historic property, the historical marker program may be a better tool than the National Register, more readily visible and much easier to use. Another type of marker which has found widespread use involves the placement of wooden date markers on houses. Such a program was initiated in Hudson back in 1976 as part of the Bicentennial celebration.

Easements

Across the country, preservation easements have proven to be an effective tool for protecting significant historic properties. As has been noted above, Benson Park is subject to two historic easements held by the state. An easement is a property right that can be bought or sold through a legal agreement between a property owner and an organization eligible to hold easements. Just as a conservation easement can be used to protect open space, scenic areas, waterways, wildlife sanctuaries, etc. from incompatible use and development, an architectural easement protects the exterior appearance of a building. If properly administered, easements are a superior method of conserving and protecting land, water, and historic resources; perhaps better and longer than zoning or locally designated historic districts.

Easements provide property owners with two important benefits. First, the character of a property is protected in perpetuity. In addition, the donation of an easement may make the owner eligible for certain tax advantages. If the property is listed in the National Register, in return for giving an easement, an owner is eligible under the Tax Treatment and Extension Act of 1980 to make a deduction from his taxes. Donation of an easement may also reduce estate and local property taxes.

Easements are also extremely beneficial to a community. The costs of acquiring easements may be significantly lower than buying properties outright to protect valuable resources, particularly when easements can be acquired by donation. Significant resources can remain in private hands but are protected from inappropriate alteration as the organization holding the easement is given the right to review any proposed change to the structure or property.

Protection of Archaeological Areas

Although much of this chapter deals specifically with architectural resources, it should be recognized that the preservation of areas of high potential for prehistoric and historic archaeological sites poses unique problems. In comparison to historic structures, archaeological resources are more difficult to identify and protect. Each site is unique and fragile. Once a site is disturbed, information is lost. While there is often an urgent need to keep the location of an important archaeological resource confidential, the same confidentiality will often preclude public awareness. Acquisition of the land or land development rights is often the only way to effectively preserve archaeological resources. Ironically, increased appreciation may also represent a very real threat to archaeological resources. Rapid growth is the greatest threat to archaeological resources. The few applicable laws that protect archaeological resources are primarily federal. As a result of these laws, large highway projects or projects which require review by a federal agency usually have a review of impacts to cultural resources. In addition, there are mining laws which allow review of projects for impacts and there is the possibility of review within the dredge and fill process.

Since much of the region's growth is from private rather than public sources, archaeological evaluation is not required. In some cases, cooperative developers have permitted recording of archaeological data which would otherwise be destroyed. The State Division of Historical Resources has very limited ability to review private projects for impact on archaeological resources. Local officials should consult the Division if a proposal will impact a known archaeological resource or if a project is in a location with a high probability of archaeological potential such as areas with proximity to water. In extreme cases, the Town may wish to ask developers to fund recovery of archaeological data by hiring a professional archaeologist as a consultant to evaluate a property for archaeological potential and/or survey the area for unknown archaeological sites. This procedure is dictated by law in many neighboring states but is not currently required in New Hampshire.

Scenic Road Designations



New Hampshire State law enables a community to designate any road as scenic unless it is a Class I or II highway. A scenic road designation protects trees and stone walls located on the public right-of-way. After designation of a scenic road, any repair, maintenance, reconstruction or paving work, tree removal or stone wall removal cannot take place without prior written consent of the planning board or official municipal body.

Designation of a road as "scenic" will not affect the Town's eligibility to receive State aid for road construction. It does however give communities a way to protect an important statewide resource and may also help to preserve the scenic quality around historic structures and stimulate respect for the existing landscape. Many communities within the region are currently taking advantage of this potential preservation tool. Currently, no roads in Hudson are designated as scenic.

Innovative Land Use Controls

The use of an "open space development" ordinance allows for development to be located away from sensitive areas, agricultural lands, or historic areas. In the State of New Hampshire RSA 674:21 gives communities authority to adopt a variety of innovative land use controls which may support the preservation of community character and consequently historic resources. The concept of the transfer of development rights is another strategy that may be used to help a community retain its historic character.

Many communities also adopt historic preservation standards as a means of determining the effects of construction on areas of historic significance. The standards require that proposed construction, alteration, removal, or demolition of a structure be evaluated for the effects on the historical, cultural,

or architectural value of a landmark or a historic preservation district. There are several criteria by which to apply these standards, which will vary by community.

In addition, impact fees can be used for the rehabilitation of both cultural and natural resources. During the site plan review and approval process, the Hudson Planning Board assessed a per unit impact fee on the Thurston's Landing subdivision to be used specifically on the Benson's Property. At the discretion of the Board of Selectmen, the money can be used for all types of improvements and rehabilitation. This would include, but not be limited to, the restoration of cultural resources such as buildings and natural resources such as scenic walkways, stone walls, rustic bridges, and landscaping.

Building Code Provisions

In seeking to protect the public's health and safety, standards such as building codes may present unique complications to the use or rehabilitation of an historic building. As a result, some communities have elected to amend local building codes to exempt historic structures from certain code requirements, other than life safety provisions. This allows historic buildings to continue to be used safely while not imposing a modern set of standards that are impossible for an older building to meet without a significant loss of integrity.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS



Hudson's historic resources are irreplaceable assets that help to define the community and create a distinct sense of place. Some of these resources, such as the historic buildings at Benson Park, are among Hudson's best-known features and most popular attractions. Notably, the largest concentrations of historic buildings and sites in Hudson are in the areas of Hudson Bridge around Library Park and Hudson Center which includes what is left of Hudson's 18th century Town Common. As can be seen in Chapter I - Community Vision & Goals, the creation of a defined town center or downtown for Hudson is one of the Master Plan's most important goals. Both the Hudson Bridge and Hudson Center areas have the potential to provide the functions that are commonly associated with New England town centers including small central open spaces or town commons that are populated with multiple monuments and memorials. One of the key elements of town centers, however, this point, both areas are largely drive-by locations that are visited and enjoyed by few residents. Preserving and protecting historic buildings and sites within these areas and enhancing public access to

and use of their common open spaces would provide broad benefits to the entire community. The

following recommendations are designed to provide alternatives to preserve and protect Hudson's historic buildings and sites with an emphasis on the Hudson Bridge and Center areas.

- Consider creating local historic districts in the vicinity of the Hudson Bridge area and the Hudson Center area with the latter to include the remaining section of the Town Common and the Old Hudson Center Cemetery. Local historic districts provide among the highest levels of protection for historic areas while maintaining local control. Creation of the districts would also necessitate the creation of a Heritage Commission or Historic District Commission to administer district regulations and become part of the Town's Design Review Process.
- Provide improved bicycle and pedestrian accommodations in Hudson Center including sidewalks on both sides of Central Street and a signalized crosswalk at the intersection of Kimball Hill Road and Central Street to connect the historic buildings and residential areas on the northwestern side of NH 111 with the old Town Common and Benson Park. A sidewalk or widened shoulder should also be provided along Kimball Hill Road to connect the old Town Common with Benson Park.
- Enhance the use and appreciation of the old Town Common, the historic Old Center Cemetery and its various monuments and points of interest. In addition to the sidewalk and crosswalk improvements noted above, consideration should be given to providing a few well-placed parking spaces on or adjacent to the site to accommodate visitors. Consideration should also be given to installing interpretive signage to describe the historic features of the site and split rail or decorative fencing along NH 111 to provide a greater sense of security. Adding picnic tables would also enhance the visitor experience and could both leverage and benefit the adjacent Super Sub restaurant.
- Provide enhanced pedestrian connections to Library Park including a signalized crosswalk at the intersection of Ferry and Derry Streets at Highland Street and the intersection of Derry and Ferry Streets. with an emphasis on connections to Library Park.
- Enhance the use and appreciation of Library Park together with its gazebo, monuments, and other points of interest. In addition to the sidewalk and crosswalk improvements noted above, consideration should be given to installing decorative fencing along Derry and Ferry Streets to provide a greater sense of security for park users. As with the old Town Common, adding interpretive signage and picnic tables could also enhance the visitor experience, though limited seating is currently available.
- Consider designation of select local roads for protection under the scenic road provisions of RSA 231:157, which provides protection for trees and adjacent stone walls that provide a foundation for Hudson's enduring rural New England character.
- Institute a historic sign or marker program through the Historical Society or other body to identify historic homes and site throughout the town to enhance appreciation of Hudson's history and culture and to instill pride of ownership.
- Provide more specific standards for design control in the Town's Nonresidential Site Plan Review regulations for key historic corridors such as the Hudson Center and Hudson Bridge areas.
- Consider joining the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program.