

# CHAPTER VI

## HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES, COMMUNITY CHARACTER & APPEARANCE

---

### A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter is intended to establish goals and to propose strategies necessary for the protection and management of Moultonborough's historical and cultural resources in order to preserve the town's rural character and appearance. These resources, which include private and public buildings, farms, cemeteries, landscapes and sites of historic interest, define the rural character of the town and contribute to the community's sense of place, quality of life, and scenic beauty. Preservation should be integrated into land use and planning efforts in order to ensure that growth and change are compatible with the rural character of the town.

Moultonborough's Zoning Ordinance (1985/2008) mandates that "the ordinance is designed to take into account the impacts of land uses and to impose limitations on uses of land for the protection of the environment, the natural resources and the rural qualities of Moultonborough." In the recent Master Plan Survey (2006) (see Appendix K) residents rated 'scenic beauty' as the town's top asset. This echoes results from the Master Plan Survey of 1989, where 'rural atmosphere and scenic beauty' and the 'desire to maintain the rural ambience of the community' were noted as top priorities for the future. The protection of natural resources (including water sources, open space and agricultural lands) was overwhelmingly identified as the most challenging issue for the town in the 2006 survey. Such natural resources, along with historical and cultural assets, contribute significantly to Moultonborough's rural appearance and appeal for both residents and visitors. Cultural, historical, and natural resources are all crucial to Moultonborough's scenic beauty and rural character, and yet these community assets are increasingly pressured by commercial growth and development that may appear to be the result of an overall lack of planning.

Along with a discussion of historical and cultural resources and recommendations to enhance the appearance of the town, this chapter will focus particular attention on the revitalization and potential expansion of present-day Moultonborough village. Compromised by the commercial growth of the Route 25 corridor (previously Main Street), the village presents special challenges in regard to zoning and appearance. Thus, along with general recommendations for the protection of historical and cultural assets throughout the town, both short and long-term priorities and strategies for village improvement are considered.



## B. SUMMARY OF PRESERVATION ACTIVITY IN MOULTONBOROUGH

Moultonborough is fortunate that it still has many structures, sites, and landscapes illustrative of all periods of town history. See Appendix C for the Brief History of Moultonborough, NH, and a Community Landmark List. However, numerous historic sites and features have been lost or compromised, and development both in the commercial and residential/agricultural zones has placed historic community assets under considerable pressure. Given that town residents value Moultonborough's rural character and scenic beauty, it is imperative to preserve historic and cultural resources while outlining goals and implementation strategies for future development.

### 1. Zoning

Moultonborough's Zoning Ordinance (MZO) was approved in 1985, and the document has undergone numerous revisions, most recently in 2008. A commercial district was approved in 2000, establishing two commercial zones on Route 25 (Commercial Zone A: from the Center Harbor town line to Blake Road; and Commercial Zone B: from Route 109 to the Sandwich town line). In 2007 voters approved a third commercial zone, known as Commercial Zone C: the Village which affected the remaining section of Route 25 (resulting in the creation of a commercial zone largely spans the entire length of Route 25 as it passes through the town).

Under the general provisions for commercial uses, the MZO identifies the "strong desires of Moultonborough residents to preserve the town's rural attributes" consistent with goals of the Master Plan of 1991. In the Master Plan Survey of 2006, residents' comments indicate considerable dissatisfaction with the current practice of what is perceived as 'spot zoning' with the approval of special exceptions for commercial use in the Residential/Agricultural zone. It appears that commercial encroachment in residential areas is a significant issue, as is the 'strip zoning' nature and appearance of commercial development along Route 25. A disparity has developed between survey preferences, the goals of prior Master Plans, and the reality of commercial development throughout the town; and thus, the underlying zoning is in need of review in order to resolve this contradiction.

## 2. Farms and Agricultural Buildings

Agricultural buildings are significant to Moultonborough's history, and their preservation is critical to preserving the town's rural character. Since RSA 79-D was passed in 2002, the Board of Selectmen has approved preservation easements for five barns (4 in 2006, 1 in 2007). Barn preservation should be promoted in order to make the public aware of this option (Discretionary Preservation Easements: Property Tax Incentive Mechanism to Help Save Historic NH Agricultural Buildings, RSA 79-D). The Lakes Region Conservation Trust (LRCT) holds an agricultural easement on the working Burrows Farm on Ossipee Mountain Road (213 acres).



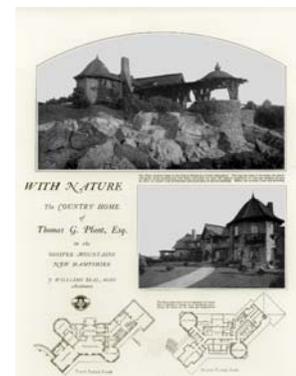
## 3. Moultonborough Historical Society

Organized in 1958 and incorporated as a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation in 1994, the Moultonborough Historical Society celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2008. The Society oversees a complex of four buildings in the center of town (the Lamprey House, now the Moultonborough History Museum; the Moultonborough Town House; the Middle Neck School House; and the Moultonborough Grange). In a recent mailing, the Society states that it should “join the town of Moultonborough in their plan to preserve the character of the village.” Long-range goals include restoration of the upper floors of the Museum and planning for use of the Grange Hall.

The Society hosts educational programs throughout the year -- and during the summer months, exhibitions that showcase its collection of artifacts, photographs, and documents. Publications include a recently updated inventory of cemeteries as well as amateur town histories. The Society apparently has a list of approximately 200 buildings and barns built prior to 1900 that could contribute to the necessary project of a Historical Resources Inventory. This inventory, best overseen by a potential town Heritage Commission or professional consultant, would benefit future preservation efforts by both the Town and the Moultonborough Historical Society.

## 4. Castle Preservation Society (CPS)

The Castle Preservation Society, a 501(c) (3) non-profit corporation, was established in 2006 to preserve and manage the historic estate property now known as the Castle in the Clouds, the town's landmark tourist attraction. The CPS has set a 2014 centennial goal for restoration of the 1914 estate residence Lucknow along with the stable and garage complex and lower gate lodge. The CPS offers cultural, educational, and nature programs during the summer and fall months.



## 5. National and State Registers of Historic Places

Presently there are four properties in Moultonborough listed on the National Register of Historic Places (site, date of listing, ownership): Windermere (Long Island), 1979 (private); Swallow Boathouse (Moultonborough Neck), 1980 (private); Freese's Tavern / Old Country Store, 1982 (private); Moultonborough Town House, 1989 (MHS/public ownership). Two properties are listed on the NH State Register of Historic Places: Lamprey House, 2004 (Moultonborough Historical Society); Moultonborough Town House, 2004 (MHS/public ownership).

## 6. Land Conservation

According to the Natural Resource Inventory (NH Soil Consultants, Inc., 2007) there are approximately 18,048 acres of Conservation/Public Lands protected from development and managed as conservation land in Moultonborough. However, most of this is mountainous land, and significant water resources, open space, and other 'high priority' conservation areas are privately held and lack protection. Conservation landowners include the Lakes Region Conservation Trust, Squam Lakes Conservation Society, The Nature Conservancy, Society for the Protection of NH Forests, NH Department of Resources and Economic Development, NH Audubon Society, Markus Foundation, and the NH Fish and Game Department.

## 7. Loon Preservation Committee (LPC)

The Loon Preservation Committee was established in 1975 with the mission to preserve loons and their habitats throughout New Hampshire and to monitor the health and productivity of loon populations as sentinels of environmental quality. LPC conducts monitoring, research, management and education to protect loons and other wildlife, and offers summer nature talks and seasonal educational programs at The Loon Center and the adjacent Markus Wildlife Sanctuary.



## 8. Archaeology

Period guidebooks and amateur town histories mention a number of Indian artifacts and sites, citing 1919-20 as regards area discoveries, mostly in East Moultonborough. Local legend claims that Lieutenant John Chamberlain made his escape from Paugus by leaping over Ossipee Falls in the Pequawket Battle in 1725. However, evidence of Native American Indians has been largely forgotten and undocumented in the town's history. Pre-settlement documentation, along with an inventory of remaining mill and dam sites in the town, would be a beneficial ongoing project.

## C. CONCLUSIONS

In the recent Master Plan Survey (2006), respondents prioritized challenging Town issues, with the protection of historic properties and sites ranked 8 in a list of 17 such issues. However, it is notable that five of the top-ranked issues relate to the protection of natural resources (protection of lakes and streams; protecting drinking water quality and supply; protecting open space; and preserving agricultural lands), which along with historical and cultural resources contribute significantly to the community's character and appearance, as well as to the Town's desirable rural atmosphere.

Historic buildings and sites are integral to Moultonborough's rural character and scenic beauty, and thus it is in the public interest to protect both through voluntary and regulatory measures. The 1991 Master Plan addressed historical resources in a limited way as part of a broader chapter on conservation and preservation, which focused primarily on natural resources. However, recent trends in development along the Route 25 corridor, as well as commercial development in residential areas, have prompted a new discussion regarding the value of community landmarks. There is some urgency in the adoption of regulatory measures to protect the Town's cultural, historical, and natural resources in order to retain Moultonborough's remaining rural character.

The Historical and Cultural Resources / Community Character and Appearance committee explored the best strategies to protect and promote the historic and cultural resources of Moultonborough in order to preserve the Town's remaining rural appearance, scenic beauty, and small-town character while being sensitive to the demands of growth and economic necessity. The challenge is to maintain a rural, small-town atmosphere by effectively managing growth and development. Most importantly, in order to respond to the desires of its citizens, the Town must efficiently implement the recommendations outlined in this updated Master Plan.

## D. VISION, GOALS, AND ACTION ITEMS

**VISION:** *The Town of Moultonborough will pursue appropriate and effective policies and regulatory controls to protect the Town's scenic beauty and rural character; to enhance its pleasing and desirable appearance as a small New England village; and to preserve its many significant historical, cultural, and natural resources.*



### Overall Action Items:

1. Integrate Preservation Goals into Planning.
2. Protect and Preserve Moultonborough's Rural Character.
3. Revitalize Moultonborough Village.
4. Protect and Preserve Moultonborough's Scenic Beauty.
5. Improve the Appearance of the Town.

### Goal #1: Increase Moultonborough's Capacity for Planning and its Implementation.

Professional planning capacity, in addition to community volunteerism, is urgently required in order to preserve community character, to foster growth with an appropriate sense of place, and to integrate preservation goals into municipal planning. A professional planner should immediately revise the Site Plan Regulations to address historical and cultural resources, and review the Zoning Ordinance to identify and resolve potential conflicts with preservation goals.

Local ordinances and state statutes provide a regulatory framework to achieve desirable outcomes regarding appropriate growth and development within Moultonborough. A town planner would review applications for both Land Use Boards and coordinate efforts to minimize inconsistent approaches of these boards and other entities. Also, the planner would work toward the timely and effective implementation of the goals of the updated Master Plan.

### Action Items:

1. Hire a full-time professional Planner.
2. Revise the Zoning Ordinance:
  - a. Review the Route 25 commercial corridor and amend zoning for the most appropriate uses.

- b. Repeal Special Exception provisions for commercial uses in the Agricultural/Residential zone. Utilize Conditional Use Permits or Variances for any commercial uses in the Agricultural/Residential Zone.
  - c. Explore a cluster/open space ordinance for future residential development.
  - d. Establish a Demolition Review Ordinance.
  - e. Replace the Village Zone with a Locally Designated Historic District.
  - f. Provide for sign approvals to be granted by the Planning Board, rather than the Board of Selectmen.
  - g. Adopt a Steep Slopes Ordinance to regulate development on Steep Slopes, Hillsides, and Ridgelines.
3. Revise Site Plan Regulations:
- a. Adopt architectural design standards (with drawings) to promote building and landscape design based on local and regional styles, materials, and practice ('traditional NE architecture').
  - b. Complete review and update of the Sign Ordinance and include enforcement provisions (PB Sign Committee).
  - c. Require nodal rather than linear commercial development outside the village and clustering of dwelling units along the length of major roads rather than narrow, deep individual lots.
  - d. Require parking in rear or on the side of buildings.
  - e. Reduce setbacks to bring buildings closer to road and require landscaped frontage.
  - f. Encourage adaptive re-use of buildings, particularly historic buildings, rather than demolition or new construction (RSA 79-E).



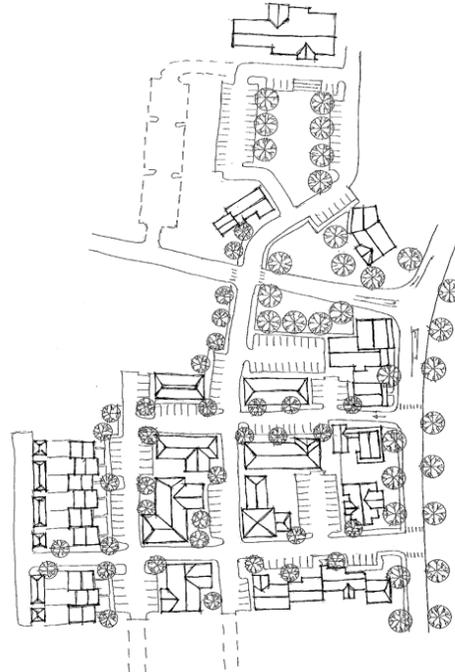
**Goal #2:** Revitalize Moultonborough Village.

Identify and adopt the best mechanisms to achieve ongoing village improvement (Main Street Program, Locally Designated Historic District, Demolition Review Ordinance, RSA 79-E). Take immediate action to identify and act on measures to encourage pedestrian activity in the Village, which would have an immediate visible impact on revitalization and community character and appearance.

**Action Items:**

1. Short Term:
  - a. Designate crosswalks across Route 25 in the village area to link the north and south sides of Whittier Highway/Route 25.
  - b. Establish pedestrian routes in key locations to encourage foot traffic and to promote safe passage from schools to village, as well as within the village area; seek easement donations where required.

- c. Encourage attractive landscaping, tree cultivation, and signage.
  - d. Adopt RSA 79-E to encourage village revitalization and adaptive re-use of historic buildings.
  - e. Identify buildings at risk (vacant or otherwise) in the immediate Village area on Route 25, and evaluate and promote potential community re-uses; encourage Town purchase and renovation of historic buildings for town use.
  - f. Ensure that village improvements/updates respect historic character.
2. Longer Term:
- a. Designate and develop a “common” or village green to provide a place for people to gather and community events to take place.
  - b. Promote the NH Main Street program, or similar private organization, and utilization of its principles.
  - c. Work with state officials toward implementation of traffic calming measures on Route 25 (review speed limits, reduce pavement to two 10’ travel lanes with angle parking on one side only, other improvements).
  - d. Conduct feasibility studies (with conceptual plan) for potential village expansion with the construction of a loop road (parallel to Route 25), allowing for non-linear growth and improvements, including walking routes, a community village green, and parking areas.



**Goal #3:** Establish a Heritage Commission (RSA 673:4-a; 674:44-b).

Make historic preservation a part of the planning process whereby an advisory, non-regulatory, Heritage Commission provides information to local boards to facilitate historic preservation goals, particularly when applications involve properties more than 50 years old or may impact a historic site or resource. Raise preservation awareness and promote community education regarding resources that are valuable for their historic, cultural, aesthetic, or community significance.

**Action Items:**

1. Promote existing preservation mechanisms for the town’s agricultural heritage, such as barn easements (RSA 79-D) and the state barn inventory (toward preservation of rural character).

2. Promote existing preservation mechanisms for historic buildings and sites, such as National and State Registers of Historic Places.
3. Promote joint conservation/preservation easements for the protection of open space and views (work with Conservation Commission and other entities).
4. Establish and promote Scenic Road designations and Stone Wall protection.

**Goal #4:** Develop an Historical Resources Inventory and Map.

Building on existing inventories (Historical Society) and the community landmarks list, conduct a reconnaissance survey identifying historic structures and sites that define the community's history and character. Survey and inventory all historical and cultural resources. Resource identification and mapping should place such sites into a framework that outlines the important historical trends or themes that they represent, with the future goal to incorporate this inventory and map into the Master Plan and onto the Town website, potentially a task of the recommended future Heritage Commission.



The committee has developed a list of significant community landmarks and views based upon the responses to the 'Top Ten' surveys distributed to citizens attending the December 2007 Master Plan community session. These buildings and sites should be preserved by the Town and protected by future planning activities (Appendix C).

**Action Items:**

1. Short Term:
  - a. Publish and distribute the illustrated list of "community landmarks" developed by the committee (promote community awareness and education).
  - b. Coordinate with the Historical Society and private entities to develop an inventory of important town historic buildings and other resources.
2. Longer term:
  - a. Encourage town-wide dialogue about future uses of buildings and sites on the community landmarks list (adaptive re-use).
  - b. Assess feasibility of vacant or underutilized buildings such as the Adele Taylor House or the Moultonborough Grange for town needs.



**Goal #5:** Promote Education and Implementation of the Master Plan.

The Master Plan update will fail if there is not sufficient support for its recommendations. Community awareness and support of the Master Plan is imperative for its success.

**Action Items:**

1. Immediate Action:
  - a. Encourage the Master Plan Steering Committee to appoint an oversight committee to achieve immediate and short-term goals and to continue to implement the updated Master Plan goals, strategies and recommendations over time.
  
2. On-Going Actions:
  - a. Educate town officials, town board members, and town committee members on the Master Plan goals, strategies, and recommendations.
  - b. Educate members of the community at large through community outreach, including presentations of the Master Plan recommendations at regular meetings.
  - c. Meet with members of the business community to promote the Master Plan goals and recommendations, seek input, and coordinate implementation of goals.
  - d. Support and recognize businesses throughout town that voluntarily adopt design standards, better parking controls, attractive signage and other measures to support Master Plan goals (also investigate incentive-based programs).