

---

# HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN ELEMENT

(Adopted March 14, 2005)

## Introduction

The purpose of this Plan element is to delineate municipal historic districts, describe their significance and set forth the assumptions, goals and policies for their preservation. Harding's historic resources are in jeopardy. Its historic landscape is under pressure from suburban residential development and its old homes are at risk of being torn down. Historic preservation is, however, in every resident's interest because it defines the character of Harding. This Plan outlines an overall strategy of promoting historic preservation primarily by voluntary, rather than regulatory, means. The identification of historic resources, with clear explanation of their significance, will encourage their preservation.

The chapter entitled Historic Context and Landscape Patterns in the Background Studies provides background information including a summary description of Harding's historic resources and their context within the township's history. In addition, it describes the township's historic landscape and development patterns and how they came about. As such, it is a companion to this Plan element.

The township's original Historic Preservation Plan was adopted in 1993; this is the first major revision of it. The 1993 Plan had a limited purpose of generally identifying the township's historic resources in municipally designated historic districts. This provided the basis for advisory reviews by the Historic Preservation Commission of applications to the Planning Board and Board of Adjustment. This amendment continues that purpose, with three additional purposes:

1. To incorporate the findings of the first comprehensive survey of the township's historic resources by McCabe & Associates, Inc.
2. To provide an update of the Plan reflecting important changes, particularly new historic districts and district boundaries
3. To comply with the Municipal Land Use Law's requirements.

The focus of this Plan is the seven municipally designated historic districts: New Vernon, Green Village, Logansville, Pleasantville, Silver Lake, Tempe Wick and Hartley Farms. An eighth "district" is made up of about 150 individual sites of historic significance, located outside the seven delineated districts. New Vernon and Green Village are historically significant because they embody the character of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century rural villages. The remaining districts are significant because they contribute to the character of the historic rural countryside.

The role of the Historic Preservation Plan element of the Master Plan is defined by law as follows:

- a. To indicate the location and significance of historic sites and historic districts

- b. To identify the standards used to assess worthiness for historic site and district identification
- c. To analyze the impact of each component and element of the master plan on the preservation of historic sites and districts<sup>1</sup>

## **Historic Districts and Their Effect on Development**

The establishment of a historic district provides defined borders that encompass historically significant resources which can include structures, landscape features and even roads. The comprehensive list of historic resources worthy of preservation is contained in another document that is the foundation for this Plan. The Intensive Level Architectural Survey, prepared by McCabe & Associates, Inc. in January 2004 provides the means for identifying specific historic resources in each district, their historic significance, and the particular elements that should be preserved.

Although historic districting is an increasingly common strategy used by communities, it is often misunderstood. There are two forms of historic districts, each having different effects:

1. Registered historic districts created by the state and federal governments.
2. Municipal historic districts enacted by the township through the municipal master plan and township development regulations.

There is considerable overlap between Harding's municipal designated districts and the State and National Register districts. The New Vernon, Tempe Wick and Silver Lake districts encompass slightly larger areas than the state and nationally registered areas. The Hartley Farms municipal district is the same as the State and National Register district. The three other municipal districts, as well as other scattered structures, sites, and areas, could qualify for future state and national registration.

State and federal historic register districts are legally distinct from the municipal districts identified in this Plan. They are established through a state agency: the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office (NJHPO). A nomination to create a state and federal registered district is most often the result of a local initiative, either by individual citizens, property owners or the local community. The nominated district is evaluated by the NJHPO for its historic significance and integrity according to specific state and federal criteria. A registered historic district is an official acknowledgement by the state and federal governments of a property's or structure's historic significance and integrity; it does not regulate or restrict the private use of property.

State and federal registration do, however, provide important protections in the implementation of public projects. When a property is listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places, any undertaking by a public entity that would encroach upon, damage or destroy the historic property must be reviewed by NJHPO and receive prior authorization. When the property is also listed on the National Register, any federally funded, licensed or

---

<sup>1</sup> N.J.S.A. 40:55D-28.b.(10).

permitted activity that may impact the property must undergo an assessment of the impacts, including an investigation of alternatives to mitigate the impact.<sup>2</sup> In many instances this has resulted in the preservation of historic resources that would have otherwise been adversely impacted. In Harding the historic registration of the Marcellus Hartley Dodge estate at Hartley Farms was an important factor in protecting it from a potential county road widening. More recently, the township ensured that a historic roadway (Cherry Lane) retain its historic character despite additional development along it.

Municipal historic districts are the principal focus of this Plan. The law that governs municipal planning in New Jersey, the Municipal Land Use Law (MLUL), has among its purposes “to promote the conservation of historic sites and districts.”<sup>3</sup> It grants substantial powers to municipalities to enact regulations for that purpose; however, it does not require them to do so. If a municipality desires to regulate for historic preservation, it must designate historic districts in its master plan and address specific MLUL requirements.

The MLUL does not prescribe how districts are designated as is the case with the State and National Registers. However, the same criteria for historic significance and for defining district boundaries are utilized in this Plan as required by the State and National Registers, since they are the most widely recognized and accepted. In addition, the MLUL permits wide discretion in the degree of regulation through zoning, including design criteria and standards.<sup>4</sup> In Harding’s case, the township has utilized these powers to delay the demolition of historic buildings to allow time for options to be explored for their preservation. In addition, the township has received *special area* designation under the New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards permitting narrower road widths more consistent with the township’s historic rural road pattern.

## **Chronology of Major Events Affecting Historic Preservation**

Following is a chronology of the major events affecting historic preservation in Harding Township leading up to this Plan.

**18<sup>th</sup> Century:** Harding’s development pattern was first established: tightly clustered crossroads rural villages surrounded by low density and open farmland areas on a framework of narrow meandering roads focused on New Vernon Village. This pattern still remains.

**1779-1780:** The area within which Harding is located became the center of important military activities of the American Continental Army, including a major encampment at Jockey Hollow. Historic resources, landscapes, and roads associated with this era of great historic significance still exist in the township, contributing to the historic integrity and significance of the Morristown National Historical Park.

**1783-1900:** The area within which Harding is located became firmly established as a rural farming community, lasting for the long period from the Revolutionary War to the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Compared to many other communities in the region, it was an economic

---

<sup>2</sup> For a fuller discussion of state and federal rules and procedures see the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office website: [www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/2protection/protect.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/hpo/2protection/protect.htm)

<sup>3</sup> N.J.S.A. 40:55D-2. J.

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 291, Municipal Land Use Law, Section C:40:55D-65.

backwater, seeing little change in the built environment and in landscape patterns. Many still-existing historic resources in Harding were created during this period.

**Early 1900s:** In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area's long established "antique" rural landscape became attractive to wealthy families looking for a nostalgic retreat from an otherwise rapidly industrializing metropolitan area. They purchased small farms and consolidated them into large estates, many of which became subject to the *New Vernon Neighborhood Restrictive Agreement an early form of zoning*. This agreement, and the desire of these new residents to preserve what had attracted them to the area, resulted in the preservation of many historic structures and landscapes.

**1933:** The Morristown National Historical Park was established, preserving and enhancing the historic resources in a large part of the township. This highlighted the significance of the area related to important events and sites in the American Revolutionary War.

**Post-World War II:** The existing large estates throughout Harding for the most part insulated it from the effects of rapid suburbanization that affected much of northern New Jersey shortly after the War. In 1965, the New Vernon Neighborhood Restrictive Agreement expired, increasing subdivision activity. Except for I-287, Harding's road pattern remained largely unchanged despite a dramatic increase in the use of motor vehicles.

**1982:** The New Vernon Historic District was created as the first Registered Historic District in the township. It was followed by Hartley Farms in 1991, Silver Lake in 1999 and Tempe Wick in 2000.

**Early 1990s:** Many township residents became concerned about the destruction of historic resources because of increased development pressures. This led to the adoption of the first Historic Preservation Plan (1993) and the creation of the Harding Township Historic Preservation Commission (1994) authorized to advise the Planning Board and township citizens about historic preservation issues.

**1992:** The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan was first adopted. Most of Harding was designated as an *environmentally sensitive planning area* (PA-5) consistent with its natural resources and its low density/rural character, which is a significant contributing factor to Harding's historic resources. Policy objectives for PA-5 designated areas include coordinating historic preservation needs with open space preservation efforts.<sup>5</sup>

**1993:** An amended township Circulation Plan was adopted detailing the design characteristics of the township's historic roads and recommending that their historic characteristics be preserved.

**1997:** The New Jersey State Site Improvement Advisory Board designated Harding as a *special area* under the New Jersey Residential Site Improvement Standards, in part because of its abundant historic resources and development pattern.

**2002-2004:** McCabe & Associates, Inc. undertook the first comprehensive survey of historic resources and districts in the township, providing the basis for this updated and amended Historic Preservation Plan in compliance with the requirements of the MLUL.

---

<sup>5</sup> The New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan, New Jersey State Planning Commission adopted March 1, 2001, p. 217.

## Goals and Assumptions Concerning Historic Preservation in Harding Township

The following are the township's major historic preservation goals with their associated assumptions.

1. **The historic character and integrity of Harding's roads should be preserved.** The township's public road network is one of its most important historic resources because of its association with the township's beginnings and events in the American Revolutionary War. However, only a small portion of it is in registered or municipal historic districts. The Circulation Plan of this Master Plan details design characteristics of those roads that contribute to their historic significance and integrity and that should be preserved.
2. **The historic character and integrity of Harding's historic buildings should be preserved.** There are many buildings with historic significance and integrity located throughout the township in municipally designated, as well as state/national registered, historic districts. They were built in a great variety of styles, sizes and placement before building codes, zoning and land development requirements. As a result, many do not conform to modern standards, especially zoning. Municipal development regulations should reflect a policy that encourages continued investment in their maintenance and rehabilitation consistent with their historic integrity.
3. **Harding's abundant heritage trees should be preserved.** There are many ancient trees throughout the township that are very visible because they are close to public roads. They contribute significantly to the character and integrity of historic districts, and to the character of the township as a whole, and should be preserved.
4. **Harding's historic development pattern should be preserved.** Harding Township still retains many features of its historic rural landscape development pattern. The major elements of this pattern are described in the Background Studies. In summary they are:
  - A network of historic roads that is narrow and curvilinear in design
  - Contrast between relatively dense but compact villages and surrounding relatively open and low density areas
  - Large areas of open space
  - Hedgerows and wooded stream corridors
  - Working farms
  - Great variety of lot sizes and configurations
  - Great variety in the size and location of buildings on lots

These landscape patterns are the foundation of historic significance and integrity in the township and should be preserved.

5. **Historic preservation should be actively promoted in the best interests of all residents.** Harding's abundant historic resources are the foundation of its character and unique sense of place. Whenever development projects will affect historic resources, the Historic Preservation Commission, Township Committee, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment should work with owners and developers to protect those resources.

## **Standards Used to Assess Worthiness for Historic District Identification** <sup>6</sup>

The MLUL requires that the municipal historic preservation plan “identify the standards used to assess worthiness for historic site and district identification.” The historic resources, sites and districts identified in this Plan are based upon a comprehensive survey of historic resources and districts in Harding performed by McCabe & Associates, Inc. in 2002 and 2003. Following is a summary of the standards used by McCabe & Associates to conduct that survey. They are the standards upon which this Plan is based.

### **Standards of Worthiness**

Historic sites and resources in this Plan are identified utilizing the following criteria. In one or more of these categories, the property is:

1. Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history
2. Associated with the lives of persons significant in our past
3. Distinctive in one of the following ways:
  - Embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction
  - Represents the work of a master (architect, engineer, landscape architect or builder)
  - Possesses high artistic values <sup>7</sup>
  - Represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction
4. Has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history

Ordinarily, properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years are not included unless they are of exceptional importance. In addition to meeting these criteria, a historic property (historic resource) must retain its “integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.” *Integrity* is defined as a property’s ability to convey its historic significance, and a clear differentiation is made between integrity and physical condition. If a building has suffered unsympathetic alteration so that style-defining elements are lost, it is considered to have lost integrity. Extreme alterations, especially those that threaten the integrity of historic districts, should be avoided. Conversely, an unaltered building is considered to have retained integrity, even if it is in extremely dilapidated condition.<sup>8</sup>

### **Historic Context**

Research conducted by McCabe & Associates indicates that the buildings in the township fall into four distinct chronological and historical phases. These phases correspond to contexts 7,

---

<sup>6</sup> This section is based upon a document entitled Harding Township Historic District Inventory Survey Evaluation Criteria, prepared by McCabe & Associates, Inc., Newton, NJ, 2003.

<sup>7</sup> Chapter 291, Municipal Land Use Law, Section C:40:55D-65.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

8, 9 and 12 of the historic contexts approved by the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office for evaluating the historic significance of cultural resources (Guidelines for Architectural Surveys, n.d., p. 16).<sup>9</sup>

Following are the HPO contexts for evaluating historic significance and a description prepared by McCabe & Associates of how Harding’s eras of historic significance relate to them.

New Jersey Historic Preservation Office Statewide Contexts for Evaluating the Historic Significance of Cultural Resources		
1	Paleo-Indian and Early Archaic Periods	11,500 - 8,000 years ago
2	Middle Archaic Period	8,000-6,000 years ago
3	Late Archaic Period	6,000-3,000 years ago
4	Early/Middle Woodland Period	8,000-6,000 years ago
5	Late Woodland Period	1,200 years ago - AD 1500
6	European Intrusion	AD 1500 - AD 1700
7	Initial Colonial Settlement	AD 1630 - AD 1775
8	Early Industrialization, Urbanization & Agricultural Development	AD 1775 - AD 1860
9	Suburban Development	AD 1840 - AD 1940
10	Immigration and Agricultural, Industrial, Commercial & Urban Expansion	AD 1850 - AD 1920
11	Metropolitan New Jersey	AD 1910 - AD 1945
12	Modern New Jersey	AD 1945 - present

- The earliest phase (the Settlement Era) corresponds to HPO Context 7: Initial Colonial Settlement. It covers the initial European settlement of the region in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the events that took place in the township during the Revolution. The majority of structures belonging to this phase are simple East Jersey cottages and two-story houses with vernacular Georgian or Federal style details.
- The second phase (the Farming Era) corresponds to HPO Context 8: Early Industrialization, Urbanization and Agricultural Development. It covers the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the township was a farming community served by two small villages and a number of mills. While the East Jersey cottage persists in the early part of the century, the majority of structures belonging to this era are vernacular Victorian farmhouse and barns. Some display a bit of Gothic or Italianate trim, and there are a handful of mansard-roofed Second Empire style houses. There are also some exceptional structures such as the New Vernon Presbyterian church, which is an excellent example of Gibbs inspired Neoclassical architecture, and the Hoyt house on Mt. Kemble Avenue (Block 34/Lot 1) in the Tempe Wick district which is a textbook Gothic Revival cottage.
- In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the township evolved into a rural retreat for the wealthy (the Estate Era). Although the region retained its bucolic character during this era, the relatively modest working farms were transformed into estates and gentlemen’s farms, with deed restrictions and covenants to preserve the open spaces and create amenities such as a network of bridle paths. This transformation was fueled by the new landowner’s desire to create a gracious and wholesome living environment, and made possible by the advances in transportation and communication. In many ways it is the elite response to the same impulses that led to the creation of middle class garden suburbs closer to urban centers, and so it can be placed in HPO Context 9: Suburban Development. The majority of homes from this era are Colonial Revival in style, although there are a number of houses in other styles fashionable in that period.

<sup>9</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 6.

- The final phase, which falls outside of the scope of this (Historic Preservation Plan), began in the 1940s and continues today, with the subdivision of open fields and woodlands to erect large scale suburban homes. It corresponds to the final HPO Context, Context 12: Modern New Jersey.<sup>10</sup>

### **Standards for Establishing District Boundaries**

Harding Township’s municipal historic districts were identified and delineated by McCabe & Associates as part of their comprehensive survey of Harding’s historic resources. This was guided by the National Register definition that “a historic district possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united historically or aesthetically by plan or physical development.” The determination of historic district boundaries was based upon the following five major considerations.

- Historic Factors:
  - Boundaries of an original settlement or an early planned community
  - Concentrations of early buildings and sites
- Visual Factors:
  - Edges determined or influenced by an architectural survey
  - Edges relating to other changes in the visual character of an area
  - Edges based on topographical considerations
  - Edges drawn to include gateways, entrances and vistas to and from the district
- Physical Factors:
  - Railroads, expressways and major highways
  - Major open spaces
  - Rivers, marshlands and other natural features.
  - Major changes in land use
  - Walls, embankments and fence lines
  - Limits of settled or developed areas
- Surveyed Lines and Lines of Convenience:
  - Legally established boundary lines
  - Streets and other local rights-of-way
  - Property boundary lines
  - Uniform setback lines (as established in a zoning ordinance)
  - Other lines of convenience, such as a circle of a given radius from an identified landmark or other cultural resource
- Political, Economic and Social Factors:
  - Political considerations – based upon comments received from public hearings on a proposed historic district
  - Socioeconomic factors<sup>11</sup>

These standards were used to identify and delineate the state/national registered districts in Harding as throughout the country. They were also used to delineate Harding’s municipal districts. Where there are differences in the delineation between a registered district and a municipal district, the difference is described below.

---

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

## Harding's Historic Districts & Their Historic Significance

The Municipal Land Use Law requires the Historic Preservation Plan to indicate the location and significance of historic sites and districts. The boundaries of the seven historic districts are displayed in Figure 16, Historic Districts (a detailed map of each district is contained in the Appendix). The location of the eighth “district” of individual sites is indicated by the list of properties found in the Appendix.

This section also provides a description of the historic significance of each of the municipal historic districts based upon the comprehensive survey conducted by McCabe & Associates in 2002-04. The historic resources in each have been classified by McCabe & Associates as either *contributing* or *key contributing* to the historic significance of the district as follows:

- Contributing: A building, site, structure or object that adds to the historic architectural qualities, historic association, or archaeological values for which a property is significant because a) it was present during the period of significance, possesses historic integrity reflecting its character at that time or is capable of yielding important information about the period, or b) it independently meets the National Register criteria for historic significance
- Key Contributing: A building, site, structure or object which is associated with individuals or events of major importance in local, state or national history, or which is an outstanding example of its architectural style and/or represents the significant work of a major architect. It must meet the National Register criteria for historic significance

### **New Vernon Municipal Historic District**

The history of New Vernon is central to the history of Harding because it has always been the focal point of the community. The sense of focus is also reflected in its geographical location in the center of the township at the intersection of four of its most important (and historic) roads: Glen Alpin, Lee's Hill, Village and Blue Mill Roads. The district extends for varying distances along each. It was designated a State and National Register Historic District in 1982. A larger area was designated as a municipal district in 1993. In this plan, the municipal district has been expanded west along Glen Alpin Road to include the New Vernon Cemetery and south and west on Village and Millbrook Roads in order to include a cluster of modest homes that are an integral part of the village in terms of scale and setting.<sup>12</sup> The unifying element is its sense of “village” distinct from the surrounding lower density countryside. The overall goal is to preserve this distinct sense of village as the focal point of the Harding community. The McCabe & Associates Historic Resources Final Report contains the following history of the village.

The earliest records relating to the township, the 1715 deeds between John Alford and John Lindsley, and Alford and Simon Tuttle relate to the New Vernon area, which was settled in the middle decades of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Among the earliest and most prominent settlers to the region was Abraham Canfield who settled in New Vernon .... and established a country store, blacksmith shop and cider mill. The ruins of his house on Block 17, Lot 55 were still visible in the 1980s. The village grew rapidly after the Revolution, and by 1789, it had the population and resources to support an Academy which stood at the corner of Lee's Hill and Glen Alpin Roads next to the Presbyterian Church. By 1853, the village

---

<sup>12</sup> Memorandum from McCabe & Associates, Inc. to Linda Peralta, Township Clerk, dated 11/17/03, p. 1.

boasted two churches: the Presbyterian Church built in 1833, and a Methodist Church on Village Road which was built in 1852. Unfortunately, it was demolished in the 1920s.

The village grew slowly through the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the addition of a few homes on Village Road. A new school house was built in the 1870s on the lot formerly occupied by the Academy. It served the village until the current consolidated school was built on Lee's Hill Road in 1926. Additional homes, businesses and two churches were built in the village in the course of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. By 1882, New Vernon was the largest village in Passaic Township, although the waning prosperity of the region served to fossilize the village somewhat, preserving much of its 19<sup>th</sup> century appearance and character.

The district contains numerous historically significant properties. Three key contributing properties relate to the early development of the village. The Tunis-Ellicks House (c.1795) is a carefully restored example of a late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century 1½ story New Jersey cottage, built by an early settlement family and now home of the Harding Township Historical Society. The William Tunis House was built around 1760 and is a good example of vernacular Georgian architecture. In the 1860s it was used as William Tunis's tailor shop and is significant because it demonstrates the varied economic strategies of 19<sup>th</sup> century residents of Harding. The New Vernon Academy was built in the 1790s and used for religious services and instruction, before churches were built. The fourth key contributing property is the New Vernon Presbyterian Church built in 1833. It is an excellent example of the Neoclassical variant of the Federal style, based upon styles developed by the British architects Christopher Wren and James Gibbs.<sup>13</sup>



*Presbyterian Church - Lee's Hill Road - New Vernon Historic District (McCabe & Associates)*

Many of the historic resources in New Vernon relate to the period of time when the village grew very slowly as a rural farming community. They collectively contribute to its significance as an example of a rural farming village of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Most of the structures contributing to this significance are 1½- to 2-story structures with pitched rooflines,

<sup>13</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 52.

a characteristic that should be preserved in the district. Many of the structures that post-date the 19<sup>th</sup> century also contribute to the historic significance because they were built in a scale, style and pattern consistent with a 19<sup>th</sup> century rural village character. As such, the district is significant because it still illustrates the township's rural agrarian history.

The historic pattern of landholdings in New Vernon contrasts sharply with that of modern suburbia, which is characterized by homogeneity resulting from zoning standards. In New Vernon, lot size and configuration vary widely, although of an overall relative high density. Land uses in the village also reflect the historic pattern in the variety and mix of residential, public and commercial uses. This again is unlike the modern suburban pattern of uniformity enforced by zoning. The inconsistency of the historic pattern with modern development standards poses obstacles for the restoration and revitalization of the village. To overcome them, the Township Committee has designated the central portion of the village as a *redevelopment area* pursuant to the *Local Redevelopment and Housing Law* with the goal of promoting the restoration and revitalization of the area consistent with its historical roots.

Although there was, and is, no predominant architectural style in New Vernon, the early inhabitants clearly favored simplicity and little or no ornamentation in building design. Buildings reflect a straightforward, utilitarian design. Most buildings were, and are, of wooden frame construction, with pitched roofs and sited relatively close to the road on narrow lots, close to one another.

The village street was the most important public space in the community. Its human scale and character made a comfortable setting for social interaction, notwithstanding a lack of formal sidewalks. Framed and enclosed by the buildings and street trees, it provided a comfortable setting for the residents to walk and interact, despite its function as the main mode of transportation. This pedestrian-friendly scale and the framing pattern of buildings and trees around the street should be protected. Of special concern is the modern tendency to modify the street to accommodate the needs of the automobile. Any changes to the design details of the street should be carefully considered to assure that the village's historic character is not unnecessarily compromised.

The municipal district is larger than the state/national register district, based upon the McCabe & Associates survey and delineation. It can be placed in the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office's context 7: *initial colonial settlement* and context 8: *early industrialization, urbanization & agricultural development*.<sup>14</sup> Its historic significance is its association *with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*.<sup>15</sup> This is enhanced by the high proportion of properties within the district that contribute to its historic significance, resulting in a high degree of historic integrity. The McCabe Survey lists over 70% of the properties in the district as contributing to its historic significance, including four key contributing properties.

---

<sup>14</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc. 2004, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Criterion A, National Register of Historic Places.

## **Green Village Municipal Historic District**

This district is located along the eastern border of Harding with Chatham Township. While the following description is limited to Harding, the Green Village Historic District extends into Chatham Township centered upon the intersection of Meyersville Road and Village Road. In Harding, the district extends for varying distances along these roads and Dickson's Mill Road. Green Village was designated as a Harding Township municipal historic district in 1993. The unifying element of the district is its sense of "village" distinct from the surrounding lower density countryside, which is enhanced by its orientation around a small triangular village green. The overall goal of this district is to preserve its distinct sense as a "village."



*Methodist Church - Spring Valley Road -Green Village Historic District (McCabe & Associates)*

The historic roots of Green Village were as a small crossroads village serving the surrounding countryside dating from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1853 there were about 20 houses, a Methodist church, and two stores. By 1868 a school, blacksmith shop, post office and saloon had been added. Notable historic resources include the Methodist church, a tavern, school, store, post office, blacksmith shop and several dwellings.<sup>16</sup> The McCabe Survey contains the following description of historic resources in the village.

The village contains two very fine Federal-style homes, a number of large Folk Victorian houses with Gothic Revival and Italianate details and some well-preserved one-and one-half story East Jersey cottages dating to the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Two of the properties on Meyersville Road originally had quasi-agricultural uses. Block 12, Lot 19 contains the remains of an extensive greenhouse complex, presumably associated with the florists' trade which flourished nearby in Madison in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. And Block 12, Lot 8 was the site of a stockyard and slaughterhouse, portions of which are still intact. There is also a cluster of late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup>

---

<sup>16</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 37.

century vernacular homes at the north end of the village at the intersection of Village and Dickson's Mill Road.

Its historic significance relates to its representation of a 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century rural farming village and to its place as a major component of Harding's overall historic rural landscape pattern. It can be placed in the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office's context 8: *early industrialization, urbanization & agricultural development*.<sup>17</sup> As such, it is *associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*.<sup>18</sup>

Overall, the district is notable for retaining its character as a 19<sup>th</sup> century rural village and for the number and percentage of buildings, built according to a variety of architectural styles, relating to this period. Like New Vernon, its historic significance is enhanced by the high proportion of properties that contribute to this historic significance. The McCabe Survey lists about 85% of the properties in the district as contributing to its historic significance. Simplicity and utilitarian objectives were the main principals of design of the buildings. The physical characteristics of a rural farming village, outlined above for New Vernon, also apply to Green Village.

### **Logansville Municipal Historic District**

This district is located in the southwestern corner of the township bordering the Great Swamp. It was designated a municipal historic district in 1993. The name "Logansville" originally identified a hamlet. Today that sense of hamlet no longer exists because the area is almost entirely residential. Instead the district identifies a cluster of about a dozen houses near the historic crossroads of Lee's Hill Road and Bailey's Mill Road, some of which were used for a variety of purposes dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The unifying element of the district is the collection of contributing buildings and their visual relationship to the surrounding countryside which still exhibits a sense of Harding's agrarian past. Since the sense of a rural hamlet no longer exists, the primary goal of this district is to preserve its rural agrarian landscape.

The origin of Logansville was as a rural hamlet serving the surrounding countryside. In the 1790s it was the home of George Logan, a Philadelphia Quaker and friend of Thomas Jefferson whose personal diplomatic mission to France provoked Congress to pass the Logan Act prohibiting unauthorized civilian diplomacy. By 1853 it contained a school, blacksmith shop, wagon shop and brickyard and in 1868 there were "factories" and stores.<sup>19</sup> Notable historic resources in the district include a cluster of early 19<sup>th</sup> century farmsteads located close to the road and two 18<sup>th</sup> century homes, both East Jersey cottages. The remaining open undeveloped areas in the district, which are reminiscent of rural agricultural meadows and fields, are important to the historic integrity of the district. Although the district no longer retains its sense of a cohesive rural hamlet, it still retains historic significance based upon the retention of a high degree of historic integrity as a 19<sup>th</sup> century rural countryside area and by

---

<sup>17</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup> Criterion A, National Register of Historic Places.

<sup>19</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 41.

virtue of containing a substantial number of surviving buildings reflecting that era. Both of these aspects of historic significance should be preserved.



*Lee's Hill Road - Logansville Historic District (McCabe & Associates)*

The McCabe Final Report contains the following description of historic resources in the village.

At the western end of the district, at the intersection of Lee's Hill Road and Bailey's Mill Road there are a cluster of homes on small lots. The two on the west side of Bailey's Mill Road are 19<sup>th</sup> century vernacular dwellings, while two and possibly three of the four on the north side of Lee's Hill Road are modern, although they are in keeping with the scale and character of the district. Progressing east, the district is made of a series of farmhouses and working farms interspersed with modern developments, all on large lots. On the north side of Lee's Hill Road, just east of Primrose Brook, is an early 19<sup>th</sup> century East Jersey Cottage that belonged to the Lindsley family, and there is a cluster of three early 19<sup>th</sup> century houses at the corner of Lee's Hill Road and Young's Road, the Miller house, the Young's house and the Avon's house. There are also three large farms in the district, one of which includes an elaborate complex of outbuildings.

In summary, the Logansville District is historically significant because it represents the characteristics of the 19<sup>th</sup> century rural countryside. It can be placed in the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office's context 8: *early industrialization, urbanization & agricultural development*.<sup>20</sup> As such, it is *associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*.<sup>21</sup> Like most of Harding's historic districts the Logansville District is notable for the high proportion of properties within the district that contribute to its historic significance. The McCabe Survey lists over 60% of the properties in the district as contributing to its historic significance.

---

<sup>20</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 7.

<sup>21</sup> Criterion A, National Register of Historic Places.

## **Pleasantville Municipal Historic District**

This district is located in the south-central part of the township, south of New Vernon. It is centered on the intersection of Pleasantville and Millbrook Roads, extending for varying distances along each. It was designated a municipal historic district in 1993. The unifying elements of the district are the focus of historic buildings on this intersection, together with their visual relationship to the surrounding countryside which still exhibits a sense of Harding's agrarian past. The primary goal of the district is to preserve the sense of the 19<sup>th</sup> century rural landscape.

Although never truly a village, Pleasantville was developed in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries as a crossroads with a mix of commercial, service and residential uses. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century there was a school and a grist mill, later used for making baskets near the crossroads. The Tunis family ran a store in an embanked East Jersey cottage on Millbrook Road. This building was demolished before the enactment of the Demolition Delay Ordinance. The contributing buildings in the district were built to a variety of styles over an extended period. Another notable historic resource is the Ogden farmhouse on Pleasantville Road which is a beautifully preserved example of 19<sup>th</sup> century architecture.



*Pleasantville Road - Pleasantville Historic District (McCabe & Associates)*

The historic significance of the district relates to its concentration of historic structures representing the 19<sup>th</sup> century rural landscape. It can be placed in the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office's context 8: *early industrialization, urbanization & agricultural development*.<sup>22</sup> As such, it is *associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*.<sup>23</sup> The McCabe Survey lists well over 50% of the properties in the district as contributing to its historic significance. Preservation efforts

---

<sup>22</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 7.

<sup>23</sup> Criterion A, National Register of Historic Places.

should be focused on the contributing structures and on the undeveloped land contributing to its rural character.

### **Silver Lake Municipal Historic District**

This district is located in the northeastern part of the township. It is Harding's largest, both geographically and in numbers of properties incorporated. It extends along James Street, Sand Spring Road, Sand Spring Lane, Blue Mill Road, Van Beuren Road, Red Gate Road, Dickson's Mill Road, and Spring Valley Road. Portions were designated a municipal historic district in 1993, as part of what was then called *Dickson's Mill Historic District*, and as a state and national registered historic district in 1999. The boundary of the municipal district is larger than the registered district because it contains an expanded area along Sand Spring Road and Sand Spring Lane. This area has been determined by the State Historic Preservation Office to be eligible for historic registration status, but has not yet been formally registered.

The unifying element of the district is the concentration of properties that collectively embody the character of Harding's historic rural countryside, particularly as it evolved during the township's *estate era* which occurred during the latter part of the *Gilded Age* in United States history (late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century). The district contains a mixture of 19<sup>th</sup> century farms, a mill site and a number of late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century estates. The evolution from farmland to estates conserved the open countryside but with subtle albeit important changes associated with the new residents' desire to create an idealized rural landscape. The main preservation goal is centered on preserving the many estate buildings associated with the *Gilded Age* and their associated countryside. In particular, the large open meadows still existing provide historic vistas which should be identified and their preservation encouraged.

The McCabe Historic Resources Final Report contains the following history of the district.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the area was characterized by small family farms, and many of these early farmhouses survive, although in some cases they became tenant houses on larger estates. The focal point for the district was the gristmill on Pine Brook (later known as the Blue Mill) that was built shortly after the region was settled in the second quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. There was a dam on Pine Brook by 1765 when the gristmill was owned and operated by Jonas Phillips. In 1777, Phillips assumed control of a powder mill on the Whippany River and sold the Pine Brook gristmill to Gerardus Duyckinck, Jr. Duyckinck added a sawmill to the operation, and lived across the road from the mill in a house which still stands.

The mill changed hands a number of times after Duyckinck sold it in 1791, and the sawmill moved downstream to the Dickson's Mill site in the 1820s or 1830s. During this period a number of French émigrés settled in the area, particularly on Blue Mill Road, but they were soon assimilated into the general Anglo-German population. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the mill was growing obsolete, and the mill pond was more valuable as a resort. The owner in the 1880s at that period, Mr. Stull, gave the millpond a romantic name, "Crystal Lake," and rented boats for recreation. By 1890, the Stulls abandoned the mill on Crystal Lake and built a new steam-powered mill by the railroad tracks in Madison. Crystal Lake gradually became known as Silver Lake, and the old mill stood empty until it was destroyed by floods in 1953.

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, the area around Silver Lake began to attract wealthy businessmen who were attracted to the rural lifestyle of the gentleman farmer, and appreciated the area's unspoiled beauty and

easy access to New York via trains in Morristown, Madison and Convent Station. George Jenkins acquired the property surrounding the “Blue Mill” in 1904 and called the place “Silver Lake Farm.” His wife was Helen Hartley Jenkins, daughter of Marcellus Hartley, president of Remington Arms. In fact, Jenkins acted as president of Remington for a time until his wife’s nephew Marcellus Hartley Dodge was old enough to take the reins. Jenkins maintained the old miller’s house opposite the dam and built two large brick barns for his horses across the street.

Other influential and wealthy men followed Jenkins’ lead, including Seth Thomas, Jr. of the famous clock manufacturing family who established “Red Gate Farm,” and constructed an elaborate Colonial Revival style mansion; Henry Auchincloss Colgate a vice president of Colgate-Palmolive who purchased “Holly Hill Farm” and greatly enlarged the early 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse; Marcellus Hartley Dodge who succeeded George Jenkins as president of Remington Arms, Charles Scribner of the publishing house fame who purchased land on the Harding-Morris Township border.

There are four *key contributing* properties in the district that embody its rural agrarian and the *estate era* history. “Red Gate Farm” represents a beautifully preserved 19<sup>th</sup> century farmstead. It was purchased in 1915 by Seth Thomas Jr. the grandson of the original clockmaker and president of the company for many years. It was incorporated into his estate as a showcase farm. The nearby Seth Thomas, Jr. estate was the site of the original “Red Gate Farm.” The estate house was built in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century and is an excellent example of the Colonial Revival style. It was designed by noted architect Harrie T. Lindeberg.



“Crestley” Van Beuren Road - Silver Lake Historic District (McCabe & Associates)

Another estate from the *Gilded Age* is “Crestley,” which contains four contributing structures: the original 18<sup>th</sup> century dwelling, an early 20<sup>th</sup> century dairy barn, a garage and the large 1920s manor house designed by Walter P. Henderson. The grounds were designed by Frederick Law Olmsted’s firm. The fourth key contributing property is located on Blue Mill Road and contains a house, dating from before 1777, that was originally associated with a grist mill on the property, since gone. The property was one of the showcase farms that led to the development of the great estates in the area.

The historic resources of particular importance in the district are the large open areas, originally farmland converted into estate properties in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century during the township's *estate era*. Other notable historic resources are the large estate dwellings, which many of their original owners termed "manor houses" and associated out-buildings. The majority of homes from this era are Colonial Revival in style, although there are a number of houses in other styles fashionable in that period. Examples include dwellings that were originally modest structures associated with earlier historic eras, which were incorporated or converted into larger *estate era* manor houses. Others include mansions built by noted architects. Farmstead buildings, some from the 19<sup>th</sup> century, incorporated into *estate era* estates are also important historic resources in the district.

The district is associated with the creation of Harding as a separate municipality in the 1920s. Prominent and influential district residents lobbied for the separation from Passaic Township (now Long Hill Township). In addition, it is notable because it encompasses a major portion of the land subject of the *New Vernon Neighborhood Restrictive Agreement*. This was an early form of community planning (1928) attempting to control development and preserve rural character. As such, it embodies significant events in the history of community planning and landscape conservation. Also, it contains buildings that are the work of master architects. It can be placed in the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office's context 8: *early industrialization, urbanization & agricultural development* and context 9: *suburban development*.<sup>24</sup>

For all these reasons, the district is *associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*.<sup>25</sup> The McCabe Survey lists about 50% of the properties in the registered portion of the district as contributing to its historic significance, including four properties as key contributing. In the expanded portion of the municipal district, over 30% of the properties are contributing. Additionally, all of the vacant properties in the municipal district contribute to its historic rural character.

### **Tempe Wick Municipal Historic District**

This district is located near the northwestern border of Mendham Township centered along Tempe Wick Road from Mount Kemble Avenue (Route 202) to the border of Morristown National Historical Park. The road is the major access approach to Jockey Hollow which was an important encampment of the American Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Jockey Hollow is not technically included in the municipal district for jurisdictional reasons. The district was designated a Harding Township municipal historic district in 1993 and as a state and national registered historic district in 2000. The state and national district designation also includes the Tempe Wick roadway. Mendham Township has designated the Tempe Wick area within its borders as a historic district as well.

The boundaries of the municipal district in Harding Township have been enlarged in two areas. A strip has been added at the northeastern corner of the district encompassing the Revolutionary Old Camp Road, and lots at the NE, SW and SE corners of the intersection of

---

<sup>24</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc. 2004, p. 7.

<sup>25</sup> Criterion A, National Register of Historic Places.

Tempe Wick Road and Mt. Kemble Avenue have been added in order to include the historic crossroads. Three non-contributing lots on the north side of Tempe Wick Road were included in order to connect the three lots at the western end of the district with the core and include the historic roadway in the district.<sup>26</sup>

The main unifying element of the district is the linear focal point of the historic 18<sup>th</sup> century Tempe Wick Road. Although not listed as a contributing resource, the historic road is central to the significance of the district because of its association with the history and historic significance of the National Historical Park. The district includes historic structures built in a variety of styles dating from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and a historic countryside that has evolved into a heavily wooded area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The McCabe Survey lists over 50% of the properties in the district as contributing to the historic significance of the district.

The history of the district is particularly related to the Revolutionary War. Mt Kemble Avenue and Tempe Wick Road were important roads associated with the movements of the American Army during its encampment at Jockey Hollow during the winter of 1779-80. The Peter Kemble House, built c. 1751-65 on Mount Kemble Avenue, is a *key contributing* historic resource to this history. Kemble was president of the Royal Assembly prior to the Revolution and a prominent Tory. In January 1781, General “Mad Anthony” Wayne is reported to have successfully confronted troops mutinying over issues of pay and terms of enlistment near the intersection of the two historic roadways.



*“Glen Alpin” Mount Kemble Avenue - Tempe Wick Historic District (McCabe & Associates)*

There are two other properties in the district that are *key contributing* to its historic significance. *Glen Alpin* (c.1840), an early and important example of Gothic Revival architecture and *Hurstmont*, enlarged and remodeled by McKim, Mead and White, prominent American architects at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Harding Township has recently acquired

---

<sup>26</sup> Memorandum from McCabe & Associates, Inc. to Linda Peralta dated 11/17/03, p. 1.

Glen Alpin in order to preserve the historic structure and this important streetscape near Jockey Hollow.

The district possesses significance embodied in its association with the American Revolutionary War and with the history of American architecture. It can be placed in the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office's context 7: *initial colonial* development, context 8: *early industrialization, urbanization & agricultural development* and context 9 *suburban development*.<sup>27</sup> The main preservation goal should be to preserve the historic homes and estates in the district and the historic character of Tempe Wick Road as the gateway to Jockey Hollow.

### **Hartley Farms Municipal Historic District**

This district is located in the northeastern part of the township adjacent to the Silver Lake district off of Blue Mill and Spring Valley Roads. *Hartley Farms* is also a state and national registered historic district. Its historic significance is its association with the township's *estate era*. Marcellus Hartley and his grandson Marcellus Hartley Dodge, who each served as president of Remington Arms, were both prominent figures in the economic development of the United States.



*"Hartley House" Spring Valley Road - Hartley Farms Historic District (McCabe & Associates)*

The property, purchased by Marcellus Hartley Dodge in the late 1800s, also has significance as the site of the Morris & Essex Dog Show between 1927 and 1957. This internationally important dog judging contest was created and sponsored by Mrs. Marcellus Dodge (Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge), "The First Lady of Dogdom." Since state and national registration, Hartley Farms has been subdivided and is being developed as a single-family residential development. The subdivision was carefully planned to preserve notable historic

---

<sup>27</sup> Intensive Level Architectural Survey, McCabe & Associates, Inc., 2004, p. 7.

structures and landscape features such as the Remington Forest and Polo Fields, and to incorporate narrow lanes so as to minimize impacts on the landscape.

### **Individual Properties of Historic Significance**

This municipal “district” is made up of the individual properties located outside of the other seven districts throughout the township. These properties are listed in the Individual Properties of Historic Significance list included in the Master Plan’s Appendix. Each contains historic resources. The McCabe Survey lists many historic resources in this district; the following are a few notable examples:

- *Raggio*, an elaborate Mediterranean/Italianate Revival-style mansion and stable on 50 Kitchell Road built at the turn of the century.
- *Windmill Farm*, on 72 Woodland Road, with a vernacular Federal-style house dating from the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with an extensive complex of well-preserved barns.
- *Bailey’s Mill House*, on 73 Bailey’s Mill Road, is a key contributing resource because it is the sole surviving element of one of the mills in the township that were important aspects of the early economy. It is a splendid example of vernacular Greek Revival-style architecture.
- *Harding Township Elementary School*, on Lee’s Hill Road just outside of the New Vernon District, built in 1925-26 and remodeled in 1931 in the Colonial Revival style.

Overall, the historic resources in the district are significant to the township’s early settlement, rural past and estate era. They can be placed in the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office’s context 7: *initial colonial development*, context 8: *early industrialization, urbanization & agricultural development* and context 9: *suburban development*.<sup>28</sup> As such they are *associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history*.<sup>29</sup> Preservation efforts for individual properties in this district should be focused on preserving the historic structures.

### **Harding’s Historic Roads**

No description of historic resources in Harding would be complete without including the township’s historic public road system, fundamentally unchanged from when it was first mapped by Lt. Montresor for the British Army during the Revolutionary War. Only a few of Harding’s public roads are located within historic districts. However, they collectively contribute substantially to the historic integrity and significance of all township historic districts.

Roads were prominent features in the early rural countryside. Their design, still largely unchanged today throughout most of Harding, played an important role in shaping and defining the character of the township. Speed and ease of travel were subordinate to ease of construction and maintenance. Cuts and fills were minimal. Natural obstacles were avoided

---

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Criterion A, National Register of Historic Places.

by means of characteristically "sharp" horizontal and vertical curvatures. As a result, rural roads were narrow, two-laned, meandering and bumpy (with minimal signage). They were frequently bordered by tree rows, hedges, walls and fences because roads were often farmstead boundaries. This provided the early rural traveler with a tree-lined, partially shaded travel experience alternating with occasional long views of mown or cultivated fields. These characteristics should be preserved.

## **Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties**

All structures need continuing maintenance and periodic rehabilitation, particularly historic structures. The federal government provides tax incentives to promote rehabilitation of historic structures if done in a manner that promotes historic preservation. For determining if such work promotes historic preservation, the U.S. Department of the Interior has adopted standards (Dept. of Interior Regulations, 36 CFR 67). They pertain to historic buildings of all materials, construction types, sizes, and occupancy and encompass the exterior and the interior, related landscape features and the building's site and environment as well as attached, adjacent, or related new construction. Locally, when the Harding Township Historic Preservation Commission reviews a development application in a designated municipal historic district it utilizes broad guidelines dealing with massing, siting, height, proportion, rhythm, materials and scale.

## **Public Policies Affecting Historic Preservation**

The Municipal Land Use Law requires that the Historic Preservation Plan address public plans and policies that can affect historic preservation. A wide variety of public policies can have direct and indirect effects on historic preservation. The areas of public policy discussed below are particularly important to historic preservation in Harding.

### **Zoning Standards**

Zoning standards shape the pattern of new development by strictly regulating lot sizes and shapes and the placement of structures upon them. They have an equivalent impact on shaping modern development that geographic, topographic and other natural features had on historic land use and development patterns. Their most important influence is that they promote uniformity in land use and in landscape patterns over large areas of zoned districts. Over time, land use, lot size, lot shape and the placement of structures upon them become homogeneous and standardized within the district. This uniformity is fundamentally inconsistent with Harding's historic land use and landscape patterns.

These effects of zoning are particularly important because so many of Harding's historic preservation goals relate to the preservation of its historic landscape. The township should continue to explore innovative zoning techniques that encourage the replication of historic development patterns and streetscapes, especially in historic districts. The integrity of historic streetscapes is tied to open space and working farms, visible approaches, open lot frontage,

and an abundance of heritage trees close to public roads. New development in historic districts should be encouraged to continue the historic patterns characterized by great variety and individuality of sizes, shapes and placement of structures on the lot.

The demolition of historic buildings is particularly destructive to historic preservation goals. Zoning requirements can encourage this unfortunate outcome because so many historic buildings do not comply with setback, lot coverage, or accessory residence requirements, and changes would require variances. In such cases, there should be more flexibility to allow additions and accessory structures provided they retain the contributing nature of these properties. Zoning requirements should reflect a policy that encourages private owners to use and preserve historic structures and landscapes.

### **New Vernon Village Redevelopment Plan**

A portion of New Vernon Village has been designated as an *area in need of redevelopment* under the provisions of the Local Redevelopment and Housing Law (NJSA 40A:12A-1 et seq). In February 2003, the Township Committee designated 13 lots in the central core of the village to be subject to a redevelopment plan.<sup>30</sup> The redevelopment area is within the state and national register and municipal historic districts. The purpose of the redevelopment plan is to promote the economic and physical revitalization of the village so that it may continue its historic role as the center of interaction for the Harding community. It calls for a variety of municipal planning strategies including changes in municipal zoning regulations and direct investments in physical improvements.

Among the objectives of the redevelopment plan is the preservation of the historic character and integrity of New Vernon Village. The township retained a historic preservation architect to recommend design guidelines for the redevelopment area. In addition to the architectural design of buildings, other physical improvements in the village should be addressed, including those for vehicular and pedestrian circulation, landscaping and utilities, in a scale and of a design that is consistent with the historic character of the village. In this regard, the following should be given consideration:

1. A plan for the reintroduction of pathways consistent with those that can be seen in old photographs
2. Landscaping guidelines for buffering residences from commercial uses with improvements such as picket fences and shrub rows consistent with historic patterns
3. A plan to diminish the visual obtrusiveness of utility lines and poles
4. Traffic calming techniques and vehicular circulation/parking improvements compatible with the historic character of the village
5. Design guidelines for new construction to promote the preservation of historic integrity and character

---

<sup>30</sup> New Vernon Village Redevelopment Plan, prepared by Susan C. Kimball, PP, May 7, 2003.

## **Public Road and Bridge Design**

Municipal and county road design standards are another area of public policy that can have a substantial effect on historic preservation. The historic "curvilinear" design characteristics of roads are an important part of the historic landscape in Harding. Roads designed to typical modern engineering standards, which ignore the historic design characteristic of roads, can unalterably damage the historic character of a district. Today's engineers can design roads, when encouraged to do so, that achieve engineering goals without sacrificing historic character. Flexible road standards should be adopted to achieve this in historic districts, particularly road widths that are consistent with historic rural roads.

Public bridges are also an important concern for historic preservation. The Pleasant Plains Road bridge is an excellent example of a steel truss bridge built in the latter part of the 19th century.<sup>31</sup> As such it has historic significance related to the history of American engineering pursuant to National Register Criterion C. Some culverts (bridges with a span of less than 20 feet) may also have historic significance, a subject that needs to be examined.

Even if a bridge or culvert is not connected with a historic event or personality or representative of an era of engineering history, it can still be considered worthy of preservation. If a bridge is in a historic district and it is in harmony with, and contributes to, the historic character of the district, it should be preserved. There are a number of such examples in the municipal historic districts. Indeed these bridges are particularly important elements of historic landscapes. They are by their nature visually prominent focal points, having more of an effect than most other single elements on the integrity of historic districts.

Bridges in historic districts should be preserved where possible and, where not, replacement bridges should be designed and sized to be reflective of the historic character of the district. Bridges in the township are for the most part under the jurisdiction of the county. In implementing its bridge repair/construction policies, Morris County is respectful of historic bridges and has demonstrated a willingness to cooperate with the township in their preservation. The Township Committee, Township Engineer and citizens should continue to work with the county to encourage the preservation of historic bridges under county jurisdiction. State historic district registration can be particularly effective in this regard, since it is an official acknowledgement of historic significance and would require impact assessment and mitigation under the New Jersey Register of Historic Places Act.

These goals were in mind when the Circulation Plan Element of this Master Plan was adopted. It outlines the importance of our roads and bridges to the character of the community and recommends design and maintenance standards consistent with the goals of historic preservation.

---

<sup>31</sup> Bierce Riley, industrial archeologist, Draft New Jersey Historic Bridge Inventory.

## **New Jersey Statewide Residential Site Improvement Standards: *Special Area* Designation**

In 1997 the NJ Department of Community Affairs promulgated statewide Residential Site Improvement Standards which would have superseded the township's subdivision road standards as they pertain to residential developments. The township received *special area* designation in part because of its abundant historic resources. The *special area* standards for new subdivision roads are substantially consistent with Harding's historic preservation goals in terms of road widths and pavement requirements for new residential subdivisions. Most importantly, they allow narrower road widths and permit more flexibility in pavement requirements (gravel roadways are permitted).

Harding's *special area* designation is consistent with the goals of this element because all of the applicable historically significant areas of concern in this Plan are located within the designated area.<sup>32</sup> Without a *special area* designation, the statewide standards would be harmful to Harding's efforts to protect its historic heritage and rural character.

## **Historic Preservation Commission**

The Municipal Land Use Law provides authority for communities to create a municipal Historic Preservation Commission.<sup>33</sup> The Commission must contain members with specific qualifications. Its role is specified by ordinance in accordance with the requirements of the MLUL. Consistent with the goals of this Plan, the Harding Township Historic Preservation Commission, established in 1994, is empowered to prepare and maintain a survey of historic districts and sites within the township and to advise and assist applicants, the Planning and Zoning Boards, and the Township Committee on the historic significance of a district or site and ways of conserving, protecting, enhancing, and perpetuating the historic character and significance of these districts and sites. The Commission makes recommendations to the Planning Board regarding the Historic Preservation Plan element and other components of the Master Plan with implications for historic preservation. The Commission also makes recommendations to the Open Space Committee for the use of Open Space funds, a portion of which may be utilized for historic preservation. All this guides township efforts to maintain and protect the integrity of Harding's historic districts and promotes preservation of all contributing properties as well as Harding's historic streetscape and building patterns.

The Commission should inform and educate. In particular, those who plan reuse, new construction or development within historic districts should be advised about the historic context of the district. This is accomplished principally through the review process with applicants for all projects within historic districts or other contributing properties. More generally, the Commission should look for opportunities to ensure review and to inform residents about the historic resources, and their significance, in the township. As the

---

<sup>32</sup> The portion of Harding that is not within the Great Swamp Watershed is comprised of the northwest corner of the township, which is a combination of publicly-owned park land and a developed subdivision.

<sup>33</sup> Chapter 291, Municipal Land Use Law, Section C:40:55D-107.

designated advocate for preservation, the Commission should create formal linkages with other commissions, the Harding Land Trust, and the Harding Township Historical Society to maintain and protect Harding's historic legacy.

In the past, an important obstacle to historic preservation has been the lack of clear guidelines for new development in historic districts. Advisory guidelines should be developed by the Commission for use when assisting property owners and developers in understanding how they can develop their properties in a manner sympathetic to the historic nature of the district. The guidelines should provide advice on architectural and streetscape patterns that are consistent with Harding's historic districts. This would be an important educational tool and would ensure a consistent evaluation of all projects in historic districts.

Recognizing that historic landscape and building patterns continue to evolve, the Commission should reevaluate and document criteria for local historic designation and update the historic survey at regular intervals. The effectiveness of all these efforts should be reviewed and changed if necessary to ensure that Harding's preservation goals are met.