



STRATEGIC PRESERVATION PLAN FOR WESTPORT, CT



REPORT
JULY 2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Town of Westport, CT
110 Myrtle Ave.
Westport, CT 06880
<https://www.westportct.gov/hdc>

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Historic District Commission

Grayson Braun, Chair
Scott Springer, Vice-Chair
Martha Eidman
William Harris
Wendy Van Wie
Elizabeth Bolognino

Steering Committee

Grayson Braun, Steering Committee Chair
Martha Eidman
Vesna Herman
Jim Marpe
Colleen Groll

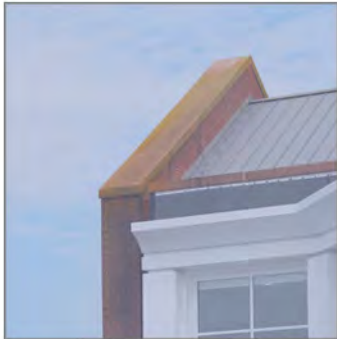
Town Staff

Donna Douglass

Chronicle Heritage (formerly PaleoWest, LLC) wishes to extend its gratitude to everyone who participated in the composition of the 2023 Westport Preservation Plan - including Town Staff, the Historic District Commission, members of the Steering Committee, and members of the public who contributed invaluable time and information that made this plan possible.

The 2023 Preservation Plan was funded by a grant provided by the State of Connecticut through a Historic Preservation Enhancement Grant acting through the Department of Economic and Community Development.

NEW ENGLAND IN
TRADITION...



COSMOPOLITAN IN
OUTLOOK

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



The old Town Hall at 90 Post Rd East was constructed in 1909 in the Richardsonian Romanesque style. The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is located within a Local Historic District and the Village District overlay.

Summary

In August of 2022, the Town of Westport, CT hired Chronicle Heritage (formerly PaleoWest, LLC) to create a preservation plan for the purpose of evaluating the existing conditions of the Town's Historic Preservation Program, and providing a set of measurable goals and objectives to guide future preservation efforts. This preservation plan acts as a planning document to be used by Town staff, members of the Historic District Commission (HDC), the Board of Selectwomen, and citizens of Westport who want to better understand the role of preservation in Westport. Planning documents such as the Westport preservation plan are meant to be carried out over a long period of time, oftentimes upwards of 10 to 15 years. Plans should, however, be evaluated on an annual basis to determine their effectiveness, identify new issues, and help create an annual action plan for Town staff and members of the HDC. Plans such as these should be updated as technology mandates change, or as goals and objectives are completed or rendered obsolete. The National Park Service recommends local municipalities adopt preservation plans as a way of integrating historic preservation into the broader realm of local public policy and advocacy. By adopting the preservation plan, Westport will better be able to direct its future preservation endeavors and target specific grant opportunities provided by the State of Connecticut and the federal government.

A total of 5 goals were established as part of the planning process. For each goal, there are related strategies to be pursued by Westport as a way of reaching these goals. Some strategies will likely take years to accomplish, while others, such as identifying new historic districts, should be undertaken on a regular basis over the lifetime of the plan. Goals and objectives are meant to be measurable, though they can also be broad and general to allow for flexibility and creativity. For each strategy and goal, we have tried to provide examples from other municipalities to provide a framework for effectively tackling the issues and reaching the plan's goals.

Plan Process

The formulation of the 2023 Westport Preservation Plan was a collaborative effort between the Town of Westport, Chronicle Heritage, members of the steering committee, residents of Westport, and various stakeholders who provided input throughout the planning process.

Initial meetings were held with Town staff in August of 2022 over Zoom. Chronicle tasked Town staff with forming a steering committee made up of members of the HDC, architects, non-profit staff, and interested citizens. During the initial kickoff meeting with the steering committee, Chronicle Heritage asked members of the committee to take a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) assessment of the Town's existing Preservation Program. Using the information from the SWOT analysis, Chronicle Heritage staff drafted an initial set of goals and strategies for the Preservation Plan. Subsequent meetings with Town staff and the steering committee revised and refined the goals and strategies that would make their way into this document. Additional meetings were held with stakeholders throughout the process to better understand the existing development conditions in Westport and how to best address problems and challenges through preservation efforts. Throughout the process, Chronicle staff gathered background information on the history of Westport, Town development patterns, codes and ordinances, and historic resource inventories in order to better understand local history, the existing historic building stock, and how to best address preservation issues moving forward.



Steering Committee

A steering committee comprised of members from the HDC and the community was formed early in the planning process. The steering committee helped with the formulation of plan goals and strategies, and provided feedback to the consultants throughout the planning process.



Community Survey

A digital survey was posted online requesting feedback from the community on existing preservation efforts in Westport and to identify strengths and weaknesses of the program. Over 225 responses were received throughout the 2 week period that the survey was open.

Community Survey

In March of 2023 an online community survey was conducted to gather feedback from Westport residents on the state of historic preservation in their community. The following section details the results of that survey. A total of 226 responses were collected over several weeks. Open-ended questions have been summarized within this section. The full results of the survey, including the open-ended questions can be found within the appendix.

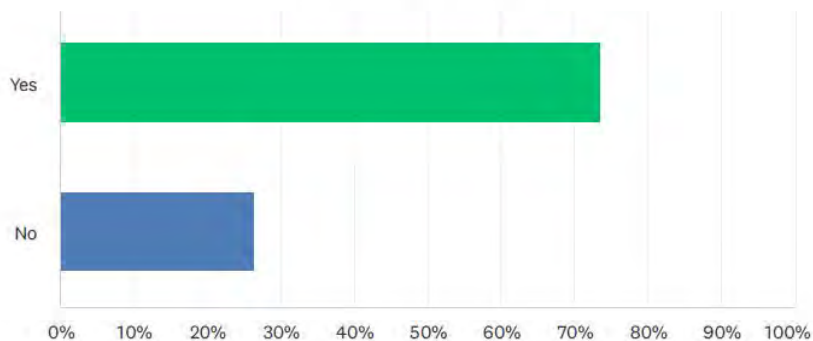
The first series of questions gauged respondents' knowledge of historic preservation, how important they believed historic preservation is, and how effective they believe the existing program is operating within Westport.

The majority of respondents were aware that Westport has a dedicated preservation program. Over 85% of respondents also believed that historic preservation was either extremely important or very important to the future of Westport. Respondents were more divided on how well they believed the existing program was operating to protect historic resources. Less than 25% of respondents believed that the Town's existing program was very effective or effective for protecting historic resources in the community.

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

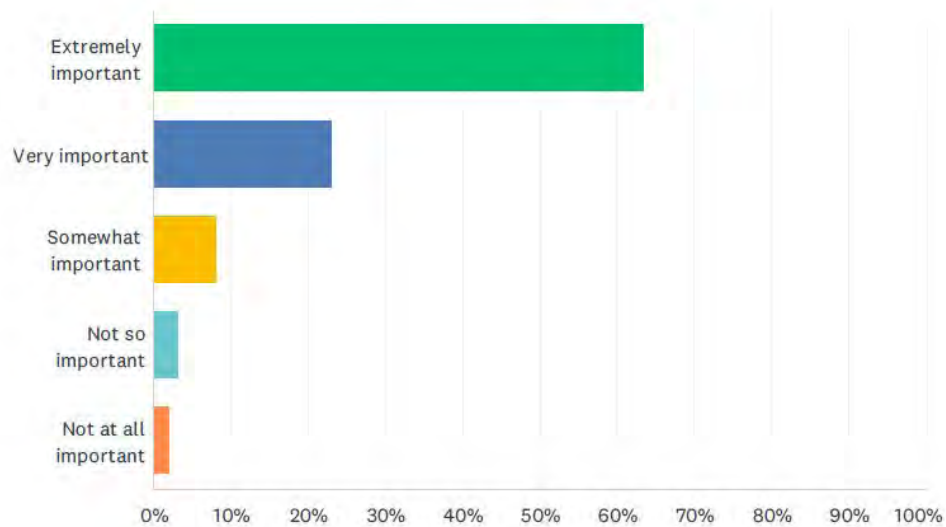
Q1 Were you aware that the Town has a Historic District Commission with a dedicated office within Town Hall?

Answered: 224 Skipped: 2



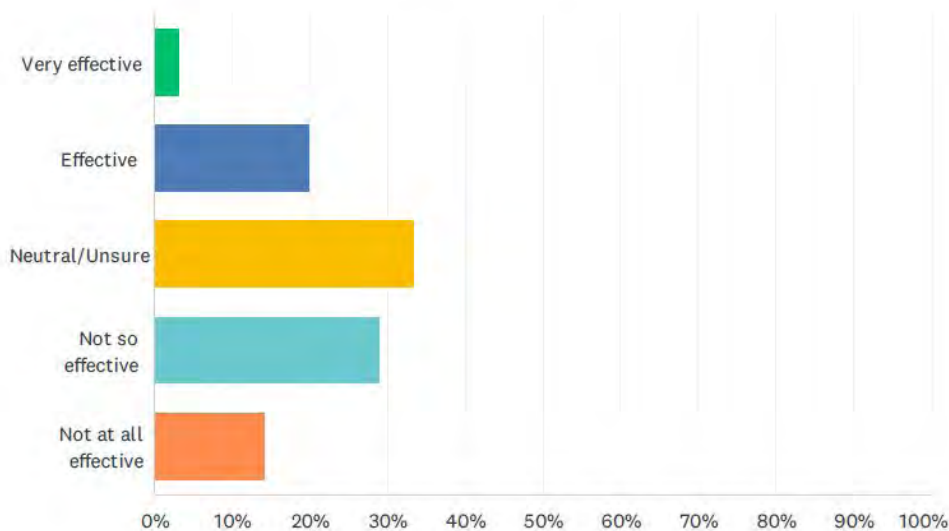
Q2 How important do you think historic preservation is to the future of Westport?

Answered: 225 Skipped: 1



Q3 How effective do you think the Town's existing historic preservation program is when it comes to protecting historic resources in the community?

Answered: 224 Skipped: 2



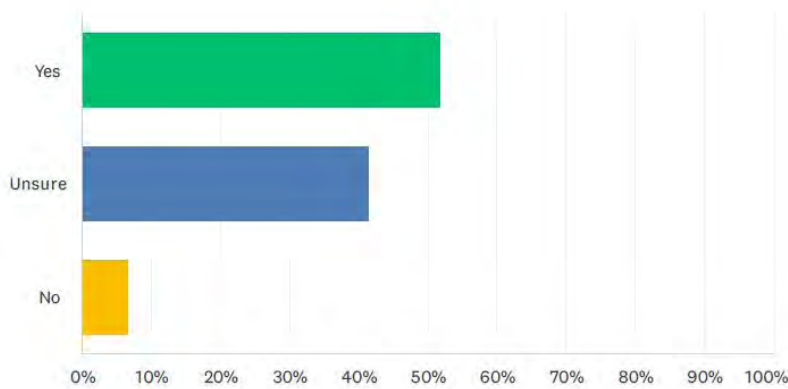
Question 4 asked respondents if they believed there were any properties, neighborhoods, or geographic areas within Westport that could be considered for historic districts or historic landmarks. Slightly more than 50% of respondents believed there are, with 41% being unsure, and slightly less than 7% believing there are no additional areas in Westport that can be considered historic. For those that answered yes, the survey asked respondents to provide more information about the area in question. A total of 96 open-ended responses were received for Question 4.

Open-ended responses for Question 4 provide a good starting point for the Town of Westport in its effort to identify new historic resources through surveys and historic context reports.

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q4 Are there individual properties, neighborhoods, or geographic areas in Westport that you believe could be considered historic districts or historic landmarks?

Answered: 224 Skipped: 2



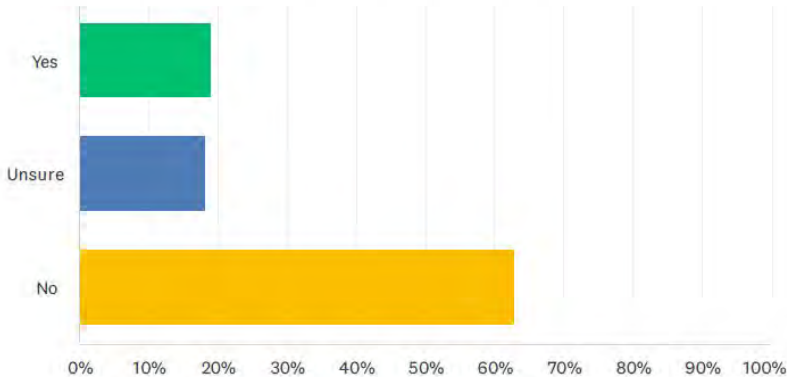
Question 5 asked respondents if they believed there are any downsides to expanding Westport's inventory of historic districts and landmarks. Over 60% of respondents answered no, with a combined 40% answering yes or unsure. There was a total of 43 open-ended responses.

Common themes that emerged out of the open-ended responses include concerns over property rights, the belief that designation would either stifle development or inhibit economic progress, a belief that historic properties cannot be updated or maintained, and concerns around the vagueness of what is constituted as a historic property.

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q5 In your view, are there any potential downsides to the Town expanding its inventory of Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks?

Answered: 221 Skipped: 5



Questions 6 through 10 asked participants to rank several initiatives on a scale of 0-10 that they believe the Town and the HDC should concentrate on in future planning efforts. Educating the public, protecting historic buildings from demolition, and promoting the restoration and reuse of historic buildings were ranked highest among participants. Increasing the number of financial incentives and identifying new historic areas within Westport were also viewed as important by participants, though scored lower than the first three questions.

Survey Q6: Identifying new areas of town for historic districts, historic landmarks, and other historic assets

Survey Q7: Financial incentives and other benefits to historic property owners

Survey Q8: Educating the public on historic preservation and local history

Survey Q9: Protecting historic properties from demolition

Survey Q10: Promoting the restoration and reuse of historic buildings while enhancing energy and material efficiency

Finally, participants were asked if there was any additional information they would like to share about historic preservation in Westport. The feedback from this question was essential to developing some of the goals and strategies found later in this document. A full copy of the survey and the results of the survey can be found within the Appendix and will be kept on file with the Town of Westport and the HDC.

Overview of Goals

A total of 5 goals have been established for the purpose of the Preservation Plan. Goals are meant to be broad, capturing a range of issues and that are both achievable and allowing for a flexible range of strategies for meeting them. For each goal, there are a number of strategies or action items that the Town and the HDC may undertake to work towards the goals of the plan. Strategies are grouped by each goal for organizational purposes, though strategies might benefit multiple goals and other strategies.

Five Goals of the Preservation Plan:

1) Protect and expand the inventory of historic resources within Westport

2) Foster a greater understanding of local preservation efforts and local history by actively engaging the community of Westport

3) Align Westport's preservation efforts with complimentary town, state, and non-profit activities

4) Expand the internal operations of the Historic District Commission

5) Provide reasonable alternatives to full scale demolition within Westport



(Source: Library of Congress)

These goals are discussed in much greater detail in Chapter 4 below. A full list of strategies associated with each goal is found in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 includes a matrix of the goals and strategies, with the estimated timeline for how long it will take to achieve specific strategies. Strategies may be grouped into short, medium, and long-term. Short-term strategies include items such as creating informational brochures of available benefits to property owners within historic districts which can be achieved within 0-2 years. Medium-term strategies include those that could result in a change to adopted ordinances and policies that will likely have to go through a public process of approval. Medium-term strategies can take anywhere from 2 to 4 years. Long-term strategies are those that may result in a dramatic change to the way the program operates. Strategies may also be ongoing, indicating that they can either be completed multiple times or should be undertaken on a continual basis throughout the life of the plan. Historic resource surveys for example should be undertaken on an annual basis as new resources are always becoming historic.

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CHAPTER 2

HISTORIC CONTEXT



The Bayberry Lane Bridge of Merritt Parkway is one of several bridges along the Parkway that was designed in the Art Deco and Art Moderne style during the 1930s. The bridges were constructed using experimental techniques for the time. (Source: Library of Congress)

Pre-History

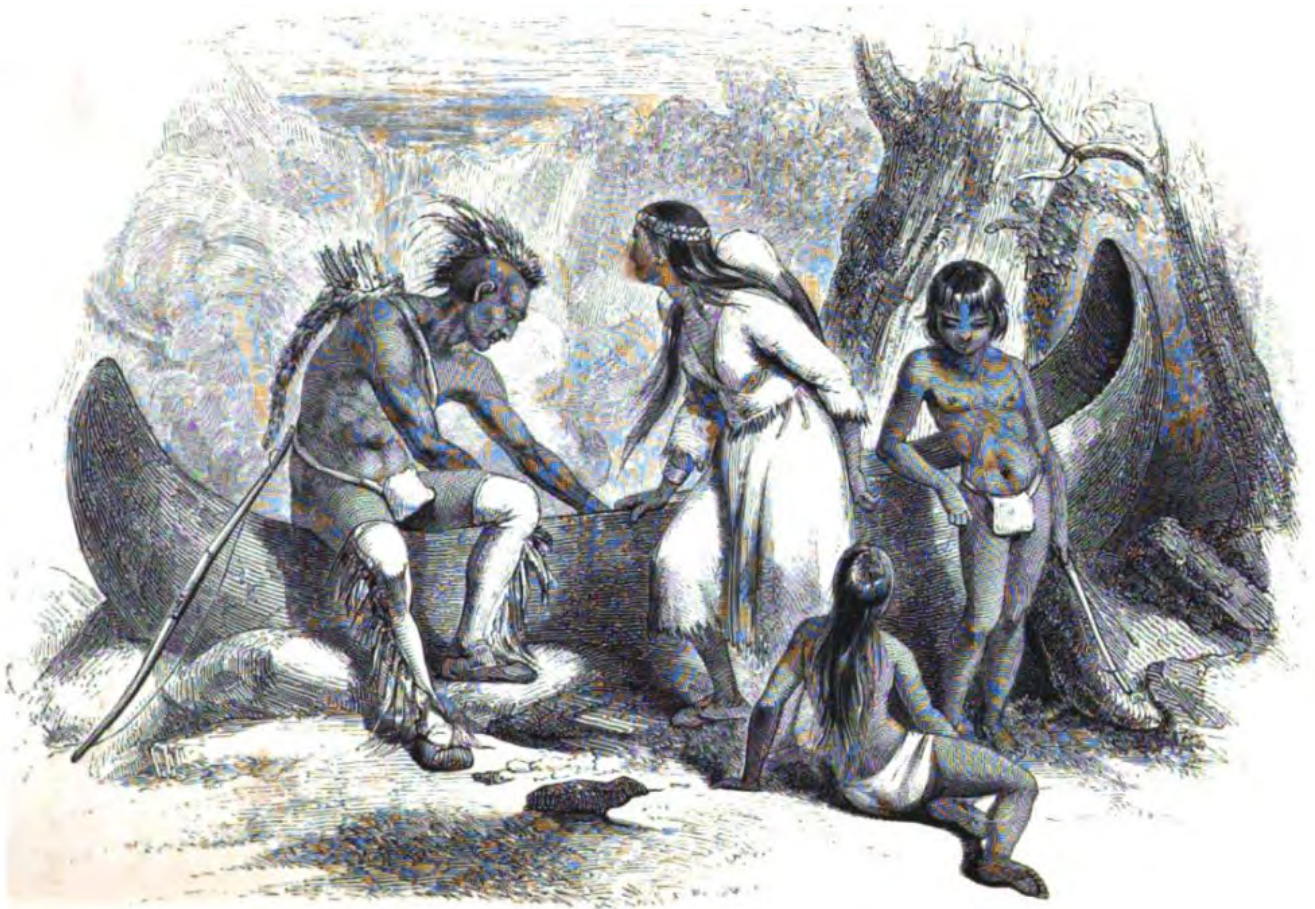
Before it became a part of the English Colonies, and later the State of Connecticut, the area surrounding Westport was inhabited as far back as 10,000 years ago by various Paleoindian groups. Abundant archaeological evidence from the Late Archaic period (4,000-2,000 B.C.) shows that the area of Westport was desirable to local Native American groups who lived, hunted, and fished in the surrounding area. The earliest evidence of agriculture in Westport dates to about 1,000 years ago, when local Native Americans grew and harvested corn, beans, tobacco, and squash. The Paugussett tribe most notably inhabited the area of Westport along the Saugatuck River where it meets the Long Island Sound. Other Native American groups who inhabited the area included the Hammonassets, the Menunketucks, the Quinnipiacs, the Siwanogs, and the Pequots. Most of the archaeological discoveries in the vicinity of Westport were located along the beaches of the Long Island Sound and the Saugatuck River, indicating that there has long been a connection between Westport's waterways and human habitation.

When colonists first arrived in the region interactions with the Native groups were not always peaceful. New Englanders quickly set up reservations for Native groups, though over time the colonist took back the reservations as settlement expanded. The Pequots resisted colonial efforts to resettle. Confrontations between the Pequots and colonists lead to the Great Swamp War in 1637. The defeat of the Pequots in the war marked a turning point in Native American and colonist relations. After the war, it was clear that the Native tribes and the colonists could not co-exist. By the time settlement had expanded westward to Westport, only a handful of Native Americans remained in the area.

Colonial Period

The first colonial inhabitants of Westport were five families who came to Westport in 1648 from nearby Fairfield. These five families, known as the Bankside Farmers, established farms along the Long Island Sound on what is now known as Beachside Ave. At the time, the area was not yet known as Westport. Colonists called the area Machamux, a Pequot word that meant "Beautiful Land." Over time, the success and prosperity of the Bankside Farmers influenced other colonists throughout Connecticut to buy land and settle in the region.

After the arrival of the Bankside Farmers, the colonist migrating to Machumax primarily consisted of clergymen, farmers, and servants of the two groups. At the time, servants included enslaved Native Americans and Africans, as well as Anglo indentured servants. A schoolhouse was established in 1703 north of Bankside in the area of town now known as Greens Farms. This area is considered the oldest standing neighborhood within the current boundaries of Westport. Several years later in 1711, the first meeting house in Westport was established near what is now Morningside Drive South.



(Source: De Forest, J. William. (1851). *History of the Indians of Connecticut from the earliest known period to 1850*. Hartford: W. J. Hamersley.)

Westport continued to grow steadily throughout the 1700s. Kings Highway, then known as the Boston Post Road, was the primary corridor connecting the northeastern colonies. Improvements to the corridor allowed Westport to prosper throughout the 1700s. A bridge was constructed over the Saugatuck River and fishing wharfs began to develop along the coast. These improvements provided access into and out of Westport for both people and goods. While the scale of slavery was not as widespread as in the south, it was used within Fairfield County and accounted for as much as 6% of the population during the late 1700s. By 1774 the Connecticut legislature had outright banned the importation of slaves. Several years later in 1783, the state legislature passed laws phasing out slavery and granting freedom at the age of 25. It wouldn't be until decades later in 1865 when slavery was formally abolished by the federal government that the practice ended in Fairfield County.

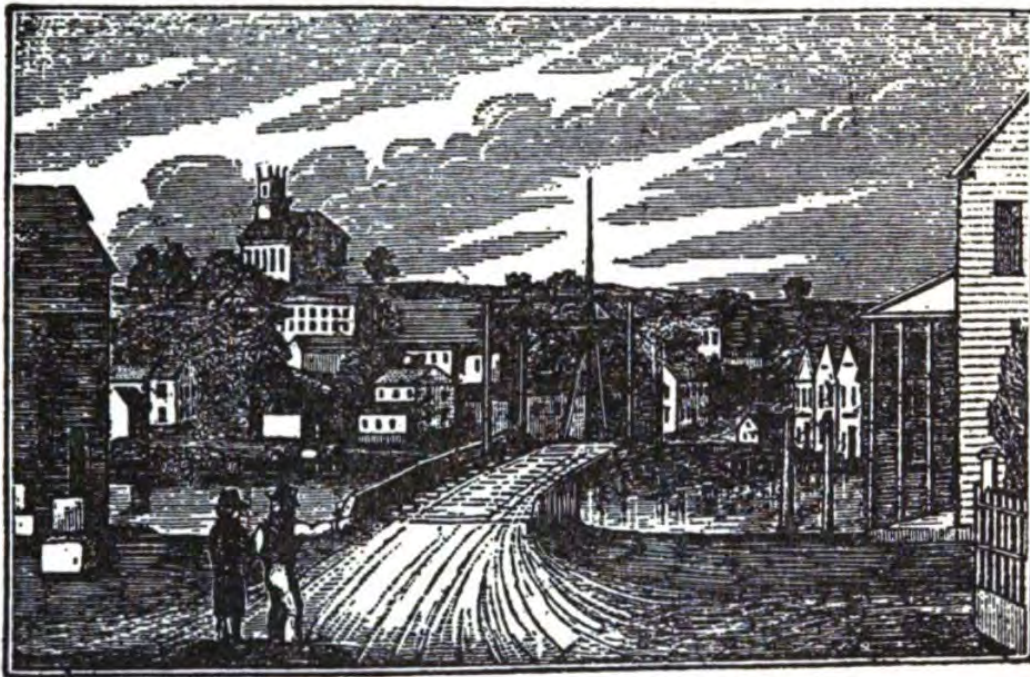
Revolutionary War & 19th Century

During the Revolutionary War, the economy of Westport changed from agricultural and agrarian-centered to supporting the war effort. Due to the strategic location of the Boston Post Road and the number of economic ventures in the area, the area of Westport was targeted by the British fleet. On April 25, 1777, General William Tryon and his forces landed at Compo Point and marched north, pillaging military supplies along the coast. Several days later Tryon and his men marched back south to their ships at Compo Point where a battle took place. Tryon and his British soldiers would return several months later in July with German mercenaries to further disrupt supplies in Fairfield County. Meeting up with British General George Garth, the two British generals burned homes and buildings along the coastline near Westport, including the 1711 meetinghouse, fifteen houses, and eleven barns. These raids had an impact on the local economy that would affect the commerce of Westport leading into the 19th century.

After the Revolutionary War, a descendant of one of the original five Bankside farmers, Ebenezer Jesup, established a wharf near the headwaters of the Saugatuck River. Jesup also constructed a new highway connecting his wharf to county roads across the Saugatuck River. This new

highway diverged from the existing Kings Highway and shifted development away from the highway in Westport, thereby preserving the colonial heritage of Kings Highway. Jesup began developing this area of Westport in what is now known as the Westport Center.

In 1835 Westport was incorporated as a new town that encompassed both sides of the Saugatuck River, though it did not yet include the area of Greens Farms and the original five farms of the Bankside farmers. The name Westport was chosen at this time to reflect the ports prominent location in the western boundaries of Connecticut. Before long the areas of Greens Farms and the Bankside families were incorporated into the boundaries of Westport, as the agricultural production of these areas was closely linked with the wharfing operations in Westport proper.



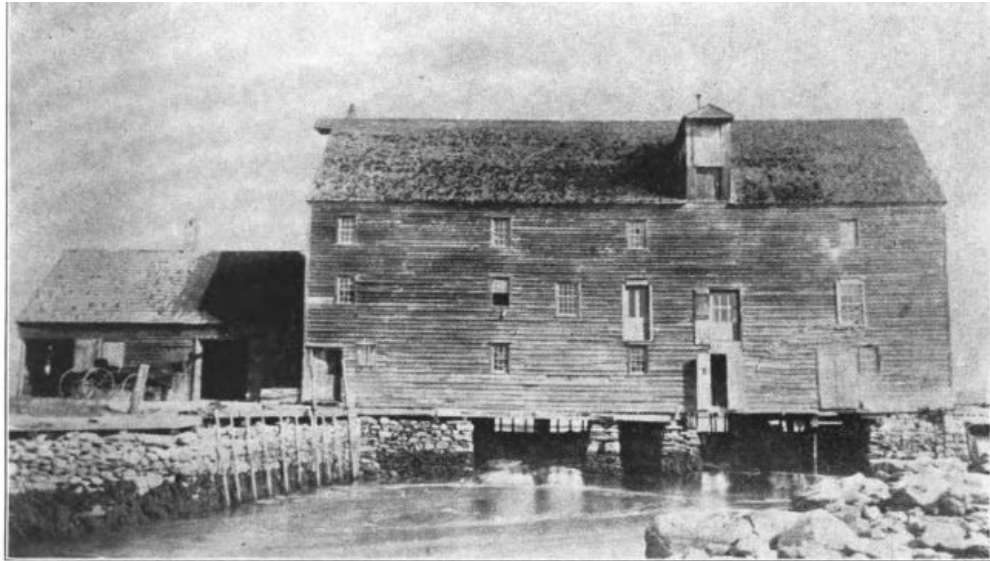
WESTPORT IN 1835

(Source: Birge, E. Coley., Gage, M. Coley. (1926). Westport, Connecticut: the making of a Yankee township. New York: The Writers Pub. Co.)

Westport wharfs primarily shipped agricultural products such as grain both domestically and around the globe in exchange for sugar, molasses, cotton, and lumber. Westport's proximity to New York City also helped agricultural production and shipping flourish locally. Onions became a staple crop of Westport during the 1800s, and during the American Civil War Westport became one of the primary providers of onions for the Union army. During this period Westport also became a local center of the Underground Railroad which is reputed to have operated out of the river in the northwestern area of Westport.

Jesup's highway and the bridge remained primary drivers of the local commercial activity in Westport until at least 1873 when new bridges were built just south of Westport Center. This area of town was primarily inhabited by both Irish and Italian immigrants who called the area Saugatuck. More industrial endeavors such as factories and coal yards began to appear around Westport during this time as they could easily take advantage of both the local shipping ports and overland routes. During the end of the 19th century, the economy of Westport began to shift away from agriculture and industry towards tourism and leisure activities.

The railroad, which had been brought to Westport in the 1850s, never had a major impact on local industry, though it did help to boost the growing leisure and tourism industry in Westport. By the 1880s commuter lines were running to Westport from New York City and allowed wealthy elites to spend their summers in Westport. Several of these wealthy elites from up north built large estates along the Westport coastline, including the 500-acre Morris Ketchum estate of Cross highway, the 180-acre Longshore estate along the Long Island Sound, and the estate of E. T. Bedford alongside Beachside Avenue at the end of the 19th century.



Courtesy of Judge Joseph Morton

TIDE MILL AT COMPO

(Source: Birge, E. Coley., Gage, M. Coley. (1926). *Westport, Connecticut: the making of a Yankee township*. New York: The Writers Pub. Co.)



COMPO HOUSE.

Residence of Richard H. Winslow Esq.

(Source: Library of Congress)

20th Century

By the early 20th century, Westport had garnered a reputation as an elite coastal haven. Bedford, who had established a large estate in Westport at the end of the 19th century, financed many public buildings in Westport at the beginning of the 1900s including several school buildings, a fire station, the YMCA building, and Westport's first public library in 1908. In the 1920s the Longshore estate was taken over by the Longshore Country Club which served clientele such as F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, and Marilyn Monroe. During this same period, more modest resort communities began to emerge, including a cottage resort community at Campo Beach. This same era saw Westport emerge as a community for artists. In 1960 the Town of Westport bought the Longshore Country Club and turned it into a public facility that still operates to this day.

The early 20th century continues to characterize much of the historic housing stock that exists in Westport today. Though this era predates the modern preservation movement by several decades, local Westport residents preserved many of the historic buildings that had been constructed in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The colonial revival style was especially popular and continues to influence architectural styles in Westport. Like many other communities across the U.S., Westport experienced a housing boom in the early 20th century as the automobile became more affordable and mainstream. This era marked the beginning of what we would recognize as suburban development in Westport. In 1924 the State of Connecticut made improvements to the old Boston Post Road and renamed it as US Route 1, the first modern highway through the northeast. Other routes such as the Merritt Parkway constructed by the Works Progress Administration and the Connecticut Turnpike completed in the mid-century helped to proliferate the suburbanization of Westport. Many of the buildings built during the suburbanization period of Westport are at an age or are soon to be at an age where they could be considered historic by established federal standards and policies.



Residential houses constructed in the 20th century pay homage to Westport's heritage by incorporating elements of colonial architecture into their design. Top photo from 1941. Bottom photo from 2023.

(Source Top Photo: Library of Congress)

CHAPTER 3

HISTORIC PRESERVATION IN WESTPORT



The Dunn House along Myrtle Ave. was constructed sometime in the early 1800s.
(Source: Library of Congress)

Benefits of Historic Preservation

The benefits historic preservation brings to communities has been well documented across several disciplines. Publications and studies have shown that historic preservation is an effective economic tool, providing enhanced property values, stability during economic downturns, and revenue through heritage tourism. Other studies show that the preservation and rehabilitation of historic structures contributes to job growth in the construction and trades industry. In addition to the economic benefits, historic preservation promotes a community's character, livability, and quality of life while honoring the past. There also appears to be a strong link between historic preservation and environmental sustainability. Waste generated from the demolition and construction of new structures contributes significantly to our local landfills. By utilizing existing structures, historic preservation helps to divert waste away from landfills while reducing the need to extract raw resources for the processing and manufacturing of building components. Advances in technology have also allowed historic buildings to become more energy efficient while providing modern amenities that many homeowners associate with new construction.

Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation

Historic preservation improves the local economy through investments, heritage tourism, and a stable tax base. The National Trust for Historic Preservation defines heritage tourism as, "traveling to experience the places, artifacts, and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present." As many areas across the U.S. deindustrialized during the latter half of the 20th century, cities turned to heritage tourism as a way of bolstering the local economy. Cities such as Detroit, Michigan and Birmingham, Alabama have utilized their historic resources to help form new identities and promote local tourism. In smaller cities, 1980s the Main Street program has been effective in utilizing historic preservation as a way of revitalizing the local economy. The Main Street program was formed in the 1980s as a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation with the goal of "strengthening communities through preservation-based economic development in older and historic downtowns and neighborhood commercial districts." Today, the Main Street program operates in over 1,200 communities across the U.S.

Financial incentives such as federal tax credits are a powerful tool provided by the National Park Service that have helped revitalize historic buildings across the U.S. Since the 1970s, over 47,000 properties have taken advantage of the federal tax credit program to preserve and restore significant historic structures. Many states, such as Connecticut, also offer a state historic tax credit program for qualifying projects. Local communities might also adopt local measures to promote historic preservation, such as offering a tax break to property owners within historic districts, fee waivers on historic properties, and small grants for qualified projects.

Construction Quality and the Longevity of Structures

Studies have suggested that, with proper maintenance, historic structures may last longer than their modern counterparts. According to a 2013 report by the Getty Center, the average lifespan of a traditional stone or wood building with ordinary maintenance is 100 to 120 years before structural elements need to be replaced. With proper maintenance, the lifetime of historic structures can be expanded hundreds of years as evidenced by buildings in the U.S. dating to the 17th and 18th centuries. Studies on more recent construction vary,



but concrete and glass structures have a standard lifetime of about 50 to 60 years. Research suggests that modern strip malls and other commercial structures usually last about 30 years before they require either complete remodeling or demolition. New residential construction has a similar lifetime before major components need to be replaced. Many historic buildings can also be retrofitted to allow for modern amenities while also being energy efficient. Historic buildings also have the advantage of being constructed of high-quality materials which stand the test of time. Since the 1950s, many buildings have been constructed of low-quality and often hazardous materials such as asbestos and synthetic sealants.

Historic Preservation and Job Creation

Historic preservation results in the creation of thousands of new jobs annually, and studies show that preservation construction jobs outpace non-skilled construction jobs for new development. This is primarily due to the intensive nature of rehabilitation and renovation projects which require a greater amount of skill and expertise from workers. Additionally, labor for preservation projects almost always comes from local sources, resulting in a financial gain to local workers and the local economy. The emerging deconstruction industry in the U.S. which has close ties to historic preservation, provides additional skilled labor that is not found in the traditional construction and demolition industries. Electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and painters are just a few of the skilled trades required for a successful preservation project. In addition, architects, engineers, lawyers, real estate brokers, and public sector workers are



also necessary participants and partners for any historic preservation project. Materials for construction also often come from local sources, creating even more revenue and jobs for the local economy. A study conducted by the Campaign for Historic Trades in 2021 found that historic preservation results in the creation of 165,000 jobs annually, with more jobs expected in the coming decades as our existing housing stock becomes older.

Historic Preservation and Environmental Sustainability

Many non-profits, research institutions, and universities have explored the relationship between historic preservation and environmental sustainability. In the U.S. alone, nearly half of our carbon emissions can be attributed to the construction and operation of buildings, and the impact increases significantly when we account for the manufacturing, infrastructure, and utility development that goes into constructing houses in new neighborhoods. Green construction has been suggested as an alternative to standard building practices to offset some of the environmental impacts associated with new construction; however, the EPA has found that it takes about 65 years for the energy savings of new energy-efficient buildings to offset the waste from demolition and the production of new materials. Couple this with other studies which show that new builds typically do not last more than 30 years, and the amount of waste from new construction is staggering. Additionally, all of the embodied energy that goes into resource extraction, manufacturing of materials, and the construction of buildings is lost when a building is demolished. The demolition of structures also adds waste to our landfills, even though many construction materials remain usable after a structure has been demolished. Certain cities in the U.S. have begun to require that building materials be reused in new construction as a way of diverting waste from landfills, but historic structures built to higher quality standards provide many more of these recyclable materials than modern buildings do. This deconstruction approach ensures that building components remain usable past the life of the building while reducing the need to extract and process raw resources from the environment into new building materials.

Further Reading Regarding the Benefits of Historic Preservation

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Westport's Preservation Program

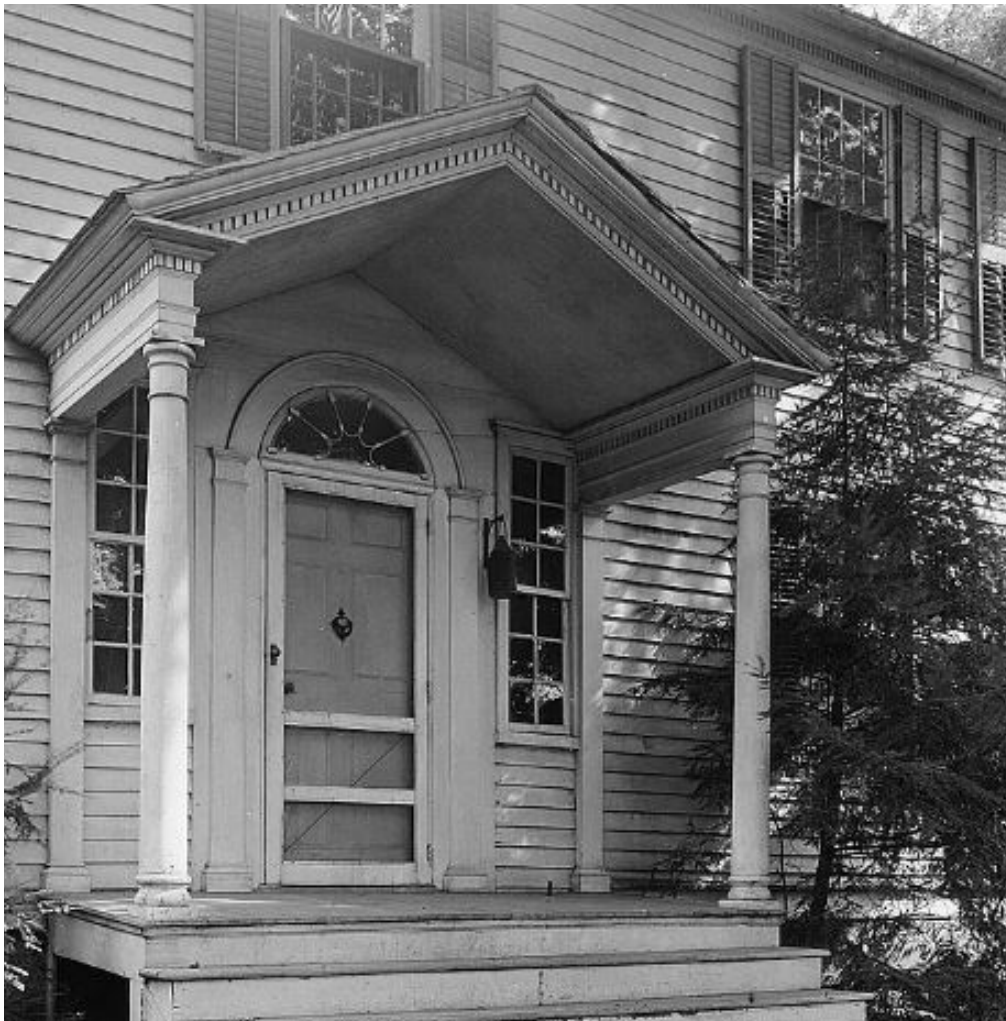
Historic District Commission (HDC)

The Historic District Commission (HDC) is the primary body responsible for the function and administration of local historic districts and local historic properties within Westport. The HDC is committee comprised of five (5) regular members and three (3) alternate members who are appointed by the First Selectwoman. They have a dedicated office within town hall and are assisted by a dedicated Town employee who provides staff support and guidance. The HDC serves in a regulatory and advisory capacity for Westport's adopted Historic Preservation Program, namely through the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness (CoA). A CoA is required for most projects that would alter the exterior appearance of a building within a Local Historic District or a building designated as a Local Historic Property that is visible from the right of way. CoA's must be approved by the HDC before any permits can be issued by Westport's building department. It is the HDC's role to determine whether or not a project is appropriate for the character and appearance of the historic district or subject historic property. The HDC uses adopted design guidelines, design principles, and the Standards for Rehabilitation adopted by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior in determining whether or not a project can be approved.

The HDC also supports the administration of Zoning Regulation §32-18 "Historic Preservation Zoning Incentives." This zoning regulation offers zoning incentives to applicants in exchange for the preservation of historic structures in Westport's residential zoning districts. Special exemptions may be granted under §32-18 for flexibility in use, setback, height, parking, landscaping, coverage, and lot area. In exchange for zoning incentives, a perpetual preservation easement is placed on the exterior of the historic structure.

Another primary duty of the HDC is to review qualifying residential and commercial demolitions within the Town of Westport. The HDC reviews demolition permits from the Building Department for buildings that are 50 years and older and 500 Sq. Ft. or more. If the HDC believes the structure in question may have enough integrity to qualify as an important historic or cultural building, then they may uphold a demolition delay for a period of up to 180 days.

During this period the demolition of the structure may not commence and the HDC may work with the applicant to propose an alternative to demolition. A demolition delay is one of the most effective tools the HDC has in its toolbox to prevent the demolition of important historic resources.



Entrance to the William Meade Prince House in Westport
(Source: Library of Congress)

Demolition Delay (§14-21)

A demolition delay ordinance is a useful tool used by many historic preservation programs across the U.S. as a way of preventing the demolition of potentially significant historic structures and other resources. Westport is one of dozens of communities in Connecticut to adopt a local ordinance enforcing a demolition delay on structures that may be historic. Westport is fortunate to have one of the longest demolition delays in the entire state, with a waiting period of 180 days if the delay is upheld by the HDC. Typically, the demolition delay process involves first identifying if the building is architecturally significant, is associated with a local historical figure, or has some other defining characteristic that may qualify it as historically significant. The HDC then evaluates whether or not the building retains enough integrity to validate upholding the demolition delay. If the building does not possess any of these qualities or lacks integrity, the HDC may waive the demolition delay, thereby allowing the demolition process to proceed. If the building does possess these qualities and retains integrity, then the HDC may uphold the demolition delay. During the delay period, the HDC, Town Staff, and the applicant may work together to come up with an alternative to the building's demolition.

Historic Preservation Zoning Incentives (§32-18)

The Historic Preservation Zoning Incentive was adopted in 2008 to incentive the rehabilitation of historic buildings within Westport. §32-18 allows the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) to grant a special permit authorizing exemptions from the underlying zoning restrictions related to land-use, setback, height, parking, landscaping, coverage, and lot area where such restrictions would discourage the rehabilitation and renovation of historic buildings. By submitting an application under §32-18, the applicant agrees to place a perpetual preservation easement on the building, which provides the holder of the easement (The Town) the authority to do all things necessary to preserve the structural and historic integrity of the building. The preservation easement provides the HDC the authority to regulate any exterior alterations to the structure through the Historic Residential Structures (HRS) process as described above.

The Historic District Commission's Advisory Capacity to the Planning and Zoning Commission

In certain instances, the HDC acts in an advisory capacity to P&Z when a case may involve historic properties or matters of local preservation. Namely, for cases before the P&Z that fall within the Village District Overlay/Westport Center, Business Center District/Historic, and the Historic Design District, the HDC is involved as a consulting party. In certain instances, a joint committee between the HDC and the Architectural Review Board (ARB) serves collectively as the advising party.

Village District Overlay (§36)

The Village District Overlay was formed in 2017 with the purpose of protecting the character, landscape, historic structures, and development pattern of the district while encouraging new development that is mixed-use, walkable, and welcoming. The overlay provides an additional layer of use and development standards to the underlying zoning district of the area. The Village District Overlay includes a set of design principles and standards that apply to new construction and the reconstruction and rehabilitation of existing building facades within the district. A joint committee between the HDC and the ARB reviews applications for new construction and substantial reconstructions within the district and submits a report and recommendation to P&Z on their findings.

Business Center District/Historic (§29A)

There are two areas within the Business Center District/Historic zone, both of which fall within the Village District Overlay. The main purpose of the overlay is to encourage the preservation of structures that are included on Westport's Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) through flexibility in the zoning regulations. The overlay also allows for the moving of structures as a way of preventing their demolition.

Historic Design District (§30)

The Historic Design District includes National Hall and several adjacent buildings on Wilton and Post Rd. The purpose of the District is to prevent the loss of historic public buildings and

Westport as a Certified Local Government (CLG)

Westport is one of many communities across the U.S. to take advantage of the Certified Local Government (CLG) program administered by the National Park Service. Westport was the first Town in Connecticut to become a member of the CLG program back in 1986. The program creates partnerships between local, state, and federal entities to promote historic preservation at the grassroots level. By being a CLG, Westport is able to take advantage of grants offered by the federal government and the State of Connecticut. In fact, this preservation plan is made possible by a CLG grant that Westport was awarded in 2022. CLG status also allows Westport to take advantage of technical assistance and training opportunities offered by the State Preservation Office and the National Park Service. Westport's responsibilities as a CLG include maintaining a record of historic resources, maintaining preservation standards set by the Secretary of the Interior, and facilitating the public participation process in the nomination of buildings and sites to the National Register of Historic Places.



The William F. Cribari Memorial Bridge around 1970. The bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1987 and is the oldest surviving movable bridge in Connecticut. (Source: Library of Congress)

The Historic Resource Inventory (HRI)

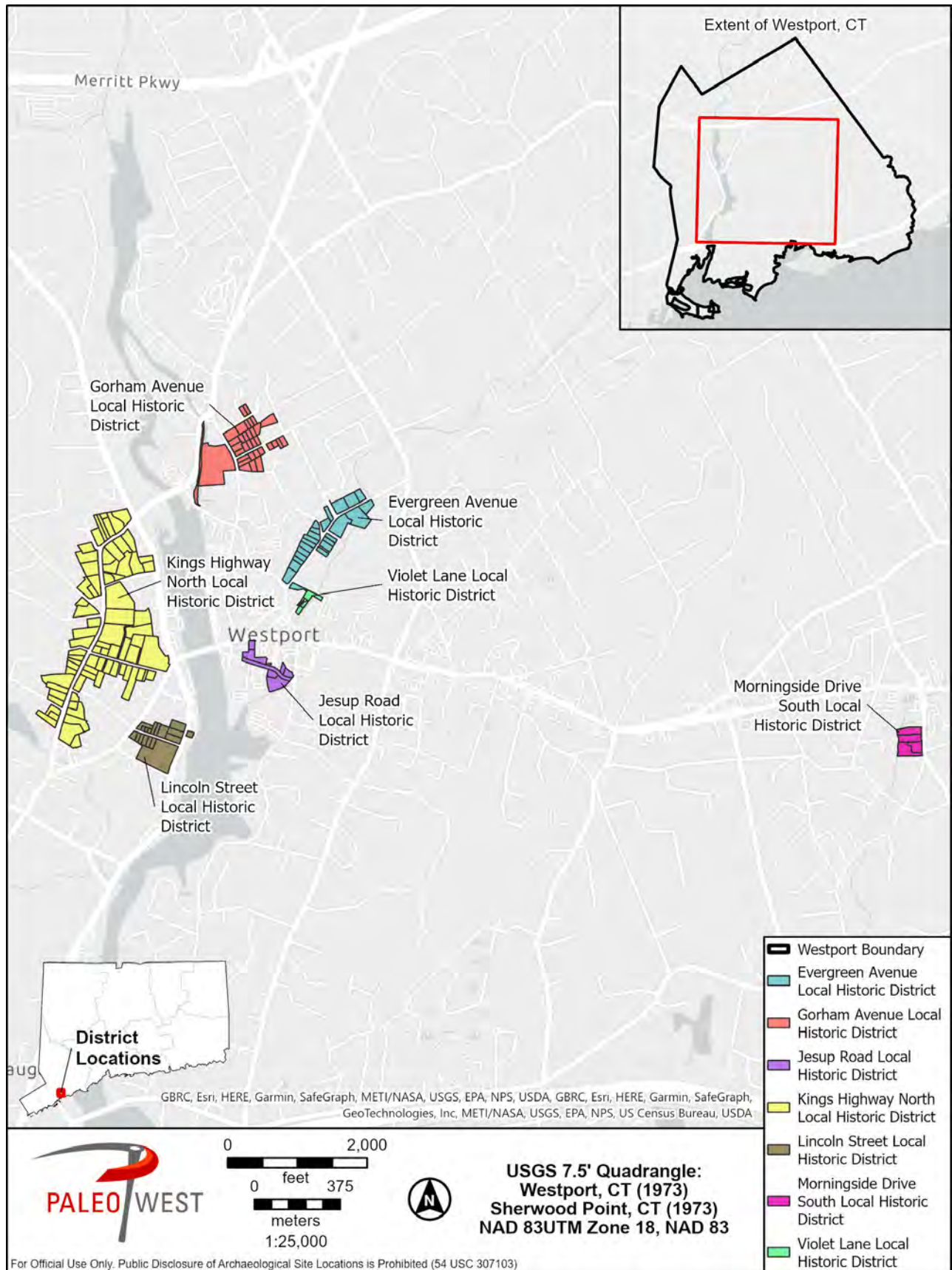
The Historic Resource Inventory (HRI) is a list of all surveyed historic properties found within Westport and is maintained by the HDC. The HRI includes information such as designation level (local, state, or federal), date of construction, building name, and architectural style. HRIs are a useful way for municipalities to maintain a record of their historic building stock and to track changes to specific properties over periods of time. Keeping an HRI is the first step in proactive planning for the protection of historic resources.

Local, State, and National Landmark Designation

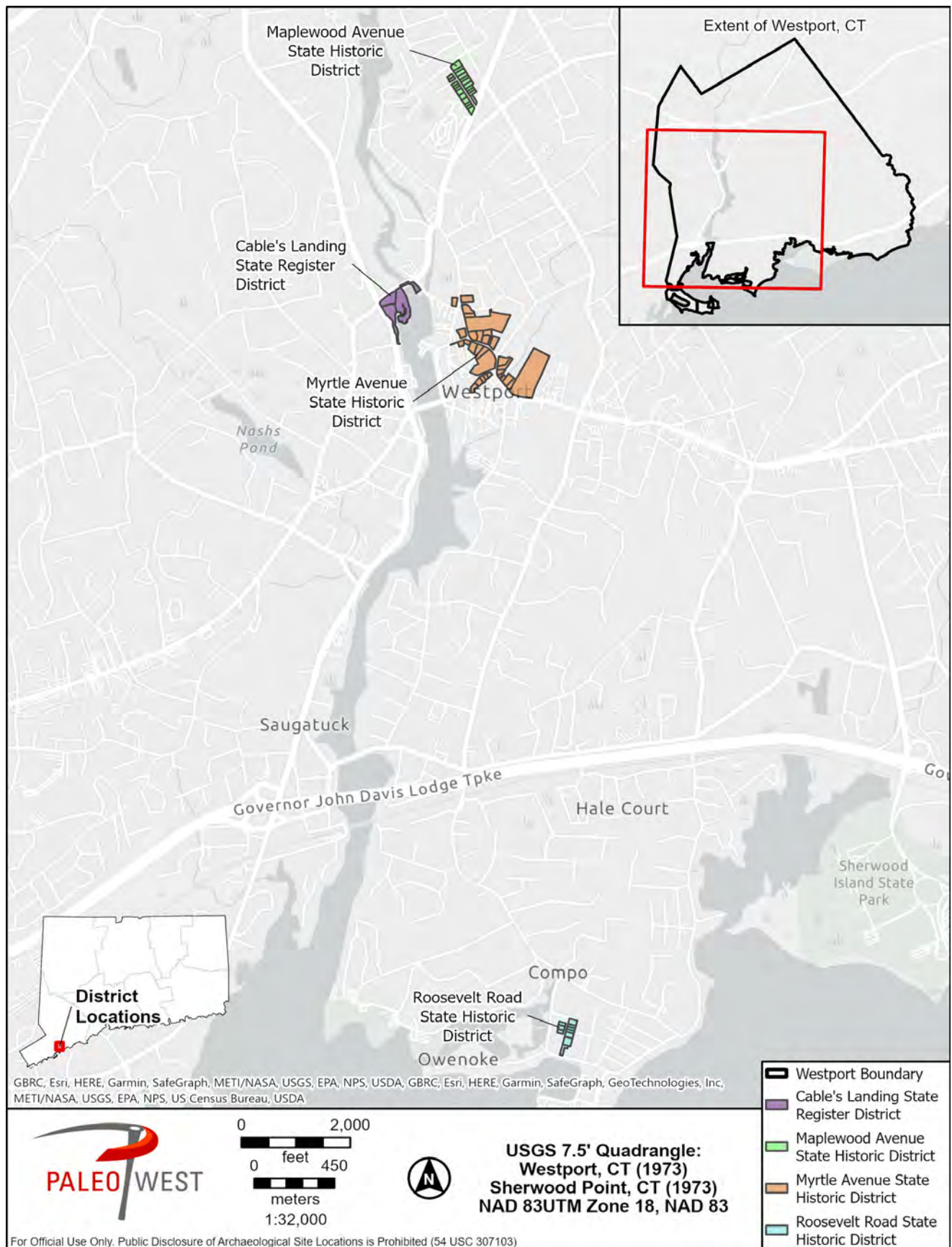
Local - There are a total of 7 Local Historic Districts within Westport. Local Historic Districts provide the most protection for historic properties. Alterations to buildings within a Local Historic District require a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) to be granted by the HDC. There are also 22 Local Historic Properties, which are regulated in the same manner as Local Historic Districts.

State - There are 4 State Historic Districts within Westport, several of which overlap with the boundaries of National Historic Districts. State Historic Districts, like National Historic Districts, are largely honorary designations that make certain properties eligible for historic tax credits.

National - There are 10 National Historic Districts within Westport, several of which overlap with the boundaries of both local and state districts. National designations are largely honorary, though they do require the federal government to consider effects to historic properties in planning projects. Some properties within National Historic Districts are eligible to receive tax credits.

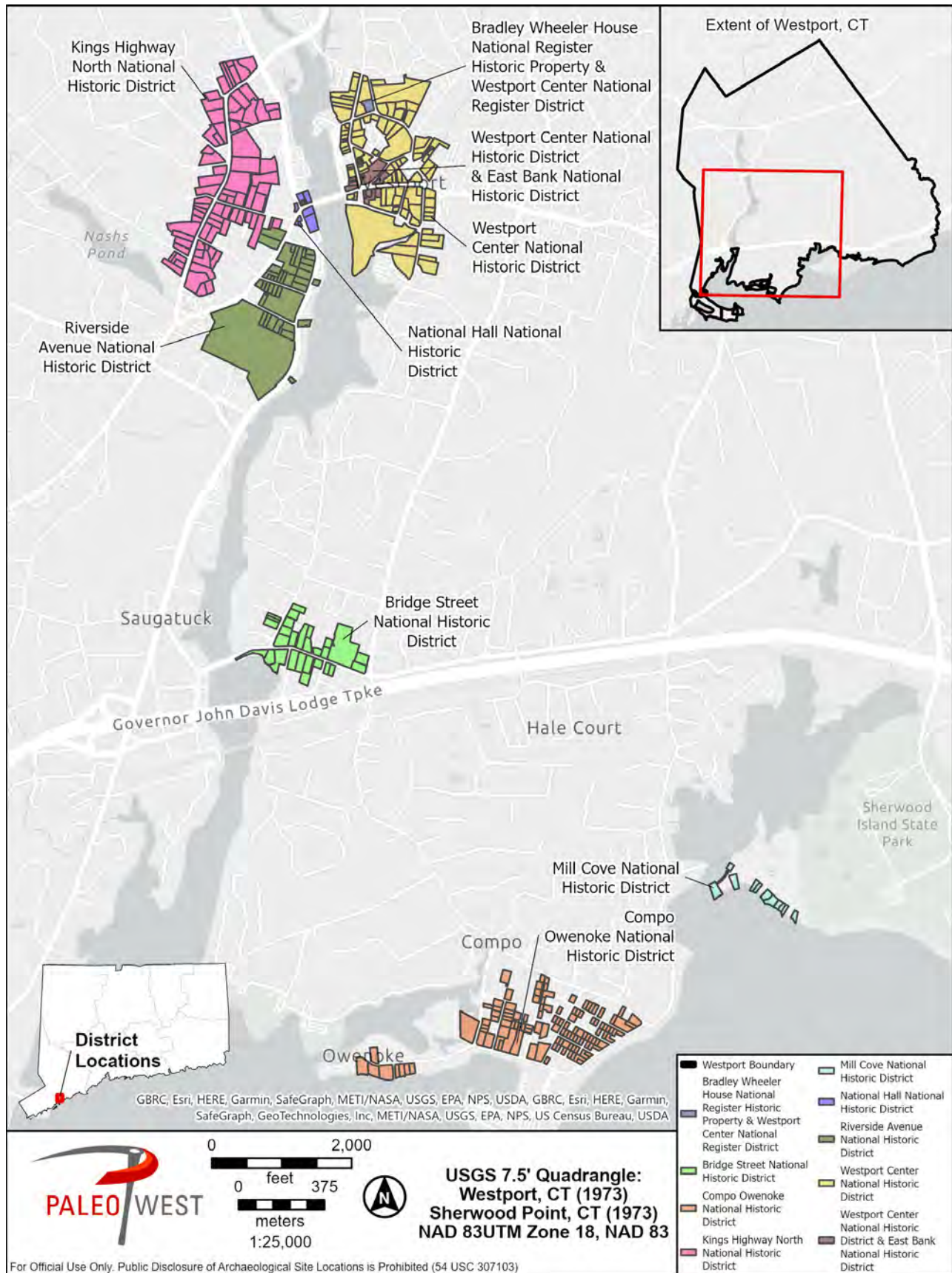


Map showing the location of Local Historic Districts.



Map showing the location of State Historic Districts.

Preservation Plan - Westport, CT



Map showing the location of National Historic Districts.

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CHAPTER 4

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

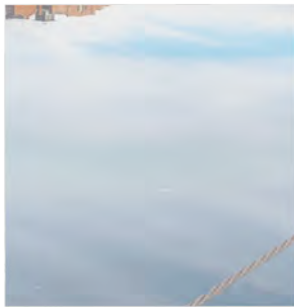
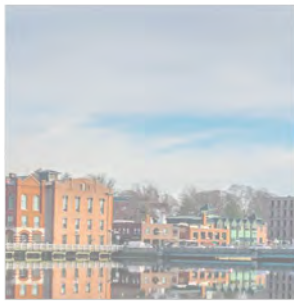
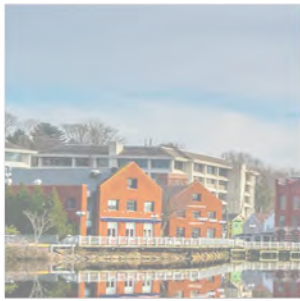


The Jessup House was constructed C. 1810 and is considered one of the finest examples of the Federal style within Westport.

(Source: Library of Congress)

GOAL 1

PROTECT AND EXPAND THE INVENTORY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES WITHIN WESTPORT

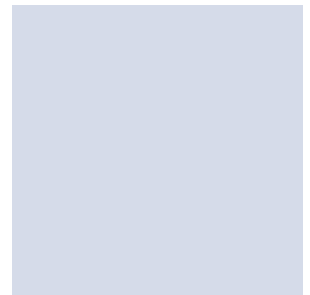


Identify potential historic districts and areas of historic properties through new surveys

Historic building surveys are one of the most effective ways of identifying and evaluating properties and districts which have the potential to be designated as historic. Typically, historic surveys follow national standards by targeting buildings that are 50 years old or older. The National Park Service has created guidelines for local historic resource surveys in National Register Bulletin 24. Surveys can help to tell the story of a particular building or neighborhood and provide a glimpse into Westport's past. By evaluating structures, surveys can reveal important information about a building's architectural style and craftsmanship, its past residents, local history, and provide details about historical development patterns and trends. Surveyed buildings are not automatically deemed historic, but a survey is the first step in the information-gathering process which can lead to landmark status or the formation of a new historic district. Survey evaluations seek to understand if individual properties or neighborhoods meet an established criteria to be designated as historic. The national criteria established by the Secretary of the Interior is most typically used, though state and local entities may have their own criteria for evaluating structures. Additionally, historic resource surveys are one of the most common recipients of grant funding from state and federal sources. Survey efforts are an ongoing process that the town and the HDC pursue annually. Both the town and the HDC should continue to pursue grant funding to conduct new surveys on an annual basis. Areas which have been surveyed in the past may be resurveyed after a period of time or if the area in question is experiencing rapid changes in development. Such resurveys can provide new information such as an inventory of exterior changes to properties, new buildings in the survey area, and the number of demolitions which have occurred since the original survey. The town and the HDC might look to the results of the community survey for identifying new sites and areas for surveys.

Consider conducting thematic surveys of Westport as an alternative to traditional surveys

Unlike traditional historic resource surveys which tend to be restricted by geographic boundaries and rigid criteria considerations, thematic surveys identify significant sites, buildings, and neighborhoods that share a common theme. Common thematic survey examples include mid-century properties, school or religious properties, WPA properties, or surveys of important manufacturing and agricultural sites. Thematic surveys might also identify places associated with social movements such as the Civil Rights movement or the Woman's Suffrage movement. Increasingly in the past ten years, thematic surveys have sought to identify properties associated with underrepresented communities. These thematic surveys can reveal information about a local community or group of people that have previously been ignored or overlooked in the larger community. Like traditional surveys, thematic surveys may use criteria considerations for evaluating the significance of structures, though that may not always be the case. The purpose of thematic surveys is not always to evaluate against criteria, but instead to provide a more encompassing picture of a place's history. The town and the HDC are in the process of conducting a thematic survey and should continue to conduct new surveys in the future. Like traditional surveys, grant funding is available to the town to conduct new thematic surveys.



Consider conducting a survey of historic properties in high-hazard areas such as floodways and coastlines

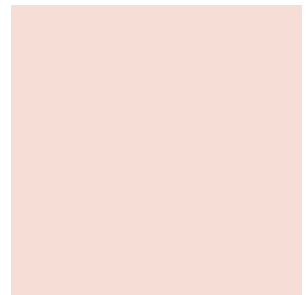
Identifying structures within high-hazard areas is the first step in formulating a plan to save historic structures in the event of a disaster. A high-hazard historic resource survey not only helps to identify historic structures, but helps Westport collect information on the types and severity of hazards. By cataloging available historic resources in high-hazard areas, the Town of Westport is better able to make informed decisions related to historic properties in the event of a disaster. Surveys such as these also have the potential to reduce flood insurance premiums for historic property owners.



Explore alternative forms of survey methods, such as community led surveys which can help identify new resources to be included in an updated Historic Resource Inventory (HRI)

One of the biggest drawbacks of traditional surveys is the costs associated with them. While such surveys are often funded by grants, Westport may consider taking a more grassroots approach to historic resource surveys through a community-based approach. Such surveys rely on the public rather than a hired consultant. Web based technology has allowed cities across the U.S. to set up community-based surveys with easily accessible features that require little to no training from the user. Typically, participants fill in information through a web portal and upload documents about their historic property, which are then added to the town HRI after it has been vetted for accuracy. This function could be incorporated into the Town's website, or as part of events to take place during Preservation Month.

As an alternative, the community can be involved in traditional survey efforts by allowing residents to provide historical information and documents that can aid in comprehensive survey efforts. Survey proposals can be authored in a such a way to require consultants to conduct public outreach and gather feedback from the community. Public input is a great way to both involve residents and allow them to provide valuable historical knowledge that benefits the HRI. The results of the community survey showed that there is both enthusiasm and a font of knowledge for local history that would benefit any future survey efforts.



Case Study:

Discover Denver is a program established by the non-profit Historic Denver of Denver, CO that works with the City of Denver to identify and evaluate buildings within the city's historic neighborhoods. The program is led by a Historic Denver staff person who takes volunteers out to photograph and record structures on tablets in the field. Volunteers first receive a formal training session at the Denver library on how to conduct property research. Volunteers then spend several hours filling out an online form and writing a short narrative context of the building's history. The program has been used by the City of Denver to identify previously unsurveyed structures that are eligible for landmark designation or inclusion in a historic district.



(Source: Discover Denver)

Explore adopting new village district ordinances in areas of Westport where the existing scale, architectural style, and character of the neighborhood should be preserved

Village overlay districts are a useful tool used alongside historic district overlays that influence the design and construction of new buildings by ensuring that new development is compatible with the existing scale of the neighborhood. A village overlay can be used to ensure that new development is of a similar style, size, and massing as its neighbors, thereby retaining the overall character and feel of a neighborhood. In a neighborhood with modest historic homes, a village overlay can help to retain smaller-scale development and prevent large infill construction which overshadows the modest scale of the neighborhood. These overlays might also be used in commercial corridors to promote a mixture of residential and commercial uses while encouraging pedestrian-scale development that is characteristic of historic commercial districts. Village districts may also be helpful in building neighborhood identity and character through cohesive design standards. Village overlays are most effective in areas where there is not an existing historic district in place. Where there is an existing historic district, design guidelines and regulations may be used to fulfill the same purpose as an overlay district. In other communities, village overlay districts are sometimes referred to as conservation districts or “historic district-lite” because they fill some of the roles of a traditional historic district, while being more flexible to new construction, material usage, and property maintenance standards. Village district overlays might also be useful in areas that are not yet historic, but might be considered as such in the future. Westport has one existing village overlay district located downtown that encompasses historic buildings and new developments. The creation of new overlays protecting the character, identity, and scale of existing neighborhoods is supported by feedback from the community survey. The HDC should prioritize village districts and similar measures to support this strategy before the scale and character of modest neighborhoods is irrevocably lost.

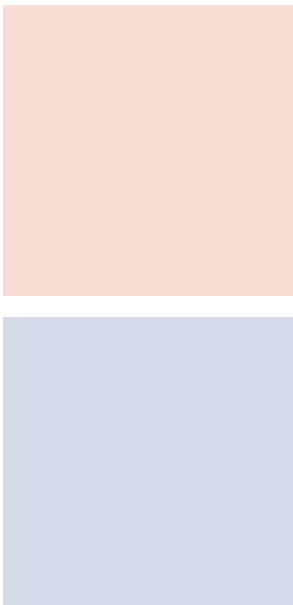
Create new incentives which encourage the rehabilitation of existing structures

The available Historic Preservation Zoning Incentive is one such incentive that Westport has in place to encourage the preservation of historic structures, though the program has a limited reach and will not apply to all projects. By increasing the number of available incentives, Westport can encourage the rehabilitation and renovation of its existing historic housing stock. Examples from other communities include fee waivers in historic districts, expedited review for historic properties, tax freezes and breaks on eligible properties, and grants for eligible rehabilitation projects. Federal and state incentives are also available though they will not apply to every project. Feedback from the community survey indicated that residents would like to see more incentives such as tax breaks and exemptions for historic properties. Westport will likely need to conduct an independent study to determine which incentives would work best for the community. Grant funding can be used to fund such a study and determine what incentives are available and the best course of implementing new incentives. Alternatively, Westport may also reach out to the State Historic Preservation Office and Preservation Connecticut to determine what other incentives have been implemented in neighboring communities across Connecticut.



Allow for more flexibility in zoning regulations to encourage the thoughtful redevelopment of existing sites while protecting existing structures

Flexibility within zoning regulations is an effective way of encouraging property owners to preserve historic buildings. Village district overlays and the Historic Preservation Zoning Incentives provided by Westport are two examples of existing zoning regulations that allow for flexibility. Westport might extend these incentives to other areas of the town or choose to adopt new standards to further support the preservation of historic buildings. Examples from other communities include disincentivizing incompatible development, building code exemptions, accessory dwelling unit exemptions within historic districts, form-based codes, and transfer of development rights (TDRs). Westport will likely need to conduct an independent study to determine which programs have the greatest chance for success, though grant funding can be used to fund such studies.



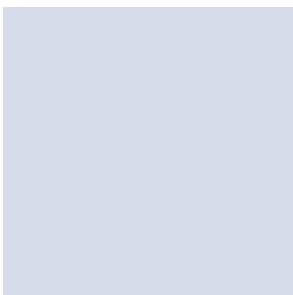
Encourage property owners to apply for state and national incentives such as the Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit and the CT Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

Tax credits are one of the most powerful tools that property owners can take advantage of when it comes to rehabilitating historic structures. The federal historic tax credit program provides a 20% income tax credit to developers of income-producing properties that have been determined by the Secretary of the Interior as certified historic structures. Connecticut also offers a 25% tax credit on qualified rehabilitation projects. The Connecticut tax credit can be utilized for residential properties if there are more than five units associated with the project. The tax credit is increased to 30% if the project is located in a federally designated opportunity zone or if the project includes at least 20% affordable rental units or 10% for sale units. State tax credits have been used successfully within Westport in the past to assist with the rehabilitation of historic properties. Oftentimes the greatest barrier to tax credits is a lack of knowledge from applicants or municipal staff, though the National Park Service and the State Historic Preservation Office are both available to guide applicants through the process. Federal and State tax credits will not apply to all residential projects, but in cases where there is a significant rehabilitation of a commercial structure, tax credits may be useful to developers.



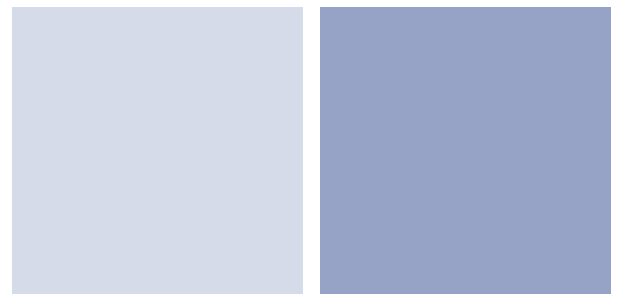
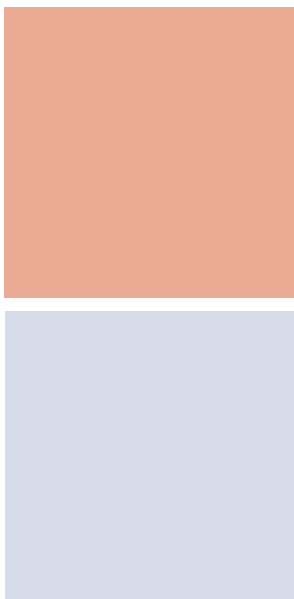
Explore adding energy efficiency guidelines for historic buildings

As technology advances historic homeowners may wish to upgrade their homes to be more energy efficient. There is a common misconception that historic buildings are not energy efficient. Design guidelines can help to address this issue, by providing guidance on where solar panels may be installed and what types of windows are appropriate without compromising the historic integrity of the structure. One of the most common alterations homeowners may wish to pursue is replacing their historic windows with energy-efficient modern windows. As technology has advanced, insulated window inserts provide the energy efficiency of modern windows while allowing homeowners to retain their historic windows. Energy efficiency guidelines should be incorporated as part of a district's design guidelines when possible. Grant funding can be pursued to create new guidelines for energy efficiency measures in historic buildings.



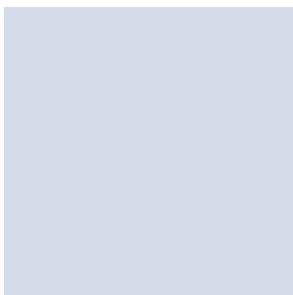
Work with industry experts, local builders, and architects to explore alternative building materials which may be appropriate for historic structures

Technological advances in the construction and building industry have provided homeowners with a range of options in building materials and fixtures. One of the biggest challenges for homeowners and preservation commissions is finding historically appropriate replacement materials for deteriorated features on historic buildings. Commissions readily prefer historic materials be used, but in many cases these materials are either not available or cost-prohibitive for homeowners. By working with architects, industry experts, and local builders, the HDC can be better informed on what replacement materials are appropriate for historic buildings. Materials can also be addressed through district design guidelines and informational brochures that provide homeowners with the most up-to-date information on period-appropriate replacement materials. The HDC and town staff should also be willing to work with property owners and applicants to find suitable substitute materials. As an example, many communities offer pre-development meetings prior to a CoA submittal in order to help applicants find alternative materials that could be accepted by the HDC.



Consider creating an honorary landmark plaque program

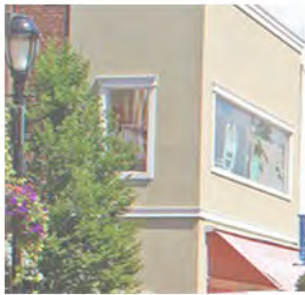
Many communities across the U.S. adopt a local marker program for historic properties in their jurisdiction. Historical markers may be provided for individual landmarks or for contributing structures in a historic district. Each community should tailor their own marker program to their individual needs and budgeting constraints. Communities might include the cost of markers in permit fees, while others might pull from their operating budget to provide homeowners with markers or plaques for little or no cost. Several communities have also established honorary programs which recognize significant buildings without attaching regulatory measures to the building itself. Such programs mirror the National Register which is honorary and not regulatory in nature. Honorary programs such as these are a useful deterrent to demolishing significant buildings while also celebrating the significance of the building itself. These programs might also be useful for recognizing significant buildings which do not yet meet the age threshold to be historic but signify their importance to the community. The Westport Museum for History and Culture currently administers an independent plaque program of historic properties in Westport. These properties are not required to be within the confines of a local historic district or be a historic landmark. The town and the HDC should consider adopting their own marker program for designated local properties or partnering with the Westport Museum on a mutually beneficial program.



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GOAL 2

FOSTER A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF LOCAL PRESERVATION EFFORTS AND LOCAL HISTORY BY ACTIVELY ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY OF WESTPORT



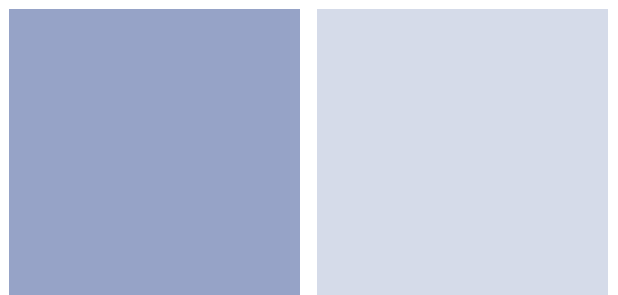
Develop historic context reports for existing historic districts and potential historic districts

Historic context reports are a useful companion to any historic resource survey. They provide a general historic context for an area or neighborhood and identify significant themes or trends that contributed to that neighborhood's development over time. Context reports are essential when it comes to determining the eligibility of a given building or neighborhood for nomination to the National Register, though they can also be useful for providing a historic context of an existing or potential historic district. Context reports provide a solid foundation for a successful planning project by revealing historic development patterns, significant industries, and persons of interest in a neighborhood. They may also be helpful in identifying which structures in a neighborhood are historically significant and can assist in the planning for historic resource surveys. Though context reports cover a broad area, they can also reveal important information about individual property types and architectural styles present in a neighborhood. For instance, a context report of a historic neighborhood associated with a mill might provide insights into worker housing and associated commercial buildings. Historic context reports are a common recipient of grant funding and can be conducted alongside historic resource surveys. Historic context reports should be easily accessible to members of the public and stored in a central repository, such as Westport's landing page on the website for historic preservation.



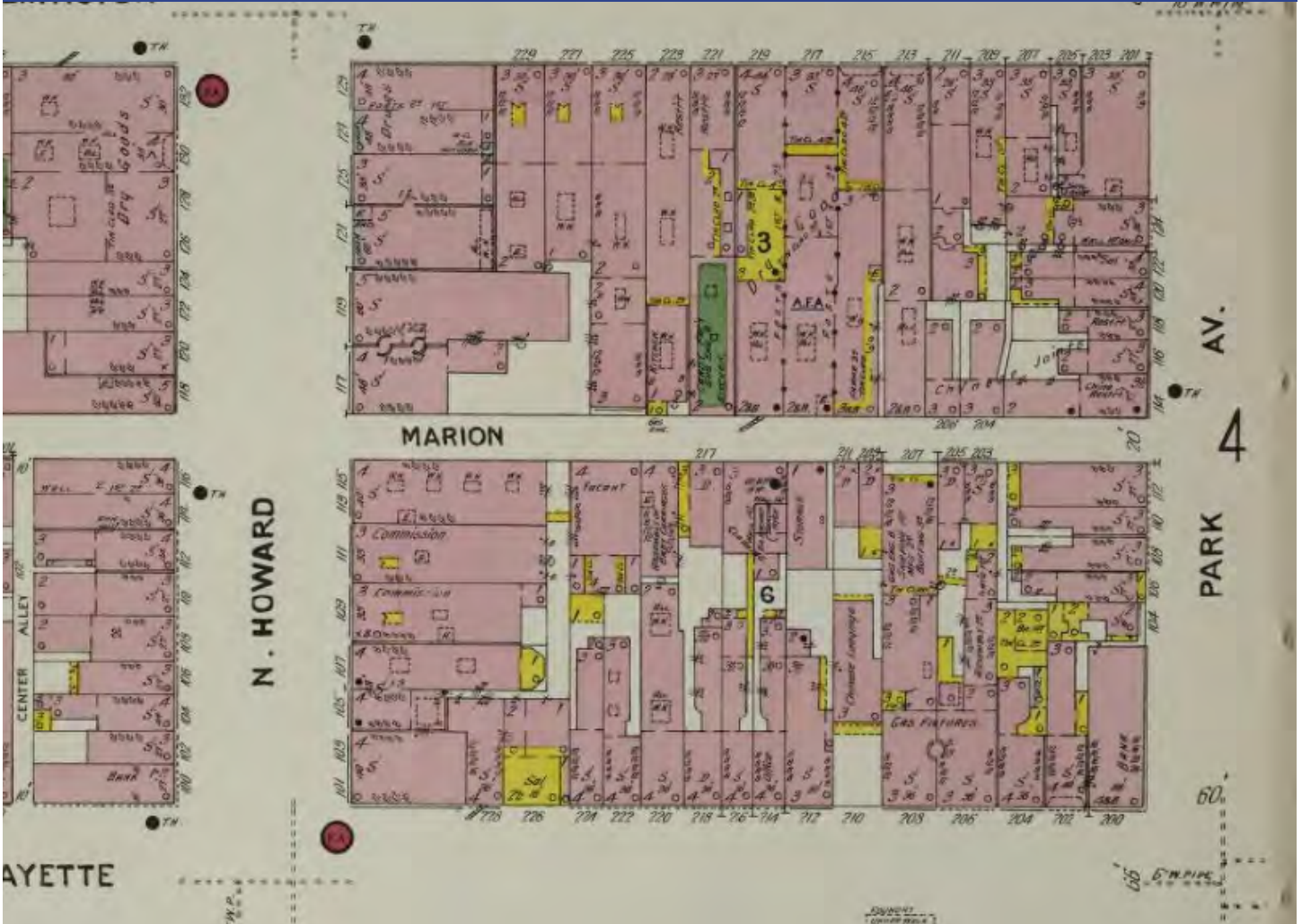
Consider conducting thematic based historic context reports of Westport

Similar in scope to thematic historic resource surveys, a thematic based historic context can provide insight into a specific area of Westport's history. Early historic preservation movements within the U.S. tended to focus on the lives of wealthy, white aristocrats and members of the political elite. Historic preservation has since evolved to encompass a more inclusive and equitable look of the past, by focusing on the lives and efforts of everyday people. A thematic context report is similar to a thematic survey in that it is crafted around a central theme. They can help to reveal untold pieces of Westport's history. Whenever possible, thematic based surveys should be combined with a thematic context report. Thematic context reports might be useful where there is no longer any physical evidence of the subject matter in the built environment. An example might be a thematic context report of the indigenous people who inhabited Westport in the distant past. Thematic context reports can also cover more recent movements and help to identify people and places associated with them such as the Civil Rights or Suffrage movements. These types of historic context reports can reveal new sites or overlooked areas of town that have been left out of the historical narrative. They may also help to bring in groups of people who have traditionally been left out of the historic preservation movement. In addition to state-funded grants, the National Park Service offers additional grant funding for thematic context reports of underrepresented communities and untold stories. Information from thematic context reports can be used to create interpretive markers or plaques and be used to identify significant places of local history.



Case Study:

In 2020, the Maryland Historical Trust was awarded \$50,000 in grant funding through the National Park Service underrepresented communities grant program to conduct a statewide historic context of Asian American communities in Maryland. The project resulted in a historic context report that led to multiple nominations to the National Register of Historic Places for the Chinese American community in Baltimore City. While the project was undertaken by the Maryland Historical Trust, individual CLG's, such as Westport, regularly receive funding to do similar projects specific to their community.



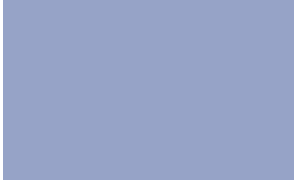
1901 Sanborn Map showing Chinese businesses within Baltimore.

(Source: Library of Congress)

Continue to utilize social media to engage the community

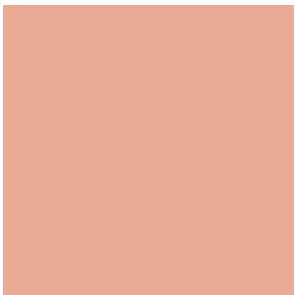
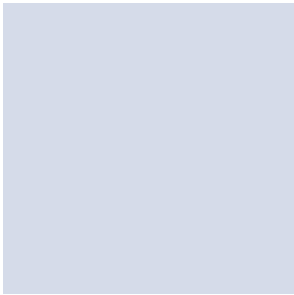
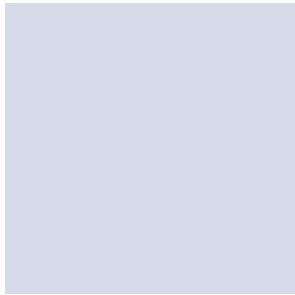
Social media can be an effective way of raising awareness and building support for Westport's preservation program. Many municipalities across the U.S. have used their social media presence to provide important updates to residents on topics ranging from disaster preparedness to street closures and town sponsored events. Social media can be used to showcase new historic landmarks throughout the town, while also informing residents of recent updates to the preservation program or of any public events sponsored by the HDC. The town and the HDC should continue to utilize its dedicated social media presence and that of Westport's larger social media presence to build support and awareness for the preservation program.





Utilize story maps and other web-based technologies on the town's website to inform residents of local history and important sites

Story maps are a relatively new technology that combines storytelling with web-based GIS technology. Many municipalities have used story maps to inform residents about existing historic resources in their communities. Story maps are an effective way of showcasing historic districts and historic landmarks in an interactive and accessible format that can be accessed through smartphones, laptops, and tablets. Historic photos and documents can be integrated as part of a story map to provide a richer experience to users. When combined with its central mapping features, users can take a virtual tour of important landmarks throughout the town, while viewing historic photos, maps, and information about a building's history. Story maps can also be used to show larger areas, such as local, state, and national historic districts. The technology can be integrated into a typical web page, such as Westport's landing page for the HDC. A story map might also be combined with a historic resource survey as a way of relaying the survey to the larger public in an accessible format.



Improve the town's landing page for the HDC to include additional information on local history, important buildings, and districts

Westport's landing page for historic preservation and the HDC is the likely first place residents will look for information regarding historic preservation and what it means for their property. Ensuring that the website is up to date and easily accessible can reduce confusion for property owners, build awareness of the program, and create a more positive experience for users. Information regarding incentives, regulations, and progress of the preservation plan should all be included on the town's website. Events and news are also useful to include on the website and can inform residents of grant awards, new landmarks, and upcoming HDC cases.



Adopt a local marker, wayfinding, or other interpretive marker program for local historic districts and historic sites

An interpretive sign program can be a great way to build awareness and appreciation for local historic resources. Signs should be easily accessible to pedestrians and include both text and photographs if possible. An interpretive sign program is different from a traditional plaque program in that it is more informative and interactive for the user. Interpretive signs can be integrated with technology, such as QR codes, to provide additional information that cannot be displayed on a standalone sign. Such an approach has the added advantage of reducing costs associated with sign construction and placement. Local markers can also be paired with walking tours or online interactive maps. Grant funding can be used to implement and design such a program.

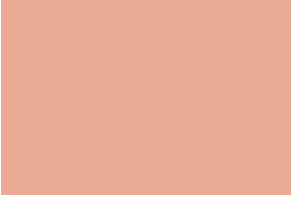


Case Study:

The City of Danville, VA was awarded a \$4,700 grant to develop an interpretive sign program for over 50 historic landmarks in its West End Historic District. Signs were either posted in the front yard of houses or along fences within the historic district and include 2 QR codes, one with a link to the building's history and the other linking the property to a larger story map of the historic district. The signs are easily accessible to pedestrians walking along the street and can be interacted with by anyone with a smartphone.

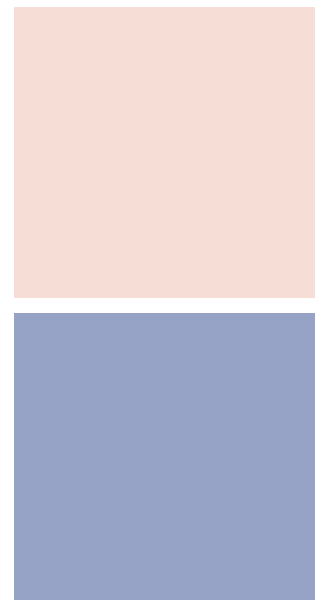
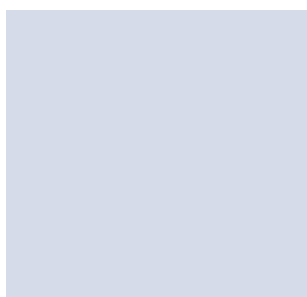


Sidewalk plaque within Danville, VA for a historic house that utilizes QR code technology.



Update the existing historic homeowners handbook to be more user-friendly and consider creating a complimentary brochure or handout

A handbook or brochure is a low-tech option for raising awareness of Westport's historic preservation program while also providing useful information to property owners. The existing historic homeowners handbook has not been updated since 2009, and while the document provides a comprehensive overview of Westport's preservation program, the document may be too extensive to be user-friendly. Adopting the handbook into a single page or tri-fold brochure is an effective way of relaying important information to residents. The print version of the 2009 handbook has since been converted to digital format and can be found on the HDC's page of the town website. Westport should consider updating the 2009 handbook and creating a complimentary brochure, which can include a reference to the more extensive handbook. A brochure can be easily mailed to property owners within historic districts and owners of historic property. Brochures or handbooks might also be shared with local realtors to help raise awareness of historic district regulations.



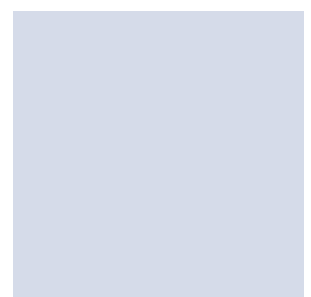
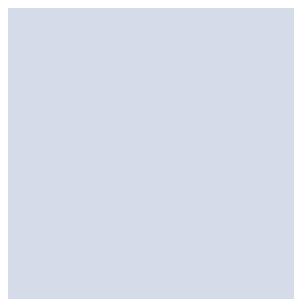
Provide owners of historic properties information on available incentives; ensure information on incentives is provided to new owners

Several action items of the 2023 Preservation Plan call for the adoption of additional incentives for historic properties. As new incentives are adopted, Westport and the HDC should relay such information to property owners. This can be achieved in several ways, through social media, through a brochure or handout, or through a postcard that can be sent in the mail. By working with local realtors, the HDC can ensure that new owners of historic properties are aware of what incentives are available.



Explore the creation of preservation related public events or festivals during Preservation Month

Preservation Month was established by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 1973 and takes place in May each year. The event is typically co-sponsored by local municipalities, state preservation offices, and preservation non-profits. Preservation Month is a celebration of cultural heritage, the built environment, and local traditions. Each municipality and organization may choose to celebrate Preservation Month differently, though some examples of activities include heritage events such as historic home tours, public runs like 5 or 10k's through historic districts, public cemetery restoration events, public workshops, and public restoration and rehab events. Preservation Month is a good opportunity for the HDC to create partnerships and promote collaboration between different organizations. Preservation Month is typically concluded with preservation awards, where property owners, contractors, and architects may be awarded for notable projects. Westport's preservation awards were put on hold in 2019 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, though as of May 2023 they have been reinstated. The town and HDC should continue to hold preservation awards in May, while facilitating new events and activities in the future.



Each year celebrate successful preservation projects during Preservation Month through preservation awards

Preservation Month is the perfect opportunity for Westport to award successful restoration, renovation, and rehabilitation projects. Other nominations might include the most compatible new build in a historic district or a notable example of a building that was saved from demolition. Preservation awards can be given out during a regularly scheduled HDC meeting or as part of an award ceremony concluding Preservation Month.





GOAL 3

ALIGN WESTPORT'S PRESERVATION EFFORTS WITH COMPLIMENTARY TOWN, STATE, AND NON-PROFIT ACTIVITIES



Ensure that future planning efforts align with the goals and objectives of the Preservation Plan


The 2023 Preservation Plan is just one plan that Westport has among a myriad of other planning documents. Planning documents are most effective when they are aligned with other complimentary plans the Town has adopted. Planning documents should also not conflict with each other. The 2017 Plan of Conservation and Development calls for the identification and preservation of historic resources, an objective that is supported by several strategies of this plan. As Westport adopts any future plans, the HDC should be open to opportunities for cross collaboration between different departments and organizations. Examples of plans which might benefit from preservation minded endeavors include sustainability plans, affordable housing plans, planning and zoning related plans, parks and open spaces plans, and any future iterations of the Conservation and Development plan.



Create partnerships with local non-profits and other advocacy groups to foster coordination between the Town and involved parties

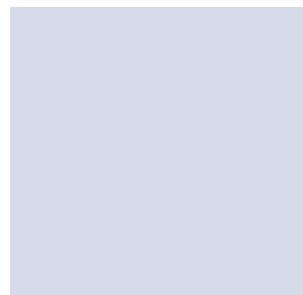
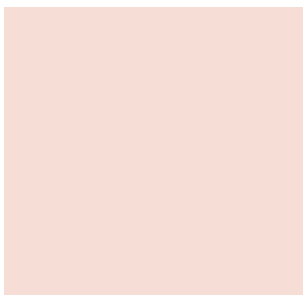
Non-profits have traditionally been one of the most effective proponents of preservation stewardship. Non-profits have flexibility and resources that the HDC might not possess. The program could be improved by looking for opportunities for partnerships with preservation minded organizations. Local organizations should be collaborated with first, though county and state organizations should also be consulted if there is an opportunity to do so. Partnerships might be event based, such as those occurring during Preservation Month, though the HDC should also look to partner with organizations on more advocacy minded endeavors that result in programmatic changes to Westport's preservation program. For instance, a partnership with a sustainability non-profit concerning energy efficiency guidelines for historic homes, or a partnership with an art non-profit on a historic mural program are two types of projects that could benefit both the HDC and the partner organization while fostering collaboration and building awareness of the preservation program.





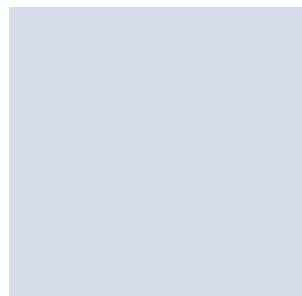
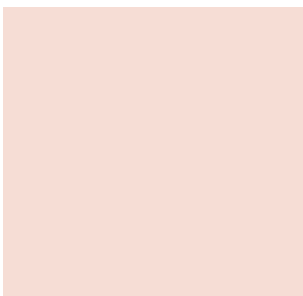
Explore ways for collaboration between the HDC and other Town boards and departments such as Planning and Zoning

In addition to creating partnerships with outside organizations, the HDC should look for opportunities to partner with existing town departments. P&Z is the most obvious choice, as several preservation ordinances and regulations overlap with P&Z. The HDC already has a role in P&Z in an advisory capacity. Ensuring that both groups are on the same page is a good way to build collaboration and build support for Westport's preservation program. Several municipalities even require that their local preservation commission has a member from the local planning board sit in on preservation commission meetings. The Town might also revise existing bylaws to require P&Z commissioners to have a background in preservation or have a member from the HDC sit in on P&Z meetings. Several responses to the public survey indicated that residents would like to see more collaboration between the HDC and P&Z.



Consider becoming a Connecticut Main Street Town

The Main Street program was started by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as a subsidiary organization in 1977. The program was created in response to trends of suburban development which drew people and businesses away from historic downtowns. The program sought to revitalize historic downtowns, which had been left vacant or modernized in the wake of suburbanization. The program was largely successful and is now an independent organization. By 2020 there were over 860 nationally recognized Main Street cities across the U.S. While the program is still preservation focused, it has grown to being an advocate for promoting downtown as a destination that is attractive to residents, businesses, and visitors. There are currently over 80 Main Street communities within Connecticut, including both individual townships and regional hubs. Westport should consider becoming a Main Street community as it promotes both historic preservation and heritage tourism, and could provide the opportunity for increased collaboration, public awareness, and grant funding.



Case Study:

The Connecticut Main Street Center (CMSC) is a private nonprofit that coordinates the endeavours of Main Street communities within Connecticut. The CMSC serves as an advocate for traditional downtowns, village centers, and urban mixed-use neighborhoods. They provide education and training, resources, and technical assistance to its member communities. The organization combines historic preservation and economic development to help promote cities through heritage tourism. The organization is also an advocate for preservation issues with both state and local leaders.



(Source: Library of Congress)

Include members of the HDC in other Town planning efforts where historic resources may be affected

Similar to creating partnerships with other town departments, members of the HDC should be included in internal planning efforts where historic resources are concerned. A common example might be the creation of a new village district where there are a number of buildings of undetermined historical significance. Bringing in the HDC early in the planning process builds transparency, increases collaboration between groups, and reduces the possibility of doing irreversible damage to any potential historic resources.



Partner with local realtors, architects, and other industry experts to create new Continuing Education (CE) courses for historic preservation

In Connecticut, CE requirements are regulated by the CT Department of Consumer Protection. Some professions that might benefit from historic preservation related CE credits including architects, landscape architects, realtors, home inspectors, and contractors. By working with professionals to advocate for and create new CE courses the HDC can take a proactive role in promoting the preservation of local historic resources. Additional CE credits may be earned online through various organizations such as the National Preservation Institute (NPI) and the Historic Preservation Education Foundation. CE courses related to historic preservation include design review and permitting, architectural history, historic window restoration and reuse, and courses on tax incentives.



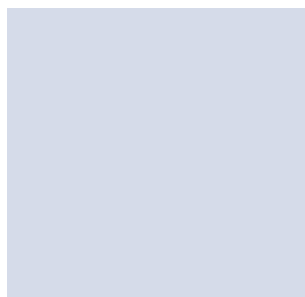
Case Study:

Rethos is a nationwide nonprofit that advocates for historic properties across the U.S. They offer a historic properties certification course that provides education and training to realtors who wish to become certified experts in dealing with historic properties. The course provides knowledge of historic architectural styles, the economics of preservation, and the environmental benefits of older homes. Within Minnesota, the certification program provides 12 CE credits for realtors who go through the program. The HDC might work with Preservation Connecticut to advocate for a similar program.



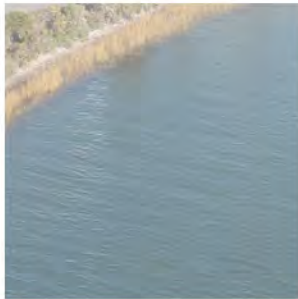
Ensure the HDC supports Westport's goal of becoming a Net Zero Community through the utilization of historic resources and partnerships with local and state organizations

Westport was the first town in Connecticut to pass a resolution to become a net zero community by 2050. The initiative was started by the non-profit Sustainable CT in 2017 as a voluntary certification program to recognize communities working towards net zero status. By being a member of the program, Westport qualifies for additional grant funding. The HDC should consider partnering with Sustainable CT and local organizations such as Sustainable Westport to help meet this goal. Existing literature shows that historic preservation and environmental sustainability go hand in hand. As the saying goes, the greenest building is the one that has already been built. By preserving its historic building stock, Westport may reduce the amount of waste sent to landfills and preserve the embodied energy contained within older buildings. Older buildings might also be brought up to modern energy efficiency standards without damaging their historic integrity. Westport should utilize grant funding from the State Historic Preservation Office to explore ways of implementing environmental sustainability measures into the existing preservation program.



GOAL 4

EXPAND THE INTERNAL OPERATIONS OF THE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION



Continue to apply for grant funding annually to meet the goals and strategies of the Preservation Plan

By adopting a preservation plan, Westport will qualify for additional grant funding that otherwise would not be available to the town. The HDC and staff should continue to apply for at least 1 to 2 grants each funding cycle. Action items of this plan can serve as the starting point for grant applications. The HDC should aim to create a yearly work plan at a regularly scheduled meeting each year to determine which grants should be pursued and what specific strategies should be worked towards. The HDC should also be aware that certain grants can be applied for special projects. For instance, state preservation offices often have a set amount of grant funding specifically set aside for historic resource surveys or context reports of underrepresented communities. By preparing in advance, the HDC can best determine which grants are worth applying for each year.



Have staff and commissioners attend trainings and conferences

A number of organizations host annual conferences and regular training sessions related to the field of historic preservation. The National Alliance of Preservation Commissioners, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and The Association for Preservation Technology all host annual conferences relevant to the HDC. Many conferences and trainings have also started to allow digital attendance to those who cannot attend in person. Additionally, discounted rates are usually given to those who sit on a local preservation commission. Conferences and trainings provide insight into what other communities around the U.S. are doing and can provide information on what developments are being made within the field. If able, members of the HDC and staff should attend conferences and relevant trainings each year. Trainings might also be given to the HDC and staff at their regular meetings.



Bring in experts to conduct public trainings such as window restoration workshops, brick repair workshops, and other home improvement workshops on a regular basis

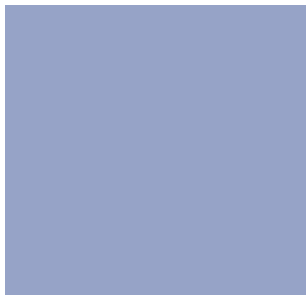
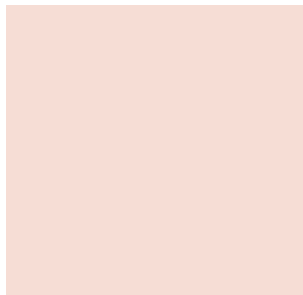
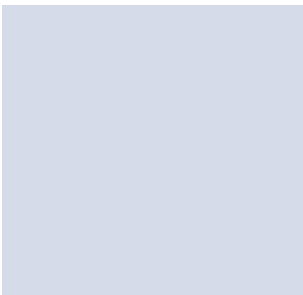
Many municipal preservation programs and local historic commissions around the U.S. host workshops for historic property owners. Events such as these not only provide useful skills and knowledge for maintaining historic buildings, but they can be a good way of raising awareness and building community support for the program. Window restoration workshops are the most common type of workshop held. Such events can help historic homeowners to maintain and repair their historic windows, while improving their energy efficiency. Workshops are also useful for contractors, who might not otherwise have the opportunity to gain experience working on historic buildings. The HDC should aim to bring in experts to conduct workshops for the community at least once a year. Preservation Month remains a popular time to bring in experts to conduct workshops and Preservation Connecticut can help to put the HDC in contact with workshop providers.





Conduct a study to determine the viability of creating an advocacy non-profit for local preservation efforts

Having an independent non-profit dedicated to preservation advocacy might benefit the efforts of the HDC and town staff. Such an undertaking would take considerable effort and likely require a study of feasibility to be undertaken by the town. Such advocacy non-profits do exist in other communities and play an essential role in building support for a robust local preservation program. Non-profits can also be a helpful advocate, assisting with public education and building awareness of Westport's preservation program. Additionally, non-profits can be a source of grant funding, incentive programs, and technical guidance for preservation projects. An existing non-profit within Westport might take on this role, though if that is not the case, there are organizations around the U.S. that help municipalities identify funding sources and determine the viability of creating a new non-profit.



Case Study:

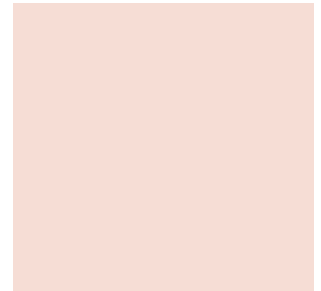
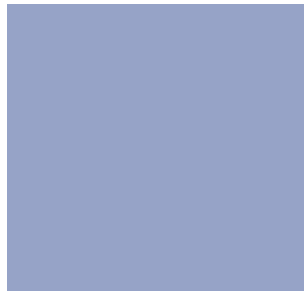
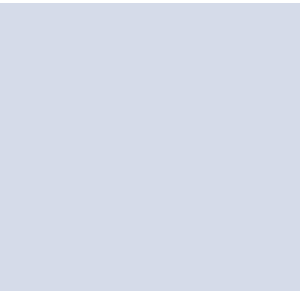
The Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans (PRNC) is a non-profit founded in 1974 to promote the preservation of New Orleans' unique architectural heritage and cultural identity. While the roots of the organization remain the same, the organization has evolved into one of the most important advocates for historic preservation in the city. The organization provides free home repairs to low and moderate income homeowners, provides historic house workshops and trainings, and helps to acquire vacant structures or those in danger of demolition. The organization is also a strong advocate of legislative change in favor of historic preservation at the local, state, and national level. They have a robust social media presence and are heavily involved with both the City of New Orleans and the local preservation commission.



French Quarter of New Orleans C. 1880
(Source: Library of Congress)

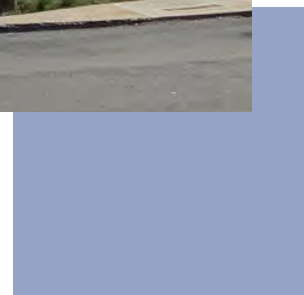
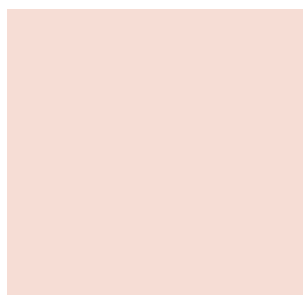
Establish a follow-up process for cases that come through the HDC

In stakeholder and steering committee meetings it was revealed that there was a desire for more communication between the HDC and applicants. The community survey also supported this specific strategy. The HDC and town staff can establish a procedure for following up with applicants after a case has gone through the review process. Even a simple questionnaire or comment box on the website can be used to see where improvements can be made to the HDC process. Applicants, contractors, and architects who have been through the process can provide valuable information on improving CoA procedures for future cases.



Follow-up with applicants who have been through the §32-18 process to determine where improvements could be made

The Historic Preservation Zoning Incentives (§32-18) is the strongest incentive currently in place for historic property owners. By meeting with applicants who have been through the process, the HDC can determine where improvements can be made to the procedure. Moving forward the HDC should keep track of existing cases, and establish a procedure for following up with applicants who have been through the §32-18 process.



GOAL 5

PROVIDE REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES TO
FULL SCALE DEMOLITION WITHIN WESTPORT





The Louis Micheels House of Westport was considered one of the finest examples of Mid-Century and Brutalist inspired architecture to come out of the Sarasota School of Architecture. The house was demolished in 2007. (Source: Library of Congress)

Revise the existing demolition delay ordinance to provide further guidance at each step in the delay process

Westport is fortunate to have the longest demolition delay period of any municipality within the state of Connecticut. Demolition delay is covered under §14-21 of the Westport Code of Ordinances. The ordinance can be further improved by adding clarification of what is to occur after a demolition delay has been upheld on a property, either through policy or changes to the existing ordinance. For instance, the ordinance could allow the HDC to consult with interested parties after a demolition delay has been upheld on a building. Certain communities allow demolitions to commence if the applicant reaches an agreement with the commission, such as agreeing to reuse materials from the structure in the new construction. Ordinance revisions and changes to policy can be undertaken in house or with the help of consultants. Preservation Connecticut has written a model demolition ordinance which can be reviewed as a point of reference.

Consider adopting a policy to salvage architectural elements and usable materials in the event of a demolition

The HDC can adopt a policy of salvaging architectural elements in the event of a demolition. The salvaging of architectural elements is a practice that already occurs informally with demolition companies, who will often resell the rarer materials salvaged from demolition. Changes to the existing demolition ordinance might also be made to incentivize the salvaging of architectural elements.



Adopt regulations in districts which encourage new construction to be of compatible scale in the event of a demolition

As a proactive way of discouraging demolitions, the HDC can choose to adopt design standards which require new construction to be of a compatible scale with the surrounding neighborhood. Such standards could be adopted through design guidelines, a historic district overlay, a village district overlay, and other form-based codes. Design standards can discourage the demolition of historically smaller buildings that are being torn down for incompatible new builds. Design guidelines and standards often specifically address demolitions and help to reinforce existing ordinances and policies. When adopting new regulations, the HDC will need to work closely with affected residents and other Town boards and Commissions such as P&Z.



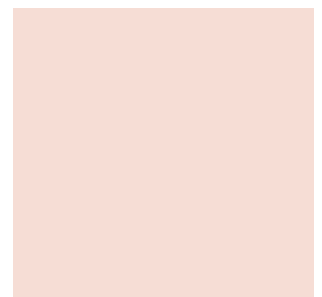
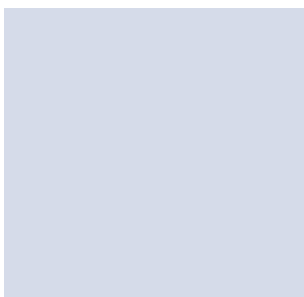
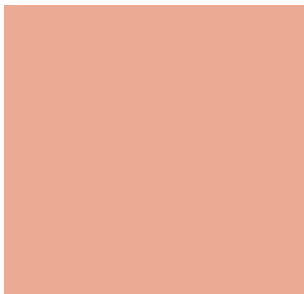
Form a working group/committee made up of HDC, First Selectwoman, local builders, architects, etc. on how to best address the high number of demolitions

The issue of rising building demolitions is one that many communities across the U.S. are facing. Oftentimes there are local factors that prevent a one size fits all approach from working. Forming a working group made up of people from the public, private, and non-profit sectors is a crucial first step in identifying what will work best in Westport. The HDC can have a proactive role in this change by being the initiator and facilitator of the working group. Changes to existing policies and ordinances are likely needed to best address the high number of demolitions.



Establish a process for moving historic structures as a last resort when demolition is unavoidable

The HDC might adopt a policy of moving buildings as opposed to outright demolition if a building cannot be saved. Building moves are often comparable in price to full scale demolition. Preference should be given to structures which are moved to another location within Westport. Buildings moved outside of Westport have a similar local effect to demolition, resulting in a loss of historic buildings within the town. The HDC should also be mindful of the potential effects a building move might have on the historic integrity of a structure. Many existing systems of landmark preservation, including national standards, prioritize the preservation of structures in the place of their historic setting. However, in many cases a building being moved and saved is the preferable alternative to outright demolition.



CHAPTER 5

GOALS AND ACTION ITEMS MATRIX



The First Congregational Church of Saugatuck
(Source: Library of Congress)

Goal 1: Protect and expand the inventory of historic resources within Westport

Timeline

Action Item: Identify potential historic districts and areas of historic properties through new surveys

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Consider conducting thematic surveys of Westport as an alternative to traditional surveys

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Consider conducting a survey of historic properties in high hazard areas such as floodways and coastlines

Short

Action Item: Explore alternative forms of survey methods, such as community led surveys which can help identify new resources to be included in an updated HRI

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Explore adopting new village district ordinances in areas where the existing scale, architectural style, and character of a neighborhood is in danger of being lost

Short

Action Item: Create new incentives which encourage the rehabilitation of existing structures

Short

Action Item: Allow for more flexibility in zoning regulations to encourage the thoughtful redevelopment of existing sites while protecting existing structures

Medium

Action Item: Encourage property owners to apply for state and national incentives such as the Historic Homes Rehabilitation Tax Credit and the CT Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Explore adding energy efficiency guidelines for historic buildings

Short

Action Item: Work with industry experts, local builders, and architects to explore alternative building materials which may be appropriate for historic structures

Medium

Action Item: Consider creating an honorary landmark program

Medium

Goal 2: Foster a greater understanding of local preservation efforts and local history by actively engaging the community of Westport	Timeline
Action Item: Develop historic context reports for existing historic districts and new historic districts	Short, Ongoing
Action Item: Consider conducting thematic based historic context reports of Westport	Short, Ongoing
Action Item: Continue to utilize social media to engage the community	Short, Ongoing
Action Item: Utilize story maps and other web-based technologies on the town's website to inform residents of local history and important sites	Short
Action Item: Improve the town's landing page for the HDC to include additional information on local history, important buildings, and districts	Short
Action Item: Adopt a local marker, wayfinding, or other interpretive marker program for local historic districts and historic sites	Medium
Action Item: Update the existing historic homeowners handbook to be more user-friendly and consider creating a complimentary brochure or handout	Short
Action Item: Provide owners of historic properties information on available incentives; ensure information on incentives if provided to new owners	Short
Action Item: Explore the creation of preservation related public events or festivals during Preservation Month	Short, ongoing
Action Item: Each year celebrate successful preservation projects during Preservation Month through preservation awards	Short, ongoing

Goal 3: Align Westport's preservation efforts with complimentary town, state, and non-profit activities

Timeline

Action Item: Ensure that future planning efforts align with the goals and objectives of the Preservation Plan

Medium, Ongoing

Action Item: Create partnerships with local non-profits and other advocacy groups to foster coordination between the Town and involved parties

Medium, Ongoing

Action Item: Explore ways for collaboration between the HDC and other Town boards and departments such as Planning and Zoning

Medium, Ongoing

Action Item: Consider becoming a Connecticut Main Street Town

Medium

Action Item: Include members of the HDC in other Town planning efforts where historic resources may be affected

Medium, Ongoing

Action Item: Partner with local realtors, architects, and other industry experts to create new Continuing Education (CE) courses for historic preservation

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Ensure the HDC supports Westport's goal of becoming a Net Zero Community through the utilization of historic resources and partnerships with local and state organizations

Long, Ongoing

Goal 4: Expand the internal operations of the Historic District Commission

Timeline

Action Item: Continue to apply for grant funding annually to meet the goals and strategies of the Preservation Plan

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Have staff and commissioners attend training and conferences

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Bring in experts to conduct public trainings such as window restoration workshops, brick repair workshops, and other home improvement workshops on a regular basis

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Conduct a study to determine the viability of creating an advocacy non-profit for local preservation efforts

Short

Action Item: Establish a follow-up process for cases that come through the HDC

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Follow-up with applicants who have been through the §32-18 process to determine where improvements could be made

Short, Ongoing

Goal 5: Provide reasonable alternatives to full scale demolition within Westport

Timeline

Action Item: Revise the existing demolition delay ordinance to provide further guidance at each step in the delay process

Short

Action Item: Consider adopting a policy to salvage architectural elements and usable materials in the event of a demolition

Medium

Action Item: Adopt regulations in districts which encourage new construction to be of compatible scale in the event of a demolition

Medium

Action Item: Form a working group/committee made up of HDC, First Selectwoman, local builders, architects, etc. on how to best address the high number of demolitions

Short, Ongoing

Action Item: Establish a process for moving historic structures as a last resort when demolition is unavoidable

Short



CHAPTER 6

APPENDIX - SURVEY RESULTS



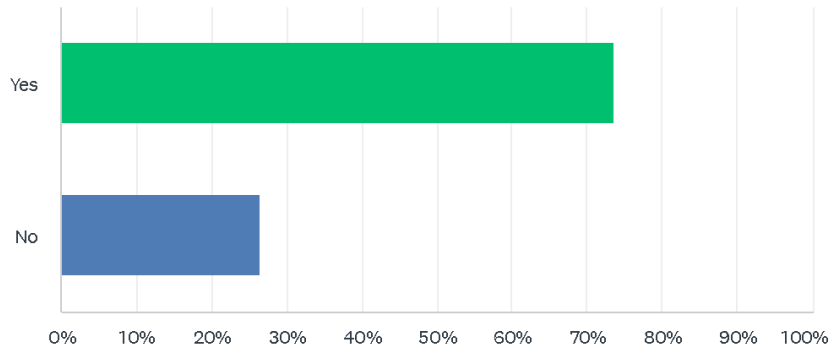
Waterfront buildings seen through the William F. Cribari Memorial Bridge.

(Source: Library of Congress)

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q1 Were you aware that the Town has a Historic District Commission with a dedicated office within Town Hall?

Answered: 224 Skipped: 2

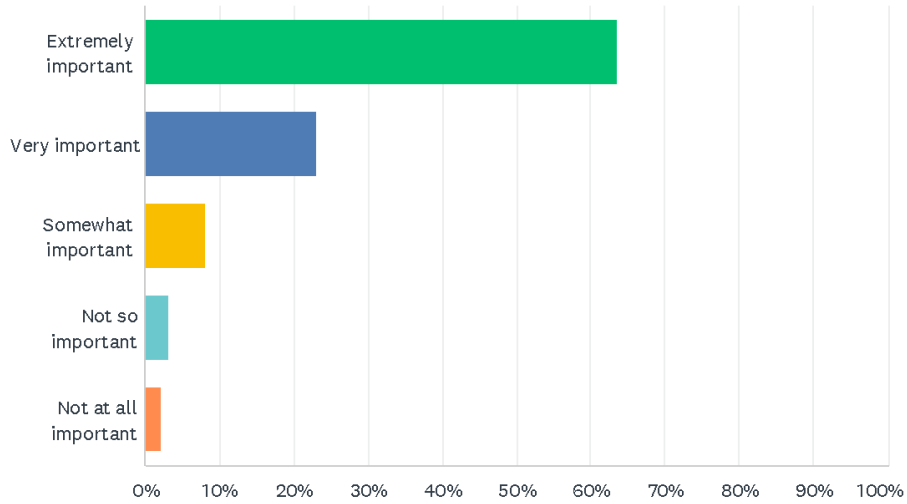


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	73.66%	165
No	26.34%	59
TOTAL		224

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q2 How important do you think historic preservation is to the future of Westport?

Answered: 225 Skipped: 1

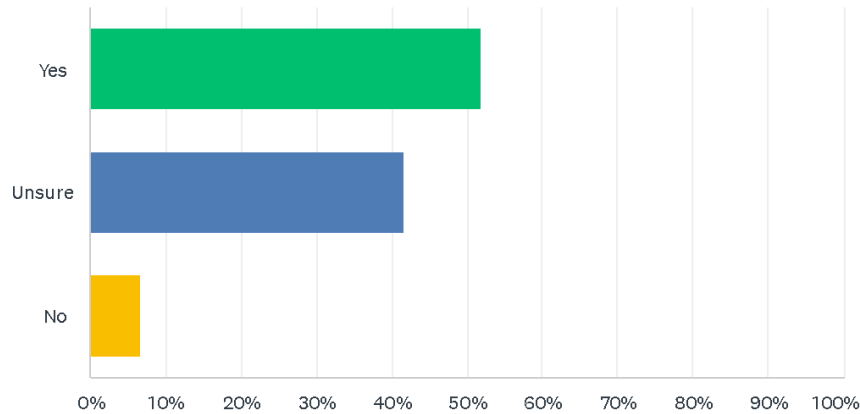


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Extremely important	63.56%	143
Very important	23.11%	52
Somewhat important	8.00%	18
Not so important	3.11%	7
Not at all important	2.22%	5
TOTAL		225

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q4 Are there individual properties, neighborhoods, or geographic areas in Westport that you believe could be considered historic districts or historic landmarks?

Answered: 224 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	51.79% 116
Unsure	41.52% 93
No	6.70% 15
TOTAL	224

#	IF YOU ANSWERED "YES" PLEASE INDICATE WHERE IN WESTPORT. FOR THIS QUESTION, EXISTING DISTRICTS AND LANDMARKS SHOULD NOT BE CONSIDERED.	DATE
1	Clinton Avenue	4/14/2023 10:52 AM
2	Any home or building built before 1890.	4/14/2023 10:41 AM
3	Compo Road South, Imperial Ave., Bridge St., Compo Beach area	4/10/2023 10:28 AM
4	Red Coat Road and it's surrounding roads.	4/8/2023 6:54 AM
5	Parts of Imperial Avenue, part of Compo Rd. South and sections of Greens Farms.	4/7/2023 9:02 AM
6	Houses and area on and near Treadwell Ave	4/7/2023 6:49 AM
7	All of Compo Road, Minute Man Hill, Riverside Drive, Lincoln Street	4/6/2023 9:34 PM
8	I have concerns about declaring geographic areas as historic districts. I think we should focus on historic landmarks. Individual properties should only be designated if the owner wants to do that.	4/6/2023 10:28 AM
9	Main street. Greens Farms Rd	4/5/2023 10:34 PM
10	150 & 151 Easton Road, and any other residence built before 1900.	4/5/2023 1:41 PM
11	Just about most of Westport! Especially areas with homes that are over 200 years old.	4/5/2023 11:13 AM
12	Compo Road South from Post Rd East to the beach	4/5/2023 11:09 AM

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13	Any building constructed before 1920.	4/5/2023 9:59 AM
14	Long Lots many old houses.	4/5/2023 9:30 AM
15	Greens Farms... there are no more farms. Subdivided land and block shaped architecture have eroded the charm of Westport. The newer homes already look outdated because of poor design. And, in general, the newer homes are not sited well on the properties. The charm and New England feel that visitors and prospective home buyers look for is disappearing. We're not quaint or timeless. Westport feels like areas Long Island, and not in a good way. Instead of polishing and leaning into making the town feel special, Westport is looking more and more like a gross strip mall.	4/5/2023 8:09 AM
16	Saugatuck	4/5/2023 7:10 AM
17	Longshore, Compo Beach, Great job improving Saugatuck Area!!!	4/5/2023 7:00 AM
18	anything on the beach. downtown. older building being restored instead of demolished. setback variances have been approved with houses way to close to each other, especially when the land lots are smaller. This takens away from value and asthetics.	4/5/2023 6:52 AM
19	Baron's property on Compo.	4/5/2023 6:30 AM
20	Greens farms area - Compo beach area	4/5/2023 5:53 AM
21	Main Street Canal Street Kings Highway North	4/5/2023 5:45 AM
22	Not sure about new districts, but HDC could probably promote ways to encourage more individual landmark properties ie: owner outreach, zoning incentives, tax breaks, rehab credits.	4/4/2023 10:59 PM
23	There are too many to list, there are homes and buildings all over Westport that merit saving and preserving. Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but most can agree on what is worth saving and what is not.	4/4/2023 5:44 PM
24	Throughout Westport, there are historical houses that are very well kept, and too often we see them go up for sale and then are sold and quickly slated for demolition and ultimately tom down. What replaces them is a larger - in some cases monstrous for the size of the lot - house. This has been going on for the entire 18 years I have lived in Westport; indeed, there used to be a feature called "teardown of the day" in WestportNow. Often there is a waiting period, and it passes and the building comes down. The historic fabric that dots the town is being removed systematically in favor of huge modern houses, and the town does not seem to care because the new home will have a higher property tax bill. What we will be left with is a town that looks like any other brand new town in America.	4/4/2023 3:35 PM
25	Maplewood Ave (already went defunct in an attempt to do this) Sniffen/Flower Farm property Kings Hwy Areas of Saugatuck/Riverside Ave	4/4/2023 1:51 PM
26	Districts and smaller neighborhoods / clusters and or homes within a larger district such as Green's Farms, Saugatuck, Old Hill, Nash's Pond, along Ford Road (adjacent to the river, Riverside Ave area from VFW to Post Road and north to encompass the older homes along the river, Compo Road S., some structures along the Post Rd etc. Possibly others as well, perhaps where famous writers, actors and others have lived, even for a short time.	4/4/2023 12:13 PM
27	1. Cockenoe Island: Native American Cockenoe (considered as an interpreter) who set up his wigwam on the island during the winters (especially during the 1651-52 winter). Known as "Cockenoe's Island". Since I am a member of the Montaukett Indian Nation, this is an important and exciting part of Westport history to me. 2. Further obvious markings of the American Revolution trails throughout Westport. 3. Staples HS neighborhood: There are areas along the wetlands in the West Parish tributaries of Muddy Brook in the Staples HS neighborhood that the Sons of the American Revolution have documented, mapping out routes where the revolutionary war soldiers traveled. One is in the Colony Road area. 4. Bridge Street Bridge. 5. Saugatuck River: preserving areas and marking significant history trade.	4/4/2023 10:03 AM
28	Areas around Old Hill, a few spots around downtown, Greens Farms, etc.	4/4/2023 6:48 AM
29	Long Lots Greens Farms	4/4/2023 6:48 AM
30	There are many homes, like 39 Cross Hgwy and 61 Bayberry Lane, that tell a unique history of families that have been part of this community for generations. These sites offer a valuable record of the timelines of our town. Without protection and recognition of these structures, the	4/3/2023 8:00 PM

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stories are lost to history. With demolitions, architectural restyling, and modern "Milton" homes, the essence of this coastal inlet is being erased. By honoring the "land-sites" of Westport, we weave a future legacy that includes the landcestors of our town.

31	Downtown main st	4/3/2023 7:45 PM
32	The red house at Long Lots and bulky. I anything on Beachside Avenue that is over 100 years old. I was very unhappy. They tore down Harvey Weinstein's old mansion. The property at 39 Cross Highway. Those are just to name a few.	4/3/2023 7:25 PM
33	downtown area, saugatuck train station area, some parts of the beach	4/3/2023 2:01 PM
34	Golden Shadows (Baron's South), Nike Site (Aspetuck Health District) on Bayberry Ave, Longshore Inn and Longshore's Adirondack Cottages, Adam's Academy, Canal Street as a Historic District, North Main St. as a Historic District, Imperial Ave. from the Post Rd southward to the crest of the hill by the Women's Club (including the Women's Club) as a Historic District. Saugatuck Congregational Church and its Parsonage, Greens Farms Congregational Church, all of the older firehouses in town except the Main Firehouse on the Post Rd, the Police Station as Local Historic Landmarks. Washington Ave., Wild Rose Rd., Richmondville Ave. as Local Historic Districts. Church Lane and what is or once was the Seabury Center (former Methodist Church) as a Local Historic District or as LHPs. The Westport Playhouse, the current Town Hall, the former Red Barn Restaurant (now owned by the YMCA), several homes on Crescent Road, several homes on Cross Highway, several homes on Morningside Drive, portions of Old Rd., two houses on the two north corners of Clapboard Hill and South Maple, one house on the corner of South Maple and Greens Farms Rd., the mill on Bulkley Pond, a few older homes remaining on North Ave., a few older homes remaining on Long Lots Rd, especially just east and west of North Ave. - all as LHPs. I could go on because there are some great older homes remaining on some of our oldest streets. Think about them all. They are being lost, one by one.	4/3/2023 1:47 PM
35	Greens farms, Turkey hill, Compo south, high gate rd, morningside, beachside avenue, Compo mill cove	4/3/2023 1:25 PM
36	Compo Beach area (beyond the primary beach),	4/3/2023 12:21 PM
37	The historic houses on Roseville Road and on Cross Highway that hold so many wonderful stories about our town!	4/3/2023 11:54 AM
38	Evergreen Saugatuck Greens Farms Charcoal Hill Old hill Downtown Area Noth imperial ave	4/3/2023 11:43 AM
39	Hurry. They are being knocked down and planting destroyed as fast as builders can work are: 39 South Maple Ave Many on South Compo	4/3/2023 11:11 AM
40	I don't know what the current districts are around town to be specific. I don't think many post WW2 houses need to be protected, except for architecturally significant individual properties.	4/3/2023 9:10 AM
41	I would ideally include all properties built before 1930. Yes, that's a pretty random number, but there is often a beauty and grace in structures built from that point going backwards as opposed to that point going forward. For example, 60 Long Lots Road is a simple but beautiful home that anchors the corner of Long Lots and Morningside. If it were to be replaced with a McMansion (no plans for this are in the works, to my knowMedge), a sense of that area's history—a sense that there were Westporters from a long-ago era that also lived and loved there— would be forever lost.	4/3/2023 8:34 AM
42	Compo Mill Cove	4/3/2023 8:31 AM
43	I think Phil Donahue house should have been evaluated. I think any house over 100 years should have some restrictions. There is a beautiful old barn falling to pieces on Turkey hill south	4/3/2023 8:24 AM
44	Saugatuck Shores Club house at 11 Sandpiper Road on Saugatuck Island. (This is different than the Saugatuck Yacht Club off Duck Pond)	4/3/2023 7:20 AM
45	Golden Shadows, center street and surrounding areas, all the stone bridges, homes built more than 100 years ago,	4/3/2023 6:56 AM
46	I don't think it should be a district but based on individual homes more than 100 years old.	4/3/2023 6:45 AM
47	Anything from before the 1920s.	4/2/2023 9:13 PM

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48	Tamarac and Lone Pine	4/2/2023 8:43 PM
49	Evergreen Saugatuck Greens Farms Charcoal Hill Old hill Downtown Area Noth imperial ave	4/2/2023 3:19 PM
50	Cribari Bridge, Bridge Street Historic Neighborhood.	4/2/2023 12:06 PM
51	Downtown some of it I am on the rtm downtown Westport	4/2/2023 9:37 AM
52	Down town	4/1/2023 11:26 PM
53	any house that is 100 years old	4/1/2023 10:49 PM
54	Downtown has many homes that together could be a historic neighborhood	4/1/2023 8:56 PM
55	Old Hill, individual properties	4/1/2023 5:37 PM
56	Richmondville Road Canal Street 30 Hyde Lane Main Street from Willowbrook Cemetery to Richmondville Road	4/1/2023 3:02 PM
57	Old Hill, Evergreen Ave, Myrtle Ave,	4/1/2023 9:28 AM
58	Compo, Saugatuck, "Downtown". Many structures both municipal and private in origin.	4/1/2023 8:16 AM
59	Several individual properties that I think could have been considered historic, which were over 100 years old and architecturally distinctive, have been demolished. I don't know how buildings can be protected when purchasers plan to demolish and replace them. But there should be an incentive to preserve historic properties.	3/31/2023 9:30 PM
60	greens farms area near the Congregational Church	3/31/2023 8:44 PM
61	Many individual properties.	3/31/2023 5:13 PM
62	Coleytown	3/31/2023 2:46 PM
63	Old Hill Road Partrick Road Saugatuck	3/31/2023 1:40 PM
64	6 Yankee Hill Road. Built mostly of recycled materials (bricks, barn wood, marble,etc.)and Philip Johnson might have been one of the three people involved (c. 1940's) Long lost article mention those involved and the process of chipping old concrete off the bricks to reuse....)	3/31/2023 1:01 PM
65	Westport Public Observatory (the Astronomical Society), Downtown Westport including surrounding areas like upper Main Street, Evergreen Pkwy and Evergreen Ave, Washington Ave, St. Johns Place, the Library, Police Station, Compo Shopping Plaza, Baron's Mansion, the Westport Women's Club, Longshore Club, Westport Beaches including Burying Hill. Too many more to mention here.	3/31/2023 11:04 AM
66	Revolutionary/Civil WWM homes, homes with historical significant stories and impact from famous people, even the soil/land. Westport Museum does not care at all.	3/31/2023 9:05 AM
67	I think there should be protections/disincentives for destroying ALL historic structures, regardless of specific location. That said, the following should be historic districts: Compo Road North between Post Road and Main Street; Compo Road South to Hillspoint Road and the entire Compo Beach area; Compo Mill Cove; Greens Farms (from Sherwood Island connector to Southport north of Greens Farms Road and south of Post Road); all of Cross Highway; all of Beachside Ave. Any structure built by a prominent architect before 1945 (e.g., anything by Frasier Forman Peters) should be permanently protected, regardless of location.	3/31/2023 9:04 AM
68	Coleytown Rd area.	3/31/2023 9:01 AM
69	Baron's South and its remaining structures.	3/31/2023 8:47 AM
70	Saugutuck	3/31/2023 6:56 AM
71	Areas in Saugatuck	3/30/2023 8:29 PM
72	Long lots	3/30/2023 7:26 PM
73	Greens farms	3/30/2023 7:15 PM
74	Historical event markers should be considered to be placed in areas where important events or locations took place.	3/30/2023 4:41 PM
75	244 Compo Rd South - F. Scott Fitzgerald House	3/30/2023 4:04 PM

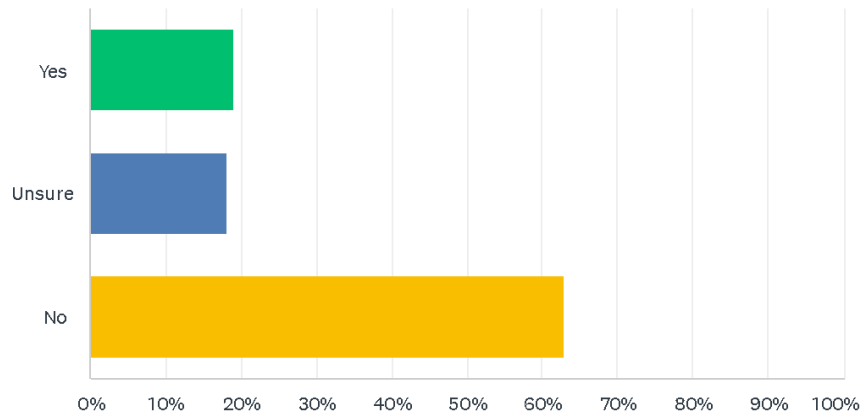
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76	Greens Farms has a number of older homes (150 years plus) that should be preserved. Additions and renovations could be OK assuming the remodeling is in keeping with the historic nature of the home/property. A historic preservation panel needs to be responsible for making said decisions.	3/30/2023 3:45 PM
77	Downtown and Main Street, Kings Highway area/Old Hill, Saugatuck	3/30/2023 3:30 PM
78	The Cribari Bridge. Barons South and Golden Shadows. The Nike Site.	3/30/2023 2:31 PM
79	The areas around Saugatuck	3/30/2023 2:07 PM
80	There are homes that were formally inhabited by our fore fathers. Others have architecture that we will never see again.	3/30/2023 2:06 PM
81	Many stone walls around town, stone wells, carriage roads - some still exist in some woods around town.	3/30/2023 1:15 PM
82	Saugatuck should have been considered but now it may be too late in this area of town. Portions of Evergreen Parkway and Evergreen Avenue.	3/30/2023 12:51 PM
83	Beach area	3/30/2023 12:31 PM
84	1. White house on corner of Riverside and Treadwell (462 Riverside Ave) 2. 443 Riverside Avenue	3/30/2023 12:29 PM
85	Compo Beach Area?	3/30/2023 12:20 PM
86	In my mind, most building built before 1940 are worthy of preserving - or, at least, discussing preservation thereof.	3/30/2023 12:16 PM
87	Main Street north Greens farms	3/30/2023 12:14 PM
88	I am not sure what's on the current list, so may be redundant. Examples: Wynkoop residence on Long Lots Rd (at Charbeth), "1776 House" and others on North Ave. 44 Imperial Ave. A number of homes on/near South Compo, North Compo, Imperial Ave. Jessup Rd. and Bridge St. A number of homes on Cross Hwy. Elmstead and other properties in the Greens Farms area. A number of homes in/around Treadwell Ave. As possible, Westport's remaining barns. (Westport participated in CT's Barn Survey some years ago).	3/30/2023 11:42 AM
89	Woodside Avenue Morningside Drive S Greens Farm Road Maple Ave. S	3/30/2023 11:34 AM
90	1820 built house at 101 Long Lots Road in Westport	3/30/2023 11:18 AM
91	Washington Avenue. Evergreen Avenue	3/30/2023 10:55 AM
92	Compo Mill Cove, Compo Beach and the Pavilions, Longshore and the Hotel, Club House etc., Cockenoe Island and Spriteview Island, Saugatuck Shores and the residential areas especially near the Yacht Club, nature preserves, historic churches and school houses, oyster beds of Compo Cove and Old Mill, Old Mill Beach, Graveyard from Revolutionary War time near Longshore and Compo Beach... +	3/30/2023 10:48 AM
93	Properties that are unique to the history of Westport, not entire blocks of homes that may be older but have zero historic value.	3/30/2023 10:37 AM
94	Any house under \$1M should be considered historical landmark	3/30/2023 10:35 AM
95	Sniffen Road	3/23/2023 8:58 AM
96	Sniffen Road	2/28/2023 9:26 PM

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Q5 In your view, are there any potential downsides to the Town expanding its inventory of Historic Districts and Historic Landmarks?

Answered: 221 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	19.00% 42
Unsure	18.10% 40
No	62.90% 139
TOTAL	221

#	IF YOU ANSWERED "YES" PLEASE PROVIDE MORE INFORMATION.	DATE
1	Potential restrictions on property owners' rights to their own property	4/14/2023 10:52 AM
2	You may stifle upgrading of houses because of renovation costs and restrictions.	4/6/2023 10:28 AM
3	waste of time, there's been so much destruction of antique homes and architecture for these mxmansions. the tax income is more beneficial to the town	4/5/2023 6:32 PM
4	States, cities, and towns usually adopt the national-level system (National Register of Historic Places) for consideration of historic properties, which informally calls on them to consider whether a property is historic at or around its 50th birthday. Please consider changing that to its 75th birthday here, so there aren't a bunch of unremarkable subdivision-like split-level properties being considered for eligibility merely because of their association with something vague like the growth of the suburbs oe similar (Criterion A). Or, consider the period of significance - for the entire town - as stretching to just the pre-war (WWI) period, and only allow for extension of that period with a majority wins town-wide ballot measure. The passage of time changes perspective, but being so elastic with the town register compromises its integrity.	4/5/2023 9:25 AM
5	the town has expanded historic districts for the past 25 years . To provide a career job for Mrs.Lahey who did not fulfill the commission's integrity. When a homeowner wanted to destroy an architecturally significant house the committee would post a wrong date for the hearing to prevent outsiders the right to protest, and through their "power " of no delays simply circumvent westport zoning established laws and protocols. Furthermore the committee chairs and officials do not adhere to their own laws, Its a sham.	4/5/2023 8:31 AM
6	It's an illegal taking of value for the property designated historical. If we were to say 18th	4/5/2023 7:48 AM

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century and 19th century were historical it would have credibility. But instead we're using historical districts to preserve 1920s to 1950s housing. I have seen historical designation as a way to stop multi-family housing preserving Westport as a wealthy enclave. That is wrong.

7	as long as a property can be reasonably saved and the plan presented to preserve it is aesthetically appealing. Sometimes a demo is necessary.	4/5/2023 6:52 AM
8	Personal property rights are trampled by historic districts. If the town want a property then decide to buy that single property from the lawful owner. If they want to sell, if not too bad for the town	4/5/2023 6:11 AM
9	To preserve history - you do not need to tear down older homes - can use the same foot print just update. Preserve what we have	4/5/2023 5:53 AM
10	I would rather see more new construction homes, then old dilapidated ones, kept in the name of preservation	4/5/2023 5:51 AM
11	Safety of a building is very important Maintaining town buildings and the financial burden on taxpayers Not leaving buildings unoccupied because of too many historic restrictions Cost to town funds if financial incentives are offered	4/5/2023 5:43 AM
12	Any expansion needs to be supportive of the home/property owner, be practical and affordable, and there has to be benefit, otherwise it not likely be supported.	4/4/2023 5:44 PM
13	Violation of property rights.	4/4/2023 5:23 PM
14	The downside is that the town will not be able to raise property taxes on new homes built to replace historical homes.	4/4/2023 3:35 PM
15	Stop trying to preserve things that arent meant to be preserved.	4/4/2023 9:14 AM
16	Everything old isn't worth saving. I'd hate to collect historic sites to the effect of clogging up progress.	4/3/2023 8:49 PM
17	Marketability of the homes if they cannot be torn down or significantly altered, which is not necessarily a bad thing if zoning regulations permitted some reasonable changes.	4/3/2023 12:21 PM
18	I think there must be a balance between being able to change/rebuild/renovate structures and the inability to change them at all. Most important to me is a sensitivity to existing neighborhoods and their land to house proportions and, in general, encouraging care and giving value to older (often smaller) structures when possible. I hope this makes sense.	4/3/2023 10:40 AM
19	Town needs to invest resources to help restore older homes. It buyers are expected to pick them up, the drawbacks of limited ability to make changes should be offset by support from the town.	4/3/2023 10:19 AM
20	The threat of landmark status may remove to incentive to improve on an older property. Some of these mid-century homes need improvement.	4/3/2023 9:10 AM
21	Perhaps there are monetary downsides for builders and individual homeowners, but the upsides for the community in terms of beauty, scale and, again, a sense that we're part of a continuum of people who have made Westport their home, there are no true downsides that I can see.	4/3/2023 8:34 AM
22	Of course need to be sensitive to owners needs — it's a balance. But developers should not be uninhibited from tearing down and clear cutting historic properties. And did I mention I hate high mdf fences in front yards shutting out the street ...?	4/3/2023 8:24 AM
23	If a property is designated, would that prevent road widening, or updated roadways adjacent to said property, from being constructed in order to solve traffic congestion? If won't interfere, then those properties should be given heritage/historical status.	4/3/2023 8:13 AM
24	Westport is very costly, and maintaining a historic home could make it even more costly. Developers have absolutely no incentive to take history (or character, obviously) into account, so it's a constant battle with them. Homeowners don't want their hands tied when it comes to what to do with their property. Sadly, I don't think the economy and public sentiment make this kind of conservation possible.	4/3/2023 7:43 AM
25	If overdone, it will limit the town's ability to grow.	4/3/2023 6:45 AM
26	Over zealous committees approving or denying changes.	4/3/2023 6:42 AM

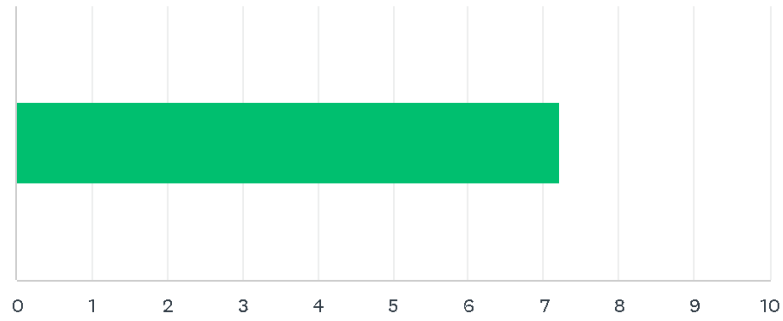
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27	The HDC process for renovations and improvements on existing historic buildings is way too arbitrary and burdensome. The building materials required in a historic district are also too expensive and do not keep up with the times.	4/3/2023 5:50 AM
28	Only if it results in other areas being high density or outside local zoning control.	4/2/2023 9:13 PM
29	I suspect that some parties might try to designate a historic district as a way to prevent otherwise appropriately located higher-density development, particularly when earlier development in the town would likely be concentrated near current retail and transit.	4/2/2023 4:49 PM
30	We should be able to do whatever we want to our houses, we paid alot of money to live here	4/2/2023 1:08 PM
31	I answered "yes" so I could add a comment. A potential downside can arise if the definition of what is "historic" changes over time without reviewing existing properties to assure the existing "inventory" continues to meet the new standards.	4/1/2023 9:49 PM
32	Do not confuse "familiarity" or sentiment with "historic merit". Buildings should not be restricted from renovation, alteration, or redevelopment unless there is some historic style inherent in its architecture or with significant past activity within the building. Similarly, new construction should not be limited to parrot old styles, lest the area becomes a Disney World Main Street. Today's architecture may be tomorrow's historic building. Today's change is tomorrow's history - as long as we don't eradicate history in the process.	4/1/2023 8:16 AM
33	The Town should strive to strike a balance between the future and the past. It needs to grow and adapt to the needs of the Town today and into the future while respecting and honoring the past. I would be cautious to adding any further Districts as that would be living more in the past than looking ahead to the future.	3/31/2023 10:01 AM
34	They might not truly be "historic" in nature and people might just use that as a way to block new construction or renovation that is a nuisance to them. For instance, the recently proposed "Fillow" historic district was really just proposed because there is a house on Sniffen Rd that is set to be demolished and new construction built in its place. A few neighbors near that house understandably don't want the disruption of a demolition and new construction for 18 months so they tried to get a "historic district" proposed that would prevent that from happening again.	3/31/2023 8:55 AM
35	I lived in an area that could almost be a district, and we looked into that. We felt that any constraints on what you could do with the property had to be applied very carefully to avoid lowering property values, and we couldn't drum up any enthusiasm with our neighbors.	3/31/2023 8:47 AM
36	If a structure has become unsafe or compromises a wetland or inland waterway, the structure should not be added to the list of landmarks.	3/30/2023 4:04 PM
37	Does the value of the grand list suffer when we preserve historic homes and landmarks? I would hope not, but we need to value other things than just the grand list and tax revenue that can be collected.	3/30/2023 12:51 PM
38	The public may perceive that a home with historic designation is less marketable and will appreciate less. It's important that there be positive information about what owners CAN do with the property, along with--perhaps--property tax incentives.	3/30/2023 11:42 AM
39	Limitations on homeowners to repair and maintain historic homes	3/30/2023 11:29 AM
40	Towns are living and evolving communities that should be prepared to change as demographics and society changes. It is important to retain a few landmarks to help educate on our past, but the focus should be on making Westport a great place to live where people of all ages can thrive. Neighborhoods are much more interesting when there is a variety of types of housing and architecture. Preserving something just because it is old is foolish and meaningless. It can also be expensive for individual homeowners, both in the cost of updating and the poor environmental performance of older buildings, many of which have substandard insulation.	3/30/2023 11:29 AM
41	While it's nice to keep old stuff, we need to be unfettered in adapting to the increasing need for housing and more appropriate housing for this era.	3/30/2023 11:07 AM
42	difficulty in maintaining properties	3/30/2023 10:42 AM
43	In order to preserve one home, several others could be devalued	3/30/2023 10:37 AM

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Q6 Identifying new areas of town for historic districts, historic landmarks, and other historic assets.

Answered: 217 Skipped: 9

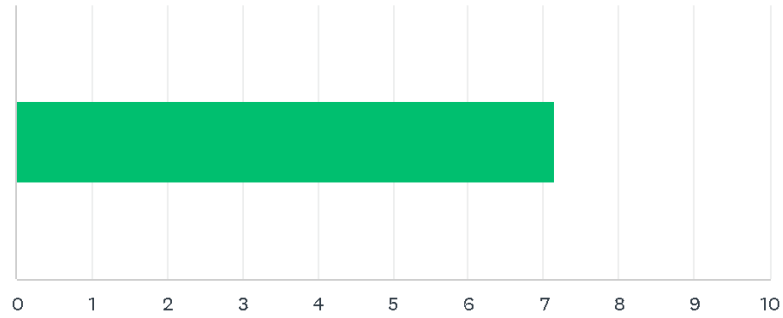


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	7	1,566	217
Total Respondents: 217			

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q7 Financial incentives and other benefits to historic property owners

Answered: 215 Skipped: 11

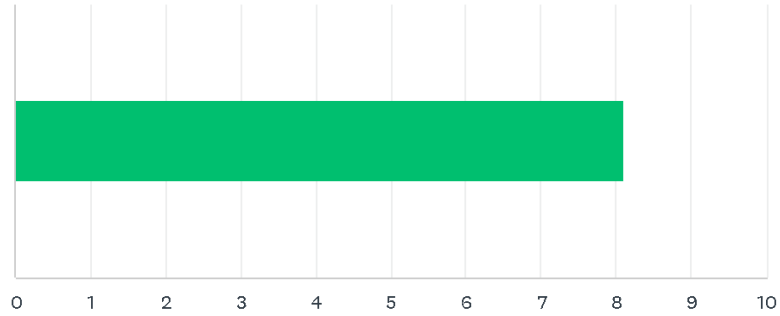


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	7	1,537	215
Total Respondents: 215			

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q8 Educating the public on historic preservation and local history

Answered: 223 Skipped: 3

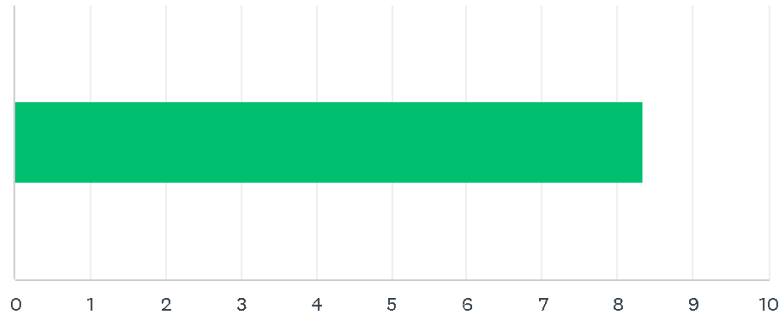


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	8	1,807	223
Total Respondents: 223			

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q9 Protecting historic properties from demolition

Answered: 223 Skipped: 3

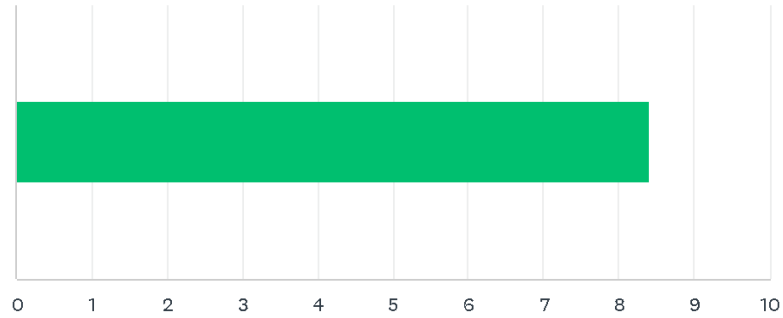


ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	8	1,861	223
Total Respondents: 223			

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q10 Promoting the restoration and reuse of historic buildings while enhancing energy and material efficiency

Answered: 220 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	AVERAGE NUMBER	TOTAL NUMBER	RESPONSES
	8	1,847	220
Total Respondents: 220			

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

Q11 If there is something else the Town and the HDC should focus on in preservation efforts, or if there is any other information you would like to share, please enter your suggestion here.

Answered: 73 Skipped: 153

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Balance the discipline of what's needed for historic preservation with flexibility for property owners.	4/14/2023 10:52 AM
2	Ensure that historic buildings have the same protections that historic homes do. Create greater community awareness of the value of preserving and restoring historic properties. All we see now are 180-day delays, which only stall the inevitable demolition of most 50-plus year old homes	4/11/2023 2:48 PM
3	Educate the public. All I know is beautiful homes are torn down and ugly buildings are put up. I don't know who owns what or what protections the buildings have. I also don't know which are the historic districts. More public information is needed. Empirically speaking I can see the town going in the wrong direction.	4/7/2023 1:09 PM
4	Find a way to communicate what "historic" means. And what is worth preserving. For example, I find the whole discussion on preserving historic Saugatuck strange. There is very little there to preserve. That whole area looks and feels "old" and not very "historic".	4/7/2023 12:45 PM
5	Strengthen the HDC's power to control demolition of true historic resources.	4/7/2023 9:02 AM
6	tax breaks for homeowners with homes 50+ years old	4/5/2023 6:32 PM
7	Please stop allowing the destruction of our local historic buildings. SO MUCH of our history has already been destroyed!! Our local history is living American History. The character of this town is what gives it value and makes it desirable.	4/5/2023 1:41 PM
8	This town is filled with New England history yet there are more "teardown" of homes to build McMansions that are of no significant value to this town's history, except to the homeowner. This town doesn't seem to believe in "restore" at all. We saw a 300 year old home torn down on Long Lots Road to become a lawn and basically just a piece of wasteland! So what is the point of a Historical Commission if there is nothing historical left to view? Yet, sadly I don't believe this survey will change anything.	4/5/2023 11:13 AM
9	The first priority needs to be consideration of historic places that may be lost due to sea-level rise, and what can be done to help property- and business-owners avoid/delay it. The second priority needs to be creation of historic trails, possibly connecting with neighboring towns. Related, the third priority needs to be development and implementation a town-branded and uniform approach to interpretation in public spaces. (There are lots of newcomers here who don't know the history of the area.) Finally, the town should adopt a no-facade solar panel policy on historic properties facing the public realm. Thanks for consideration of these comments.	4/5/2023 9:25 AM
10	It would be wonderful to have safe paths and sidewalks. People would be more appreciative of preserved and historical architecture if they had safe sidewalks to stroll on and thereby appreciate the town they live in. It's hard to pay attention to the beautiful homes, architecture and landscaping when you're trying to dodge traffic in the road. People have to be able to slow down to see the details and charm, but there's no ability to slow down and appreciate the historic areas because of traffic. I just received a local magazine in the mail called STROLL - Green Farms and Compo, my husband and I laughed and said, "who's strolling anywhere?! We'd get knocked off the road if we stepped onto Center St and Greens Farms Rd" which is our corner. Building an appreciation for historic district begins with building a community. Sidewalks build community and foster independence in young kids. Young couples WANT to live in that fairytale village, but they can't even walk their kids to the school down the street.	4/5/2023 8:09 AM
11	Westport should prioritize multi-family and affordable housing. Anything else simply preserves	4/5/2023 7:48 AM

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

	privilege.	
12	I think the HDC does a great job balancing preservation & necessary improvements for homeowners/developers to not be overly economically burdensome for both. We must preserve our historical landmarks & provide incentives for doing so! Thank you for your hard & important work!	4/5/2023 7:00 AM
13	Stop allowing to many buildings going up with adequate space in between. We are not in NYC!!	4/5/2023 6:52 AM
14	Less building, period. Every square inch is being developed and the character of Westport is suffering from over development.	4/5/2023 6:19 AM
15	Less building, period. Every square inch is being developed and the character of Westport is suffering from over development.	4/5/2023 5:37 AM
16	Stay engaged with P&Z and Town administration on historic preservation matters.	4/4/2023 10:59 PM
17	HDC needs to work with Planning and Zoning to make Historical Properties an asset to the property vs a liability. You can do more if you save the historical building vs tearing it down	4/4/2023 5:44 PM
18	Westport is truly unique in that it played a major role in the Revolutionary War and that history including the structures that stood at that time should be saved. Without HDC recognition, all will demolished and wiped out with all the development with only profit as the objective. Westporters should be proud of their heritage or move to another Town. Over time, the HDC could do small bus tours with different categories, possibly with the Westport Museum as they do in Boston.	4/4/2023 12:13 PM
19	1. Baron's South: The historic Commission needs to do a better job at forcing the town to take responsibility for maintaining properties they now own. Why was Baron's South left to become damaged and be in disrepair? Unacceptable. And who was responsible for this? 2. I know that colonial history is out of vogue now...but the town has a responsibility to preserve its New England colonial history before new density development completely destroys the last remnants of the town's New England history. It can't be undone.	4/4/2023 10:03 AM
20	Answer to #9 above - Only if the homeowner desires to restore the home. Concentrate on actual historic homes, and the homeowners who really wish to restore the homes. Provide them with useful tools to search for Architects, builders, suppliers that specialize in these areas, modern materials which have historic appearances, etc. The 50 year rule no longer works for demolition permits, not sure it ever worked. The number should be changed to 75 years as there really are not any properties which qualify between 50-75 and that era (1950-70) was an architectural time we should probably forget.	4/4/2023 9:41 AM
21	I own a historic building that I restored - it would have been much cheaper to demolish and start over but there is already too much of that happening in town so we decided to preserve the building.	4/4/2023 7:29 AM
22	Town should protect historic houses, antiques and buildings that reflect Westport's history' including old saveable commercial buildings.	4/4/2023 7:08 AM
23	Incentives for preservation and restoration are key - working WITH developers and homeowners, not against them.	4/4/2023 6:48 AM
24	ACT! Too much has been lost already to greedy developers and unconcerned and unformed politicians asleep at the switch 😞	4/4/2023 6:48 AM
25	If there's no incentive to restore these old houses then people will knock them down 🙄	4/3/2023 8:49 PM
26	I once approached the Westport Museum with a proposal for documenting the "Wells of Westport". There are many properties through out the town that have farmstead stone water wells. Each unique in character and current condition. Would be wonderful to have the HDC document, map, and record these historic architectural elements. Perhaps a public call for submission of property well to be documented, allowing the homeowner to provide photo and information towards a town archive.	4/3/2023 8:00 PM
27	it's imperative to preserve the historic character of the town. this is what will continue to make our town unique and interesting	4/3/2023 2:01 PM
28	The HDC and the town need to be willing to collaborate with local residents who show passionate interest in working to preserve and designate the town's historic assets and resources (including those the town itself owns). It's a big job, and the input from residents	4/3/2023 1:47 PM

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

should be welcomed by the HDC rather than discouraged, stonewalled, delayed or forgotten. Great LHP proposals went belly up after huge amounts of work due to poor HDC involvement and/or advocacy (or both) over the years. The HDC has accomplished little in the last 10 years other than the waiving of demo delays. A more welcoming and hard-working HDC could accomplish so much more. HDC leadership over the past decade was poor. The new, recent changes in leadership (Grayson Braun and Scott Springer) provide some hope for better performance and friendlier collaboration with the public. Look for additional new members to populate the Commission who are passionate about historic preservation, who do their homework, and who are willing to walk the talk. The HDC should attempt to actually preserve properties by forming subcommittees (that include members of the public) that would then lead to successful designations rather than waste their own precious time re-doing manuals and developing plans for preservation that never result in an actual preservation. Stop relying on the State to provide money to hire pros to do study reports in pursuit of LHP status. The state will only provide money for one project at a time (which can take 1-2 years or more). Rather than rely on state funds 100% of the time, some of these studies can be done in-house using talented residents - yes, it has been done in Westport in the past. In that way, two or more studies can run simultaneously. Additionally, perhaps advocate for a bigger town budget allocation for the HDC to hire some assistance from pros without having to rely so much on state support. To discourage the tear-down craze, meet with realtors and builders to help them understand the value of historic homes before they file the demo permit - provide them with resources to help sellers market their historic homes to historically interested buyers. Educate the RTM too. Their votes have killed great LHPs in the last ten years. Use the HRI to send the current owner of each of the listed properties a letter letting them know that their house is on the list. Include a copy of the info gathered on that property when it was put on the list. Many homeowners would be fascinated by the history. Encourage them to come talk to you about how to preserve their homes or how to market them if they are considering selling them. The HDC and Town should work to establish a "Preservation Fee" for every demolition permit that is pulled for a structure that is fifty or more years old. The fees collected would help pay for the preservation initiatives and the education materials mentioned above. The current Town Plan prioritizes historic preservation (as have those in the past) yet it is rarely, if ever, used as a tool to initiate efforts or protect current assets. I fear this plan will end up on the same shelf. I'll try to feel hopeful, yet again. I could go on and on, but won't. You get the idea.

29	The town buying significant historic properties/land for museums, parks, etc	4/3/2023 1:25 PM
30	Saving trees and planting	4/3/2023 11:11 AM
31	Rather than protecting historic properties from demolition, perhaps the focus should be oriented to how the new structure will complement or impact the existing housing stock around it.	4/3/2023 10:40 AM
32	New developments within historic districts should conform to historic aesthetic guidelines	4/3/2023 10:19 AM
33	So important to preserve historic neighborhoods to prevent McMansion blight!	4/3/2023 8:32 AM
34	Please do something useful with Barons South land. Anything other than what it is currently.	4/3/2023 7:54 AM
35	Tax breaks (meaningful ones) would be a great incentive. We ALL enjoy driving by classic older homes, and those who choose to maintain them are, imo, providing a wonderful service to the rest of the community.	4/3/2023 7:43 AM
36	I'd actually just like to know how effective all of this is. Compo Beach was put on the National Register of Historic Places - and part of that was because it had "one of the largest assemblages of period resort architecture in Westport, and one of the best such collections in the region." But no one devised a master plan for it. So all those beautiful houses at Compo Beach have been replaced by huge oversized houses - many of which are not in keeping with the New England spirit and are downright ugly. What a shame. What a horrible shame.	4/3/2023 7:02 AM
37	It is a travesty what has been allowed to happen to our town. We look like white plains now. I've been a resident for over 20 years and each day I'm more outraged at the lack of planning and foresight by the historic commission and their lack of authority given to them by the town.	4/3/2023 6:56 AM
38	Question 10 is great. How to keep the town's history while keeping up with the present.	4/3/2023 6:45 AM
39	They should abolish the 50 year review period, its so arbitrary. A historic building could be 10 years old and it could be 100 years old. Like pornography, you know it when you see it. The HDC knows in advance what buildings demo application have been applied for and should only hear applications that they deem "historic" to make every applicant come in front of the	4/3/2023 5:50 AM

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	commission is a waste of everyone's time. The applicant can then make their case as to why its not.	
40	We need to focus on sugtuck and downtown main st and post road I live down here I am on the rtm	4/2/2023 9:37 AM
41	Preserve remaining mid-century modern homes. Educate the public to appreciate historically significant homes.	4/2/2023 9:36 AM
42	Track houses that the building company sir builders is putting everywhere in Westport they destroy charming homes and put the exact same houses everywhere.	4/1/2023 11:26 PM
43	Protect Saugatauck	4/1/2023 10:49 PM
44	What sort of financial incentives does the HDC offer, and for what purpose? More importantly, your scale should have an odd number of choices so the respondent has a neutral point, or a point of indifference. Additionally, a five point scale is far more manageable than a nine or ten point scale -- what is the difference between a seven and an eight in responding to identifying new areas?	4/1/2023 9:49 PM
45	It is sad that green farms lost most of its historic community , westport should focus on preservation of a historic community so that in 100 years westport will become a place for citizens to be proud of	4/1/2023 8:56 PM
46	For buildings and districts offering access to the public, accessibility for the disabled should be accommodated unless entirely impractical.	4/1/2023 8:16 AM
47	I don't envy your difficult task. When I moved to Westport 40 years ago from California I was told, "Wow Westport is the Carmel of Connecticut." Obviously this person had never been to Carmel, CA. Anyway, I owned a small house on Fairfield Ave at Compo. I was told my little house was historic and therefore, had to go before the historical district before demolishing, which took months and months. Then I was told by P&Z that I could not build a larger house like all my neighbors had done. I guess they hired lawyers to get by P&Z which I did not. Como is like Balboa Beach, CA. So I sold my house and moved to another part of our wonderful town. I am sorry my input is of so little use.	3/31/2023 3:02 PM
48	Why hasn't Westport done this sooner? So much damage has been done that is irreparable.	3/31/2023 1:40 PM
49	I do not think that historic preservation means keeping a property so "historic" that every nail must be scrutinized. It may be that better windows, for instance, with modifications to make it look "in sync" with preservation, would encourage residents to allow for designation without making it too difficult to reside in such a building. I use windows only as an example, not for any particular reason or to exclude other possible components of a home.	3/31/2023 1:19 PM
50	Identify properties that deserve special attention such as the building on the edge of the terrain property which has been badly neglected.	3/31/2023 10:09 AM
51	Protect Lincoln Street and other historic areas by purchasing open land	3/31/2023 9:05 AM
52	The existing incentives for historic preservation require lots of time, money, and sophistication to navigate, have significant downsides, and are really only relevant to a handful of properties. There need to be disincentives for destroying historic properties, not just weak incentives to preserve them. I own an historic house and am in the process of restoring it, so I can attest to that. If you want more info, you can email me at wyatt.jansen@gmail.com	3/31/2023 9:04 AM
53	History of people	3/31/2023 7:58 AM
54	Why are historic homes being torn down on Beachside Avenue? How did that get approved?	3/31/2023 5:49 AM
55	Sharing the information about Westport's history. I'd love to know more about native americans that bonce lived here.	3/30/2023 8:47 PM
56	Also need to consider surrounding area of a historic property	3/30/2023 7:15 PM
57	The HDC should consider the character of the town, so Westport does not become another strip mall type town.	3/30/2023 4:41 PM
58	The demolition of a 150+ year old home in good condition is an insult to our history. We are hoping the recently sold 39 Maple Avenue home will not be torn down, but preserved. After	3/30/2023 3:45 PM

Westport Historic Preservation Plan Survey

surviving 200 years its demolition would be shameful! After all that time it deserves its place as a permanent witness to Westport's ongoing experience..

59	Be just as vigilant preserving Town Own Property as preserving Private Property. The biggest abuser for none preservation is the Town itself. And the HDC historically is complicit in this abuse. You don't work for the BOS you work for the Westport Community - both past and present!	3/30/2023 2:31 PM
60	As a long time resident of Westport, it is a shame to see so many cute homes in established neighborhoods being replaced by the big souless white houses being built by a certain builder. The Zoning Board in this town has much to answer for. It feels like the small town atomosphere, with its roots in our colonial past and thriving arts that drew so many to our town, is being erased. The HDC can do much to help to protect what remains of our charming town and I sincerely hope it can.	3/30/2023 2:07 PM
61	perhaps giving the homeowner tax breaks.	3/30/2023 2:06 PM
62	Begin Homestead tax treatment (similar to homestead tax treatment in the state of Florida for primary residences) for residents who reside in the same property continually for years; this benefits the homeowner as they can afford to remain in their home, prevents unnecessary demolition due to higher more frequent turnover AND is the green /environmental option. As we know and has been proven in studies , tearing down a building and constructing new is energy intensive and a very high use of resources vs improving and updating what already exists (and can be retained.)	3/30/2023 1:08 PM
63	Prevent over building and over crowding of historic quiet and quaint neighborhoods such as projects like the Saugatuck hamlet near the train station.	3/30/2023 12:29 PM
64	Question 10 brings up an interesting issue. Preservation vs energy efficiency is often times easier said than done. There needs to be dialogue between the Zoning/Town Engineer (who enforce local building codes) the Historic Preservation people to ensure Engineering and Preservation goals are not mutually exclusive.	3/30/2023 12:16 PM
65	Sadly, historic preservation is an elective and continuous process. Homes/buildings that have not received that elective, continuous care, or have been abandoned, may not be able to be saved. If, despite tax/other incentives, a home needs to come down, separate incentives for a "green" takedown/recycle--as possible--would be a positive.	3/30/2023 11:42 AM
66	The town should consider the negative impacts on historic areas of over building around historic areas. For example ... around the Saugatuck area	3/30/2023 11:41 AM
67	The importance of preserving historic properties may be generational: younger age groups seem to have no appreciation of the workmanship and classic lines of older buildings. This may change if they are willing to be educated to style and design. That said, some newer house designs have few redeeming features, such as the "raised ranch" which remain eyesores (my opinion).	3/30/2023 11:34 AM
68	The HDC should be very selective in what it chooses to preserve. There should be unique qualities to the building; it should not be preserved just because it is old.	3/30/2023 11:29 AM
69	Open spaces should also be preserved.	3/30/2023 11:18 AM
70	thank you	3/30/2023 10:58 AM
71	Continue to retain the history, charm and character of Westport	3/30/2023 10:55 AM
72	Any house over \$1M should get no historical status, protection, or related benefits. Concentrate assistance to all houses at least 50yrs old below \$1M	3/30/2023 10:35 AM
73	Educating realtors and architects on the benefits of historic preservation	2/28/2023 9:26 PM