

6. Heritage Preservation/Community Character

Historic Preservation is about civic pride and Dennis, still essentially a small rural town, is filled with treasures. In earlier years, Capt. John Sears produced the first salt by solar evaporation in the colonies. Asa Shiverick's three sons built eight magnificent clipper ships along the edge of Sesuit Creek that would grace harbors throughout the world. The first cranberry cultivation in America took place in Dennis. Liberty Hall is located at the crossroads of one of the "most perfectly preserved 19th century intersections" in New England, according to the Massachusetts Historical Society. The sea captains' village in South Dennis and historic structures elsewhere in Dennis mirror Cape Cod's history as a place anchored by the sea.

Like other towns on Cape Cod, though, Dennis is an endangered species. Although the town shares a common history with other Cape towns, Dennis faces a challenging future. It cannot, for example, be assumed that the town's meadows, its wooded lands and its waterfront will remain as they are. They likely will – until the next push to develop the town's landscape.

Inventory

A. Historic Resources

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places identifies the following (See Map 6.1):

- Josiah Dennis Manse (1736) – Nobscusset Road and Whig Street
- West Schoolhouse (c. 1770) – Nobscusset Road and Whig Street

Sites on the State Register of Historic Places

The State Register of Historic Places identifies the following:

- "Tom Sailor" Howes House (1720) – New Boston Road (See Map 6.1)
- Old King's Highway Regional District – Including historic structures (See Map 6.1)
- South Dennis Historic District – Including historic structures (See Map 6.2)

Non-Register sites in existing historical surveys

Within each of the Town's Villages there are several historical sites, which are not listed on the National Register. Listed below, by village, are some of those sites. However, some are within the Old King's Highway Historic District and the South Dennis Historic District.

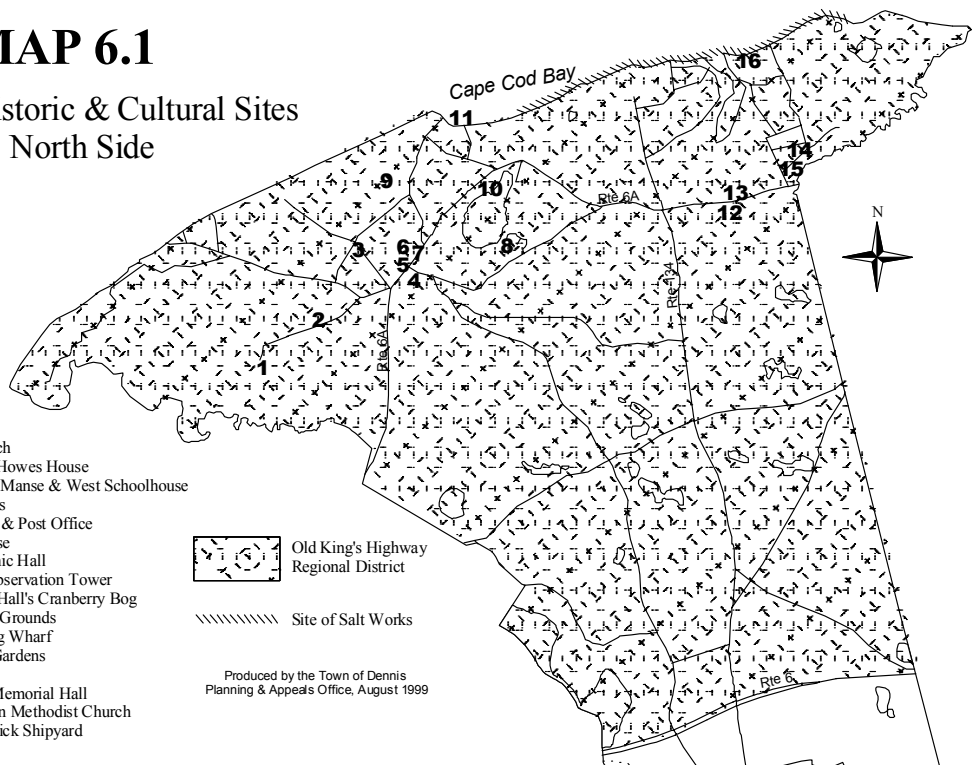
Village of East Dennis (See Map 6.1, except as noted)

Site of Shiverick shipyard (1812-1862) – Asa Shiverick bought land along Sesuit Creek and began building vessels for whales and fishermen who wanted to fish the waters of the Grand Banks rather than coastal waters. The first schooner was launched in 1815, and the following year a brig was sent off to Boston for rigging. In the next few years several more schooners were built and rigged in Boston. The shipyard would eventually build eight handsome clipper ships for the world trade.

Site of first salt produced by solar evaporation in the colonies. Captain John Sears began this salt making process in 1776.

MAP 6.1

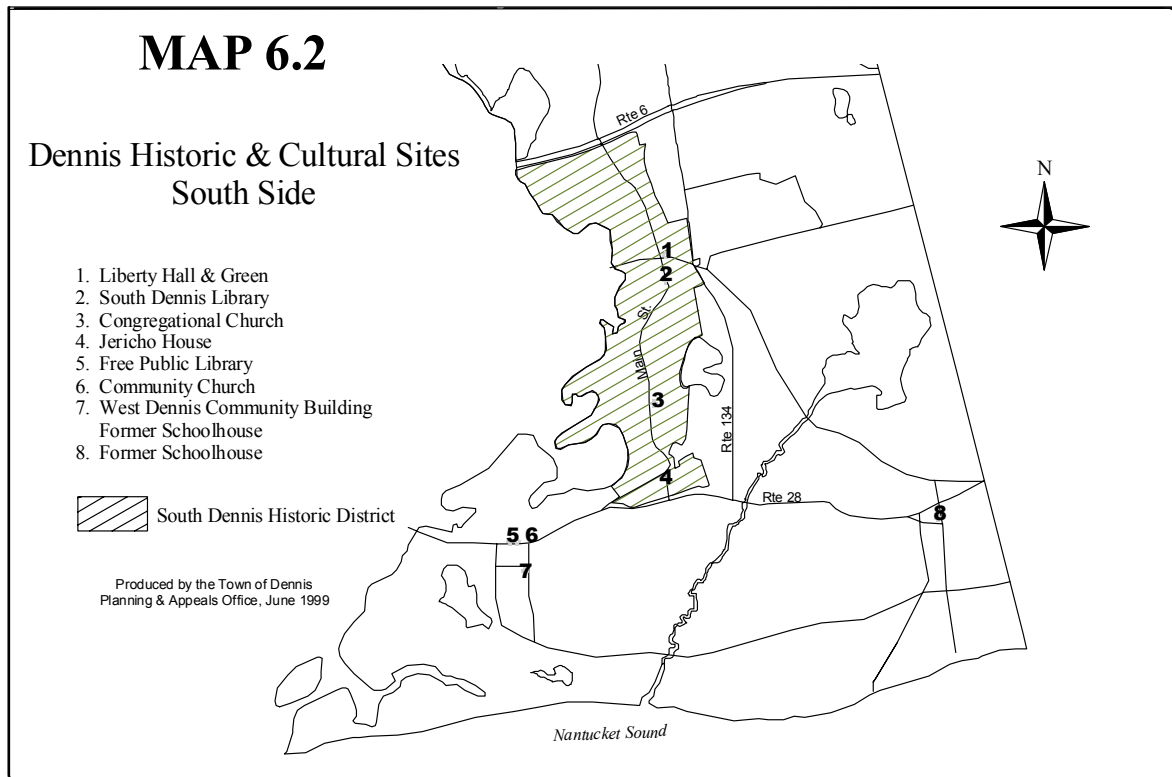
Dennis Historic & Cultural Sites North Side



1. Blueberry Patch
2. "Tom Sailor" Howes House
3. Josiah Dennis Manse & West Schoolhouse
4. Grist Mill Sites
5. Country Store & Post Office
6. Cape Playhouse
7. Former Masonic Hall
8. Scargo Hill Observation Tower
9. Site of Henry Hall's Cranberry Bog
10. Indian Burial Grounds
11. Site of Fishing Wharf
12. Community Gardens
13. Worden Hall
14. Jacob Sears Memorial Hall
15. First Wesleyan Methodist Church
16. Site of Shiverick Shipyard

-  Old King's Highway Regional District
-  Site of Salt Works

Produced by the Town of Dennis
Planning & Appeals Office, August 1999



Burial grounds with 17th century grave sites (See Map 4.2 in Capital Facilities)
 Numerous 18th and 19th century dwellings, including the homes of many sea captains.

(Individual homes have not been shown on a map.)

First Wesleyan Methodist Church (1845) – Later the East Dennis Community Church
 Worden Hall on Route 6A was built in 1866 and used as a community social center for
 100 years. It is on the site of the Worden family land.

Jacob Sear Memorial Hall (1896) – Library, 23 Center Street

Community Gardens – Off Route 6A – Listed as a cultural landscape

Village of Dennis (See Map 6.1, except as noted)

Cape Playhouse, a former 19th century Unitarian Meeting House, and since 1927, the
 “Birthplace of the Stars”. Now, the oldest summer theater in America.

Indian Burial Grounds – The NobsCUSsett tribe’s chief, Mashantampaine, deeded to
 settlers most of the land that ultimately became the Town of Dennis. In 1828, the
 town voted to fence the tribe’s burial ground located off Route 6A and along a
 portion of Scargo Lake.

Former Masonic Hall (1800)

Site of Henry Hall’s cranberry bog – Off Scarsdale Road

Hall family burial ground (late 1600’s) (See Map 4.2)

Country store and post office (1850) – 776 Route 6A

Grist mill sites

The four acre town blueberry patch, a popular berry picking fruitery for the past 50 years. Harry and Regina Cross donated the land to the town in 1972.

The Scargo Hill Observation Tower built of stone in 1901 after two others had been destroyed by fire and storm and located atop the highest point in the mid-Cape area. It provides a panoramic view of the legendary Scargo Lake, Cape Cod Bay and the shoreline from Provincetown to Sandwich and beyond (See also Map 6.3).

In 1814, a 600 foot wharf was built at Nobscusset Point (Corporation Beach). It was at this site that packet boats regularly loaded corn and salt for Boston markets. Small vessels were also built at Nobscusset Point until the wharf and ship-building facilities were storm damaged in 1849.

Cemeteries in Dennis trace the town's history beginning with the first settlers in the 1600's. Portraits were common in the 18th century and good examples are found throughout the burial grounds. One example is the portrait stone of Michah Chapman who died in 1797. The remains are in the burial ground at the Dennis Union Church, properly called the Dennis Village Cemetery. (See Map 4.2.2)

Village of South Dennis (See Map 6.2 except as noted)

Congregational Church containing oldest working pipe organ in America

South Dennis Library (1858) former cottage with gingerbread decoration

Liberty Hall and Green mirror the village's culture since 1844: gathering place, general store, post office, and stage coach stop

Several 18th and 19th century burial grounds (See Map 4.2.2)

Historic sea captains' village

Quaker Burial Ground (Friends Meeting House 1717-1809) (see Map 4.2.2)

Village of West Dennis (See Map 6.2, except as noted)

Former schoolhouse (1867) and now a community building

Jericho House (1801)

Community Church (1835)

Free Public Library (1924)

Burial ground (1857) (See Map 4.2.2)

A number of 19th century dwellings, including several wonderful examples of Greek revival style houses built mostly between 1830 and 1875 (Individual homes not shown on Map)

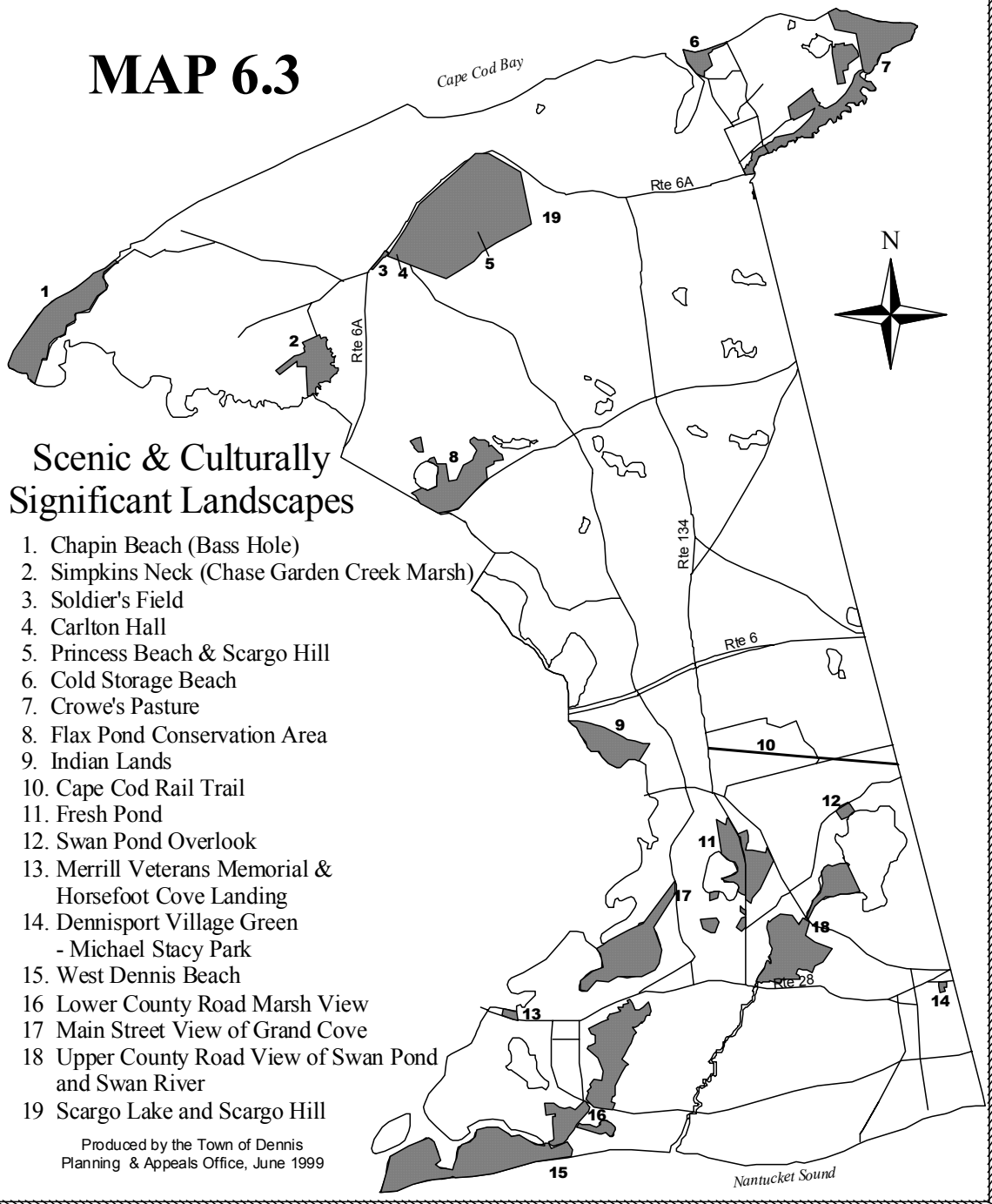
Village of Dennis Port

Schoolhouse (1802) (See Map 6.2)

Burial ground (1845) (See Map 4.2.2)

Several 19th century dwellings (Individual homes not shown on map)

MAP 6.3



Local Historic Districts

These districts can be found under the State Register of Historic Places.

B. Significant Historic Archaeological Resources

The Indian Lands along the Bass River in South Dennis, Crowe's Pasture in East Dennis and Scargo Hill may yield archaeological finds in the future. NobsCUSset Indians lived along the Old King's Highway, which was once an Indian Trail. The settlers in the area eventually bought the land from the Indians (deeds from 1694). To date only one small burial ground has been formally documented, however the one in Crowe's Pasture has yet to be examined.

About the year 1000, Leif Ericson, a Norwegian, led a Viking expedition from Greenland to North America making landfall somewhere along the east coast. Ericson called the area Vinland. Some historians believe Vinland was located in either what is now Maine or Massachusetts. Others think it was in Newfoundland where the remains of a Viking settlement were found in 1961. Although local historians believe Vikings may have sailed up the Bass River in the year 1000, there is no historical evidence of any Viking expeditions to Massachusetts.

C. Scenic Landscapes

Within the Town of Dennis there are many other distinctive scenic areas. Some are listed below. (See Map 6.3)

Simpkins Neck (Chase Garden Creek Marsh) – wooded roads wander through undisturbed stands of oak and pine leading to panoramic salt views and fresh water wetlands.

The Indian Lands offer views of the Bass River, saltwater marsh and fresh water marsh and in spring the largest stand of lady slippers on Cape Cod.

Swan Pond Overlook

Flax Pond Conservation Area features cranberry bogs and old wood roads, red tailed hawks and white tailed deer.

Chapin Beach (Bass Hole) is a good example of a barrier beach protecting upland along Route 6A. It features tidal flats and coastal sand dunes.

Princess Beach and Scargo Hill on Scargo Lake features nature trails, fresh water swimming and fishing. The lake is stocked with trout annually.

Cold Storage Beach features sand dunes, a large granite jetty and a panoramic view of natural dunes and the historic Pilgrim Monument in Provincetown.

West Dennis Beach offers a panoramic view of saltwater marsh, Bass River and ferries passing to and from Historic Nantucket.

The Cape Cod Rail Trail begins in South Dennis following the path of the Cape's first railroad, the Cape Cod Railroad, which early in its service used wood-burning engines. Later, the Old Colony Railroad provided service between Boston and eventually (1873) to Provincetown. The Rail Trail continues to the Cape Cod National Seashore, a distance of about 26 miles.

Merrill Veterans Memorial and Horsefoot Cove Landing offer boat access and an overlook of Horsefoot Cove off of Bass River. It also features a memorial for Dennis' War Veterans.

Dennisport Village Green and Michael Stacy Park serve as a memorial to Michael Stacy and provide a village green with gazebo and a children's playground.
Crowe's Pasture offers one-hundred acres of preserved open space including a large sandy beach, salt marsh and views of Cape Cod Bay and Quivett Creek.
Lower County Road, West Dennis Marsh views.
Upper County Road, South Dennis, Swan River views.

Culturally Significant Landscapes

Soldier's Field located on Old King's Highway in Dennis Village was used to train citizen soldiers during the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812. The training ground was identified in 1902 as the Village Green. (See Map 6.3)
Liberty Hall Green, along side one the "most perfectly preserved 19th century intersections" in New England and the location of a 19th century structure that mirrors the early settlers way of life. (See Map 6.2)
Carleton Hall on Old Bass River Road was originally built as a "praying house" in 1828 by the Reformed Methodists. It was acquired in 1847 for use as a private academy and in 1865, it was purchased by a local group led by Carleton Howes for community uses. (See Map 6.3)
Historic Churches in Dennis include: the Dennis Union Church built in 1838 (See Map 6.1); the First Wesleyan Methodist Church built in 1845, replaced in 1959 (See Map 6.1); the West Dennis Community Church built in 1835 (See Map 6.2); and the South Dennis Congregational Church built in 1835. (See Map 6.2)

Areas in need of Improvement

Preservation and rehabilitation of some historic structures in the several villages are desirable. Tax incentives for historically accurate work might encourage such improvements for a number of deteriorating structures.

Unattractive, multiple signage and other unlovely commercial displays along portions of Route 6A have a decidedly negative impact on the historic integrity of this roadway and should be eliminated. Dennis should follow the practice in neighboring towns of planting seasonal flowers along Route 6A and other major roadways passing through places with significant historic structures and sites. The Town should also address design issues outside historic areas, such as along Route 28 and Route 134. The way Dennis looks affects materially how residents and visitors alike feel about the town.

Analysis

A. Existing Levels of Protection Provided for Historic, Scenic and Cultural Resources

Historic properties within the Old King's Highway Regional Historic District and the South Dennis Historic District have a high level of protection since a public hearing is required to alter the exterior architectural features of structures and the demolition or removal of a building within both districts. Elsewhere in Dennis, however, such alterations and the removal or demolition of historic properties can be accomplished by adhering to local building, zoning and health regulations. Within the Town of Dennis

there exists a demolition by-law which affects the demolition or removal of any building which is at least 75 years old. Sites listed on the State or National Register and not protected by local districts can be protected from substantial alteration by the Dennis Historic Commission's referral to the Cape Cod Commission.

B. Current and Projected Threats to Historic, Scenic and Archaeological Resources

Dennis has the largest number of properties in seasonal use on Cape Cod. Anticipated conversion of many of these seasonal properties to year-round use could result in significant harm to these resources as increased traffic flow and population pressures mount.

Excessive signage, especially along scenic Route 6A and Route 28 and overhead utilities in villages with a high concentration of historic structures have altered significantly the integrity of such historic structures and scenic places. The Massachusetts Highway Department is unduly focused on traffic flow along Route 6A, which is designated by the state as a scenic highway. The state has been working on, and is anxious to complete "improvement" to Route 6A in the Sandwich area, so that its task will be made easier when it moves on to other sections of Route 6A, including Dennis. Such "improvements" could alter the roadway's visual qualities, causing irreparable harm to one of America's most scenic byways.

House color and architectural style are dictated by provisions contained in Historic District by-laws, but the by-laws do not address the neglect or deterioration of historic properties or other structures within these districts. Hence, architecturally appealing structures can exist side-by-side with clearly visible eyesores. The way Dennis looks affects materially how both residents and visitors alike feel about the town.

The Town, at an annual Town Meeting in 1974, adopted the provisions of Chapter 67, Acts of 1973 – Scenic Roads, and designated, within the five villages, 43 roadways and three major highways as such. Casting the net so widely diluted the credibility of the process. A roadway should be considered for this designation if it has obvious scenic qualities such as panoramic views, appealing rural patterns, significant historical or architectural sites or structures, stone walls, or the contour of the roadway contribute to its quality.

Impressions of a community are often unshakably and, perhaps unfairly, tainted by the look of the entry ways into the town. Enter Dennis along Route 6A and the tree-lined roadway offers views of stone walls, white painted homes built in centuries past, meadows, and a glimpse of the blue waters of Sesuit Harbor. The view is quite different when entering Dennis on Route 28 from Harwich. As a contrast, the motorist is embraced with a discordant array of yellow traffic signals hanging from wires and jutting poles, red, white, yellow and blue lettered mercantile signs, countless utility poles criss-crossing overhead wires and cables and ubiquitous traffic signs. Clearly lost among this maze is a sign announcing that the motorist is about to enter Dennis.

C. Need for Improvement or Expansion of Existing Local Historic Districts

The Dennis Historic Commission should be tasked to determine how best to protect historic properties and sites beyond the two historic districts. There are, for example, 19th century burial grounds in both West Dennis and Dennis Port and a number of 19th century houses at risk. The former Bass River lighthouse, built in 1850 as a beacon of safety for Bass River's 200 fishing vessels and packets engaged in trade and fishing along the Atlantic coast and now located at the present Lighthouse Inn in West Dennis is also at risk.

D. Strategies to Protect Identified Resources

Historic Structures

Listing of individual structures on the National Register of Historic Properties should be actively pursued to provide appropriate recognition of their significance, tax credit opportunities and, for those properties outside the two Districts, protection from substantial change. The Southside Historic District Study Committee should be re-activated and given a clear mandate to ascertain the manner of protecting and preserving the south side historic properties and sites, including incentives and educational information on significant historic resources to encourage proper maintenance.

Scenic Roadways

The Town should support the Corridor Management Plan adopted by the Cape Cod Commission in 1995. The Plan's purpose is to preserve the character of Route 6A as traffic flow pressures are addressed. Unless town officers and citizens are involved in roadway design changes, they will be determined exclusively by the state agency. Establish or review rules and regulations for local scenic roads to best protect their defining features.

Scenic and Historic Landscapes

About 17% of ComElectric power on Cape Cod are provided by underground cable. There has been no serious effort, except on Nantucket, to place utilities underground. Dennis should consider participating in a program to place utilities underground in places where the integrity of a historic site would clearly be enhanced.

Overhead utility wires, cables and other power supply appurtenances are a 20th century phenomenon. They have no special historic relevance to the early patterns of development in Dennis. Indeed, Cape Cod's first overhead wires were strung on utility poles in Falmouth in 1909, providing a small portion of the town its first street lights. By 1915, 22 miles of power lines gave electric power to 1,015 customers in Bourne, Falmouth, Sandwich, Barnstable and Harwich. Street lights came to Dennis in 1926.

The Cape Cod Pathways project, linking open space and existing trails in each Cape town deserves the support of every Dennis citizen concerned about the Town's historic heritage and its healthy outdoor environment. Thus, the Town should participate fully in

the Cape Cod Commission's Pathways Program, and work with conservation groups and land trusts to acquire land or easements on significant historic and scenic properties.

The marsh areas along Lower County Road in West Dennis and elsewhere provide large wonderful expanses of uninterrupted natural areas. The existing wetland setbacks provide some protection to these areas, however, the ability to clear land, and erect tall structures may someday interfere with these views. The town needs to take steps to protect these areas, bylaws that protect pond, marsh and shoreline areas from development intrusion, and regulatory controls on the interruption of the sky-line with excessively tall structures are clearly necessary.

Archeological Resources

The town should adopt a number of strategies to protect archeological resources. First, working with various historical interest groups, including but not limited to the Old King's Highway Historic Committee, the South Dennis Historic Committee, The Wamponoags Indians in Mashpee, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Cape Cod Commission the town should develop a mapping of known potential archeologically significant areas. Second, the town should develop, as a part of its proposed development impact assessment procedures the town should require developments in or near these significant areas to include an assessment of the archeological resources prior to permit approvals. As site conditions may warrant, the town should require that archeologically significant sites be either protected as a part of required site development restrictions, donated for permanent protection, or acquired for open space by the town. Should sites be identified as eligible for protection on the National Register of Historic Properties such listing should be actively pursued.

E. Design Review and Design Guidelines

Dennis has a number of enviably accessible beaches along Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket Sound. However, in recent times summer usage of the beaches compelled the Town to limit access at five beaches to residents only. Several Cape bank president recently joined together to promote public discussion and action to preserve community character. Among the ten objectives established by the bankers, a proposal to increase public ownership of land, particularly when it provides public shoreline access, and to develop appropriate funding methods. The Town should adopt the bankers' proposal vis-à-vis beach access as public policy.

Excessive signage and other visual clutter, both Town and State as well as private signs, especially along scenic Route 6A and at the gateways to Dennis on Route 28 should be curbed and monitored. The Town should evaluate the sign code and consider design review.

Patriot Square dramatically changed the character of the village of South Dennis and state highway plans to alter significantly the on-off ramps at Route 134 and the Mid-Cape Highway will further impact the village's rural character. State plans to improve traffic flow along Route 6A including widening, removal of trees, construction of curbs and other highway barriers will adversely alter the historic nature and scenic beauty of this

landmark roadway once traversed by stage coaches and Indians. Both Dennisport and West Dennis can expect along Route 28 greater commercial development and the likelihood that remaining historic structures will disappear. Review zoning regulations to ensure they encourage preservation and appropriate development forms.

Design changes need to recognize the vital importance of preserving the town's rural character and actually encourage the continued use of existing historic structures. If such structures are removed they should be replaced with structures of similar character and scale. The visual character of village centers should likewise be protected where commercial development and signage is taking place. Develop design guidelines or design review for some areas of town.

Goals and Policies

The Cape Cod Commission in the Regional Policy Plan, has established goals and minimum performance standards for a town's heritage preservation and community character. The goals and performance standards proposed for Dennis are consistent with the Commission's Regional Policy Plan.

6.1 Goal: To protect and preserve the important historic and cultural features of the Town's landscape and built environment that are critical components of Dennis' heritage and economy.

Minimum Performance Standards

6.1.1 Additions or alterations to historic structures shall be consistent with the building's architectural style and shall not diminish its historic and architectural significance. The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) shall review any projects which require a state or federal license, permit or funding as defined by the National Historic Preservation Act for their conformance to the Secretary of the Interior's rehabilitation guidelines and for their effects on the historic significance of the property and district.

6.1.2 The distinguishing, original qualities of an historic building, structure or site and its environment shall be preserved. The needless destruction, removal or alteration of historic material or architectural features shall be avoided unless the applicable local authority (historical commission or historic district commission) determines that such removal will not substantially alter or damage the integrity of the building or the site (see Technical Bulletin 96-00x, Guidelines for Referral of Historic Structures).

6.1.3 Where development is proposed on or adjacent to prehistoric or historic archaeological sites as identified by the Massachusetts Historical Commission or local historic commissions during the review process, it shall be configured so as to maintain and/or enhance such resources where possible. A pre-development investigation of such

sites shall be required before a final design proposal is submitted. This will minimize difficulties and expense should the site be of archaeological or historic importance.

6.1.4 Historic buildings that may be slated for demolition or relocation should be preserved on site and reused or incorporated into the overall design of the project unless reuse has definitely been shown to be infeasible. Distinguishing original stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship or historic or aesthetic significance should be maintained or replaced with similar elements unless the local historical commission determines another alternative to be historically appropriate.

6.1.5 The reuse of historic structures in village center is encouraged so as to promote revitalization of these areas. Where reuse has definitely been shown to be infeasible, these buildings should be replaced with structures of similar character, mass, proportion and scale.

6.2 Goal: To encourage redevelopment of existing structures as an alternative to new construction, and to ensure that future development and redevelopment respects the traditions and character of the Town's historic village centers and outlying rural areas so as to protect the visual character of Dennis Consistent with the Commission's Design Manual, "Designing the Future to Honor the Past".

Minimum Performance Standards

6.2.1 The height and scale of a new building or structure and any addition to an existing building shall be compatible and harmonious with its site and existing surrounding buildings. No new development in Dennis shall include a single structure, which is larger than 5,000 square feet unless it can be demonstrated that screening and buffering of the project will prevent adverse impacts on the surrounding area.

6.2.2 Where proposed development and redevelopment is surrounded by buildings with distinctive architectural style, building height and exterior materials shall be harmonious with the character of the surrounding area and new construction shall not obscure views of existing historic structures from public ways. In general, where new buildings and additions are proposed the mass and scale of the buildings, roof shape, roof pitch, and proportions and relationships between doors and windows shall be harmonious among themselves and consistent with traditional Cape Cod architectural styles.

6.2.3 New development shall provide landscaped buffers to significant vistas, open landscaped scenic roadways, historic districts or individual historic structures on adjacent properties in order to limit visual impacts of the new development. Preservation of existing natural vegetation in these buffer areas is preferred.

6.2.4 Expansion or creation of strip development in Dennis shall not be permitted. Redevelopment of existing strip development shall provide adequate buffers between parking areas and the street, and significant improvement to interior parking lot landscaping.

6.2.5 Landscaping that integrates buildings with their environment, enhances architectural features and provides amenities for pedestrians shall be provided on site by all new development.

6.2.6 All development in Dennis shall implement a landscape plan which addresses the functional aspects of landscaping, such as drainage, erosion prevention, wildlife, wind barriers, provision for shade, energy conservation, sound absorption, dust abatement and reducing glare.

6.2.7 Exterior lighting in new development or redevelopment shall comply with standards including design, light source, total light cutoff and foot-candle levels defined in the Cape Cod Commission's Exterior Lighting Design Standards, Technical Bulletin 95-001.

6.2.8 The installation of billboards, off-site advertising (excepting approved directional signs) and internally lot or lashing signs shall not be permitted.

6.2.9 All utilities for development including cable shall be placed underground except where the presence of natural features such as wetlands or archaeological resources prevent such placement.

6.2.10 Parking shall be located to the rear of the side of a building or commercial complex in order to promote traditional village design in commercial areas unless such location would have an adverse or detrimental impact on environmental or visual features on the site, or is completely infeasible.

6.2.11 Open storage areas, exposed machinery, refuse and waste removal areas, service yards and exterior work areas and parking lots shall be visually screened from roads and adjacent residential areas through fencing, stone walls or landscaping. Where landscaping is used as screening, it should be equally effective in summer and winter. Landscape screening should be installed at a height, density and depth that provides for the full desired effect within three years growing times. If plantings are not an alternative due to site limitations the facilities shall be screened from public view with materials harmonious with the building.

6.2.12 The integrity of natural landforms and broad, open views of the landscape as seen from a local, county or state-designated scenic roads and Route 6A in Dennis should be maintained.

6.2.13 Existing views to the shore from surrounding areas should be maintained wherever possible.

6.2.14 The planting of shade trees along roadways to improve the visual quality of the area is encouraged. Such trees should be tolerant of roadside conditions and a minimum of 3" caliper/diameter at breast height at time of planting.

6.2.15 Parking lots should be designed to accommodate average usage, (rather than peak day usage), where appropriate have pervious surfaces, and be planted with shade trees in the interior portions of the lot.

6.2.16 Landscape materials, which are suitable to the climate and location of the site, should be used.

6.2.17 Distinguishing original features of a site such as trees of greater than 6" diameter, existing plantings and topography should be preserved where possible. Planting on the street-facing side of buildings, window boxes and planters are encouraged. Benches or other seating arrangements and walkways within the development and linking to other buildings should be provided where appropriate.

6.2.18 Traditional building materials such as wood shingles, clapboards and brick should be used for new construction and rehabilitation of existing structures.

6.2.19 In general, the size and color of all signs should be in scale and compatible with the surrounding buildings and street. When more than one sign is used, the graphic should be coordinated to present a unified image. Wooden signs, either or carved, are usually most appropriate.

6.2.20 All exterior lighting should be part of the architectural and landscape design concept. Fixtures, standards and exposed accessories should be concealed or harmonious with other project design materials.

Implementation

1. Dennis should focus on building design, signage, landscaping, lighting and off street parking standards to enhance the historic and rural character of the Town.
Responsible Party: Planning Board, Historic Commission, Old King's Highway & Board of Selectmen
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: 2002
2. Dennis should develop ways to increase public awareness of historic preservation issues and to improve the visual character of the Town.
Responsible Party: Historic Commission
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
3. Dennis should develop ways to increase public awareness of owners of historic structures and encourage them to become involved in the preservation process and support historic preservation measures.
Responsible Party: Historic Commission
Priority: High

Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

4. Dennis should continue to inventory the Town's historic resources, particularly on the south side.
Responsible Party: Historic Commission
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
5. Dennis should encourage the nomination of structures of historical significance to the State and National Registers.
Responsible Party: Historic Commission
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
6. Dennis should consider incentives for historic preservation and upkeep such as restrictions tied to property valuation and reduced tax assessment.
Responsible Party: Board of Assessors, Historic Commission, Board of Selectmen
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
7. Dennis should seek a grants to design and implement preservation education programs targeted to owners of historic properties, public school students and teachers, and specific community groups; and relevant brochures and program material.
Responsible Party: Historic Commission, Board of Selectmen
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: 2004
8. Dennis should review the scenic road designations adopted in 1974, and determine if such designations meet scenic road criteria and if not, roadways failing to satisfy the criteria should be dropped from the list.
Responsible Party: Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Historic Commission, Board of Selectmen
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
9. Dennis should publicize protection afforded roadways identified as scenic and the way in which such roadways are regulated and the Town should establish or review rules and regulations for local scenic roads to best protect their defining features.
Responsible Party: Planning Board, Board of Selectmen
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: 2002

10. Dennis should undertake an evaluation of the visual impact of overhead utility lines located in areas of historic value and develop a plan for placing such lines underground with priorities for specific locations.
 Responsible Party: Various Historic Committees and Commissions,
 Planning Board & Board of Selectmen
 Priority: Medium
 Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

11. Dennis should sponsor archaeological excavations and studies to increase citizens' understanding about the habits and the environment of the Town's Indian tribes.
 Responsible Party: Historic Commission
 Priority: Low
 Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

12. Dennis should support the Cape Cod Commission's Corridor Management Plan (Route 6A) and the Pathways Project adopted April 1995.
 Responsible Party: Planning Board, Department of Public Works,
 Board of Selectmen & Old King's Highway
 Historic District Commission
 Priority: Low
 Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

13. Dennis should support the preservation of open space by means of acquisition and conservation restrictions, including shoreline access.
 Responsible Party: Land Acquisition Committee, Planning Board,
 Board of Selectmen, Beach Committee &
 Conservation Commission
 Priority: High
 Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

14. Dennis should recognize eligible historic properties by use of markers containing the date of construction so as to encourage preservation and rehabilitation and to enhance local awareness of town's historic structures.
 Responsible Party: Various Historic Committees and Commissions
 Priority: Medium
 Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

15. Dennis should explore ways to encourage, where it is deemed desirable, property rejuvenation, including establishing incentives for reinvestment in historic properties, allowing flexible reuses as may befit the property, as well establishing standards concerning property maintenance functions for properties taking advantage of these incentives. .
 Responsible Party: Various Historic Committees and Commissions and
 Planning Board
 Priority: Medium

Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

16. Dennis should identify areas with significant concentration of seasonal housing to determine the likely impact of the conversion of this housing to year-round use, particularly on public services and traffic flow.
Responsible Party: Planning Office, Planning Board, Assessors, Board of Health and Water District.
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
17. Dennis should monitor closely state plans to improve traffic flow along Route 6A in Dennis and respond appropriately to proposals to alter the roadway's visual and historic qualities. Scenic America designated 6A as one of the 10 most scenic roadways in the United States – 1993.
Responsible Party: Planning Board, Old King's Highway District Historic Committee, Engineering & DPW
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
18. The Zoning By-Law should be amended to provide for enhanced screening and landscaping of commercial development at the entryway into Dennis, particularly along Route 28.
Responsible Party: Planning Board & Board of Selectmen
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: 2004
19. Dennis should continue to support archaeological research along the Bass River and the Indian lands, and especially the Native American Research project, which began in 1995 along the Bass River in Yarmouth.
Responsible Party: Conservation Commission and various Historic Groups
Priority: Low
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
20. Dennis should support the local Chamber of Commerce proposal to reverse the degradation of Route 28 by preserving the cultural and historic resources along this largely commercial corridor.
Responsible Party: Planning Board, Board of Selectmen & Historic Commission
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing
21. Dennis should monitor closely the Cape Cod Commission's review of proposals to construct telecommunication towers. Nine companies are seeking permission to build on Cape Cod towers ranging in height from 100 feet to 200 feet.

Responsible Party: Planning Board, Board of Selectmen & Historic Districts
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

22. Dennis should work with the Massachusetts Historical Commission to identify significant archaeological sites in the town and to pursue protection of significant archaeological resources through easements, donations of land, purchase of open space, and educational efforts.

Responsible Party: Planning Board, Board of Selectmen & Historic Districts
Priority: Medium
Time Frame for Completion: ongoing

23. Dennis should pursue the formal examination of the Indian Burial Grounds documented in the 1668 survey of John Thacher of property adjacent to Coles Pond in the Crowe's Pasture/Quivett Creek area. This effort should be conducted in concert with the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Responsible Party: Planning Board, Historic Commission, Old King's Highway & Board of Selectmen
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: 2002

24. Dennis should adopt regulations to protect identified scenic vistas. These regulations should include shoreline setbacks for ponds, coastal areas, marshes and swamps; adoption of a telecommunication by-law which protects scenic resources, etc.

Responsible Party: Planning Board, Historic Commission, Old King's Highway & Board of Selectmen
Priority: High
Time Frame for Completion: 2005