

GOAL - To enhance aesthetics and community character

Greenwich has been a favorite place for people to live as far back as we can trace.

Archeologists have uncovered evidence of human activity 12,000 years ago. More recent activity is not buried, but in plain view.

Many of our roads, village centers, houses, public buildings and parks, stone walls, dams, ponds, and even trees were set in place between 100 and 350 years ago.

ACTION STRATEGIES

The Action Strategies for Preserving Community Character are:

- Protect Pre-historic, Historic and Cultural Resources, and
- Protect Scenic Resources.



*View of Greenwich Harbor from
Roger Sherman Baldwin Park*

Protect Prehistoric, Historic and Cultural Resources

Historic resources are important because they connect the community to the past and establish a sense of character of the individual town. There are many historic buildings and resources within Greenwich.

Greenwich has an Historic District Commission (HDC) that develops new local historic districts and properties, and oversees exterior changes in these districts and properties. These designations have aided in the preservation of the historic character of these parts of the community.

There are three Local Historic Districts:

- Strickland Road Historic District in Cos Cob
- John Street at Round Hill District
- Stanwich Historic District

There are two Local Historic Properties

- Jeremiah Mead Homestead, Taconic Road
- Charles Green House, Round Hill Road

There are also seven National Register Districts:

- Greenwich Avenue
- Putnam Hill
- Municipal Center Historic District
- Glenville Center
- Fourth Ward in Downtown
- Strickland Road
- Round Hill

In addition to the properties with local historic designation, the Town also has 29 individual properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, 10 properties on the State Register of Historic Places, and 270 properties enrolled in the Historical Society's Greenwich Landmark Program (HSTG).

P&Z has also established two historic overlay zones to promote preservation of historic buildings and features which prevent demolition of structures in these overlay zones. They should be reviewed to determine their effectiveness.

The Certified Local Government Program, administered by the State Historic Preservation Office, provides Federal and State grant funding for programs that identify, register and protect resources that contribute to Connecticut's cultural heritage.

The Historic District Commission and the Historical Society have urged the Town to become a Certified Local Government to obtain funding to protect historic structures. Threats to historic resources can occur from land-use changes, building modifications, demolition, or deterioration from neglect.

Founded in 1931, the mission of the HSTG is to collect and preserve the cultural heritage and ongoing history of Greenwich and provide a center for its enjoyment and study at Bush-Holley Historic Site, the Town's only National Historic Landmark.

The mission of the Greenwich Preservation Trust, formed in 2008, is to educate and advocate for preservation of our historic and cultural resources through preservation projects, easements and incentives in planning and land-use policy and regulations.

The trend toward larger houses and increased density (discussed in Chapter 3) has also resulted in the demolition of existing houses. Greenwich has a 90-day demolition delay ordinance to provide an opportunity for comment on the potential demolition of historic resources.

Updating and expanding the historic resource inventories is one of the ways that Greenwich can improve the awareness about the loss of such resources. This Plan recommends that the Architectural and Historic Resources Inventory be completed for the entire Town and that the former inventories be updated.

Archaeological Resources

Greenwich's location on Long Island Sound, its plentiful rivers, streams and forests have defined settlement patterns in Town since the end of the last glacial period. Native American shell middens, stone walls, old barns, rock quarries, mill dams and the estate farms are a reminder of the unique cultural heritage of the Town.

There is a need to protect these cultural, historic and pre-historic archeological resources. The Conservation Commission is responsible for monitoring and keeping an inventory of the archeological resources of the Town.

The Departments of Parks and Recreation and Public Works must prioritize repair and maintenance of Town-owned facilities of historic merit so that their integrity is not diminished beyond repair due to budget constraints and poor maintenance.

ACTIONS

- 2.1 The Assessor's Office should note on their field cards information about the historic status of properties and structures.
- 2.2 Professional staff support is needed for the Historic District Commission.
- 2.3 The Conservation Commission should continue to update the inventory of the Town's archeological resources.
- 2.4 The Historic District Commission should develop Town standards for historic buildings using the National Register standards for buildings built before 1940.
- 2.5 The Board of Selectmen should participate in the Certified Local Government Program.
- 2.6 The Town should work with HSTG to update and complete the Architectural and Historic Resource Inventory for all of Greenwich.

Protect Scenic Resources

Scenic resources are important in Greenwich. These resources include natural scenic vistas (e.g. coastal views and foliage views) and cultural scenic vistas (e.g. farm views and historic structure views).

Views from the public right-of-way greatly add to our perception of openness and community character and are threatened by tall fences and buildings located without sensitivity to these resources.

Greenwich does not currently have an inventory or a map of where these resources are located. Therefore until such an inventory is done few strategies can be developed to protect scenic resources.

Greenwich currently has five recognized scenic roads:

- Clifffdale Road,
- Burying Hill Road,
- Selden Lane,
- Buckfield Lane, and
- Sawmill Lane.

There are many other roads, such as sections of North Street, Riversville Road, Stanwich Road, Round Hill Road and Lake Avenue that should be evaluated to raise awareness of important character elements and the Town should explore designating some of these as Scenic Roads.

The Historic District Commission, the Historical Society, and neighborhood associations should work with local residents for Scenic Road designations.

ACTIONS

- 2.7 Create an inventory and map of scenic resources and suggest new roads for Scenic Road designation.
- 2.8 Develop a Scenic Road signage program.