

# DENNIS RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

---

## CAPE COD COMMISSION LANDSCAPE INVENTORY

### MASSACHUSETTS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE INVENTORY PROGRAM



**Cape Cod Commission**

**Boston University Preservation Studies Program**

**Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation**

---

## **PROJECT TEAM**

---

### **Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation**

Jessica Rowcroft, Preservation Planner, Department of Conservation and Recreation

### **Cape Cod Commission**

Sarah Korjeff, Preservation Planner, Cape Cod Commission

### **Boston University Preservation Studies Program**

Eric Dray, Boston University Professor of Preservation Planning

Shelby Graham, Boston University Preservation Studies graduate student

Kim Hanna, Boston University Preservation Studies graduate student

### **Local Heritage Landscape Participants**

Burt Derick, Local Project Coordinator

Nancy Thacher Reid

Henry Kelley

### **May 2007**

(Cape Cod Commission staff edits, 2008)

**Cover Photo Descriptions:** Historic Old King's Highway near Bound Brook at the border of Dennis and Brewster, View of Scargo Lake, Hokum Rock, Quaker Cemetery on Mayfair Road.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Introduction.....	4
Dennis History.....	5
Resources and Documentation.....	7
Planning Documents.....	8
Priority Heritage Landscapes and Planning Strategies.....	10
Bass River Corridor.....	14
Crowell Farm Estate .....	16
Howes Cemetery.....	18
Josiah Dennis Manse.....	20
Tobey Farm.....	22
Quivet Neck Village.....	25
The Mormon Church (RLDS).....	27
Areas of Critical Concern.....	29
Bass River Corridor .....	29
“Hidden” Burial Grounds.....	30
General Recommendations.....	32
Conclusion.....	35
Appendix	

## INTRODUCTION

Dennis, Massachusetts is located in Barnstable County on Cape Cod. The town is oriented north to south and is bordered by Cape Cod Bay on the north side and Nantucket Sound on the south, with Yarmouth on its western border and the towns of Brewster and Harwich to the east. This heritage landscape survey is an inventory of the various landscapes found in Dennis, including farmland, religious properties, and water routes. Heritage landscapes are places that are created by human interaction with the natural environment. They are dynamic and evolving. They reflect the history of the community and contribute to a sense of place. Although the towns on Cape Cod have similarities, each community has specific landscapes unique to that location. The heritage landscapes show the natural ecology that influenced land use patterns and they often have scenic qualities, for example a river corridor or an historic highway. This wealth of landscapes is central to each community's character; yet heritage landscapes are vulnerable and ever changing. For this reason it is important to take the first steps toward their preservation by identifying those landscapes that are particularly valued by the community—a favorite local farm, a distinctive neighborhood or harbor, a unique natural feature, or an inland river corridor. To this end, the Cape Cod Commission and Boston University's Preservation Studies Program have been working with citizens of Dennis to bring the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Heritage Landscape Inventory program (HLI) to the Cape. Three communities on Cape Cod: Dennis, Harwich, and Brewster have been selected as the first three towns to have Heritage Landscape Surveys completed for their town. The primary goal of these surveys is to help each community identify a wide range of landscape resources, particularly those that are significant and unprotected. The focus is on landscapes that have not been identified in previous survey efforts in the community. Another goal of the program is to provide communities with strategies for preserving heritage landscapes.

The methodology for the Heritage Landscape Inventory program was developed by the DCR and has been used by the Cape Cod Commission and the BU students. It is outlined in the DCR publication *Reading the Land* which has provided guidance for the program in other parts of the commonwealth as well as Cape Cod. Each participating community appoints a Local Project Coordinator (LPC) to assist the BU students. In Dennis, the LPC is Burt Derick. The LPC organizes a heritage landscape identification meeting at which interested residents and town officials offer community input by identifying potential heritage landscapes. At the Dennis meeting, BU students and CCC staff were joined by Burt Derick, Nancy Thacher Reid, and Henry Kelley. This meeting is followed by a fieldwork session in which BU students, Burt Derick and Nancy Thacher Reid visited the priority landscapes identified in the meeting and gathered information about the community. The final product of this phase of the Inventory Program is the Reconnaissance Report. It outlines the history of the community; identifies the resources and documentation that provide background information; provides a short description of the priority heritage landscapes visited and outlines planning recommendations for each priority; and discusses planning issues identified by the community. A list of all of the heritage landscapes identified by the community is included in the Appendix.

## **DENNIS HISTORY**

---

Dennis has a rich and varied history. The geography of the area affects the layout of the town as the hilly Sandwich Moraine runs through the center of town, dividing it into northern and southern sections. Though no specific settlements have been identified, the existence of trails indicates that there was native activity and movement through the area, and reaching the Indian Field area near Scargo Lake. One of the early native trails likely followed the route of present day Route 6A.

First colonial settlement took place in the year 1639, surrounding the Nobscusset tribe's planting fields in the north section of present day Dennis. Evidence shows that the Nobscusset tribe had settled the land sometime before initial European settlement.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Dennis was part of Yarmouth and most of what is present day Dennis was known as Nobscusset. As mentioned, in 1639 the settlement of several families in the North Dennis area occurred. The original settlers included the Thachers, Crowes (Crowell), Howes, and Nickersons. Descendents of these men and women are still living in Dennis. Although the area was originally sparsely settled, within a few years, settlement had spread to almost all areas of the present day town.

By 1721, the area that is now Dennis was called East Yarmouth. Dennis became its own community in 1793, after formally separating from Yarmouth. The majority of colonists in Dennis were involved in agriculture and planted corn, rye, wheat, and English hay. The colonists also took part in various types of animal husbandry. The 18<sup>th</sup> century saw a lot of advancement in road construction and new routes were created throughout the area. This improvement in the transportation system indicated that more people were living in the town. Improved transportation routes enabled more colonists to move to the area and also improved trade and quality of life.

While European colonists settled the land rapidly throughout the first three quarters of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the native population in Dennis shrunk to near extinction by 1775. As settlement in what is now Dennis increased, five general divisions of the township were created. The five Dennis neighborhoods were Dennis Village; North Dennis, discussed above; East Dennis, which was also settled early and was mostly agricultural in nature; South Dennis, focused along the Bass River; and West Dennis/Dennis Port, which saw more development after the Revolutionary War. These village centers are still prominent in the town today.

Dennis was the first area in the United States to manufacture salt by solar evaporation. Most salt manufacturing took place along the northern coast of the town. By 1802, the north shore of Dennis had 47 salt works. Salt was imperative to the fishing industry, which was the most important non-agricultural industry in Cape Cod at this time. By the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century, local industry was increasingly focused on the fishing industry, and the north shore continued to be the industrial center of town. Unlike most of the towns on the Outer Cape, Dennis' harbors remained serviceable until the mid- late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Moreover, Dennis was the only town in the area to engage in large shipbuilding. Dennis' prosperity was aided by the cranberry industry, which like the salt industry, was first introduced on Dennis' north shore. In 1865, the railroad opened from Yarmouth to Orleans, with a station located in South Dennis.

During the years between 1870 and 1915, the shipping industry declined which led to a decline in population. Dennis, along with nearly every other town on the Cape, lost nearly half of its population. In the 1880s, town residents attempted to provide alternate types of employment in Dennis to avoid the depression caused by the decline of the shipping industry. Therefore, a shoe factory, a tack factory, and other industries appeared on the landscape, only to fail within a few months. West Dennis and Dennis Port were able to remain somewhat prosperous, due to their active coastal trading and fishing.

During the mid 1920s, residents of Dennis saw great improvements to the transportation systems on the Cape, including Route 6, which then connected Dennis to the entire Cape as well as with the mainland of Massachusetts. The advent of the automobile helped change the shape of the town- including architecture, town development, and recreational uses. The Hurricane of 1944, while not as well known as earlier hurricanes on the Cape devastated the southern coast of Dennis. The hurricane is not as well known due to the fact that it struck during World War II and it was decided to not draw attention to any negative news dealing with the United States. Many of the cottages along the southern coast were damaged and some were pushed farther inland. During the storm clean-up, the cottages were returned to their foundations.

The tourism industry began to grow in the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century with the addition of resort cottages, entertainment venues and new institutional buildings. Although tourism and summer recreation helped encourage economic development, both farming and fishing remained very important to the area's economy, especially the cranberry industry.

## **EXISTING RESOURCE DOCUMENTATION AND PLANNING TOOLS**

---

This section of the Reconnaissance Report identifies planning documents and tools that provide information relevant to the Heritage Landscape Inventory program.

### **Inventory of Historic Assets**

The Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC) Inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets is a stateside list that identifies significant historic resources throughout the Commonwealth. In order to be included in the inventory, a property must be documented on an MHC inventory form, which is then entered into the MHC database. This searchable database, known as MACRIS, is available online at <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc>.

According to the MHC, in 2007 Dennis has 283 properties included in the inventory documents. These inventoried properties range from 1650 to 1968, with the majority of the properties listed dating from between 1750 and 1900. While most of the inventory forms are for properties, every cemetery in Dennis has been inventoried as well. Many of the forms were done in the late 1960s and the 1970s and although well done do not meet current standards for documentation of historic resources. Archaeological sites, landscapes and other non-traditional historic resources are under-represented.

### **State and National Registers of Historic Places**

The National Register of Historic Places is the official federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that have been determined significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. All National Register properties are also listed in the State Register. Dennis has no National Register districts, but the northern half of the town is located in a Regional Historic District, the Old King's Highway Regional Historic District, which is included on the State Register of Historic Places. Individual National Register listings include the Dennis Village Cemetery, the Josiah Dennis Manse, the "Tom Sailor" Howes House, the West Dennis Grade School and the West Schoolhouse.

Dennis has 3 properties under preservation restrictions consistent with State Laws: the Josiah Dennis Manse, the "Tom Sailor" Howes House, and the West Dennis Graded School. A preservation restriction runs with the deed and is one of the strongest preservation strategies available. All properties that have preservation restrictions filed under the state statute are automatically listed in the State Register.

### **Local and Regional Historic Districts**

The Old King's Highway Regional Historic District, established in 1973, includes all of Dennis north of Highway 6. There is some concern that the district, even though it has review powers, does not provide enough protection for the properties located in this large area. Five of Dennis' priority landscapes are located in this regional district, as are several cemeteries, which are listed as a critical concern.

Dennis has a local historic district, the South Dennis Historic District. Local historic districts are special places within a community where the distinctive characteristics of buildings and places are preserved and protected by a local historic district commission. The South Dennis Historic District was established in 1974 by town meeting vote and was the first Historic District established on Cape Cod and in Barnstable County. Over one hundred homes are located in this district representing the growth of maritime industries in the area and the development of architectural styles from 1680 to the present. Many of the homes built in this district were built and owned by prosperous 19<sup>th</sup> century sea captains. The historic district has a solid historic resource inventory and established design guidelines.

### **Planning Documents**

Dennis has three planning documents that are useful in protecting historic resources. These include a Local Comprehensive Plan, a Communitywide Preservation Plan, and an Open Space and Recreation Plan. These documents were developed by the Town of Dennis to identify important resources in the town, as well as ways to protect them, while planning for the direction of new growth. As the community grows, these planning documents can guide growth in ways that preserve the town's significant resources.

Dennis' **Local Comprehensive Plan** focuses on the entire town of Dennis and not just its historical resources. It was written in 2002 and in it Dennis outlines its plan to protect its natural, cultural and historical resources for future generations. Dennis' Local Comprehensive Plan addresses the following issues: land use/growth management; natural resources; economic development; community facilities and services such as transportation, solid and hazardous waste management; capital facilities/infrastructure; open space and recreation; and heritage preservation and community character.

Dennis' **Communitywide Preservation Plan** is one chapter of the town's Local Comprehensive Plan and lays out several goals related to heritage preservation. These goals include protecting and preserving the important historic and cultural features of the town's landscape and built environment that are critical components of Dennis' heritage and economy. A second goal is 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 Cape Cod Commission's Design Manual, "Designing the Future to Honor the Past."

Dennis' **Open Space and Recreation Plan** focuses on protection and management of open space in the community. This plan was updated in 2003 and outlines how Dennis plans to address its open space issues. In its Statement of Purpose, the Open Space and Recreation Plan Update intends to continue to provide a framework for decision-making by its residents by serving as a guide to responsible action to conserve Dennis' natural resources, preserve its open space, and provide ample opportunities for its citizens.

The Local Comprehensive Plan, including the Preservation Plan, can be found on the Town of Dennis' website: <http://www.town.dennis.ma.us/>. A copy of the Open Space



and Recreation Plan can be found by contacting either the Cape Cod Commission or the Planning Department at Dennis' Town Hall.

### **Other Planning Tools and Bylaws**

Dennis has many other tools and bylaws at its disposal. These include a demolition delay bylaw, design review, open space zoning, a scenic road bylaw, site plan review, village center zoning and a wetlands protection bylaw. Dennis also has a District of Critical Planning Concern (DCPC) and an Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Dennis' DCPC is located at Quivet Neck/Crowes Pasture, in the northeast portion of town, and includes special regulations to protect historic and archaeological resources and community character.

The town is fortunate to have a strong Historical Commission that administers an educational plaque program and a Historical Society that holds several events throughout the year. Dennis adopted the Community Preservation Act in 2005 and has funded several historic resource projects including restoration work in cemeteries and archival document preservation. The Dennis Historical Commission has been involved in the review and development of these projects.

Dennis does not currently utilize several planning tools and bylaws that could be very helpful in the planning strategies of their priority landscapes. These include a right to farm bylaw, scenic overlay districts, a scenic vista protection bylaw, the shade tree act, smart growth zoning, transfer of development rights, adaptive reuse overlay, corridor protection overlay districts, and flexible development. These tools will be discussed further in the following sections.

## **PRIORITY HERITAGE LANDSCAPES**

---

Dennis' unique access to both Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket Sound has always been a character-defining feature of this town. In turn, the many villages of Dennis have their own flavor, making each one different. The mouth of Bass River served as a protected harbor, making this an ideal place to settle. The knob hills on the north side of town allowed town residents to spot both whales and the packet coming from Boston. The marshes, bogs and ponds were perfect for the inventive residents to harvest salt hay, cranberries and ice. Dennis residents know that their town is a special place, and that actions must be taken to ensure that it remains as such in the future. Dennis, like most towns on Cape Cod, is experiencing a period of high popularity and is threatened by the pressures of new development.

The Dennis Heritage Landscape Identification meeting was held on February 20, 2007 and was attended by town representatives of the Historical Commission and Historical Society. During the meeting, residents compiled a comprehensive list of the town's heritage landscapes that is included in the Appendix to this report. Community members then discussed the significance of each landscape and threats to its preservation. Based on this meeting and further discussions with individuals in the town, the group identified priority landscapes for protection in five categories: Agriculture, Burial Grounds and Cemeteries, Neighborhoods and Villages, Maritime and Water Resources, and Scenic Roads. These categories are discussed briefly below. A more detailed discussion of individual Priority Heritage Landscapes and recommended actions follows.

### **Priority Heritage Landscape Categories**



#### ***Agriculture***

Today, there are limited agricultural resources in Dennis. Many of the town's historic agricultural lands have been lost to new development, so preservation of the remaining active farms, cranberry bogs, and salt hay sites that represent the town's cultural heritage is important. These historic uses for the land are important for their agricultural buildings and fields, their scenic value, and presence of open space. Dennis participants indicated that large remaining farm parcels such as Tobey Farm and the Seth Crowell farm were

particularly threatened because of the limited number of large open parcels remaining in the town and the pressure for subdivision.



### ***Burial Grounds and Cemeteries***

Dennis residents identified one burial ground as a priority landscape but expressed general concern about other town owned and private burial grounds and cemeteries throughout Dennis. Howes Cemetery, chosen as a priority because of its isolated location, may be threatened mostly because of the town’s lack of knowledge and attention. Almost all of the cemeteries and burial grounds in Dennis exhibit some preservation needs, including vandalism, hazardous trees, inadequate maintenance, deteriorated monuments, overgrown vegetation, impacts from abutters, lack of signage and general indifference.



### ***Neighborhoods and Villages***

Dennis has diverse residential neighborhoods rich in historic resources and essential to community vitality. They include Dennis Port, West Dennis Village, South Dennis, Dennis Village and Quivet Neck Village in East Dennis. Historic houses, churches, schools, old industrial buildings (many of which have been converted into other uses) and other institutions were mentioned as important pieces of their neighborhoods. The loss of these institutions or of the historic resources that make each individual village unique

would be especially devastating to the residents of Dennis. While almost all of the villages and neighborhoods are facing changes that threaten community character, Quivet Neck Village was deemed especially threatened.



### ***Maritime and Water Resources***

To preserve the scenic vistas along the rivers, lakes and coasts of Dennis is to protect the exceptional viewsheds for which Dennis is known and which draw so many to the town to live and to visit. The views along the Bass River Corridor, the coastlines on both Cape Cod Bay and Nantucket Sound, as well as on Scargo Lake and Swan Pond are especially important to Dennis residents. Beyond the concerns about certain scenic vistas, Dennis residents also expressed distress at the general decline of their rivers and waterways that were once teeming with marine life and native vegetation.



### ***Scenic Roads***

Dennis residents mentioned the few remaining rural roads as scenic and historic assets. Of particular interest for the residents is the area surrounding the Old King's Highway. Although this area is currently part of the Old King's Highway Regional Historic District, residents feel that the area is still threatened by new and inappropriate development, insensitive public works projects, road widening projects, and other outside impacts. Dennis is fortunate to have some of the original portions of the Old King's Highway

intact along today's transportation routes. While these sections of the old dirt road remain, they are not necessarily protected for the future. The section of the unpaved road near the Brewster line on Quivet Neck, as well as the section of the Old Post Road in Paddock's cemetery should be further considered for future protection. Residents were also passionate about the stone walls found on the north side of Dennis, present here due to the abundance of glacial remnants found above the Sandwich Moraine. They remarked that these walls were very characteristic of the rural and agricultural past of Dennis, particularly of the north side.



### **Bass River Corridor**

#### ***Description***

The Bass River has attracted people to its shores for centuries. Cape Cod natives, called the NobsCUSset Indians, part of the Wampanoag Nation, came to Bass River for its abundant fishing opportunities. When the colonists began to take over the natives' land, they sought out the territory along these banks for many of the same reasons. Fishing boats, salt works and eventually barges and bridges soon graced the river. The six and a half mile long tidal river is unique and home to the largest number of different fish species in the region.

#### ***Issues***

Today, Dennis is proud of its many walking trails and the town owned Conservation Area along Bass River. The forested banks offer beautiful scenic vistas, and at some angles, the area appears untouched. However, development on the Yarmouth side of the river can be seen, and increased construction and new projects towards the mouth of the river show that even land protected by conservation areas may be impacted soon by this building trend. Some of the area directly surrounding the 25-acre Indian Lands Conservation area is not protected at this time.

#### ***Recommendations***

- The town should consider establishing an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) along the Bass River corridor to partner cultural and environmental concerns along the river. This initiative could help to focus efforts to protect the scenic and historic importance of this area and also draw attention to the threats existing along the Bass River. In conjunction with establishing an ACEC, the town should consider changes to zoning and other local regulations to ensure that environmental resource concerns are addressed in all new development in the area. Efforts should be made to establish similar protections on the other side of the river in Yarmouth.

- A **Scenic Overlay** District could help protect specific scenic vistas and open viewpoints by requiring undisturbed buffers between developed areas and key vistas or establishing size and height limits on properties adjacent to natural areas. Buffers to the water would be appropriate also.
- Similarly, a **Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw** could be established to limit development impacts on scenic vistas. This bylaw could require additional design criteria be applied to any proposals for new construction in areas the town identifies as a scenic vista. The Bass River Corridor could be one such area within the town.
- **Site Plan Review** could be required for all significant development within the Bass River Corridor, and criteria could be written to specifically address community concerns about cultural and natural resources in this area. This would provide the planning staff and board an opportunity to comment upon site plans and request changes to the design to address these concerns.
- The town should continue to pursue land protection efforts within the Bass River Corridor, either through **purchase or conservation restriction**, to limit development impacts. West Dennis, and the area between Grand Cove and the town land at Route 28, should be areas of focus. Coordination with the town of Yarmouth in this effort would help to limit development impacts on both sides of the river and further protect scenic vistas.





## **Crowell Farm Estate**

### ***Description***

The Crowell (Crowe/Crow) Farm has been owned by the same family since John Crowell, an original founder of East Yarmouth, came to the area in 1639. Seth Crowell, a descendent of John, owns the property today. This large estate is located on both sides of Sesuit Neck Road in East Dennis. A small reportedly 18<sup>th</sup> century Cape farmhouse is located on Old Town Lane, and the land on the south side of Sesuit Neck Road is open and borders on Sesuit Creek. There are tree lines on both edges of the property. There are more modern buildings on this site as well, including a mid 20<sup>th</sup> century home and several outbuildings. The property is located within the Old King's Highway Historic District, but is outside the Quivett Neck Crowe's Pasture Resource Protection District.

This agricultural area was once part of the thriving cranberry industry, and there are surviving bogs near to the property. The land was cleared of its forests in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and this property is one of the last remaining cleared lands left in Dennis. Some farming continues on the land today, and the open landscape is indicative of what much of Dennis may have looked like during Colonial times.

Large parcels of open land are very valuable to developers. The land to the east of this farm has been subdivided and there is a threat that this land could be sold and subdivided as well. Although the portion of the estate south of Sesuit Neck Road is protected by a Conservation Restriction, the land north of the road has no such protection.

### ***Recommendations***

- The town should consider using **Flexible Development Zoning or Open Space/Cluster Development zoning** to protect key features of the property if the northern portion of the estate were to be developed. If the Crowell Estate was subdivided, Flexible Development Zoning could be used to direct development away from the farmhouse and the most significant open spaces surrounding it. Similarly, Open Space/Cluster Development zoning could be used to focus future development on a smaller portion of the parcel, and to protect key agricultural lands and scenic vistas through permanent conservation restrictions.



- The Crowell Farm estate is located within the **Old Kings Highway Historic District**, so any new construction or demolition of existing structures on the property requires review by the historic district committee. If the property is proposed for redevelopment, the town should consider providing additional assistance to the both the historic district committee and other review boards to guide development in a way that best preserves the important natural and cultural features of the site.
- **Scenic Overlay Zoning or a Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw** could be used to limit development in key portions of the landscape surrounding the Crowell Estate. Scenic Overlay Zoning can protect scenic vistas by providing for a no-disturb buffer on private lands or by identifying scenic vistas that should be protected, thereby allowing for the protection of scenic elements beyond what the Scenic Roads Bylaw can protect. This bylaw would require additional design criteria for new construction in areas that are determined by the town to have scenic value. It could be modeled after criteria used within the Quivett Neck Crowes Pasture Resource Protection District.
- The town and the Dennis Conservation Trust should **pursue land protection options** (land purchase or conservation restrictions) for the unrestricted portion of this estate, noting the potential tax benefits to the property owner of such restrictions.
- The town should consider adopting a **Transfer of Development Rights bylaw** to allow them to direct development potential away from the Crowell Farm Estate to other areas of town where they want to encourage denser development.





## Howes Cemetery

### *Description*

The cemetery represents one of the oldest family/neighborhood cemeteries in Dennis. The earliest dated stone reads 1705 and there are 130 stones in the cemetery. Thomas and Mary Howes first arrived to the region in 1637, and were among the first settlers of Dennis in 1639. Their homestead adjoined the land on which the cemetery stands today. The Howes family has continued to live and die in Dennis for over twelve generations, and many are buried here. At times, the Howes family has accounted for the largest percentage of families in Dennis -- in 1837, out of 664 households, 84 of the families were Howes. The cemetery is accessed by a small dirt road called "Bramble Lane", which is found off of Beach Street, in the northwestern section of town, near Dennis Village. The cemetery lies in the woods, at the end of this path, and features an iron gate, stone walls and hitching posts. The gravestones, ranging from very old slate stones to the more current marble grave markers, are scattered evenly on a gentle sloping hill.

### *Issues*

The town-owned, family cemetery has a historic marker plaque, placed by the Dennis Historical Commission in 2001. Threats to the cemetery include intrusive vegetation, possible ill effects due to expanding roots, and the general lack of upkeep and maintenance of ancient stones. One of the key concerns is that some of the stones are broken or are sinking into the ground. Many of these issues can be found town wide, however, the concealed location of Howes Cemetery may be a threat in and of itself.

### *Recommendations*

- Dennis voted for the Community Preservation Act in 2005. The town should consider using **Community Preservation Act Funds** to support preservation efforts at this and other town cemeteries, including repair and restoration of historic stones.
- The town should consider hiring a **Gravestone Preservation Consultant**, possibly funded with CPA funds as noted above, to identify the appropriate means of restoring damaged stones. Consultant services could include cleaning, resetting tilted stones and rejoining fractured tablet stones, survey and documentation work, or training

town volunteers in various cleaning techniques and how to better care for their cemeteries. Work with a consultant should also include educational programs to help explain the significance of this and other historic cemeteries to the community.

- Establishing a **permanent wooded buffer** around the cemetery and along the narrow access road would be helpful in limiting impacts from subdivision development immediately adjacent to the cemetery. The view of the cemetery from Bramble Lane and also from within the gates itself is one of an undeveloped, wooded area that maintains the secluded historic character that has existed for over three centuries. Maintaining the buffer of trees around the cemetery is important to separate it from more recent development.

- **The Shade Tree Act** could be used to focus more attention on the trees that are important to the character of this cemetery. The Shade Tree Act helps to protect historic trees on public property that are a part of a heritage landscape. This act is a part of MGL Chapter 87, which defines all trees within the public way as public shade trees. The municipal Tree Warden (in Dennis, the DPW Director acts as the Tree Warden) is responsible for the care, maintenance and protection of all public shade trees. This act is not utilized in Dennis.





## **Josiah Dennis Manse**

### ***Description***

The town of Dennis was named after its first minister, Josiah Dennis. Dennis came to what was then known as East Yarmouth in 1725, and after being ordained in 1727, remained there until his death. The Josiah Dennis Manse was constructed in 1736 for the minister and his family. It remains in its original location, on the corner of Nobscusset Road and Whig Street and is owned by the Town of Dennis. It is now being used as a Historic Center for Dennis and is open as a museum in the summer. Holiday celebrations are also held there. Outbuildings, including an historic schoolhouse, a well and a privy, were moved to the site from the neighborhood. The approximately 2 acre property surrounding the Manse is gated by a stone wall.

The Manse was the first house to receive a marker from the Dennis Historical Society in 1965 and it was placed on the National Register in February of 1974. As well as being on the National Register, the Josiah Dennis Manse is located within the Old King's Highway Regional Historic District (OKHRHD). A preservation restriction was placed on the home in 1998 and is held by the Massachusetts Historical Commission.

### ***Issues***

Although the house itself is protected, the building has fallen into disrepair and the town wants awareness of this important historic landmark in the hopes that money can be raised to preserve it. There is concern that the landscape and surrounding stone walls will also be neglected.

### ***Recommendations***

- The town should consider hiring a preservation consultant, perhaps funded through **Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds**, to help develop appropriate goals for protection of this building and its surrounding cultural landscape. This information would help to guide the town in their efforts to preserve the property, and the Old

Kings Highway Historic District Committee in their review of any proposed improvements. The consultants could be asked to enumerate the important trees and landscape features of the property to provide a basis for the town DPW's maintenance work on the property in the future.

- This property should be considered for inclusion on the town's list of scenic and culturally significant landscapes in the **Local Comprehensive Plan**. This would draw further attention to the property's significant features, as well as to the Manse itself.
- A **Scenic Overlay District** could be considered to help maintain the rural character and scenic areas surrounding this distinctive property. Scenic Overlay Zoning could supplement review by the Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee, possibly requiring a vegetated buffer on private lands between proposed new developments and significant cultural landscapes or scenic vistas.





## Tobey Farm

### *Description*

The Tobey family first came to the Nobscusset area of Dennis in 1676 from Sandwich. Widow Mehitable Tobey lost her husband Thomas in the King Philips' war, and returned home to the area to be reunited with her family, the Crowells. Upon her return, she and her newborn received a large land grant on both sides of King's Highway. Much of this land would stay in the Tobey family for centuries. The site of the present Tobey Farm has been cultivated by the family since around 1690.

The farmhouse, which stands along the Old King's Highway, was built in 1802 by Seth Tobey and his wife, a descendent of the Howes family. The house, which is two stories and has a five bay façade, is typical of the era in which it was built. The front elevation features clapboards, while the less prominent sides are covered in shingles. Descendants of this Tobey family would own and operate the famous Nobscusset Hotel in Dennis, as well as the land on Scargo Hill. The Nobscusset Hotel kitchen used fresh vegetables, milk, cream and eggs that had been raised on the Tobey Farm. Charles Tobey, who may be responsible for bringing the concept of tourism to Dennis, built the first Scargo Hill Tower so that his guests could enjoy the view of the North side of the town and Cape Cod Bay.

The Tobey Farm remains a well-known institution and popular destination in Dennis. Today, the Tobey family operates a greenhouse where they raise flowers and herbs. Each spring the farm opens its store for the season, which is frequented by both residents and visitors to Dennis. Each fall, the farm features hayrides and other activities.

### *Recommendations*

- The town should consider a **Right to Farm Bylaw** to help retain active agricultural lands like those at Tobey Farm. A Right to Farm bylaw would assert the rights of farmers to pursue agricultural activities, provide community support for farming activities and require dispute resolution so that abutters cannot make nuisance claims. There may be little concern about the Tobey Farm currently in this respect, as it has been a Dennis institution for centuries, but as there are very few agricultural areas left in Dennis, it is imperative to give them as much protection as possible.

- Representatives of the town or local preservation groups should contact the current farm owners to see if they would be willing to consider an **agricultural preservation restriction or a conservation restriction** on some portions of their land to protect it into the future. The town could consider using Community Preservation Act funding to support a restriction on part of the property to preserve the town’s agricultural heritage.
- **Flexible Development Zoning** could provide protection for key features of the agricultural landscape if Tobey Farm were to be sold for development in the future. This tool could be used to protect the farmhouse, the outbuildings, and some of the farm operations, or to cluster new development in the least sensitive areas, preserving the key features of the landscape.
- Similarly, **Open Space Zoning** could be used to help preserve the most significant portions of Tobey Farm from development. This tool would allow for the same overall amount of development that is already permitted, but would require new construction to be located on only a portion of the parcel, thereby preserving at least part of the current farm and landscape. The remaining open space would be permanently protected under a conservation restriction co-signed by a local conservation commission or land trust, meaning that agricultural land or a scenic vista can be preserved while allowing development elsewhere.
- Involve the **Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee** and the Dennis Historical Commission in the review of any plans for subdivision or further development of the site. The Dennis Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee has the authority to review new construction, additions, alterations and demolition of existing buildings, but does not have the authority to review subdivisions of land. Because of both groups’ knowledge of the historic features of the property and of the district, they should be consulted during any review process for new development on the property to ensure that the proposed development supports preservation goals.
- A **Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw** could help limit development impacts to important features of Tobey Farm that contribute to scenic vistas in the town. The view from Main Street to the Tobey Farm buildings and fields has been enjoyed by residents and visitors for centuries. The possibility of increased development at the borders of Tobey Farm is a threat to both the town’s agricultural history and scenic resources. A Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw would establish specific design criteria for any proposed new construction in areas that are determined by the town to be of scenic value. This could address both the Tobey Farm property and adjacent properties. Dennis does not currently utilize this planning tool.
- Dennis should consider a **Transfer of Development Rights bylaw** as part of an effort to protect the remaining agricultural properties in town. A Transfer of Development Right bylaw establishes two different overlay districts: a “sending zone” (areas where development would be discouraged), and a “receiving zone”

(areas where development is appropriate). Landowners in “sending areas” sell their development rights (and agree to a permanent deed restriction) to landowners in the “receiving areas” who can then develop in the receiving area at a higher density than what would have otherwise been allowed under conventional zoning. This would allow the farm owners to receive economic benefits without further subdividing and developing their land, leaving Tobey Farm and the historic landscape intact.







## **Quivet Neck Village, East Dennis**

### ***Description***

This area in the northeast portion of East Dennis is home to a large number of 18th and 19th century homes. Historically, the village was tied to the Shiverick Shipyard and the sea. The large homes that line Pleasant Street, Sea Street, School Street and Center Street make up a well-defined early residential village largely built by those that made their livings in the maritime trades and the cranberry and salt works industries. The neighborhood became populated enough to warrant its own post office in 1828, officially giving East Dennis its name.

Quivet Neck Village is also home to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century Jacob Sears Memorial Hall library, an attractive and contextual addition to the neighborhood. The village also features “Old Red-Top,” a house that has experienced a varied past. Once a Methodist church building located in nearby West Brewster, it became a straw-hat factory in 1871. The factory was the first in Dennis to employ women. “Old Red-Top” was later used as a place to pack and sort cranberries, and was eventually transformed into a residence, still retaining its distinctive red roof.

### ***Issues***

The neighborhood is characterized by large lots on which the historic homes cover only a small portion. Because of the large size of these lots and the desirability of neighborhood, there is a temptation to subdivide.

### ***Recommendations***

- The **Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee** should consider developing specific design guidelines and resource protection goals for this area because of its significant resources and the development pressures it faces. A preservation consultant could be helpful in developing additional guidelines for the area.
- The town should pursue listing this neighborhood on the **National Register**. Previous historic research shows that this area is likely eligible for listing on the

National Register. Such listing would provide additional recognition of the significance of the area's historic buildings and landscapes, and could support the drafting of additional design guidelines and development criteria to protect these resources.

- A **Scenic Overlay District** should be considered to protect the historic village and the waterfront and open spaces surrounding it. A small portion of this neighborhood is within the Quivet Neck Crowe's Pasture Resource Protection Area and is already subject to scenic vista protection regulations. Similar protections that address scenic resources within the historic village would be helpful in protecting this area from inappropriate forms of development.
- The Dennis Historical Commission and various land protection groups should consider seeking **Preservation Restrictions and/or Conservation Restrictions** on key buildings and landscapes in this area. Community Preservation Act funds could potentially be used to support placing these restrictions in historic properties.





### **The Mormon Church (RLDS)**

This property was included in the heritage landscape inventory, though it is more appropriately considered an historic structure than a landscape. The student authors identified recommendations for how to preserve this property, so they are included for information purposes.

\* \* \*

#### ***Description***

Crocker's Neck, in Dennis Port, is the only early Cape village where a branch of the Mormon Church, the Church of the Latter Day Saints, was formed. Traveling Mormon missionaries from New York and Pennsylvania came to Cape Cod in 1835 to convert people to the new faith and to convince them to travel to Illinois with them. One Cape Codder, Clark Hallett of Yarmouth, left the Cape for Illinois with the missionaries. He returned in 1840 to recruit more from the Cape. This resulted in the conversion of several families to the Mormon faith. In Dennis, these families formed a branch of the church with six charter members who met in the village of Crocker's Neck. Over the years, more converted to Mormonism. In 1845, because of persecution throughout the country, religious leaders encouraged Mormons to go west, and several families in Dennis followed Brigham Young and other Mormon leaders to Utah. Others of the Dennis congregation stayed.

The reorganized church in Dennis was developed during the 1850s after many of the original congregants became disillusioned by changes Brigham Young had made. In 1866, a reorganized branch of the church was established in Dennis Port. By 1870, the membership of the Reorganized Church of the Latter Day Saints was large enough to build a church building, and the first service was held on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1871. Since 1970, a wing has been added to the south side of the building, doubling its size.

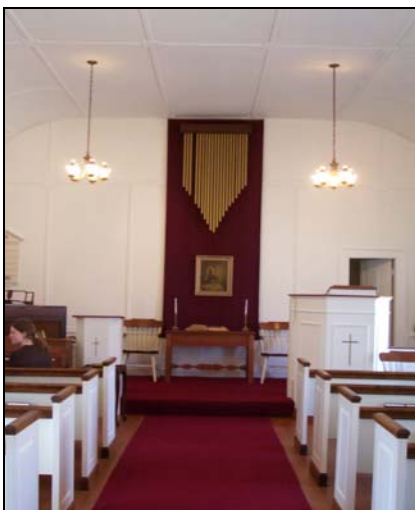
#### ***Issues***

The church owns property across Sea Street which is an open parcel with trees dotting the landscape. The church is surrounded by a residential neighborhood with housing stock of

late 19<sup>th</sup> century to present day architecture. In recent years, many of the church members have moved away or died, leading to questions about the building's possible sale and concern about what will happen to the church and surrounding land.

### ***Recommendations***

- One of the fears about this property is that the land will be sold and the church torn down for new development. The proposed demolition of this building would trigger the town's Demolition Delay bylaw, which was revised in Spring 2007 to require a 12-month delay period. This delay period serves to discourage demolition of the building and also allows the Historical Commission to work with the prospective buyer and others to identify ways to preserve and re-use the building or to arrange for it to be moved to another site.
- **Design Review**, which is currently in place in Dennisport, could be used to guide any future plans for the property, including additions or alterations to the building or new construction on the site. If the building is sold and moved [or demolished], new construction could be required to be consistent with the existing building and sympathetic to the surrounding neighborhood.
- The town should discuss the possibility of placing a **Preservation Restriction** on the church building before it is sold. A restriction placed on the building would halt the possibility of tear down and the building could be sold to another congregation or used as a commercial space. Convincing a church to place a restriction on their building before they sell it can be a challenge. Being proactive with the church might help. Another possibility is for the town to buy the church building, place a restriction on it, and then resell it to another congregation or commercial owner. Placing a restriction on the exterior, interior or both would preserve the historic fabric of the church while allowing it to be used for a different purpose.
- **Community Preservation Act funds** could potentially be used to support preservation of this property, by funding historical survey work or a re-use study, or by contributing to purchase and rehabilitation of the building.



## AREAS OF CRITICAL CONCERN

---



### **Bass River Viewsheds**

The Bass River and associated viewsheds have been listed as a critical concern by Dennis residents. The banks of this river have long been considered valuable real estate, first by the native tribes that spent their winters here, and then by colonists, Dennis residents, and now sometimes by seasonal visitors. Unfortunately, the very beauty and character that attracted these people to its shores is now being affected by the overdevelopment of the Bass River Corridor. Both the scenic value of the river and the delicate ecology hang in the balance.

The aptly named Bass River no longer contains the huge amount of fish or shellfishing opportunities it once did. The highly sensitive ecological environment of the wetlands and the mouth of the Bass River have been in a state of deterioration for decades. The increased development along West Dennis Beach and Weir Creek have resulted in nitrogen loading in these waters, which then creates a very healthy environment for excess algae. This extra foreign growth then threatens to kill off the remaining marine life present here.

Steps have been taken in the past, by both preservationists and conservationists, to save the unique character and ecology of the river. The Indian Lands Conservation area has been a big success in Dennis, drawing its residents and visitors along the shores of the Upper Bass River to hike and to enjoy the seemingly untouched natural resources. Different environmental campaigns to bring the river back to its original status have also been partially successful, although the river remains quite different than it was even a few decades before. As noted in previous sections, more steps must be taken to ensure that both the scenic beauty of the river and its ecological health are preserved. This scenic maritime environment is significant for both the current and historic livelihood of fishermen and for its recreational value as an attraction for tourists and more importantly, for Dennis residents.



### **Hidden Burial Grounds**

“Hidden” burial grounds in Dennis were listed as a critical concern. Because they cannot be seen from major roadways, or in some cases, from any roads at all, these cemeteries and burial grounds have fallen into disrepair. One hidden burial ground, Howes Cemetery, was listed as a priority landscape, but it is not the only hidden cemetery in the town. Some of the others in Dennis include the Wixon Family Burial Ground, the Baker Family Burial Ground, the Indian Burial Ground, the Quaker Cemetery, and the Hall Family Cemetery.

A major issue facing hidden burial grounds is the damage being done to the historic grave markers. Many of these cemeteries are old family cemeteries that have not been used in over fifty years. The lack of maintenance to the gravestones is leading to sugaring, rust, biological growths, and cleaving and breaking of some of the historic stones. Since they are not located where large amounts of people see them every day, there is not a lot of focus on their maintenance. All of these cemeteries are town owned, and the Dennis Department of Public Works maintains them. The town’s Cemetery Advisory Committee has been active in providing tours and demonstrations for preserving gravestones. All the burial grounds have had stone markers erected to identify them.

The Cape Cod Gravestones Committee has performed a survey on most of the cemeteries on Cape Cod, including Dennis. While the cemeteries have been surveyed, it is important to note which cemeteries are hidden and to get the community more involved in the preservation and maintenance of these burial grounds. Almost all of these cemeteries are located within the Old King’s Highway Regional Historic District and the Historic District Committee could play a role in drawing more attention to them and encouraging additional preservation work. The Dennis Historical Commission and Historical Society should also be involved, perhaps pursuing grants from the Community Preservation Committee, the National Trust, or Massachusetts Historical Commission, or seeking volunteers and community groups to “adopt” certain burial grounds and address the maintenance issues.

## GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

---

### **Survey**

Although portions of the community have been surveyed, much of the inventory work is close to forty years old and doesn't meet current inventory standards. Also, many more buildings in Dennis have become eligible for historic survey over the past 40 years. Documenting the different neighborhoods in Dennis with Area forms would be most efficient, as it would allow for study of the town without creating Building Forms for every single structure. Very significant buildings, however, should have individual inventory forms. This survey work could be done either by a preservation consultant or by volunteers who are familiar with the Massachusetts Historical Commission's historic inventory process. The new inventory forms would be stored locally and at the Massachusetts Historical Commission in Boston and would provide another layer of protection for historic buildings that might be impacted by state funding or permitting. The updated inventory forms could also be used by the Dennis Old Kings Highway Historic District Committee and the South Dennis Historic District Commission to inform their review of work proposed on specific historic structures within those historic districts.

### **Old King's Highway Regional Historic District**

The Old Kings Highway Regional Historic District (OKHRHD) encompasses a large amount of land, spanning several towns on Cape Cod. The portion of the district within Dennis includes all areas north of Route 6 and generates many projects that must undergo review. To better support the work of the town historic district committee and protect the historic resources within this district, it would be appropriate to consider updating historic resource inventory information and providing increased professional staff support. The town could also work with the Regional Historic District Commission and other towns in the region to develop a plan to better preserve and protect the large number of historic landscapes located within this district through design guidelines or other means. The town should also consider reviewing the underlying zoning in the historic district to insure that it does not encourage inappropriate development, but instead supports the protection of key heritage landscapes.

### **Demolition Delay Bylaw**

A demolition delay bylaw authorizes a procedure in which requests for permits to demolish historic buildings must first be reviewed and approved by the local historical commission. Demolition Delay Bylaws are either list-based (applying only to a specific list of buildings that have been previously identified), age based (applying to all buildings that are older than a certain age-typically 50 years), or categorical (applying only to resources that meet a specific criteria, such as only buildings that have been documented on Massachusetts Historical Commission forms). If the historical commission does not approve of the demolition and deems a structure significant, it can impose a delay period, which provides a window of time in which the property owner is encouraged to explore alternatives to demolition. By

recommending that more buildings are surveyed and documented for the MHC, more buildings could be saved from demolition by the bylaw.

It is recommended that the town adopt a 12-month delay period, in order to best develop other possibilities before demolition. At Spring 2007 Town Meeting, the town adopted a 12-month demolition delay period.

### **Scenic Road Bylaw**

The Scenic Roads Bylaw, which can be adopted at town meeting, requires that a public hearing be held prior to the removal of any trees or stone walls that fall within the public right of way on a town road. The bylaw can be written so it applies to either a predetermined list of identified scenic roads, or it can encompass all roads (other than numbered routes) in a town. This bylaw applies whenever there is any public or private impacts to trees or stone walls within the right of way-therefore anything that might impact these resources, including road widening, utility company work, or even creating private driveways-requires a public hearing. Dennis has a Scenic Road Bylaw, but it should be expanded so that all significant roads in the town are addressed. Route 6A is addressed by a state scenic road designation, which establishes the Planning Board or Old Kings Highway Committee as the review body.

### **Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw**

The town of Dennis should consider adopting a Scenic Vista Protection Bylaw, as it is one of the most effective initiatives to help maintain historic landscapes and viewsheds such as those that have been identified by Dennis residents. The bylaw would help to limit development impacts to scenic vistas, such as the Bass River Corridor and the town's agricultural open space. Scenic Vista Protection Bylaws require additional design criteria for any proposals for new construction in areas that are determined by the town to be a scenic vista. The sweeping views seen from the hills of Dennis, and from the roadways, of its coastal, agricultural, and historic resources are some that should be protected from inappropriately placed development.

### **Create Scenic Overlay Districts**

Many of the priority landscapes in this report could be better protected by Scenic Overlay Districts. Creating several such districts in town could help to limit development in scenic areas and viewpoints, such as the view of Bass River from Route 6, and could protect scenic vistas by requiring an undisturbed buffer on private lands adjacent to these areas. This would go beyond what the Scenic Roads Bylaw protects and it could be used to address development along numbered routes such as Route 28 and Route 6A. Sandwich and Bourne have adopted this tool, and other Cape towns should consider following their lead. The town of Dennis has many opportunities to utilize this tool. Areas such as Quivet Neck Village, along Old King's Highway, throughout the Bass River Corridor, and along the coast would all be viable choices for the Scenic Overlay District.



### **Flexible Development Zoning**

It is recommended that the town of Dennis consider Flexible Development Zoning. This type of zoning provides the opportunity to protect key features during the development of large parcels of land. Flexible Development Zoning allows for greater flexibility and creativity when subdividing land, to conform and work with the natural and cultural resources of a site and to minimize alteration or damage to these resources, rather than following standard requirements of subdivision regulations. This tool promotes better overall site planning and would be especially useful in the case of Dennis's agricultural landscapes, which have experienced subdivision over the course of the centuries and are experiencing some of the greatest development threats. While this zoning bylaw would not necessarily protect these properties from subdivision, it does call attention to preserving certain portions of the land, such as the area around an historic barn or homestead or areas with other resources interests.

### **Corridor Protection Overlay Districts**

The town of Dennis should consider Corridor Protection Overlay Districts to protect some of their transportation and river corridors that are significant landscapes. These districts are written to promote appropriate development within a given corridor, and can address the scale and massing of development to protect existing heritage landscapes and key resources that are important features of the designated corridor. This kind of overlay district can be used to coordinate development among communities that share a corridor with Dennis, such as Yarmouth, Brewster or Harwich. In addition to increased regulations over site design, the corridor overlay district can be used to relax existing parking lot regulations if this would better protect the town's historic and rural character.

### **Transfer of Development Rights**

Transfer of Development Rights can be used to direct development potential away from cultural landscapes to other areas of town where more dense development is encouraged. A transfer of development rights bylaw establishes two different overlay districts: "sending zones" -areas where development would be discouraged- and "receiving zones" -areas where denser development is appropriate. Landowners in "sending areas" sell their development rights (and agree to a permanent deed restriction) to landowners in the "receiving areas" who can then develop in the receiving area at a higher density than what would have otherwise been allowed under conventional zoning. This tool may be useful in steering new development away from outlying agricultural and other cultural landscapes and into nearby villages or commercial areas that can handle additional density.

## CONCLUSION

---

Dennis, Massachusetts is a town where descendants of the founding settlers live next door to retirees, young families, and summer tourists. This mix of residents makes Dennis an exciting place to work and live. Dennis has a large mix of historic buildings and landscapes, many of which are protected. However, many more historic areas of Dennis are in danger. There are a number of dedicated residents who are very involved in the preservation of the historic fabric of Dennis, and as we traveled through the different neighborhoods and talked to community members about our project, they seemed very excited about the prospect of preserving more of Dennis' historic landscapes. However, it seems that a small minority of the population is doing most of the advocacy work. Others need to join this effort to make sure that future generations can enjoy the wonders of Hokus Rock, Quivet Neck Village, and the Bass River Corridor, among others.

These landscapes are what make Dennis such a unique and special place, for both the year-round and summer residents. It appears to us, as outsiders, that many in the community, both young and old, understand the resources that they have in Dennis, but more knowledge of the imminent threats to these landscapes must be understood. We believe that this is an amazing place and hope that future generations will be able to enjoy the vast river viewsheds, historic neighborhoods, and heritage landscapes in Dennis.

The Cape Cod Commission is a resource that the citizens of Dennis should both be aware of and utilize in their work to preserve more of Dennis' historic landscapes. The preservation specialist at the Cape Cod Commission is available to assist in developing new preservation programs in Dennis, including assistance in rewriting bylaws and creating new historic districts.

The heritage landscapes of Dennis are a wonderful treasure for residents and visitors alike. Preserving them will help draw even more visitors to the area, creating more economic success for the residents of Dennis.

## DENNIS HERITAGE LANDSCAPE RECONNAISSANCE REPORT

### APPENDIX: HERITAGE LANDSCAPES IDENTIFIED BY COMMUNITY

This list was prepared as a summary of a Heritage Landscape Identification meeting held in Dennis on February 20, and follow-up fieldwork on March 10 and April 21, 2007. This is a working list and can be updated by the community. **While the goal was to make this list as comprehensive as possible, there may be other heritage landscapes in Dennis that were not identified at the Identification meeting.** The chart has two columns, the name and location of the resource are in the first and notes about this resource are in the second. Landscapes are grouped by land use category. Abbreviations used are listed below.

CR=Conservation Restriction  
 LHD= Local Historic District  
 NHL= National Historic Landmark  
 NR= National Register Individual Listing  
 PR= Preservation Restriction  
 \* = Priority Landscape

**ED= East Dennis**  
**WD= West Dennis**  
**SD= South Dennis**  
**DP= Dennis Port**  
**D= Dennis**

Agriculture	
<b>Stone Walls</b> North Dennis	Very characteristic feature of the north side of Dennis, due to the glacial outcroppings found only north of the Sandwich Moraine.
<b>Worden Farm (ED)</b> Located off Route 6A	Homestead and farmland of one of the original settlers, Peter Worden, who reputedly illicitly claimed this land for his own and created farmland, where he raised cattle and produced crops.
<b>*Tobey Farm (D)</b> 352 Main Street Route 6A	Part of a larger historical farm, given to the Tobey family in 1676 by a King's Grant Land remains with the original family (1680 to present) in Dennis Village. The historic boundaries of the farm included much of the surrounding area, including Scargo Hill and Scargo Lake. The Federal house built in 1802 by Seth Tobey remains today, along with a farm stand and store. (LHD)
<b>Cranberry Bogs</b> <b>Scarsdale Bog (D)</b> Scarsdale Road	Cranberry Bogs are found scattered throughout the north side of Dennis, in East Dennis and along the Bass River. The first commercial bogs on Cape Cod on Nobscussett Street and Scarsdale Road. Many of the cranberry bogs came under the ownership of retired sea captains, who turned to the more predictable world of agriculture. To this day, there are working bogs in the area.
<b>Salt Hay (D)</b> Black Flats, Area between Centre St and Main Street, south of Swan Pond, Stage Island salt marsh, south of Rt 6, adjacent to Bass River	On New Boston Road. There is a field marker on Bridge Street looking East. Marsh on Warden Farm. Crab Bridge at Swan River on Upper County Road. Salt hay grass was used for fodder. Salt hay grass was harvested for bedding and fodder for farm animals and for garden mulch. Before hay was bailed and stored under cover, salt hay grass was used to top the hay stacks in the fields.
<b>Stage Island (WD)</b> Mouth of the Bass	Transient sands created what is now called Stage Island at the mouth of the Bass River. Located between Yarmouth and West Dennis, today the island is covered in salt hay.

River	
<b>*Crowell Farm (D)</b> Sesuit Neck Road and Old Town Road	The Crowell (Crowe/Crow) Farm has been owned by same family since John Crowell, an original founder of East Yarmouth, came to the area in 1639. There is an early 18 <sup>th</sup> century Cape house located on one portion of the property and the farm land is located on both sides of Sesuit Neck Road. (LHD)
<b>Burial Grounds and Cemeteries</b>	
<b>Wixon Family Burying Ground (DP)</b> East Side of Summer Street	In Dennis Port, no gravestones, but at least fifty graves. Now on privately owned residential land. No burials of the Wixon family elsewhere in Dennis before 1850. The earliest known burial dates to the mid to late 18 <sup>th</sup> Century. The last interment occurred in 1849. Robert Wixon, family patriarch, was one of the initial settlers of Eastham. The Burying Ground is now marked by a plaque.
<b>Swan Lake Burying Ground (DP)</b> Depot Street- Bester Street and Stafford Circle	Overlooks Swan Pond, Upper Reaches of Depot Street. Created 1856, now run by a private association dedicated to the preservation and upkeep of the cemetery. Originally the cemetery was limited to residents of Dennis Port. Many members of the prominent Wixon, Kelley, Chase and Nickerson families are buried here. Most of the people buried here were involved with maritime life, which is evident through the use of many different symbols found on their graves.
<b>West Dennis Cemetery (WD)</b> Fisk and Pond Street	Started as a family cemetery (Crowe/Crowell) but became the village cemetery. This cemetery contains at least 500 stones that are more than one hundred years old. The oldest portion of the cemetery has many graves but few stones as the early fishermen and farmers buried there could not afford gravestones.
<b>South Dennis Congregational Cemetery (SD)</b> 216 Main Street	On Old Main, west of Fresh Pond, first gravestone from the late 1700s. There 530 stones here older than 100 years old. The earliest gravestone is from 1795. The cemetery and the Meeting House were built on land originally owned by John Nickerson, grandson of one of the first settlers. Of note, a small grave dedicated to "Chinese Woman brought from Hong Cong" can be found here. History tells us that she was brought to Dennis by a Sea Captain who hired her to care for his children, who later commissioned the stone.
<b>Ancient Cemetery (SD)</b> 485 Main Street	Behind Town Hall. Oldest community cemetery and the earliest South Dennis settlers are buried there. There are hundreds of graves, but only 120 stones. The earlier graves were laid out contrary to the Colonial practice of east to west; rather, they lie northeast to southeast, with the head facing toward the northeast. An Indian Burial Ground is also located there. (LHD)
<b>Quaker Cemetery (SD)</b> Mayfair Road	Earliest Quaker cemetery. Following Quaker tradition, there are very few stones. The remaining stones are made of simple marble with names and dates, but no symbols or decoration. The earliest known burial date is 1809, and the latest is 1843. (LHD)
<b>Dennis Village Cemetery (D)</b> Highway 6A and Old Bass Road	Still an active cemetery, the earliest known burial date is 1728. Reverend Josiah Dennis is buried here. The cemetery was historically and economically important to the town. The cemetery is highly visible due to its proximity to other popular locations in Dennis. Small unpaved piece of Old Kings Highway can also be found here. (LHD, NR)
<b>*Howes' Family Burial Ground (D)</b> Beech Street and Bramble Lane	A highly non-visible burying ground, set deep into the woods. The cemetery sits on land that was originally farmland owned by Thomas Howe, and is one of the first three official family cemeteries in town. There are close to 130 stones in the cemetery, ranging in date from 1705-1882. Surrounded by native woods, stone walls, and still has hitching points. (LHD)
<b>Hall Family Burial Ground (D)</b> Off Highway 6A behind Cape Cod Playhouse.	Sits in the woods across Nobscusset Creek. There are 61 stones here, dating from 1696 to 1835. Buried here are the descendants of John Hall, who first came to the area in 1651. One of the more famous Halls was Henry Hall, who was the founder of cranberry cultivation. He discovered the benefit of standing cranberry bogs, which resulted in creating the booming cranberry industry Cape-wide. (LHD)

<b>Indian Burial Ground (D)</b> North Shore of Scargo Lake, bounded by Doctor Lord's Road and Elm Street, on Indian Field.	In 1829, a town meeting was held, and residents voted to fence in the Indian Burial Ground, which reserved part of the original Indian Field that was left to the NobsCUSset tribe after they sold much of present day Dennis to the colonists. The burial ground is the resting place of Mashantampaine and his tribe, the NobsCUSsets.
<b>Paddock Cemetery (D)</b> East of Paddock's Path, off of Highway 6A	The site of the location of the first Paddock Farm, owned by Zachariah Paddock. There are 57 stones, dating from 1708 to 1929. (LHD)
<b>Worden Cemetery (ED)</b> Main Street	There are 100 stones dating from 1688 to 1932, and it bears the names of some of the area's earliest settlers. Legend tells us that Peter Worden illicitly claimed this land for his own and created farmland, where he raised cattle and produced crops. (LHD)
<b>Quivett Cemetery (ED)</b> South Street	Quivett cemetery is located on Quivett Neck and is very close to the border with Brewster.
<b>Civic/Centers</b>	
<b>Center of Dennis Port (DP)</b> Depot Street, Lower County Road, and the surrounding area.	Dennis Port Village, originally called Crocker's Neck, was firmly rooted in the maritime industries. Therefore, most of the buildings reflect these purposes, with many warehouses, wharves, stores, and small residences. Dennis Port became the most populated area and business center in the town by the 1860s, when it was granted its own post office. The postmaster, Thomas Howes, decided to call his post office Dennis Port, which has remained the name of this village ever since.
<b>West Dennis Main Street (WD)</b> West Dennis Main Street, Fisk Street, and Loring Avenue and the surrounding area.	In 1832, a bridge was built over the Bass River, connecting the area to Yarmouth, and bringing the mail directly to this area, which then came to be named West Dennis, as it was west of the rest of South Dennis. Located along the Bass River, this area was also closely tied to those who made their living working from the sea. There are many fine houses in the Fisk Street area that were built as Sea Captains' homes.
<b>Liberty Hall Green (SD)</b> Highbank Road, Main Street	Located South Dennis, the site of many historic buildings, including the former post office, and a general store. Now it is the crossroads for some Dennis' most scenic roads, making the Liberty Hall Green a very picturesque and centralized landscape in the South Dennis village.
<b>Dennis Village (D)</b> Route 6A and Old Bass River Road	Dennis Village is located along Highway 6A. This village center has churches, a training ground and a general store. Also located in this area are the Cape Cod Playhouse and several cemeteries. Many of the earlier buildings have been replaced. (LHD)
<b>Industrial</b>	
<b>Dennis Port (DP)</b> Lower County Road and Depot Street	The site where the 600 foot wharf once stood and the reason behind Dennis Port's name. The sea clam packing industry was one of the more prominent endeavors in the area. It was then converted to a mackerel Cannery. Once home of many fisherman and up to two hundred vessels, the area no longer have a working wharf and its buildings have since been transformed into residential uses.
<b>Wharf Buildings (ED)</b> Cold Storage Road	Wharf located on the east side of Sesuit Creek once had a packet that loaded with salt that departed regularly to Boston. The major business conducted in the village took place at Shiverick Shipyard.
<b>Fresh Pond (SD)</b> East/West Dennis Road/Main Street	By 1855, the ice industry had begun to make substantial profit. In Dennis, several lakes and ponds saw the construction of storage and ice houses, which were built with double walls and insulated. Scargo Lake and Fresh Pond were the best examples of this new industry. Typically the ice was cut

(6A)	in February, and stored in sawdust or salt hay until the temperatures rose, when the ice was then transported to the wharves to be used in the transport of fresh fish to Boston and New York. A small amount of ice was sold locally for household use.
<b>Straw Hat Factory (ED)</b> 10 Pleasant Street	Established in 1871, the Straw Hat Factory resided in an old Methodist meeting house building also known as "Red-Top", which had been moved to Pleasant Street from nearby West Brewster. The factory was the first in Dennis to employ women. The building was later used as a place to pack and sort cranberries, and then was eventually transformed into a residence, still retaining its distinctive red roof.
<b>Institutional</b>	
<b>Cape Playhouse (D)</b> 820 Main Street	Built as the Nobscusset Meeting House in 1810, the building was moved three times, until it came to rest in its current location in the 1920s. It has been used for everything from a church to a slaughter house. In 1927, producer and playwright Raymond Moore bought the building and transformed it into the Cape Playhouse theatre, which soon earned regional fame as a premier summer theatre. (LHD)
<b>*R. L. D. S Church (DP)</b> 185 Sea Street	Wood frame church built in 1870 located on Sea Street just north of Lower County Road. The church building has been a center of community life and service for the church community.
<b>*The Manse (D)</b> 61 Whig Street	The Josiah Dennis Manse was the home of the first settled minister of the "East Yarmouth Parish Church" in Yarmouth and was built in 1736 for the minister and his family. It remains in its original location, on the corner of Nobscusset Road and Whig Street and is owned by the Town of Dennis. It is a two story structure with clapboard siding. Several outbuildings on the property are not original. (LHD, NR, PR)
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	
<b>Scargo Tower (D)</b> Main Street (6A)	One of the first manmade tourist attractions in Dennis, the view from atop of Scargo Hill overlooks Scargo Lake and towards the beaches and Cape Cod Bay. The tower was first built in 1874 out of wood, but it was destroyed in a storm. The second Scargo tower was completed later that year. After a fire burned the tower down, the stone tower that currently stands on the summit was built in 1901. (CR)
<b>Cold Storage Road (ED)</b>	This area on the east side of Sesuit Creek was once owned by Prince S. Crowell. A Cold Storage Plant built in wood was built here in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century burned to the ground, and was then replaced by plant built with cement. By the 1920s the Cold Storage industry became obsolete in Dennis and on the Cape because it was faster and more efficient to use a motorized boat to travel to Boston. Town residents would like to place a plaque here for historic Saltworks.
<b>Open Space /Parks/Water Bodies</b>	
<b>Bound Brook (ED)</b> Airline Road	Bound Brook creates the town border with Brewster. This portion of Bound Brook was once home to a herring run and fish ladders. Adjacent to the brook is Sears' Cemetery and the original unpaved portion of Old King's Highway.(CR)
<b>Trotting Park (DP)</b> Trotter's Lane	Originally developed as a race track in the late 19 <sup>th</sup> century by the Dennis gentry class. Used purely for entertainment purposes, the Riverside Trotting Park featured a grandstand that could hold 200 spectators. The half mile, oval shaped racetrack has now been developed into a residential community, and only the oval shaped street layout of the neighborhood indicates its equestrian history.
<b>Seaview Playland (DP)</b> Inman Road and Caleb Street	Most recently used as a golf course and recreation area named Seaview Playland, this area was also at one time open farmland. The large dairy farm was swamped by the hurricane of 1944. Plans are currently in the works for the area to become parkland, with pathways to the beaches.

<b>*Bass River Corridor (SD)</b>	The Bass River draws from Nantucket Sound then snakes about halfway into Dennis, creating much of the border with Yarmouth. The extensive river front has been valuable real estate for centuries, as the native population camped along its banks, and the colonists built houses there. In many places the river is lined with salt hay and marshes. (CR in some places)
<b>Scargo Lake (D)</b> Main Street	Large water body adjacent to Scargo Hill, which is the site of the Scargo Tower. Once called Flax Pond, Native American legend has it that the lake is named for Princess Scargo, and further explains the "fish" shape of the lake. Scargo Lake is also home of Princess Beach.
<b>Corporation Beach (D)</b> Corporation Road and Howes Street	At Nobscusset Point, a 600 foot pier was constructed. The pier was then used as the packet landing, and for ships going to and from Boston.
<b>Dr. Fennel's Estate (ED)</b> North End of Bridge Street and Mooncusser Lane	High Bluff looking over Cape Cod Bay in East Dennis. Home of a 1730s colonial house alongside a 19 <sup>th</sup> century estate. Today this open landscape features stone walls, and cranberry bogs.
<b>Chapin Beach (D)</b> Black Flats and Chapin Beach Road	Located on the northwest shore of Dennis on Cape Cod Bay. The presence of tall dunes called the Knob Hills made this a preferred place to watch for whales. During WWII, there were army outposts set up to watch for enemies.
<b>Hokum Rock (D)</b> Hokum Rock Road	A large rock formation left here by receding glaciers. Today it is town owned land, and is used frequently by the town for gatherings and programs. Once the popular starting spot for Dennis parades.
<b>Crowe's Pasture (ED)</b> Quivett Neck	The far side of East Dennis on Quivett Neck. Community pasture land that was once home to Salt works, sheep pasture, cattle pasture, cranberry bogs, blueberries, and good goose hunting.
<b>Residential</b>	
<b>Toy Village (WD)</b> Main Street, Woodbine Road	Cottage Colony that contained miniature versions of the entire typical Cape Cod house styles; gambler roofed, cape cottage, garrison, and saltbox. Toy Village became a popular vacation destination and a Dennis landmark.
<b>Campgrounds (DP)</b> Between Lower County Road and Wharf Road, along Glendon Road	Along the Dennis Port shore. Arthur Chase owned a large section of the land near Nantucket Sound- during the first decades of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century vacationing families set up tents on his land for a fee. In the 1930s, the tents were replaced by small cottages. The Hurricane of 1944 swept many of the small cottages off their foundations, but most pulled back to their original location.
<b>Little Taunton/ Little Italy (D)</b> Doctor Bottero Road and Taunton Road	Located near Chapin Beach, a group of Taunton residents of Italian descent began to vacation in Dennis. These summer residents built small masonry cottages along the dunes.
<b>*Quivett Neck Village (ED)</b> Between Cold Storage road, Sea Street and South Street and Cape Cod Bay	The East Dennis neighborhood became populated enough to warrant their own post office in 1828. Most business took place at the large Shiverick shipyard, and almost all East Dennis men were involved in the maritime trades. A large group of 18 <sup>th</sup> and 19 <sup>th</sup> century sea captains homes create an attractive village.
<b>Transportation</b>	
<b>Railroad Station (SD)</b> Main Street	Tracks came from Yarmouth through to Orleans. The Depot was constructed on what is now the north side of the Town Hall parking lot. The passenger train was discontinued in 1938. The tracks were taken away at the end of the 20 <sup>th</sup> century. The town is now rebuilding the depot for rail trail/tourism uses.

<p><b>West Dennis Lighthouse (WD)</b> West Dennis Beach Road</p>	<p>The light house was built in 1855 at the entrance of the Bass River. The beacon is on a large building that was historically paired with a brick building on one side. The light was decommissioned when the Cape Cod Canal was opened, and a new beacon was erected on the Yarmouth side. Today the lighthouse remains, but is used as a restaurant and an inn.</p>
<p><b>Old Field Bend (WD)</b> West Dennis Beach Road</p>	<p>Once the entrance to the Bass River from Nantucket Sound, Old Field Bend was created when residents decided to built a dike here to prevent shoaling problems. The dike failed and the area has been filled in and is now open space.</p>