

**To: Committee on Community Preservation Members**

**From: Brian Lever, Senior Preservation Planner**

**RE: Additional Information for Community-wide Archaeological Survey Proposal**

In the packet provided you will find additional information requested at the March meeting. I have since received additional letters of support from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. Also at your request, I have sought and received reviews of community-wide archaeological surveys from other communities. They are included in the order in which they were received. Please note: some responses are full letters, while others are simply short emails. There are still communities that I am awaiting responses from, those included herein are:

Acton

Wareham

Chatham

Bedford

Halifax

Dartmouth

Medfield

Westport

Additionally, the towns' of Westport and Bolton have their surveys online at:

[http://www.uncoveringwestport.org/wordpress/?page\\_id=32](http://www.uncoveringwestport.org/wordpress/?page_id=32)

[http://www.townofbolton.com/Pages/BoltonMA\\_HistComm/ArchSurvey/Protection](http://www.townofbolton.com/Pages/BoltonMA_HistComm/ArchSurvey/Protection)

Should you have any questions please let me know.



## The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth  
Massachusetts Historical Commission

March 31, 2009

Mr. Brian Lever  
Senior Preservation Planner  
City of Newton Planning and Development  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Mr. Lever,

Thank you for the opportunity to state the Massachusetts Historical Commission's (MHC's) support for a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey in the City of Newton. Located in the western portion of the Boston Basin and the Lower Charles River drainage, Newton has a long history of both ancient Native American and historic settlement. While many ancient Native American sites identified in Newton have unknown cultural affiliation, most settlement periods are expected either by analogy with sites located in the town or within the larger Boston Basin. In 1982, MHC's study of *Historical and Archaeological Resources of the Boston Area* identified Newton as one of several towns in the Boston Area study unit where survey information on ancient Native American sites is extremely limited and where surveys are most needed. That conclusion has not changed in the last 27 years.

While over 8,000 prehistoric sites have been recorded in Massachusetts, only 13 of those sites are located in the City of Newton. Historic archaeological site frequencies are slightly better with 16 sites recorded within the city. Both ancient Native American and historic site frequencies attest to the fact that archaeological sites in Newton are underreported, probably due to suburban development and the loss of the natural landscape. The number of archaeological surveys conducted in Newton also supports underreporting as a major factor in the low numbers of prehistoric and historic sites in the city. Among over 2,600 archaeological reports published in Massachusetts, only 15 were conducted in Newton.

One way Newton can begin to systematically locate, evaluate and manage its prehistoric and historic archaeological resources is to conduct a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey of the town. Information pertaining to ancient Native American and historic archaeological sites in Newton is dispersed among numerous individuals,

repositories, and documentary sources at the town, state, and regional levels. A community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey, conducted by an experienced, professional archaeological consulting firm under a State Archaeologist's permit (950 CMR 70) would gather this information into a single reliable source from which additional survey can be based, if needed for particular proposed projects, and management decisions can be made.

One of the main goals of a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey is to identify the patterns of ancient Native American and historic occupation and activity in Newton, and to determine known and probable locations of archaeological resources associated with these patterns. This phase of research will be especially important in Newton since both ancient Native American and historic archaeological sites are underreported and landscape features that contain sites with integrity continue to be proposed for development. Known and potential locations of archaeological sites will be presented in a series of GIS locational and sensitivity maps (based on the city's assessor's maps) and site inventory forms for newly identified sites.

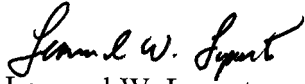
In addition to locating known and potential archaeological sites, the survey will also include narrative histories and related contexts for ancient Native American and historic archaeological sites. This information will contribute the basis for determining the range of known and predicted archaeological site types and to consider the significance of particular sites in the city.

Finally, the information presented above and accompanying recommendations will be presented in a report format that will allow more effective management and protection of significant archaeological resources in the town, through existing and potential future local permitting and approval processes, and through ongoing public and private efforts at land acquisition for conservation and protection. The community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey report, site inventory forms, and site locational maps, would be kept in a secure location where the Newton Historical Commission (NHC), could control access to archaeological site locational information to protect the sites. Archaeological site locational information is confidential and is not a "public record" (M.G.L. c. 9, ss. 26A (1) & 27C; c. 40, s. 8D) to protect the sites. The archaeological sensitivity maps, however, that do not show actual site locations, are made available so that city planners and permitting departments and the public can determine if particular parcels are archaeologically sensitive.

I hope you are successful in securing local funding for a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey of the City of Newton. Undoubtedly, many ancient Native American and historical archaeological resources have gone unrecognized and been lost in the city's long history of land use and development. The City of Newton has long recognized its ancient and historical resources and has been involved in many ways, such as through archaeological surveys for private and public development projects, Massachusetts Archaeology Month events, and through research, exhibits, and other interpretative initiatives at the Jackson Homestead. The implementation of a community-wide archaeological reconnaissance survey in the City of Newton would be an important

initiative to provide a systematic means to identify, evaluate, and appropriately manage the city's remaining ancient and historical archaeological sites.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leonard W. Loparto".

Leonard W. Loparto  
Archaeologist/Preservation Planner

Cc: Mr. Donald Lang, Chairperson, Newton Historical Commission

BWJN



Mr. Michael Kruse, Director  
Planning and Development Department  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459

March 31, 2009

Re: Community Preservation Grant

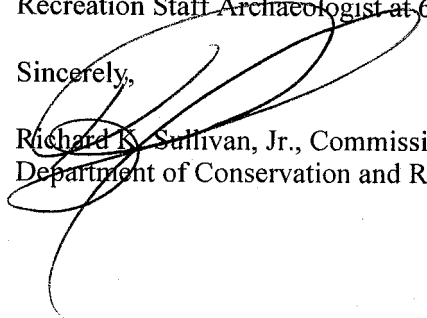
Dear Mr. Kruse:

It has come to the attention of the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) that the City of Newton's Planning and Development Department is seeking a Community Preservation Grant to undertake a systematic citywide survey of historic resources (archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures). DCR is highly supportive of this meritorious effort and looks forward to its successful completion.

DCR provides stewardship for a number of sites and properties in Newton and sees this as an exciting proactive approach of historic resource preservation. It's very difficult to protect something that you don't know exists or what its significance may be. With the City of Newton providing its own program of cultural resource management, DCR's efforts will be greatly enhanced because of the expanded context within which the resources exist.

If DCR can be of assistance, please call Thomas F. Mahlstedt, Department of Conservation and Recreation Staff Archaeologist at 617-626-1385. Thank you.

Sincerely,

  
Richard K. Sullivan, Jr., Commissioner  
Department of Conservation and Recreation

Date: 3/31/09



## ACTON BOARD OF HEALTH

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Doug Halley  
Health Director

472 Main Street  
Acton, MA 01720

Telephone 978-264-9634  
Fax 978-264-9635

April 2, 2009

Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Alice E. Ingerson, PhD  
City Hall  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459

Dear Ms. Ingerson,

I am writing this letter in response to a request from Zack Blake, a member of the Newton Historic Commission and Community Preservation Committee, to provide information regarding Acton's Community-wide Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey. This project which was recommended by Acton's Community Preservation Committee and approved by Town Meeting in 2007 is nearing completion and I thought that some background regarding the importance of this project to Acton might be helpful in determining the value of a similar project for Newton.

Acton, like many other New England communities, has a rich historical context, especially during the revolutionary period of this country. The first casualty of the battle at the Old North Bridge in Concord was a farmer from Acton. From this context much has been done by both the community and by non-profit organizations to protect and enhance this heritage.

In 1999 the context of Acton's history was broadened when an archaeological dig, funded by the community, was conducted on the banks of the Assabet River. As the project manager for the Pine Hawk Dig, a subcomponent of a larger sewer project, I was able to witness the discovery of artifacts left behind 7,000 years ago, testifying to the recognition of this country's indigenous people of the value of this area's resources.

From this discovery a multi-pronged effort, conducted by the town, the school system and the Friends of Pine Hawk, of education and outreach began. The fruits of these efforts produced a website, school programs, and traveling exhibits and culminated in the permanent multi-media display of the original artifacts. In recognition of these efforts the Massachusetts Historical Commission presented Acton with a Preservation Award at their 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Award ceremonies.

Given the renewed interest in the community to understand and protect its historical past Acton took a look at how other communities approached this issue and found that several communities had conducted archaeological reconnaissance surveys. These types of surveys are non-intrusive and broad brush, which rely upon the review of public documents, interaction with historic societies or groups, interviews with long term residents and avocational archaeologists, and assessing the environmental features of a community.

The primary purpose of the reconnaissance survey was to know the community better, to have appreciation for its past and its people. Through this knowledge working with the Historic Commission, Historic Society and the Acton-Boxborough School System educational programs could be implemented that would allow people to respect and understand what has happened in the past that has formed the community's identity.

The secondary purpose was to identify tools that would assist in protecting archaeological resources and putting in place a rational process that would allow the identification of those resources without overly encumbering homeowners. Through either a town bylaw, or a zoning bylaw, resource areas could be identified and protection mechanisms could be put in place.

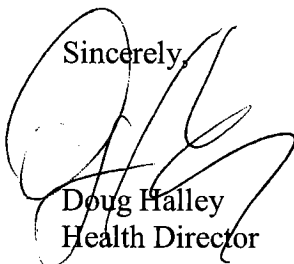
At this point Acton's reconnaissance survey is 99% complete. Archaeological Sensitivity maps for both pre and post contact eras, a guide for understanding the maps and the reconnaissance report have been developed. They are being reviewed by the Massachusetts Historic Commission with approval anticipated in the immediate future.

Final management recommendations detailing bylaws and protection methods have been submitted to the Historic Commission. Utilizing these materials they have developed an Archaeological Preservation Bylaw, which they anticipate will be submitted this fall to Town Meeting for approval.

In all, the Town committed \$35,000 in CPA funds with an additional \$4,000 for in-kind project administration by myself. Through the course of the project we have had several public meetings which were well attended and very supportive. Without this study the town would have been less informed and more prone to losing archaeological resources of unknown importance and significance. With the study directed educational efforts can be implemented to inform townspeople of their resources and any disturbed important or significant archaeological resource can at a minimum be cataloged.

Should you need any additional information regarding Acton's project you can reach me at 978-264-9634.

Sincerely,



Doug Halley  
Health Director

Date sent: Tue, 7 Apr 2009 21:03:00 +0000 (UTC)  
From: Barbara <beb100acrewood@comcast.net>  
To: blever@newtonma.gov  
Copies to: Robin Ragle-Davis <robin@rrinteractive.com>  
Subject: Community Wide Archaeological Survey

Brian,

Robin Ragle-Davis forwarded your e-mail to me as I was chair of Wareham's Historical Commission during the time our Community Wide Archaeological Survey was completed. We used CPA funds and hired Craig Chartier, director of Plymouth Archaeology Rediscovery Project in New Bedford. Craig has completed a number of digs that we have been involved in during the past seven years or so. We have been more than satisfied with his professionalism and the quality of his work.

When we contracted with Craig unfortunately we did realize that we should have included a town wide master map that would show the possibly/probably significant sites without identifying the exact locations of known archaeological sites. The individual maps based on assessors maps are very usable for identifying project areas for the Commission but not as a tool for the Planning Dept. including Conservation or for the Inspections Dept. WHC is planning on having a large size master map with the areas readily identifiable completed in a future Part II of the Survey. This would allow these departments to easily identify sites that might be adversely affected by development and to consult with us as soon as a project comes before them.

Our focus at the time was to continue to complete all the requirements to become a Certified Local Government. This was probably the reason we overlooked a master map.

The Commission uses the plans in discussing any development projects coming before the town. Unfortunately the town is without a Planner at this time. In the past we had a very good relationship with the director and he notified us of upcoming projects so that we would have an opportunity to investigate the area to be developed before it came before the Planning Board, ZBA or ConCom. This allowed us time to consult with Craig and prepare a recommendation for an archaeological survey if appropriate. The director also notified us of endangered buildings over 50 years of age that might be historically significant.

WHC feels that this was a very worthwhile project as a planning tool as well as a preservation tool. As volunteers there is never enough time to properly utilize the survey and we hope that in the future a planner will be appointed that will work with us in preserving endangered archaeological and architectural sites.

Wareham had been developing at an alarming rate and we found both the architectural and archaeological surveys helped us to determine what sites were worth protecting and where to focus our efforts.

Please contact me if you would like any further information.

Barbara E. Bailey,  
Vice Chair Wareham Historical Commission



Date sent: Wed, 8 Apr 2009 14:38:07 -0700 (PDT)  
From: theaikmans@yahoo.com  
Send reply to: theaikmans@yahoo.com  
Subject: archaeological survey  
To: blever@newtonma.gov

Brian,

Paula Liska forwarded me your inquiry and I will try to respond to your questions.

The survey here in Chatham was just recently finished so I feel it is too soon to tell if it will have a more protective effect.

It did however provide some very valuable information as to potential sites, which turned out to be most of the Town.

Since we are not making the sites public so as to avoid unwanted invasion, it is going to be up to Town employees and members of the Chatham Historical Commission to keep watch on the sites.

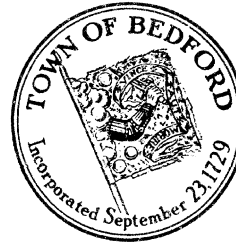
Only time will tell if we are successful

As to whether it was worthwhile, I know the preservation community thinks so but I think the developers may have a different opinion.

Hope this is helpful.

Don Aikman Chairman  
Chatham Historical Commission

**TOWN OF BEDFORD**  
BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS 01730



TTD/TTY: 781-687-6124

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**Historic Preservation Commission**

**Town Hall**  
**Bedford, MA 01730**  
**781-275-1111**

April 24, 2009

Brian Lever, Senior Preservation Planner  
City of Newton  
1000 Commonwealth Avenue  
Newton, MA 02459-1449

Re: Community-wide Archaeological Survey

Dear Mr. Lever:

I have been asked to respond to your letter of April 13, 2009, regarding this subject. I was the Local Project Coordinator for the Town of Bedford when we conducted such an archaeological survey. It was done with the assistance of a matching grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission and with Bedford's Community Preservation funds.

I believe that the project was worthwhile and has provided some additional information to assist in our overall preservation efforts. However, it failed in several respects to meet our expectations, and it would be difficult to show how our archaeological sites are better protected as a result. In my opinion, issues that limited the usefulness of this survey are as follows:

1. In the course of interviewing consultants responding to our RFP, a professor from the university appeared at the interview and spoke very knowingly and convincingly. We subsequently selected the university to perform the survey. However, students did the work, and we literally never saw or heard from the professor again. The students worked diligently and gave their best effort, but the final report consisted largely of information that we provided which was fed back to us. It also included empirical data for sensitive archaeological sites based on distance from streams and trails, slopes, wetlands, etc. As a consequence, the Native American archaeological sensitivity map generally consists of bands of high sensitivity along streams, and the historic (Colonial) archaeological sensitivity map generally consists of bands of high sensitivity along ancient ways.

2. The report recommended an Archaeological Site Protection Plan for Bedford, but we were unable to find any other precedent by a city or town under provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws. The consultant recommended controls similar to those of the Cape Cod Commission, but their authority was granted under a special act of the General Court.

3. We found the information in the report to be too general to be able to defend it in creating an overlay district in the town's bylaws, which the Massachusetts Historical Commission had suggested. In addition, much of the information, particularly relating to Native American sites, is sensitive and must not be discussed publicly in order to protect the sites and

potential sites from vandalism. I have served both as a Selectman and Planning Board member, and I frankly would have had a problem trying to sell such an overlay district amendment at Town Meeting where the most relevant information could not be shared and other information was far too general to support the proposal.

We have had great success working with other consultants on other contracts, particularly where the principals of small firms performed the work directly. I believe that this survey could have been more useful if it had been performed by more knowledgeable individuals who had a clearer understanding of how the information could be applied in municipal planning, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws.

Notwithstanding our experience, I would encourage the City of Newton to seriously consider conducting an archaeological survey and simply take note of our cautions.

Sincerely,

  
Donald L. Corey

Date sent: Mon, 27 Apr 2009 23:03:41 +0000 (UTC)  
From: sbasile581@comcast.net  
To: blever@newtonma.gov  
Subject: Community wide archaeological survey

Mr. Lever,

I have just picked up my mail, so I haven't gotten back to you sooner. I certainly feel that the effort that went into the survey was well worth it. The archaeologist that I worked with was great. The members of our town Zoning Board of Appeals, Conservation Committee and a newly formed Master Planning Committee are all using the information in the report now. The ZBA is dealing with a large 40-B plan in a sensitive area, the Master Planning Committee has requested the information to help with a new plan for the town and the Conservation Committee has looked at the maps in regards to the wet lands in the area planned for the 40-B development. There is no doubt in my mind that the archaeological sites will be protected as the result of the survey. [Too many people know about the survey and that I will be watching.]

Unfortunately a new housing project in town brought all this about. Rumors were heard that the workers were finding arrowheads and artifacts two years ago during the initial building but when I went up there to speak to some of the workers no one knew anything.

I finally received a phone call from an abutter to the project who happened to be on the town's Board of Health. He and his son discovered a large area of artifacts during a walk on the area adjacent to his property, one of the last sites to be build on unfortunately.

I called Boston and they sent someone out to look at the site and a stop order was issued. The builder worked with all concerned and the person that bought the property is doing everything that was asked of him to protect what ground was not disturbed. The large Indian camp site itself was totally disturbed.

One thing the older residents of Halifax can be proud of is their love of it's history and many of the residents attended a "Public Information Day" held by the Historical Commission and the agency that did the survey. We even had a speaker come and speak to the Fifth Grade class, all 105 of them. Knowledge itself is a powerful tool.

If I can help in any way please let me know. Good luck.

Susan Basile

From: Judith Lund <jnlund@comcast.net>  
To: blever@newtonma.gov  
Subject: Re our Archaeological Survey  
Date sent: Mon, 4 May 2009 21:40:02 -0400

Mr. Lever,

Your letter to the Dartmouth Historical Commission was read at our meeting tonight. I was chair or co-chair of the commission throughout the process, and involved in the application for and supervision of that survey.

The survey has given us a good tool for consideration of our archaeological assets. We have turned to it several times to consider sensitivity of developable sites, but since it was completed, we have not faced a situation where a potential site needed protection. Our one case of intrusion into a suspected native american site happened before the survey was in place, and politics intervened to use the site.

I am happy we have the report for reference on our shelf.

Judy Lund

Subject: community-wide archaeological survey  
Date sent: Wed, 6 May 2009 17:50:20 -0400  
From: "John A. Thompson - Dedham" <jthompson@woodardcurran.com>  
To: "Brian Lever" <blever@newtonma.gov>

Hi Brian:

I serve as chair of the Medfield Archaeology Advisory Committee (MAAC) a committee under the Medfield Historical Commission, a town board.

Our goal (MAAC) in having PAL (Public Archaeology Lab) of Providence do a town wide survey was to map areas of archaeological sensitivity to assist in the construction and planning process. Most people don't know that there are historic and/or prehistoric artifacts in about every 10 square feet of undisturbed soil in the greater Boston area. This would include Newton. In some places, significant cultural resources are present. One residential development site I worked on in Medfield yielded over 6000 prehistoric artifacts. I have been able to successfully work with my group(I get informed by the building department), and developers during the permitting process, to perform simple archaeological surveys, and recover/salvage artifacts that would have been lost or destroyed. We did have PAL prepare a draft archaeological by-law, but I am finding that given lead time, its possible to work out data recovery without the enforcement component provided by using a by-law, so I have not sent it town meeting for a vote. I would be happy to share our maps or draft by-law with you.

The maps are created using information in the historical society, and also from data on hand at the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). Because picking artifacts from fields was a popular hobby in the early 20th century, MHC has maps that record the location of finds in our towns. Due to its sensitivity, this information is the only public information officially protected from FOIA requests, with MHC only sharing it for purposes such as yours.

I am certain that Newton has significant unmapped and unprotected cultural resource sites. Once these resources are destroyed, they can never be reclaimed. As a planning tool, I'm sure a GIS layer depicting such resources, either historic sites or prehistoric sites, would be worth consideration in the planning process, since you can then make informed decisions about the value of historical and or cultural remains to be disturbed.

By way of reference, I am a former colleague of Catherine Farrell, I believe Catherine still works for the City of Newton. Feel free to contact me with questions, or if you would like to see the work product.

Best, John Thompson

J. A. Thompson PG, LSP  
Vice President  
Woodard & Curran  
980 Washington Street  
Dedham, MA 02026

781.251.0200  
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From: westhist@gis.net  
Send reply to: westhist@gis.net  
To: blever@newtonma.gov  
Copies to: dcolebslade@aol.com  
Subject: westport archeological survey  
Date sent: Wed, 06 May 2009 09:47:51 -0400  
Priority: normal

Dear Mr. Lever,

I am responding to your request for some thoughts on the archeological survey.

Westport Historical Society funded an archeological survey in 2004. The survey was undertaken by the Public Archeology Lab and the result was a 150 page document and a set of maps identifying archeological sites and potential sites. The survey resulted in identification of 68 previously unrecorded archeological sites (25 prehistoric and 43 historic sites. Copies of this document were distributed to the public library, and offices of the town hall.

I regard this document as a first step in improving preservation efforts in Westport. The survey is an extremely useful summary of many different sources of local history. However, the survey did not allow for any new archeological surveying, but rather it "suggests" potentially sensitive locations. The project relied heavily on information that had already been published and on interviews with individuals.

Considerations for your committee:

- The survey needs to be fully integrated into town planning (town departments need to know about the survey and have access to the information). I suggest exploring ways to put the survey online, and to integrate the archeological sensitivity maps with GIS.
- The survey needs to be updated regularly. Who will do this?

In summary, as you might expect, the survey is one of many steps towards improving protection of archeological sites. Equally important is the need to consider how you will use the survey once it is completed. I should note that Westport Historical Society does not monitor how this survey has been used by the town.

We are working to put our survey online. You can view a prototype version at [http://www.uncoveringwestport.org/wordpress/?page\\_id=32](http://www.uncoveringwestport.org/wordpress/?page_id=32)

Jenny O'Neill  
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