

NEWBURYPORT PRESERVATION TRUST

P. O. Box 184, Newburyport, MA 01950
www.nbptpreservationtrust.org

Linking the past with the present and future



Quarterly Newsletter of the Newburyport Preservation Trust

Winter 2017

Draft Master Plan 'infill map' prompts NPT response – and city clarification

'Future Land Use Map' sent unclear message, according to the Planning Department

When the City of Newburyport's draft Master Plan was posted on the city's website for public comment in December 2016, the Generalized Future Land Use Map deep within the 232-page document was not expected to generate much attention.

But by the end of the public comment period (January 31, 2017) the land use map prompted not only public response, but an NPT member alert followed by newspaper coverage, a subsequent editorial, letters to the editor, social media postings, and NPT member letters to the city that questioned the "Residential Infill Potential" areas on the map. Irritating the raw nerves was the city's apparent endorsement of infill in already-packed neighborhoods in the National Register Historic District.

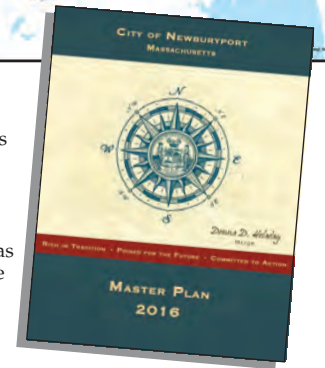
The Newburyport Preservation Trust board of directors collaborated on a five-page point-by-point response to the infill designation and other preservation-related issues in the draft Master Plan. This response was submitted to the city on January 26. (Read the response on the NPT website (News), www.NbptPreservationTrust.org. The city's Master Plan draft, with the map, is on the city's website, www.cityofnewburyport.com/master-plan-steering-committee.)

NPT's comments led to a meeting on February 3 with Mayor Donna Holaday and Planning Director Andrew Port. Port explained that the "Residential Infill Potential" areas on the map were merely to indicate the situation as it is today, given current zoning regulations. According to the Planning Dept. the map was not intended to be a welcoming fanfare for developers to shoehorn more homes into neighborhoods where some of the houses are already just

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At right is the cover of the Newburyport's draft Master Plan. The 232-page draft, including the above map, was made available for public comment, which it did receive.



Preservation Week 2017 scheduled for May 16-21

For the past several months NPT board members have been shaping up plans for this year's Preservation Week events set for May 16-21, 2017 at various sites.

This year's theme, "Newburyport in the Historic American Buildings Survey," turns attention to the federal program in the 1930s – known by its acronym, HABS – that documented notable and at-risk structures and landscapes throughout the U.S. In Newburyport, a number of High Street homes and gardens were surveyed, but most of the structures documented were those planned for demolition to make way for the U.S. Rte. 1 construction in 1934.

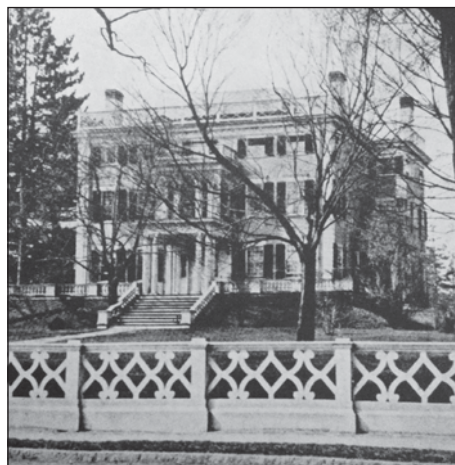
Among the Preservation Week events will be a presentation about the HABS survey in Newburyport, a fund-raising reception at the granite "Old Jail" built in 1823, HABS displays by NPT collaborators, and the presentation of the annual NPT Preservation Awards. More details will be forthcoming as the date draws near. ■

Join us at the Pike-Cushing-Bachman House (1810) for Annual Meeting & Party on Sunday, Feb. 26, 2017

Join fellow Newburyport Preservation Trust members at NPT's Annual Meeting & Members Party on Sunday, February 26, 2017 at the Pike-Cushing-Bachman House, 63 High Street, Newburyport, 3:00-5:30 p.m.

The meeting features an update on NPT education and advocacy efforts during the past year – and light refreshments.

Thanks to the generous spirit of an NPT member homeowner, Annual Meeting & Members Party attendees can enjoy the ambiance of the Pike-Cushing-Bachman House. Built in 1810 by Richard Pike, it was the home of Newburyport's noted local and national public servant Caleb Cushing (1800-1879) from 1848 to his death. The home was owned by mill owner Solomon Bachman (1827-1898) and his heirs from 1881 to 1945. ■



Above is the Pike-Cushing-Bachman House (1810), from *Old Newburyport Houses*, by Albert Hale (1912).



Above is restoration masonry expert **Richard Irons**, presenter of a return engagement of the "Cooking in Beehive Ovens" program on Saturday, March 4, 2017, another in NPT's "Do It Ye Self" series. Register now, as last year the program sold out in less than 24 hours.

Register now for "Cooking in Beehive Ovens" with Richard Irons on Saturday, March 4, 2017

Back by popular demand is historic fireplace expert Richard Irons for another session of "Cooking in Beehive Ovens" on Saturday, March 4, 2017, 3:30-5:30 p.m. at 6 Independent Street, Newburyport.

Prompt registration is advised via NPT's website, www.NbptPreservationTrust.org (Events page), as last year's beehive oven session, part of NPT's popular "Do It Ye Self" series, sold out in less than 24 hours. Registration is just \$20 per person for members. (\$30 per for non-members.) Registration is limited to 18 attendees.

The program includes an overview of brick oven construction; the evolution of beehive ovens in New England; an

explanation of how the oven works; and a real-time cooking demonstration – with hands-on participation.

This month's venue, a restored Georgian home (c. 1725) with a fireplace and oven just right for the presentation, was generously volunteered for the event by the owners, supportive members of the Newburyport Preservation Trust.

The presenter, restoration mason Richard Irons of Limerick, Maine, has worked on historic houses and museum properties in the northeast U.S. for more than 40 years.

For more information, contact "Do It Ye Self" program coordinator Matt Blanchette at 978-697-5135 (email: bchette@gmail.com). ■

An election you can feel good about: Send in your nominations for NPT's 2017 Preservation Awards

The Newburyport Preservation Trust is accepting nominations for the 2017 Preservation Awards to be presented in conjunction with Preservation Week May 17-21, 2017.

Awards will be presented in seven categories: stewardship, exterior restoration, interior restoration, sensitive addition to a historic building, historic landscape restoration, historically sensitive contractor/builder, and sustainable historic structure.

Simply download and print the nomination form and awards criteria from the Preservation Week page at the NPT website, www.NbptPreservationTrust.org, fill out the form(s) with your nomination(s),

and return by old-school postal mail to the Newburyport Preservation Trust at P. O. Box 184, Newburyport, MA 01950. Nominations must be received by March 15, 2017.

Since 2007 the Newburyport Preservation Trust has celebrated preservation efforts through its annual Preservation Awards. The goal is to support, promote, celebrate, and showcase preservation – and raise awareness of the value and unique historic character of our community.

So put on your "thinking caps" and submit your worthy preservation award nominations, then clear your calendar for Preservation Week and the awards presentations on Sunday, May 21, 2017. ■

Master Plan map causes a stir ...

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two feet apart. The Mayor and the Planning Department said a suspended and long-overdue rewrite of the zoning code will promptly resume, section-by-section according to urgency, addressing infill and loss of historic structures as a priority.

Besides infill, other topics addressed in NPT's response included preventing the degradation of historic neighborhoods, architectural design standards-and-review, affordable housing, and the need for a zoning enforcement officer that works independent of the Building Department.

According to the Planning Dept., a revised draft of the Master Plan – with a new map – is forthcoming. Thanks to the questions raised in the first map, NPT and the city engaged in a valuable discussion on multiple preservation-related topics. ■

NPT is a 'Trailblazer' nominee, and now you can vote us to the top

The Newburyport Preservation Trust has been nominated as a "Trailblazer" – one of the region's "exemplary organizations" – by the Essex National Heritage Area.

As part of the Essex Heritage 20th anniversary celebration, a special event, "A Toast to the Trailblazers," is planned for April 5, 2017 at the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem, Mass. to "honor the extraordinary organizations and people that make the Essex National Heritage Area so exceptional."

With this nomination announcement, Essex Heritage is asking the public to vote on what organizations gets toasted (not roasted) at the gala. Votes will be tabulated via an online survey: surveymonkey.com/r/TrailblazersVote. Essex Heritage has nominated 131 Trailblazers, and while each organization will be recognized at the gala, only a few top vote-getters will be honored with a special toast. Trailblazers



will be announced and celebrated in four categories. At the survey website, where nominees are listed by category, NPT is listed in the Preserving This Special Region category. NPT is one of six nominees chosen from Newburyport.

For more information about the "Toast the Trailblazers" event – the celebratory cocktails, the exquisite dinner, the silent auction, the toasts, and the ticket options that range from \$150 to \$15,000 – visit www.essexheritage.org. ■