

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

Historic Resources

The many historic resources in the East Central Wayne County Planning Area are key components of the rural working landscape and the character of the traditional villages. The preservation of these resources in this time of growth and development is one of the basic tenets of this *Comprehensive Plan*.

The history and historic resources of the Planning Area have been well documented by the Damascus Historical Society, the Equinunk Historical Society, and the Wayne County Historical Society. Each organization maintains an extensive list and description of buildings, structures and sites which comprise the historic fabric of each Township and the Planning Area as a whole. In addition, the organizations have accumulated and preserved myriad artifacts, documents and photographs that tell the striking history of the Planning Area and County.

NATIONAL REGISTER LISTED	
Description	Date Listed
Hill's Sawmill	1974
Milanville-Skinners Falls Bridge	1988
Damascus Historic District	1992
Milanville Historic District	1993
NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBLE	
Description	Date Eligible
Tyler Hill Store	1985
Bruns, R., Residence	1994
Conklin Hill Union Church	2004

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture.

The National Register is administered by the National Park Service, which is part of the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission manages the National Register of Historic Places for Pennsylvania. National Register properties are distinguished by having been documented and evaluated according to uniform standards. These criteria recognize the accomplishments of all peoples who have contributed to the history and heritage of the United States and are designed to help state and local governments, federal agencies, and others identify significant historic and archeological properties worthy of preservation and of consideration in planning and development decisions.

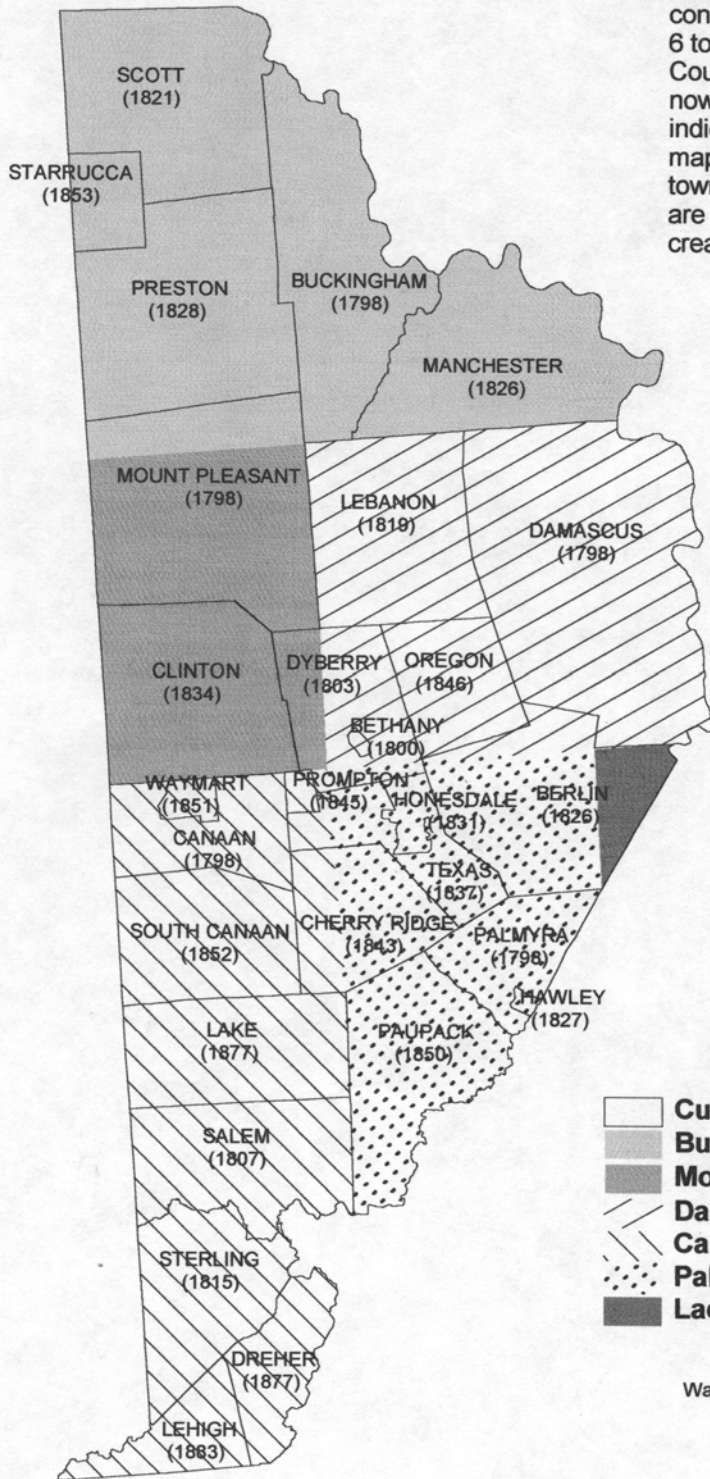
Listing in the National Register, however, does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage or dispose of property. It often changes the way communities perceive their historic resources and gives credibility to efforts to preserve these resources as irreplaceable parts of our communities. Listed historic districts enable municipalities to control the exterior appearance of structures.

Listing in the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

- Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, the state, or the community.
- Consideration in the planning for federal or federally assisted projects.
- Eligibility for federal tax benefits for income producing properties.
- Qualification for federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.

Wayne County's Six Original Townships

Wayne County, created in 1798, contained parts of the following 6 townships. At that time, Wayne County also included what is now Pike County. The legend indicates what area on the map applies to each original township. Today's townships are shown along with their creation dates.



- Current Municipal Boundaries
- Buckingham Township 1798
- Mount Pleasant Township 1798
- Damascus Township 1798
- Canaan Township 1798
- Palmyra Township 1798
- Lackawaxen Township 1798

Map prepared by the
Wayne County Dept. of Planning
2001

According to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, two individual structures in the ECWC Planning Area and two historic districts are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and three additional buildings are eligible for listing. All of the sites are located in Damascus Township. (See *National Register of Historic Places Sidebar*.) The structures and districts are listed in the *National Register Listing Table*. In addition, the Equinunk Historic District, although located in Buckingham Township, was listed on the National Register in 1995 and this historic village has and continues to be an important part of the area community.

Community Survey

The results of the community surveys conducted as part of this *Comprehensive Plan* suggests public support for historic preservation. In Damascus Township ninety-three percent of resident and ninety-five percent of nonresident survey respondents support the preservation of historical heritage. The historical preservation question was not asked directly in Manchester Township and Oregon Township. However, more than eighty percent of survey respondents in each Township rated rural character as important and historic sites and structures are an essential part of that character.

Historic District Ordinance

The Pennsylvania Historic District Act enables local municipalities in the Commonwealth to govern, by locally adopted ordinance, the architectural integrity of structures and appurtenances in an historic district certified by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. In the case of the Damascus Historic District and the Milanville Historic District, Damascus Township could create a specific zoning district for each designated area and provide specific design criteria to preserve the existing historical architectural character. The support and participation by the property owners in each district would be essential to the success of any such effort.

An Architectural Review Board would be created to advise the Township on the appropriateness of any proposed construction, alteration, repair, restoration or demolition of any buildings in the designated historic district. The Ordinance would not memorialize historic structures or prohibit any changes. Instead, the goal would be to ensure that any changes are in keeping with the style of the structure and the fabric of the historic district.

Benefits of Historic Preservation

Since the 1970s, mounting evidence has shown that historic preservation can be a powerful community and economic development strategy. Evidence includes statistics compiled from annual surveys conducted by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and statewide Main Street programs, state-level tourism and economic impact studies, and studies that have analyzed the impact of specific actions such as historic designation, tax credits, and revolving loan funds. Among the findings:

- *Creation of local historic districts stabilizes, and often increases residential and commercial property values.*
- *Increases in property values in historic districts are typically greater than increases in the community at large.*
- *Historic building rehabilitation, which is more labor intensive and requires greater specialization and higher skill levels, creates more jobs and results in more local business than does new construction.*
- *Heritage tourism provides substantial economic benefits. Tourists drawn by a community's (or region's) historic character typically stay longer and spend more during their visit than other tourists.*
- *Historic rehabilitation encourages additional neighborhood investment and produces a high return for municipal dollars spent.*
- *Use of a city or town's existing, historic building stock can support growth management policies by increasing the supply of centrally located housing.*

Source: *Planning Commissioners Journal*, No. 52, Fall 2003, p. 4.

Site and Sign Design Assistance

As part of a continuing commitment to the historic character of a community some municipalities and historical societies provide site and sign design guidelines to ensure that commercial establishments and signs are consistent with the community's heritage. Although such guidelines would not be

Historic Preservation Planning

A well-conceived preservation planning process serves to:

- *Establish a basis of public policy about historic resources;*
- *Educate and inform residents and others about their community’s heritage and its value;*
- *Identify opportunities for economic growth based on the community’s historic and architectural character.*
- *Ensure consistency among various local government policies that affect the community’s historic resources;*
- *Lay the groundwork for adopting a local historic preservation ordinance or strengthening an existing one;*
- *Eliminate uncertainty or confusion about the purpose, meaning, and content of a community’s preservation ordinance;*
- *Inform existing and potential property owners, investors, and developers about what historic resources the community wants to protect as it grows;*
- *Create an agenda for future preservation activities; and*
- *Facilitate compliance with federal and state historic preservation and environmental quality laws.*

Preservation plans serve several purposes:

- *educating elected and appointed officials, municipal staff, property owners, investors, and others about the status of historic resources within the community and the economic benefits of preservation;*
- *formally documenting existing conditions, issues, opportunities, and challenges;*
- *providing information on tax and other incentives for preservation;*
- *offering discussion and analysis regarding preservation of historic resources, and establishing a roadmap for future efforts;*
- *setting out the roles and responsibilities of the public, private, and nonprofit sectors with regard to the preservation of historic resources.*

Source: *Planning Commissioners Journal*, No. 52, Fall 2003, p. 6.

mandatory outside of a regulated historic district, such a community based effort would be invaluable to preserving the overall character of the Planning Area.

Historic Preservation Actions

- Support historical society efforts to promote the benefits of historic preservation and document and preserve local history and historical artifacts.
- Allow home occupations in all zoning districts as a means of encouraging productive use of historic structures which tend to be larger and more difficult to maintain.
- Consider the development of a local historic register program aimed at identifying properties eligible for state and national recognition, and support efforts to list such properties on the National Register.
- Incorporate the preservation of historic resources in conservation design for residential development.
- Prepare and adopt design guidelines for commercial, industrial, and institutional development to encourage the most efficient use of commercial land and development consistent with the Planning Area’s character.
- In the case of Damascus Township, investigate the adoption of an historic district ordinance for the Damascus Historic District and the Milanville Historic District.