



2006 Princeton Historical Commission Annual Report

The Princeton Historical Commission's main focus in 2006 was preparing the area known as "West Village" for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The proposed West Village district includes a total of 48 homes in the area of Hubbardston, Radford and Allen Hill Road. In February, historical writer Ann Forbes was chosen to prepare the West Village nomination at a cost of \$9,000. The Princeton Historical Commission was able to fund \$5,500 toward this cost by pooling its annual budget, unencumbered funds and private donations. (A deduction of nearly all photography expenses is reflected in the total cost since the Commission provided the majority of the required photographs.) A request for the remaining \$3,500 was placed on the FY07 warrant and was approved in a special town meeting vote in May. Ann Forbes began working on the nomination in June. In October, residents of the proposed West Village district were invited to attend an informational meeting presented by Betsy Friedberg of the Massachusetts Historical Commission. Completion of the West Village nomination is expected in January 2007. Acceptance of the nomination is expected by 2009.

The Commission held two fundraisers this year including a tour of Meetinghouse Cemetery in October and an Historic House Plaque program which is ongoing. Both projects have required a significant amount of research and the Commission is extremely grateful to the Princeton Historical Society for the use of their collection. Preparations for the cemetery tour also involved clearing brush and spreading woodchips (provided by the Princeton Highway Department) to improve access for visitors. The Commission is very grateful to the owner of the neighboring Town Pound for allowing this hidden treasure to be included in the tour. The Commission is also extremely thankful to the Highway Department for clearing large mounds of earth from in front of the cemetery's tombs and revealing the facades of these unique memorials.

To further raise public awareness of Princeton's historic cemeteries, the Commission has begun discussions with the Princeton Cemetery Commission regarding cemetery conservation. The cataloging of at-risk gravestones is underway.

Extensive progress has been made in compiling a town-wide inventory as required by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The inventory includes histories, architectural descriptions and photographs of all houses and municipal buildings built before 1950. In order to facilitate this effort, the information contained in the Princeton house card file established by Anita Woodward and Clayton Hubbard has been computerized.

Respectfully submitted,
Alexandra Fiandaca