

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN

Historic Resources

The many historic resources in Blooming Grove Township are key components of the rural-recreation landscape and the character of the community. The history and historic resources of the Township have been well documented by the Township Historian and the Pike County Historical Society, each maintaining an extensive list and description of buildings, structures and sites which comprise the historic fabric of the Township. The preservation of these resources in this time of growth and development is one of the basic tenets of this *Comprehensive Plan*. The historic resources in the Township are detailed in the *Blooming Grove Township Historic Resources Table on the next page* and the *Historic Sites Map* included at the end of the Plan. The 2001 publication, *Blooming Grove Township, Pike County, PA, Celebrating 150 Years* by Township Historian Gail B. Masker, details the Township's history from its establishment in 1850.

National Register of Historic Places

According to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, just one structure in the Township is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (See the *National Register of Historic Places Sidebar*.) The Lord House, located at the intersection of Route 739 and Route 434, was constructed in 1850 as a hotel to serve travelers on the Bethany - Dingman's Choice Turnpike. The Westbrook House, located about one mile west of Route 402 on Blooming Grove Road appears to be eligible for listing on the National Register. It was built in 1870 and also served as an inn on the Bethany - Dingman's Choice Turnpike.



The Lord House

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.

Name of Site	Description of Historic Resource
Dingman's Choice Turnpike	Old Road - Stage coaches and wagons used this highway to travel between Bethany (Wayne County) and Dingman's Ferry on the Delaware.
The Lord House	Commodious hotel, built by Simeon Lord in response to the traffic on the turnpike. A State Historic Site
Lord's Valley School	The property upon which this grammar school rests was donated to the school district in March, 1888 by the Lord family. This building gives a good indication of what grammar school facilities in Pike County were like in the past.
Boiling Spring and Wyoming Minisink Path	This spring, located a short distance in the woods along Spring Road and the former Delaware Indian Trail, has water emanating from underground sources which is under pressure and when it surfaces, it appears to be boiling out of the white sand bottom.
Blooming Grove Hunting and Fishing Club/Blooming Grove Park Association	The original organizers of this private sporting preserve were able to acquire 12,000 acres including 8 lakes within walking distance of each other. The Association was officially incorporated in March, 1871. They had the privilege of creating game regulations entirely independent of state game laws for any lands which they owned or leased to raise and have their members hunt native and exotic game. It has preserved the Pike County wilderness in this area. Now the Club owns 20,000 acres.
Westbrook House	A two-story frame house which was built in 1870 is located on the south side of SR 4004, between Spring Road and Route 402. Solomon Westbrook came to the area in 1827. He established himself in the flourishing lumber trade by rebuilding an existing sawmill. When the horse and buggies used the Bethany-Dingman's Choice Turnpike, the Westbrook house served as an inn.
Good Shepherd Catholic Church	Inspired by William C. Shanley, who originally saw the need for a Catholic Church in the area, and built by his widow, Mrs. Mary Shanley in 1926 as a memorial for her late husband. Constructed completely out of native stone and it is an exact replica of a gothic country church in England. All the work on the church was done by local artisans and laborers except for the stained glass windows which were done by the Deprado Studios of Italy.
The Blooming Grove Baptist Church	The oldest church of any denomination in the township. June 10, 1901, a dedication service was held for Blooming Grove's first church.
Kleinhans' Tannery	Jacob Kleinhans obtained approximately 4,000 acres from William H. Nyce, to build a tannery on the Blooming Grove Creek in 1851. Using bark from hemlock trees, he tanned shoe leather in his 50 vats. Today, a small portion of the original foundation can be seen behind the Blooming Grove Tavern.
Home of Robert Smith	Two-story frame house of Robert Smith, a respected citizen, who, until the age of 84, manned the fire tower on High Knob.
Estate of George M. Brewster/Hemlock Farms	This private country estate belonged to George M. Brewster. He and his family owned the Brewster Construction Company, which built the Pike County section of Route 402. Originally comprised of more than 4,000 acres, the Brewster's maintained the property as a steer ranch and as a retreat for family, friends and business associates. He dredged and dammed the area to create present day Hemlock Lake. It was later sold to Western Heritage Properties Limited, a Canadian based firm, which became the initial developer of the present day Hemlock Farms.
Brewster Tower (at entrance to Lord's Valley Country Club)	A medieval looking structure provided a panoramic view of the lake and surrounding lands and also housed electric generators which gave the George M. Brewster estate electricity before public utilities existed in the area.
Brewster's Steer Barn	Just off Hemlock Farms Road, on Basswood Drive is this original structure. George M. Brewster owned this steer barn and was located on his estate property. The building has been completely renovated by the Hemlock Farms Association and is used as a community activity center.
High Knob	The highest point of the Township and County, it forms the southern edge of the Notch. It registers an altitude of 2,022 feet above the sea level.

Name of Site	Description of Historic Resource
Tarkill Forest Demonstration Area	A nature education center located within the Delaware State Forest, it has 30 acres, 2 trails and trees are marked with signs indicating their names along with information concerning the forest in general. There are more than 40 species included in the demonstration area.
Old Route 402	This section of Route 402 was bypassed in more recent times. This section of the road borders Peck's Pond. Half lies within Blooming Grove and half lies in Porter Township. Parking and access to fishing areas are available here.
Owego Rest Area	This facility is approximately 1.5 miles west of Route 739 on Route 6. Restrooms, picnic areas, and fire pits are provided for public use. It borders the Delaware State Forest and primitive camping is allowed with a permit obtained by the Bureau of Forestry's Owego Trail Headquarters.

Blooming Grove Township Historic Resources (Source: Pike County Comprehensive Plan)



Westbrook House



Mill at Westbrook House

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 Guidelines

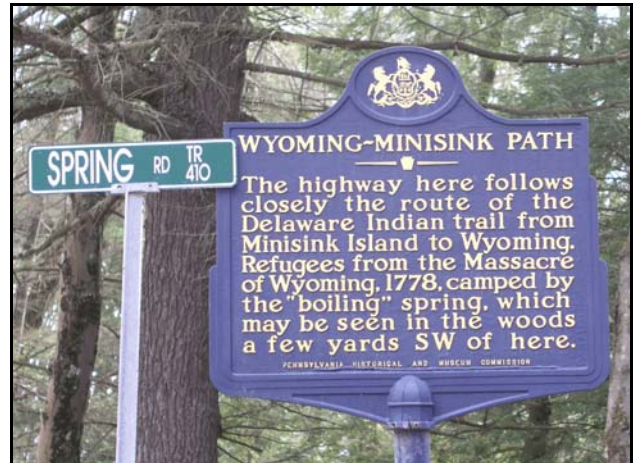
As part of a continuing commitment to the historic character of a community some municipalities and historical societies provide site and sign design guidelines to ensure that commercial establishments and signs are consistent with the community’s heritage. Although such guidelines would not be mandatory outside of a regulated historic district, such a community based effort would be invaluable to preserving the overall character of the Township.

Historic Preservation Actions

- Support 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 encourage and support efforts to list and preserve such properties on the National Register.
- Incorporate the preservation of historic resources in conservation design for residential and commercial 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 Township’s character.



Boiling Spring



Historical Marker



Stone Wall Along Route 739 in Commercial Zoning District

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.