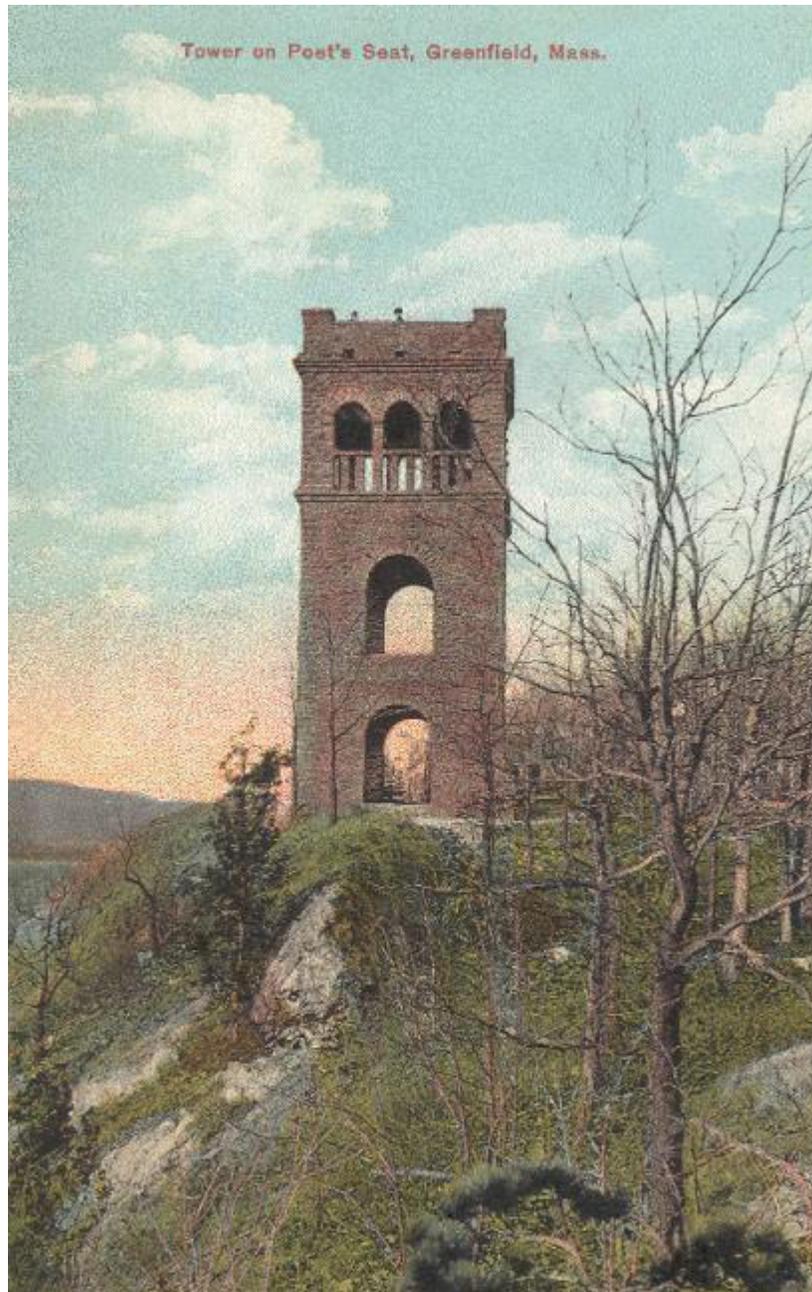




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Community Branding & Wayfinding Program: *City of Greenfield Final Report*



Dt: November 30, 2015

To: Elizabeth Hahn,
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Department of Housing and Community Development
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Fr: Mark Favermann, Favermann Design

Re: Community Branding and Wayfinding Program: Town of Greenfield Final Report

Background:

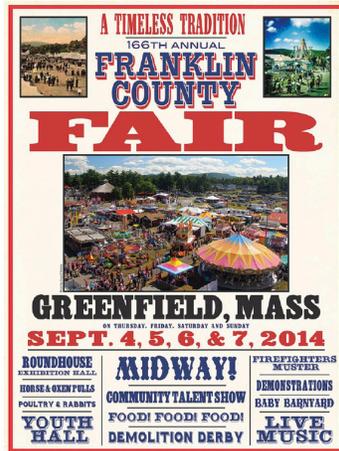
Colonized as part of Deerfield by the English in 1686, Greenfield, MA is set at the eastern end of the historic Mohawk trade route. In 1753, Greenfield, named for the adjacent Green River was incorporated as a separate town from Deerfield. Located at the confluence of the Deerfield and Green rivers, and not far from where they merge into the Connecticut River, Greenfield developed into a trade center. The falls provided water power for industry, and Greenfield grew into a prosperous mill town. John Russell established the Green River Works in 1834, hiring skilled German immigrants at what was the country's first cutlery factory. During the 19th and 20th centuries, Greenfield was one of the most important American centers of the tap and die trade.



Greenfield was designated the county seat when Franklin County was created in 1811. The largest community (population around 18,000) in Franklin County, now a city, known as the town of Greenfield still serves as the center of county services including courthouse, health care and social services. After years of no consistent passenger rail travel, in 2015 Amtrak has established a twice a day stop in Greenfield along its St.Alban-Burlington, VT-Washington, D.C. Northeast Line.

The town takes pride in its civically active residents who serve on a variety of community boards, commissions and committees. It is still a center for local agricultural products for the county and region, and an emerging creative community is developing there. The highly popular and very well attended 170 year old Franklin County Fair is held each year in Greenfield celebrating the regions agriculture and farming. Greenfield is a nationally-known center of Contra Dancing as well.

Annual Fair Poster

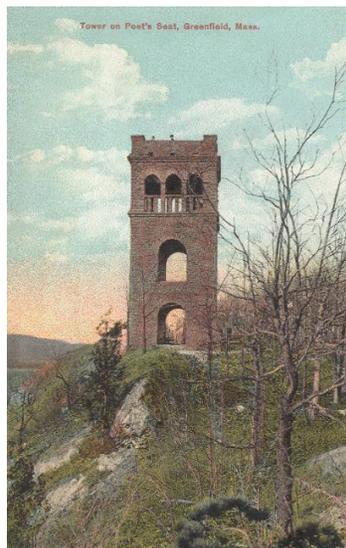


Greenfield Sculptured Park Gateway

In recent years, visual artists and craftspeople have continued to add to the population in greater numbers in Greenfield. With younger and new residents, there is now a large number of tech savvy individuals as well. The city is adding high speed free WiFi.

Greenfield has a thoughtful, extremely well-used park system as well as sections designated as Conservation areas. Also in Greenfield an important landmark exists, The Poet's Seat Tower, a sandstone observation structure constructed in 1912 overlooking stunning views of the region's mountains and landscape.

Poet's Seat Tower



Poet's Seat Tower view

Set off of Massachusetts State Route 2 and US Interstate 91, there is no real sense of entry into Greenfield. Over the years, there were a few attempts to orient visitors through less than helpful or maintained sign elements sprinkled around entering roads and streets. Also, other than directions to nearby towns, there are no local helpful directional signs in the historic downtown. When entering Greenfield, there has never been a clear sense of arrival.

To assist with improving this situation, Greenfield needed to have a community brand, a visual representation of its essence or character. Correspondingly, once the community brand is clear, how to get to, from and through a neighborhood, downtown, town itself gives the community an easily accessible navigational orientation. This is called wayfinding. In turn, this wayfinding system fosters a sense of comfort for visitors and residents. When developed, the brand underscores the community sense of character that can and should be further applied to the town's website and other forms of social media as well.

The need for wayfinding and appropriate signage has long been a concern of Greenfield's local government and many of its civically involved residents as well as business and cultural leaders.

Process:

After being awarded a grant by the DHCD's Downtown Initiative for community branding and wayfinding consultation services, the Advisory Committee met with Mark Favermann of Favermann Design. At an initial presentation in mid-April 2015, an overview of urban and community branding was shared with the committee. This set the framework for the design process to follow.

The first step was to develop a scope of services and schedule for the consultants, Favermann Design. These tasks included the following:

Scope of Services for Community Branding and Wayfinding for Greenfield, MA

1. A preliminary meeting with advisory committee to develop strategy and goals.
2. At least four advisory committee or public meetings with Greenfield coordinating staff and designated community members to discuss project context and visual influences.
3. Design of a brand theme, logo and slogan or tagline including color, font, placement, etc. to be approved by Mayor and/or other appropriate Town of Greenfield review committees.
4. Creation of as many as three (3) brand options for application to all wayfinding elements. These will be illustrated to show a "hierarchical family" of individual signs and other elements.
5. Refinement of a final logo/logotype and slogan as a Community Brand.
6. Recommendations for placement and use of Brand on wayfinding elements and other applications (website, etc.).
7. Development of preliminary hierarchy of wayfinding elements.
8. Refinement of hierarchy to an intermediate phase for public review and discussion.
9. Creation of sign element site placement with digitally illustrated location views.
10. Development of a final wayfinding sign and element hierarchy to be approved by appropriate committees.
11. Creation of a sign and element specification digital document with recommendations for placement, installation, costs and city staff involvement.



Greenfield Mayor
William Martin

Schedule:

There will be monthly advisory committee meetings for May, June and July and a public meeting after Labor Day. In addition, there would be two meetings with necessary City staff and the Mayor.

Starting in mid-May 2015, Favermann Design began meeting with the representative advisory committee to focus on Greenfield's community branding and wayfinding needs. Among those serving on the committee were individuals from the Town Planning Department, the Arts Council, a representative of the Mayor's office, the President of the City Council, a representative of the Historical Commission, representative from Recreation Department, Greenfield Business Association, Local Cultural Counsel and other residents. Heading up the advisory committee was Assistant Town Planner Maureen Pollock.

By developing words, phrases and design concepts generated through ideation exercises leading the workshop sessions, the committee worked on refining concepts and ideas on what would best symbolize or represent the Town of Greenfield. Favermann Design's staff interpreted the words and phrases and refined them into various visual design options for the community brand. In addition, phrases were considered as potential slogans or taglines. Consideration by Favermann Design was given to develop a sense of place, a sense of shared visual memory and to underscore a cultural narrative as well.

During the months of May through October 2015, Favermann Design participated in 5 community workshops and public meetings for the development of appropriate branding and signage solutions to help visitors identify and navigate throughout the City of Greenfield. During this design development process, Favermann Design did research and analysis into the historical context, geography and cultural icons to develop into the desired image for Greenfield. During various site visits, Favermann Design documented existing conditions and visited Greenfield's rather unique downtown, prominent institutions and scenic locations.

A variety of branding elements were explored. By the end of the 5th meeting in October, the color, image and font were worked out. The design process evolved in a number of conceptual ways. Initially, the designs focused upon iconic sites, tool making and nature vistas. Many structures were worked with as potential symbols.

These included images of the Public Library, Town Hall and the Round Barn at the Fair Grounds. However, the most iconic site in Greenfield is the unique Poet's Seat Tower. The committee felt that Poet's Seat was the best image. Favermann Design did a large number of variations of this beloved structure ranging from photo realistic to a more basic graphic interpretation. The committee agreed upon the more minimalist graphic approach to the Poet's Seat image unanimously. Though the committee eventually chose brick, gold and green as colors. Later, a medium green color was selected as the major sign element color. To augment this, a brick colored strip would be added to emphasize a site name or direction.



Greenfield Mayor William Martin speaking at unveiling of stainless steel sculpture, "Brookie," on Deerfield Street, Greenfield, MA

In addition, it was recommended that Artwings, artistic metal kinetic attachments on an armature to light poles, be added to the streetscape. These would be silhouettes of tools crafted in Greenfield and vegetables grown and sold in Greenfield and the region.



View of Countryside from Poet's Seat Tower.

Additionally, a slogan or “tagline” for the wayfinding system was considered—Creative Vistas. Coming out of a series of ideation exercises led by the Favermann staff, this tagline is based upon the town’s deep connection to history, its beautiful natural setting and its view to the future. After much discussion, the tagline was left to be used on an as needed basis.

Concurrently, while the branding was being worked out, potential sign shapes and sizes were displayed during the workshops to give members of the advisory Committee an idea of what the branding could look like for a potential sign type.

Favermann Design has created a sign specifications package, showing each sign, the recommended number to be fabricated of each sign, and including the final artwork for each element. This digital specifications package will eventually be sent out to qualified fabricators and installers to acquire competitive bids to make and install the signs.

With the sign package developed in-depth, and artwork finalized, a brief, slide PowerPoint show summarizing the design process and results was presented to three term Mayor William Martin in early November 2015. The Mayor wholeheartedly approved the community branding and wayfinding package. At a public meeting to the City Council, a similar presentation was scheduled for early 2016.

Maureen Pollock, Assistant Town Planner was particularly key in moving along the whole design process. The Advisory Board members were strategically thoughtful and supportive in ensuring approval of the branding and wayfinding program for the Greenfield. It is expected that funding will be approved for the first phase of project to start in Spring of 2016.



Greenfield Family of Sign Elements

This report was funded by the:



Massachusetts Downtown Initiative

Department of Housing & Community Development, 100 Cambridge Street, Boston, MA 02114