

HISTORY ON THE GROUND Tracing the Growth of Greenfield Through Its Historic Areas



The Comprehensive Cultural Resource Survey of 1985 identified 17 historic areas: distinct groups or clusters of interrelated buildings, structures, landscapes or sites and their surroundings. They show us where our predecessors lived and worked, and how the 1700s settlement developed into today's community. While beneficial changes will be necessary, the sensitive conservation of these areas is the key to also preserving our sense of place. They are listed in approximate chronological order.

The Meadows 1700-Present: The best surviving area of buildings and landscape which evokes the appearance of pre-1753 Deerfield's Green River District.

Factory Hollow: This mill village on the Falls River began in the 1780s with saw, grist and wool fulling mills. Active until 1869, the post office & store, tower of the 1829 granite mill burned in 1933, two early and other later houses remain.

Nash's Mills: Daniel Nash's early mill settlement was connected to Mill (River) Street in the 1790s. This industrial village was destroyed in the 1960s for I-91 and its homes moved, but its bricks can be seen in many buildings from the 1800s. It is now a town recreation area.

Lampblack Road: This 1800s rural settlement began around Moses Bascom's farm. The 1796 lampblack manufactory was located at the Griswold farm.

Washington Street: This area contains an historic streetscape of cutlery worker houses from John Russell's Green River Works beginning in the 1830s.

Main (Green River) Street, Bank Row (Clay Hill) and Court Square: The village and commercial center of Greenfield from the 1780s into 1820s with the rise of the river trade and the first mills on the Green River. A National Register Historic District.

East Main-High Street: From the 1820s to the 1860s Greenfield's wealthiest and most prominent citizens built substantial homes in this section. A National Register District.

River, Mead (formerly Mill) and Deerfield Streets: This is the "Green River Industrial Heritage Area" where the first grist mill of 1714, the Moore six story mill of the 1780s, the J. Russell "Green River" Cutlery, Wiley & Russell Mfr. Co., Greenfield Tap & Die Corp. and a host of smaller metal working shops had their beginnings. Housing of skilled German and English metal workers, churches, and two dams remain in this landscape.

Hope Street: Houses of the 1840s and 50s line this street, mills were sited there after the introduction of the railroad in the mid 1840s, the Planing Mill of the Franklin Co. Lumber Co. and early 20th century buildings fill its downtown section.

Meridian Street-Petty Plain: these architecturally compatible houses are related to the Russell Cutlery and the 1850s short-lived rail spur.

Grinnell-Congress-Prospect Streets: An area of 1840-60 stylish houses of merchants and managers built when space ran out on East Main Street. By 1800 the Fifth Massachusetts Turnpike came over the hill here and connected the small village to the eastern part of the state.

Central Main Street: This National Register District houses a core of 1870-1920 buildings, most built in the post Civil War years of prosperity, reflecting the character of the county seat.

Fort Square: Site of the 1744 Shubel Atherton fortified house, these well designed, large houses were primarily built between 1910 and 1920, just west of the Millers Falls Tool Company. The Eastern Stick Style House on Main Street is a significant example.

Crescent Street-Highland Avenue: The most opulent houses in town built 1884-1895 by industrialists from Greenfield and Turners Falls after buildout of East Main Street. It also housed New York retirees and summer residents.

Leonard Street: A street of well preserved, late Victorian houses built by developer Franklin Pond after 1883 on part of the Theodore Leonard estate whose house is on Federal Street. Its scale promotes a sense of neighborhood.

Pierce to Garfield Streets: 1890-1910 an area of large, stylish houses initially planned by Theodore Judah and built by Frank & George Pond, the town's largest developers.

Riddell-Hastings-Haywood Streets: Many house styles were built here during the expansion of the 1920s and 30s on the Riddell farm for those who worked at the nearby GTD#2 plant, the Greenfield Machine Co. on Haywood St. and in the F.E. Wells & Sons visionary single-story reinforced concrete building off Beacon Street.