

HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF EASTON, CONNECTICUT

Presented to

**The Town of Easton
Planning and Zoning Commission**

April 23, 2012

*This Project was funded by The Town of Easton and by a grant from the
Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation in cooperation with the
Connecticut Humanities Council.*

Prepared by

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Aspetuck Landways
Greenwich, Easton, Redding, CT

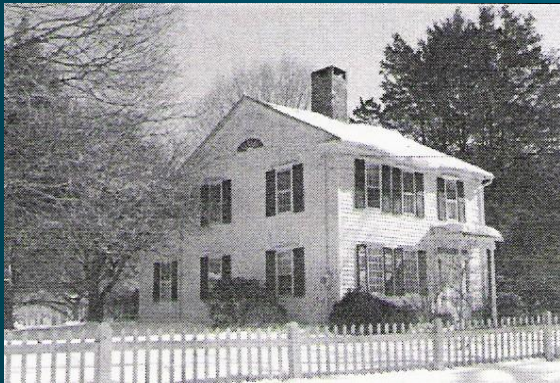
In 2009, David Silverglade, Kathleen von Jena and I submitted this report, describing a two-year study to identify known historical and cultural resources in Easton. This was a big task, we worked very hard. Therefore, the resulting report was thick and may seem a bit intimidating.

We never had a chance to discuss our results with the Easton Planning Commission, thus we welcome this opportunity tonight.

A Heritage Worth Conserving

Easton Town Plan of Conservation and Development, 2006

“Preservation of Easton’s historic and prehistoric heritage is vital to its future civic character and quality of life.”



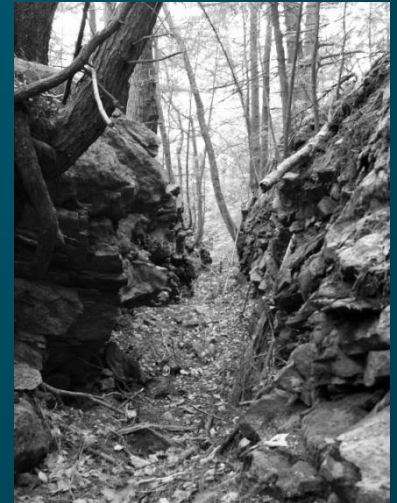
Historic Architecture

Ida Tarbell House (National Historic Landmark)



Archeological Sites

Jennings Brothers Paper Mache Factory
Mill Race (site 46-117)



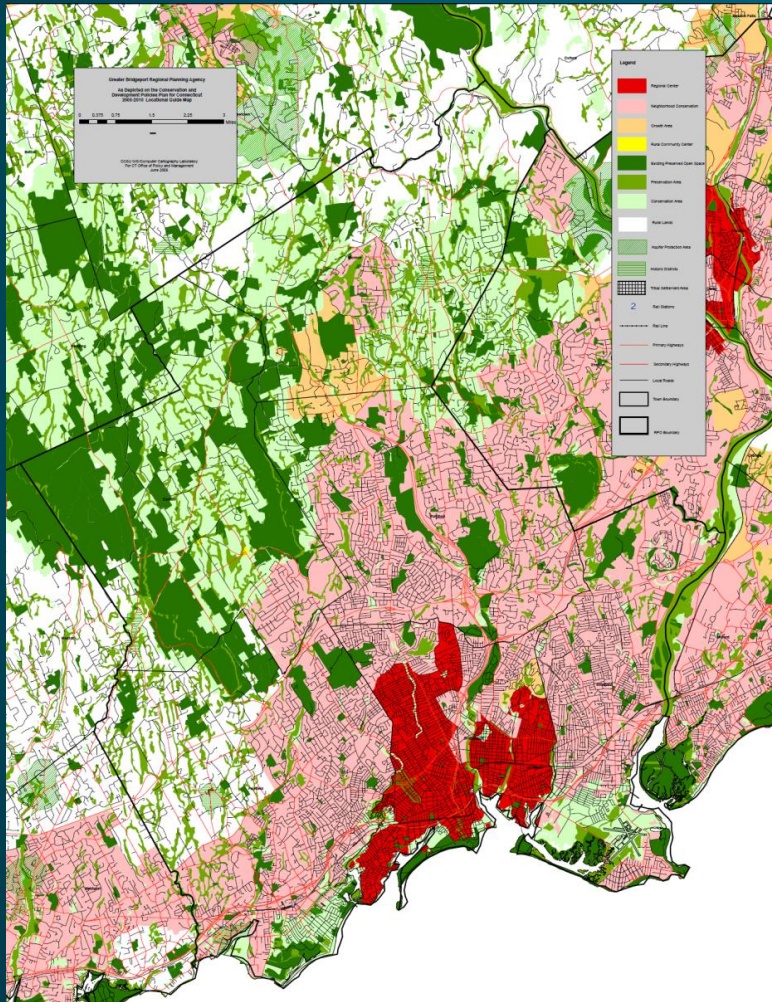
Cultural Landscapes

Easton Center, 1836 (John Warner Barber)

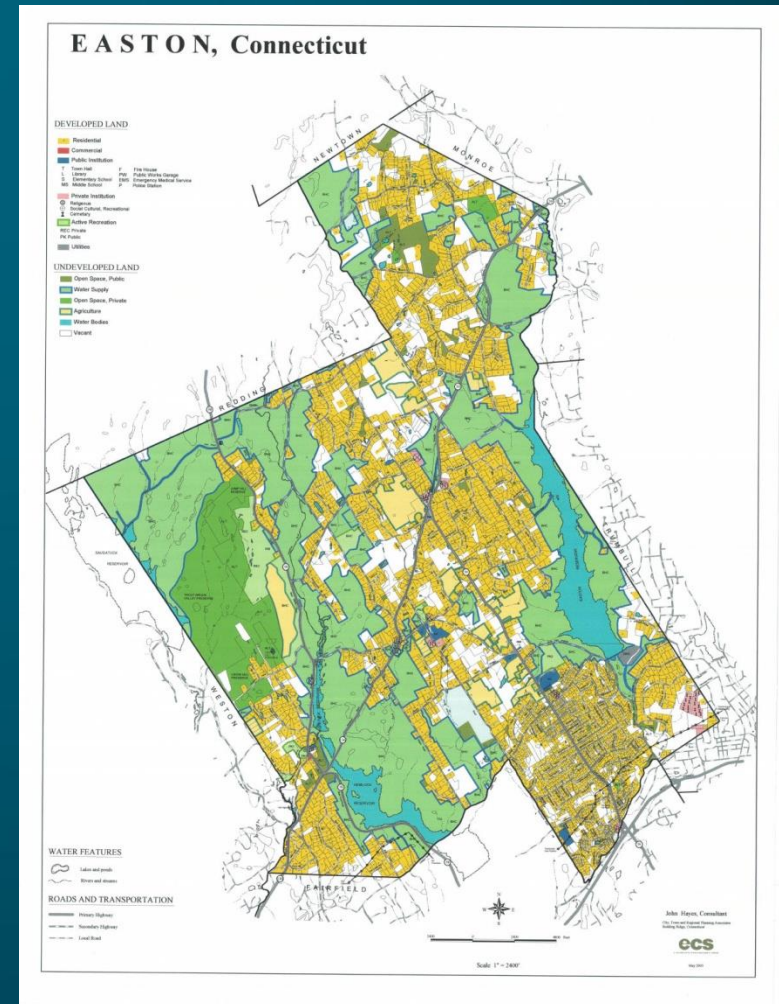
Our study was an outgrowth of the 2006 Plan of Conservation and Development to support the town's policy that "preservation of Easton's historic and prehistoric heritage is vital to its future civic character and quality of life." We wanted to identify cultural landscapes, including historic architectural resources, archeological sites, and cultural landscapes from Easton's past. Once gone, these can never be replaced.

Regional Planning and Conservation

Threats to Cultural Resources



Greater Bridgeport Region



Town of Easton

Modern Easton is the sum of its history. Many roads and other landscape features descend directly from early Colonial settlement. Throughout Fairfield County, cultural resources are threatened by urban growth. Easton is now at the frontier of urban expansion. This Commission will deal with many issues of new housing, roads and infrastructure proposals that might adversely impact irreplaceable historic and cultural resources.

Project Objectives

The Town of Easton and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation funded a two year study by *Aspetuck Landways* to identify cultural and historical resources in Easton. Research identified the people, places and events (contexts) important to Easton's history and prehistory. Recorded archeological sites and architectural resources assist state agencies, town officials and the citizens of Easton in making informed decisions concerning future land use, and to implement recommendations of the 2006 *Town Plan of Conservation and Development*:

- Preserve significant historic sites, buildings and districts through enactment of appropriate regulations as authorized in the General Statutes, especially for historic districts and historic properties.
- Research and prepare an archeological sensitivity map of the town, and amend Town regulations to require that major development projects preserve or recover evidence and pre-historic artifacts of significant value.
- Strengthen protection of the town's scenic character by enacting design review standards for all public and quasi-public buildings, for specially-designated scenic protection and historic sites, and for several village districts.
- Encourage designation of additional Town and State Scenic Roads, and strengthen the Town Scenic Road Ordinance by clearer definition of permissible changes and added protection for significant trees and stone walls.
- Add protection for all landmark trees, historic stone walls, and special viewsapes to Town regulations.

Our goal was to identify people, places and events that were important in Easton's past and have been preserved to the present. This information would assist town officials, state agencies, and local citizens in making informed decisions about future land use. We also wanted to provide information to implement the 2006 Town Plan.

Project Results

- *Aspetuck Landways* reviewed archival and background literature for known archeological sites, historic structures and cultural landscapes in Easton, including local histories, historic maps, architectural surveys, census data, church records, cemetery records, deeds, town meeting records, Grand Lists, genealogies, historic newspapers, and other sources;
- Defined historic contexts to establish qualifications for designating historic districts, archeological preserves or scenic roads;
- Interviewed local residents, analyzing **19 artifact collections**;
- Recorded **129 new archeological sites**;
- Abstracted **1,933 deeds** dating from 1748 to 1799 from North Fairfield Parish and the Long Lots;
- Identified **1,033 early settlers** from 1675 to 1800 in the area of North Fairfield Parish, now Easton;
- Inventoried **279 historic photographs** and art collections curated at the Historical Society of Easton;
- Identified cultural resource sensitivity for **3,368 lots and 2,550 dwellings** in Easton, including
 - **178 archeological sites** (high sensitivity), **87 properties** dating from 1700 to 1799 (high sensitivity),
 - **128 properties** dating from 1800 to 1899 (moderate sensitivity), and **800 properties** dating from 1900 to 1959 (low sensitivity);
- Prepared cultural resource maps identifying high and moderate sensitivity areas for prehistoric and historic resources; and
- Presented recommendations and priorities for future cultural resource preservation in Easton.

Report Organization

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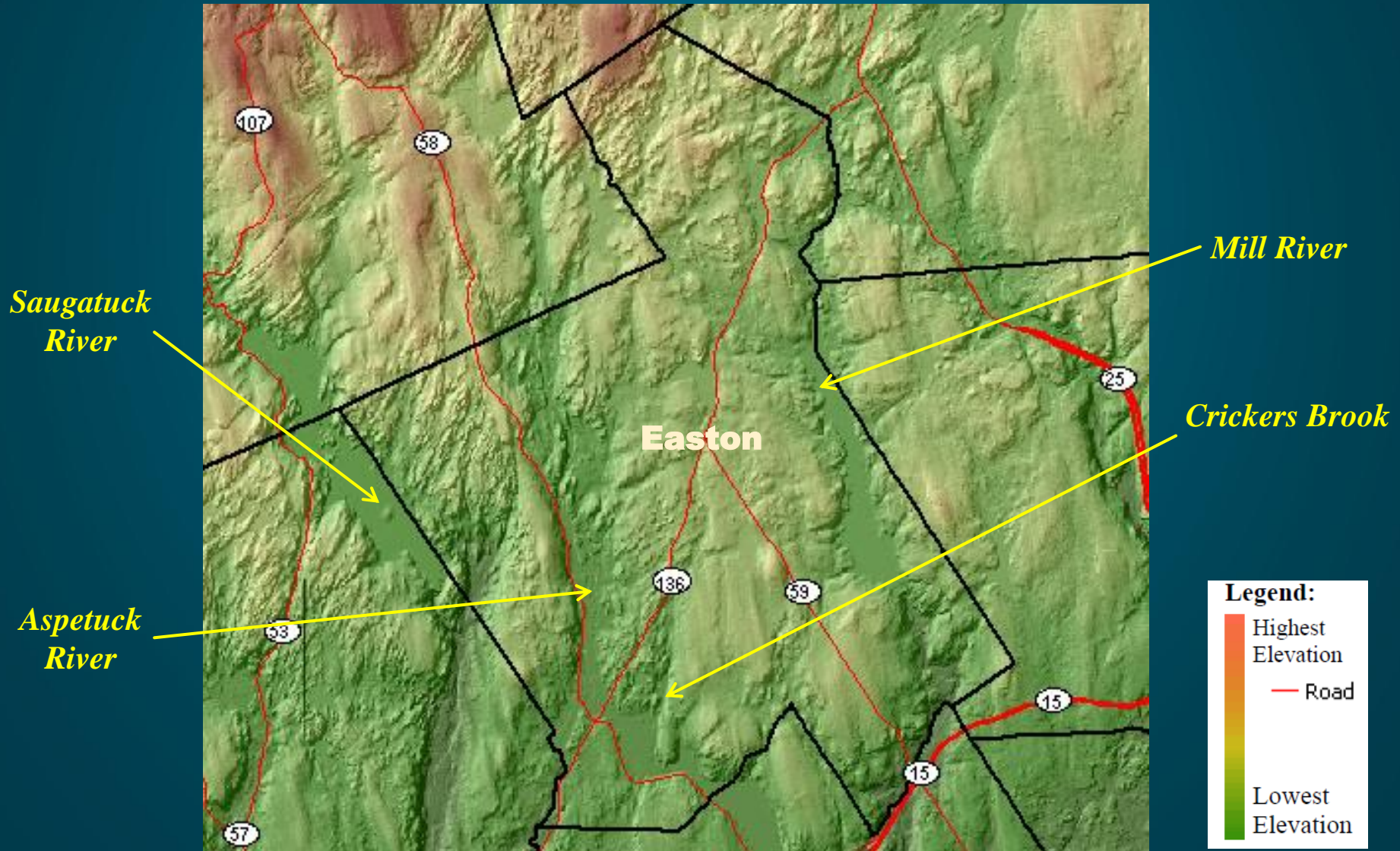
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Our report emphasized broad trends in the environment, prehistory and history, leaving most details to supporting maps, tables and appendices. Easton's diverse origins made study of Colonial history especially vexing. We focused on development of the Long Lots in Easton and surrounding towns. Chapter 5 and Appendix P provide detailed analyses of cultural resource sensitivity. I'm going to run through slides in order to keep to schedule, but please ask questions or stop me to examine slides or discuss issues more thoroughly.

Easton Topography



Both Prehistoric Native Americans and Historic-period Europeans, African-Americans and others were drawn to the valleys and ridges north of Long Island Sound. Easton is in the glaciated Western Uplands, drained by the Saugatuck, Aspetuck and Mill Rivers, and Crickers Brook. Watershed conservation has shaped the town over the last century, and has preserved landscapes and many archeological resources.

Easton's Prehistoric Native American Cultures

103 Prehistoric Period archeological sites have been recorded in Easton.

19 Easton artifact collections were analyzed, including **629** chronologically sensitive projectile points. Artifacts document over 10,000 years of human occupations.

Easton Artifact Collections – Thank You for Sharing!

- Cyrus Sherwood Bradley (site 46-040);
- Rev Kenneth H. Kinner (sites 46-001, 46-025, 46-069, 46-082, 46-166, 46-169, 46-170, 46-171, 46-174, 46-177, 46-178, 46-185, and unverified locations);
- Joseph and Marjory Trup (sites 46-023, 46-025, 46-063, 46-066, 46-068, 46-069, 46-081, 46-082, 46-170, 46-174, 46-179, 46-180, 46-181, 46-182, 46-183, 46-184, 46-185, 46-186, 46-187, 46-189 and 9 unverified locations);
- Joseph Haines (sites 46-039, 46-063, 46-067, 46-069, 46-070, 46-071, 46-072, 46-073, 46-080, 46-081, 46-083, and 46-170);
- Robert Harper (site 46-014, and unverified locations);
- Robert Forte (unverified locations);
- Brian Roach (sites 46-013, 46-025, 46-043, 46-050, 46-069, 46-081, 46-169, and 46-184);
- The Barney family (site 46-157);
- Verne Gay (46-043, 46-176, 46-182, and 8 unverified locations);
- Joy and Norman Haller (sites 46-050, 46-169, and 1 unverified location);
- James Robertson (site 46-013);
- Charles and Maron Lieb (sites 46-013 and 46-020);
- Robert Pierson (sites 46-019, 46-033, 46-050 and 1 unverified location);
- James Prosek (sites 46-033 and 46-140);
- Constance Benson (site 46-097);
- John and Pricilla Chatfield (site 46-103);
- The Minasi family (site 46-062);
- Francis Mellen (site 46-112); and
- David Silverglade (sites 46-041, 46-054, 46-074, 46-075, 46-078, 46-079, 46-086, 46-088, 46-092, 46-100, and 46-160).

Easton's Native American cultures are only known from 103 prehistoric archeological sites. Most information comes from private artifact collections. Many Easton families shared their finds, notably 629 time-sensitive projectile points and some pottery. We deeply thank you for sharing. There is much more to learn from chipped stone tools, animal and plant remains and much more preserved at archeological sites.

Prehistoric Native American Cultures

Easton's Treasures

10,000 years ago



Paleo-Indian fluted point,
Joseph Trup, Jr., Aspetuck River

8,000 years ago



Early Archaic bifurcate-base points
from the Aspetuck River

4,000 years ago



Late Archaic narrow-stemmed points
from the Aspetuck River

2,000 years ago



Middle Woodland (?) blade cache
from the Asptetuck River

1,000 years ago



Late Woodland arrow points
from the Aspetuck River

500 years ago



Late Woodland East River Tradition
ceramic from Crickers Brook

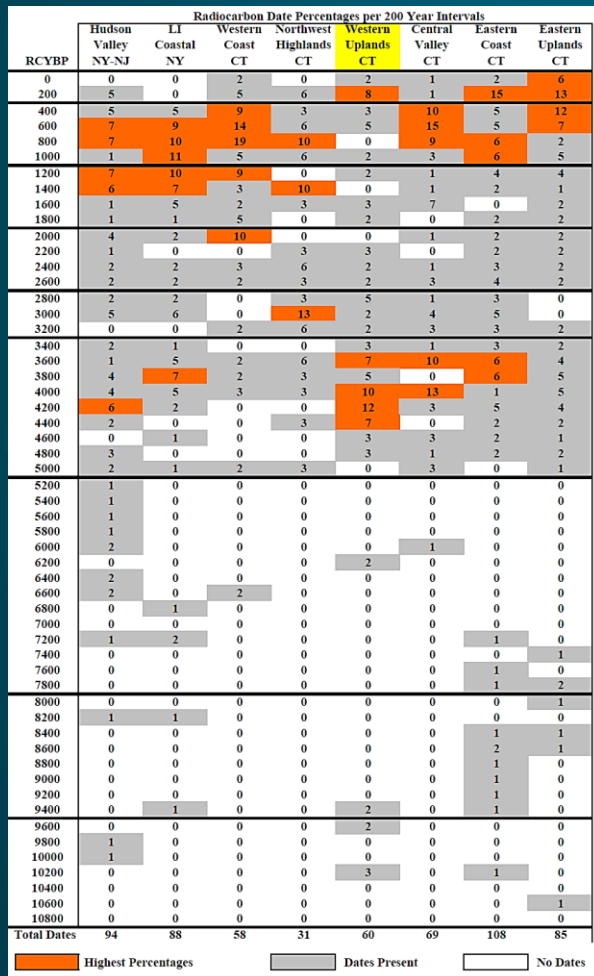
Here are some of Easton's treasures: a 10,000 year old Paleo-Indian fluted point found by Joe Trup; rare Early Archaic bifurcate-base points; many Late Archaic stemmed points; a blade cache from the Aspetuck River, Late Woodland arrow points, and a well preserved vessel linked in style to coastal New York.

Native American Cultural Chronologies

Radiocarbon Dates

SE New York and Connecticut Regions
(Date percentages per 200 years)

Recent
↑
Time
↑
Early



West → Space → East

Cultural Periods

Years Before Present (BP)

Easton Projectile Points (Points per 200 years)

Historic

0 – 300 BP

0

Late Woodland

300 – 1100 BP

29.4

Middle Woodland

1100 – 1900 BP

3.0

Early Woodland

1900 – 2900 BP

5.8

Terminal Archaic

2900 – 3300 BP

18.0

Late Archaic

3300 – 5100 BP

44.2

Middle Archaic

5100 – 7900 BP

1.4

Early Archaic

7900 – 9500 BP

2.3

Paleo-Indian

9500 – 10,900 BP

0.3

We've been assembling a lot of data to better understand Native American populations over time. Cultural periods and time ranges are listed in the center, with the oldest Paleo-Indian period at the bottom, then Archaic, Woodland and Historic periods toward the top.

On the left, are time-space distributions of nearly 600 radiocarbon dates from southeastern New York and Connecticut regions, running generally west to east; from the Hudson Valley, to Coastal New York, the Western CT Coast, Northwest Highlands; the Western Uplands are highlighted in yellow; then the Central Valley and Eastern Connecticut to the right. Orange blocks identify 200-year intervals with the most radiocarbon dates. In general, dated sites are very rare before 5000 years BP (before present). There are dramatic increases during the Late Archaic by 4500 BP, and again during the Late Woodland, after 1000 BP.

Projectile points from Easton, on the right, generally correspond to this population model, with many more points during the Late Archaic and Late Woodland. We know that during the Late Woodland, the bow and arrow and corn agriculture led to population increases across the eastern US. But we know very little about what factors drove Late Archaic population growth and later declines.

Easton Prehistoric Settlement Patterns

Prehistoric Site Densities Per 100 Years within Cultural Periods

Cultural Periods	Centuries/ Period	Lowlands <300 feet	Uplands >300 feet	Total Sites
Late Woodland	7	1.4	1.9	3.3
Middle Woodland	8	0.8	0	0.8
Early Woodland	8	0.9	0.3	1.1
Terminal Archaic	6	1.3	1.0	2.3
Late Archaic	18	0.8	0.8	1.7
Middle Archaic	28	0.2	0	0.2
Early Archaic	16	0.3	0.3	0.6
Paleo-Indian	14	0.1	0	0.1
Total	105	0.6	0.4	1.0












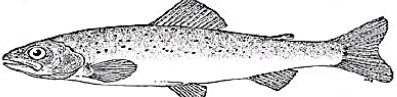





Red - high prehistoric site densities

We've begun looking at these questions through the ecological associations of archeological sites. In general, lowland river valleys are occupied more intensively than uplands over the last 10,000 years. Lowland sites are most numerous during the Late Woodland and Terminal Archaic. Upland occupations are only common during the Late Archaic, Terminal Archaic and Late Woodland, with little evidence during other periods.

River and Wetland Resources

Fish Spawning Runs? – Spring and Fall

REPORTS OF NATIVE FISH IN EASTON, CONNECTICUT TRIBUTARIES ALONG THE ASPETUCK AND MILL RIVER DRAINAGES (Prior to 1968)

GOLDEN SHINER <i>Notemigonus crysoleucas</i>	Aspetuck River (Saugatuck Drainage)	
BLACKNOSE DACE <i>Rhinichthys atratulus</i>	Ballwall, Canoe & Cricker Brooks	
COMMON SHINER <i>Notropis cornutus</i>	Ballwall Brook (Aspetuck Drainage)	
CUTLIPS MINNOW <i>Exoglossum maxillingua</i>	Ballwall Brook	
PUMPKINSEED <i>Lepomis gibbosus</i>	Ballwall & Canoe Brooks	
REDFIN PICKEREL <i>Esox americanus</i>	Ballwall Brook	
TESSELLATED DARTER <i>Etheostoma olmstedii</i>	Ballwall Brook	Not Shown
WHITE SUCKER <i>Catostomus commersoni</i>	Ballwall Brook	
AMERICAN EEL <i>Anguilla rostrata</i>	Canoe Brook	
BROOK TROUT <i>Salvelinus fontinalis</i>	Canoe Brook (Mill Drainage)	
REDBREAST SUNFISH <i>Lepomis auritus</i>	Canoe Brook & Mill River	
CREEK CHUB <i>Semotilus atromaculatus</i>	Cricker Brook (Mill Drainage)	
ATLANTIC SALMON <i>Salmo salar</i>	Mill River	
BANDED KILLFISH <i>Fundulus diaphanous</i>	Mill River	
BRIDLED SHINER <i>Notropis bifrenatus</i>	Mill River	
CHAIN PICKEREL <i>Esox niger</i>	Mill River	
WHITE PERCH <i>Morone Americana</i>	Mill River	
YELLOW PERCH <i>Perca flavescens</i>	Mill River	

Root Crops? – Spring and Fall



Plate 8. Feature 1 (view to the north).

Weirs and stone tools for making cordage

Earthovens – fire-cracked rocks

Looking at river and wetland resources, spring and fall fish runs were probably very important below high falls. This is difficult to prove, since most fish are cartilaginous, no preserved bones, but we look for fish weirs and stone tools for making cordage for nets, basket traps and food storage. Root crops might also have been important. On the right is Arrow Arum, also known as Tuckahoe or “breadroot”, was cooked in large rock-filled earthovens, like this rock feature excavated in Redding. In Colonial deeds, upper Crickers Brook and Easton Center were known as Flag Swamp, possibly referring to this plant.

Upland Rockshelters

Hunting – Fall and Winter?

Mother Grouse Rockshelter

Excavated in 1965 by Rev. Kenneth Kinner

- 3 Brewerton Eared-notched
- 2 Brewerton Side-notched
- 1 Beekman Triangle
- 5 Sylvan/Lamoka Stemmed
- 1 Sylvan Side-notched
- 1 Vosburg
- 1 Wading River
- 1 Orient Fishtail
- 3 Susquehanna/Wayland Notched
- 1 Levanna
- Windsor Tradition Ceramics



Now Episcopal Bishop of the
Wind River Reservation,
Wyoming

Rockshelters are relatively common in Uplands, possibly used for Fall and Winter hunting. This is the Mother Grouse Rockshelter, excavated in 1965 by Easton Episcopal minister Kenneth Kinner. He inspired interests in artifact collecting by a generation of BHC employees. Interestingly, Rev. Kinner is now bishop of the Wind River Shoshone and Arapaho Reservation in Wyoming. This rockshelter contained diverse Late Archaic and Terminal points, also a Late Woodland triangular Levanna point and ceramics.

Easton Prehistoric Archeological Sensitivity

103 Prehistoric Period sites

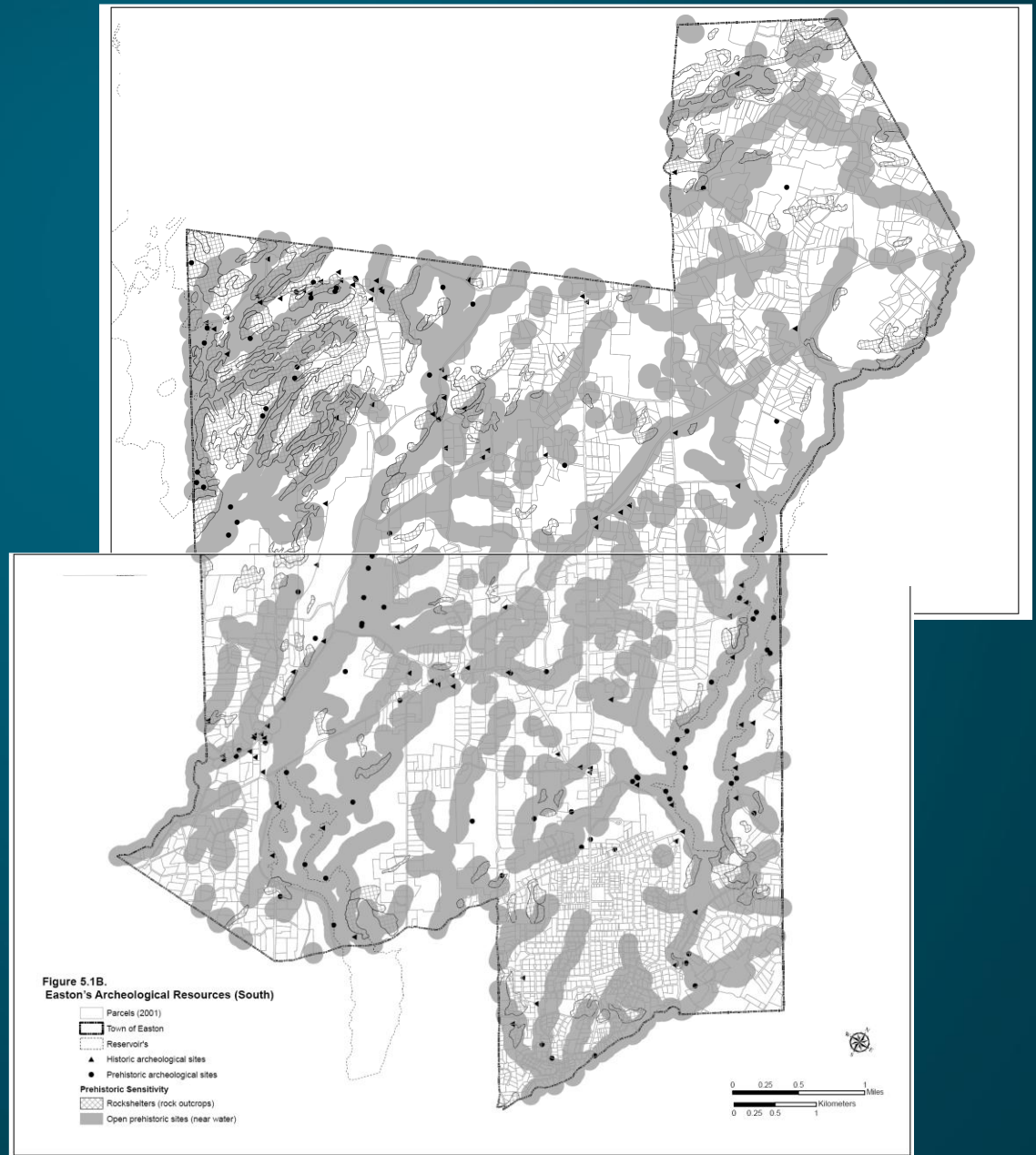
80% of prehistoric sites are in
areas of rock outcrops or within
391 feet of a stream or wetland

77 Historic Period sites

- ▲ Historic archeological sites
- Prehistoric archeological sites

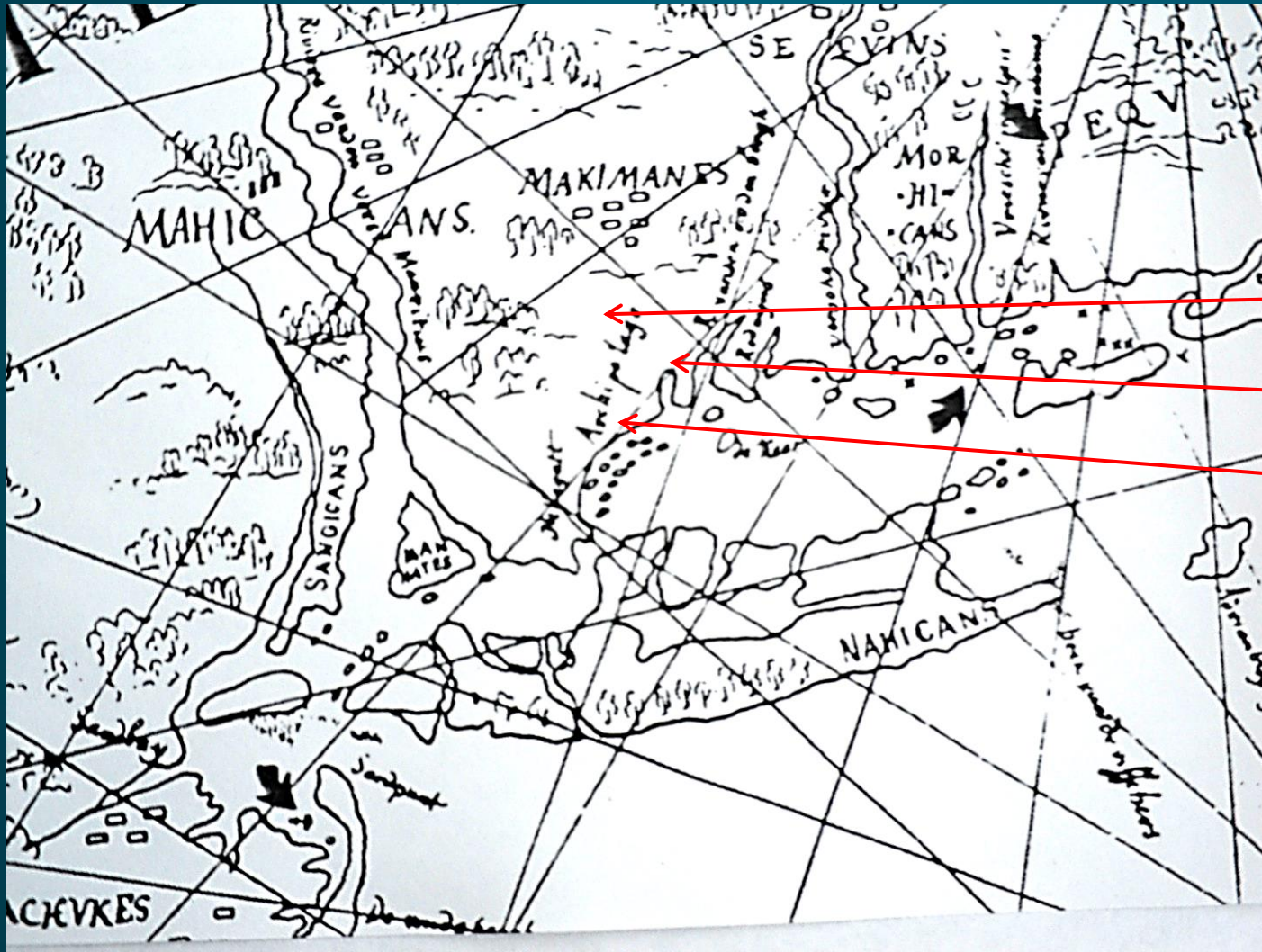
Prehistoric Sensitivity

- Rockshelters (rock outcrops)
- Open prehistoric sites (near water)



In terms of our Planning recommendations, 80% of all Prehistoric sites are in areas with rock outcrops and within 391 feet of streams or wetlands. This includes about 40 percent of the town. Sites are much less common in uplands far from water sources. With larger samples of sites, we should be able to refine Prehistoric Sensitivity in the future. This map also shows distributions of 77 recorded Historic Period archeological sites. We will focus on the Den Road area a bit later on.

Adrian Block Map - 1614



Native American Communities

Aspetuck

Pequonnock

Sasqua

Ceci 1990

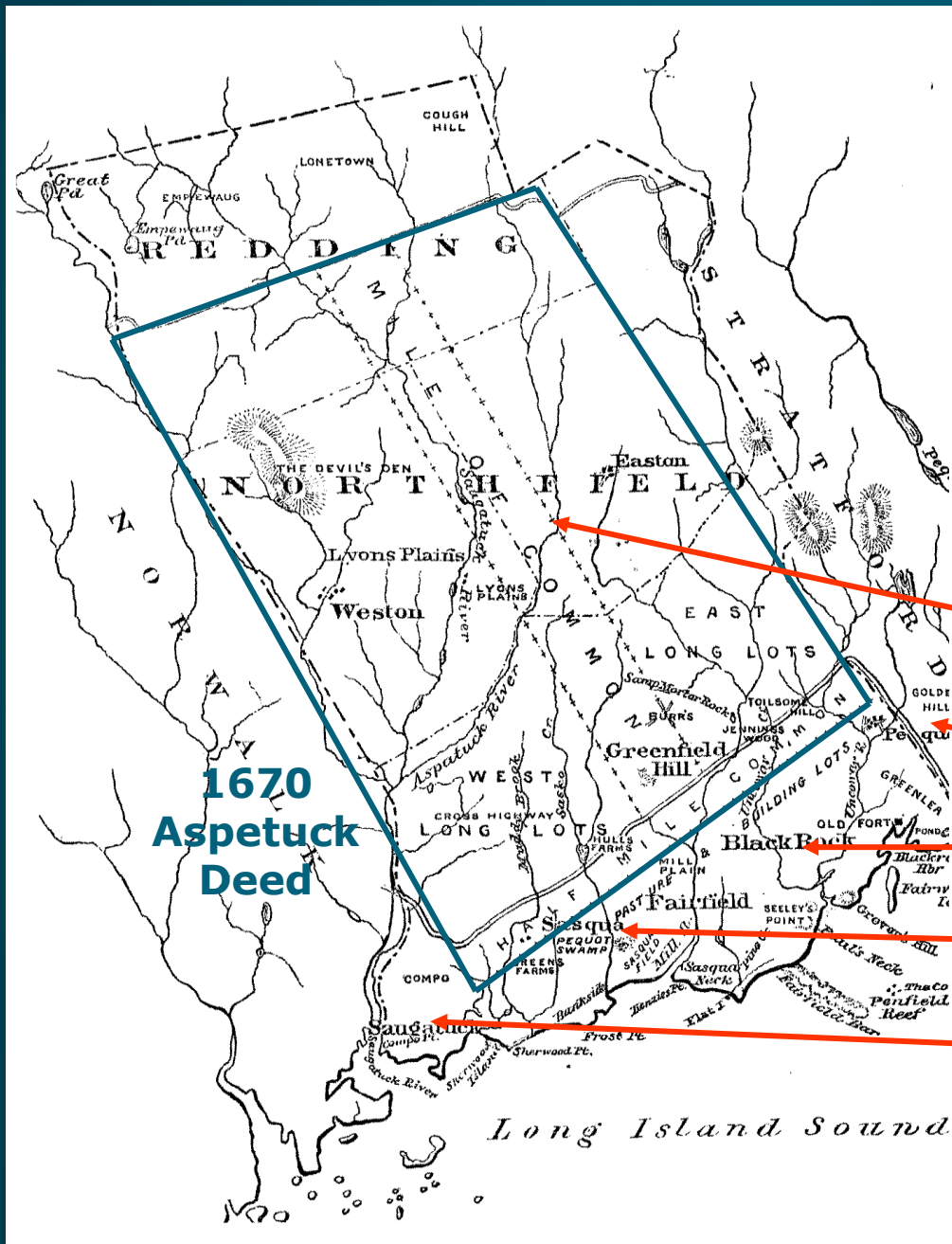
Native American cultures changed quickly and dramatically with European colonization. Diseases ravaged Native populations, stone tools and ceramics were quickly replaced by metal implements. Many local Mohican groups moved to the coast, where wampum was made and offered as tribute to the powerful Pequots to the east.

During the Pequot War of 1637, English militias from Massachusetts, the Connecticut River towns and Indian allies, chased the Pequots to their western frontier at Sasqua Village, where they were killed or captured. One prisoner was a young Aspetuck girl named Ann Praske, the daughter of Romanock, who was raised in Boston, and apparently had a major role in the Indian trade.

Following the Pequot War, the English settled Fairfield in 1639, contesting the frontier with the Dutch at Manhattan.

Colonial Town of Fairfield – founded 1639

1670 Aspetuck Deed and Native American Communities



Aspetuck

Golden Hill - Pequonnock

Uncaway

Sasqua

Clapboard Hill

Easton is forever linked with to the Aspetucks, whose village was in southwest Easton. Chief Crocrocros signed many deeds for Indian lands, most notably the 1670 Aspetuck Deed for the northern part of Fairfield. Crickers Brook is named for Crocrocros, who is supposedly buried beneath Hemlock Reservoir.

You must read the amazing story of Ann Praske (an Aspetuck girl) and her husband John Wampas!

1679 Petition to King Charles II



*Petition of John Wampus, alias White, an Indian and inhabitant of Boston. Became by marriage of Anne, daughter of Romanock, late Sachem of Aspatuck and Susquanaugh, on death of the said Sachem, sole proprietor of the land on which Fairfield in Connecticut is built. About 19 years since, his father-in-law having delivered up the possession of the lands to him, he sold part to Captain Dennison and Amos Richardson and others of Stonington in Connecticut for the sum of about 530*l.* sterling. Is, by the evil practices of Major Nathan Gold and others of Fairfield, kept out of his rights, and having gone to demand possession according to the King's letter of 22nd August 1676 was imprisoned in May last, whence he made his escape to New York and is forced to come to England destitute to seek relief. Being with other native Indians miserably comprised within the laws made by the English only for their particular advantage, there being no Supreme Court of Judicature whereunto the oppressed may repair for redress, prays for the appointment of impartial persons to hear the matters in difference. Endorsed, 'Recd. 14^o Marcii 1678/9.*

The conquest of Native Americans was not always smooth. I recommend reading the story of Ann Praske and her husband Wampas, who went Harvard, owned a house on Boston Common, and twice petitioned King Charles II for return of Indian lands. This 1679 petition for Aspetuck lands, and the subsequent trial, forced Fairfield to divide its common lands and set the stage for the settlement and subsequent history of Easton.

Colonial Town of Fairfield

1681 Long Lots divided among 100 Fairfield proprietors, and new parishes were founded by settlers

Redding Parish - 1729

North Fairfield Parish- 1762

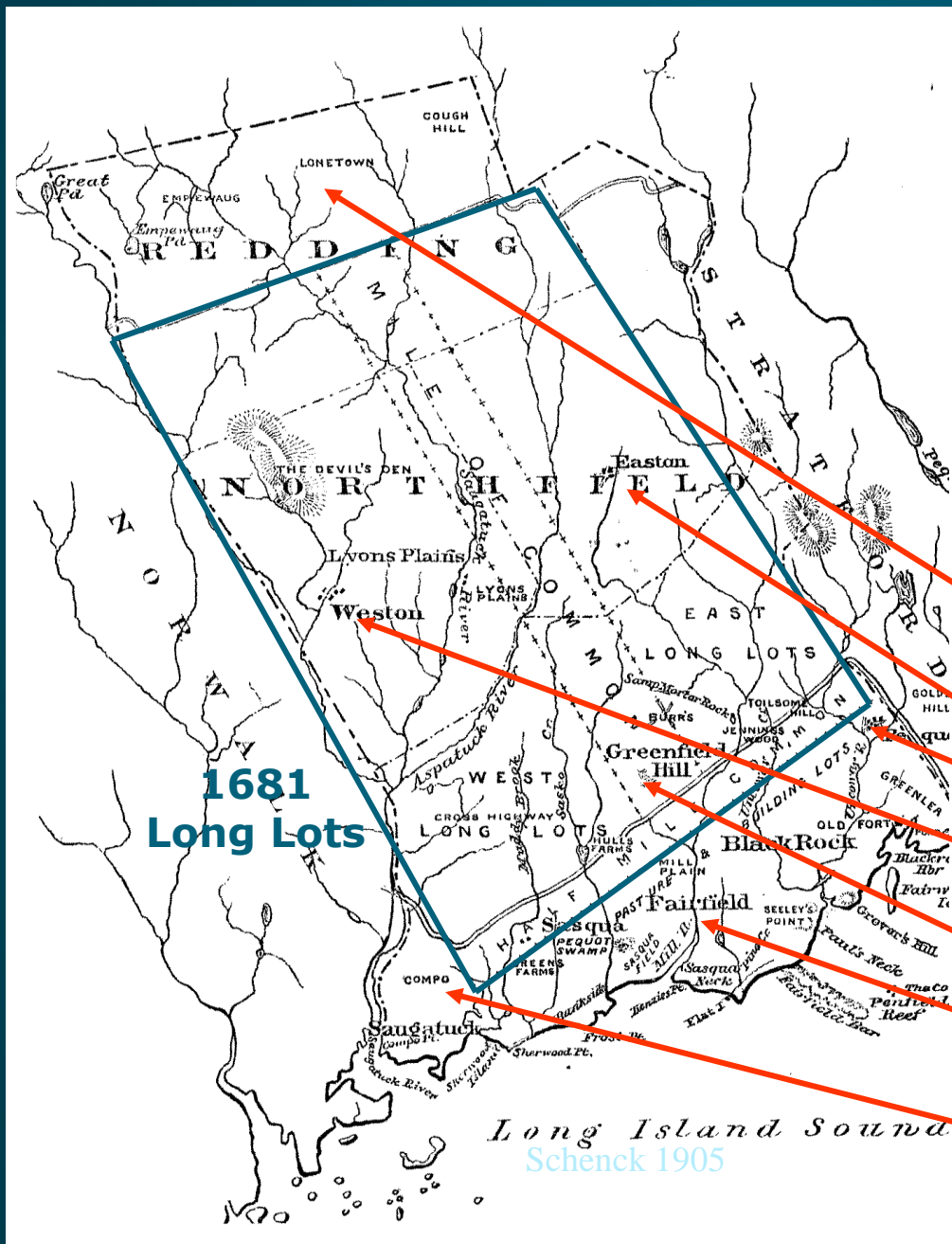
Stratfield Parish- 1691

Norfield Parish - 1755

Greenfield Hill Parish - 1725

Fairfield Town - 1639

Fairfield West Parish - 1711



In 1681, the Aspetuck Purchase was distributed on paper to about 100 Fairfield proprietors. The Long Lots ranged from 64 to 879 feet wide, establishing a landed hierarchy, and ran straight for 15 miles inland. Claiming any patch of land proved to be a surveying nightmare. Over the next 80 years, new parishes resulted from gradual survey and settlement of the Long Lots: Stratfield in 1691 by families owning Eastern Long Lots; Fairfield West in 1711, Greenfield Hill in 1725 in the Mile Common, Redding in 1729 including northern parts of the Long Lots; and later Norfield in 1755, now Weston, and North Farfield Parish in 1762, now Easton.

Long Lot Proprietors, 1681

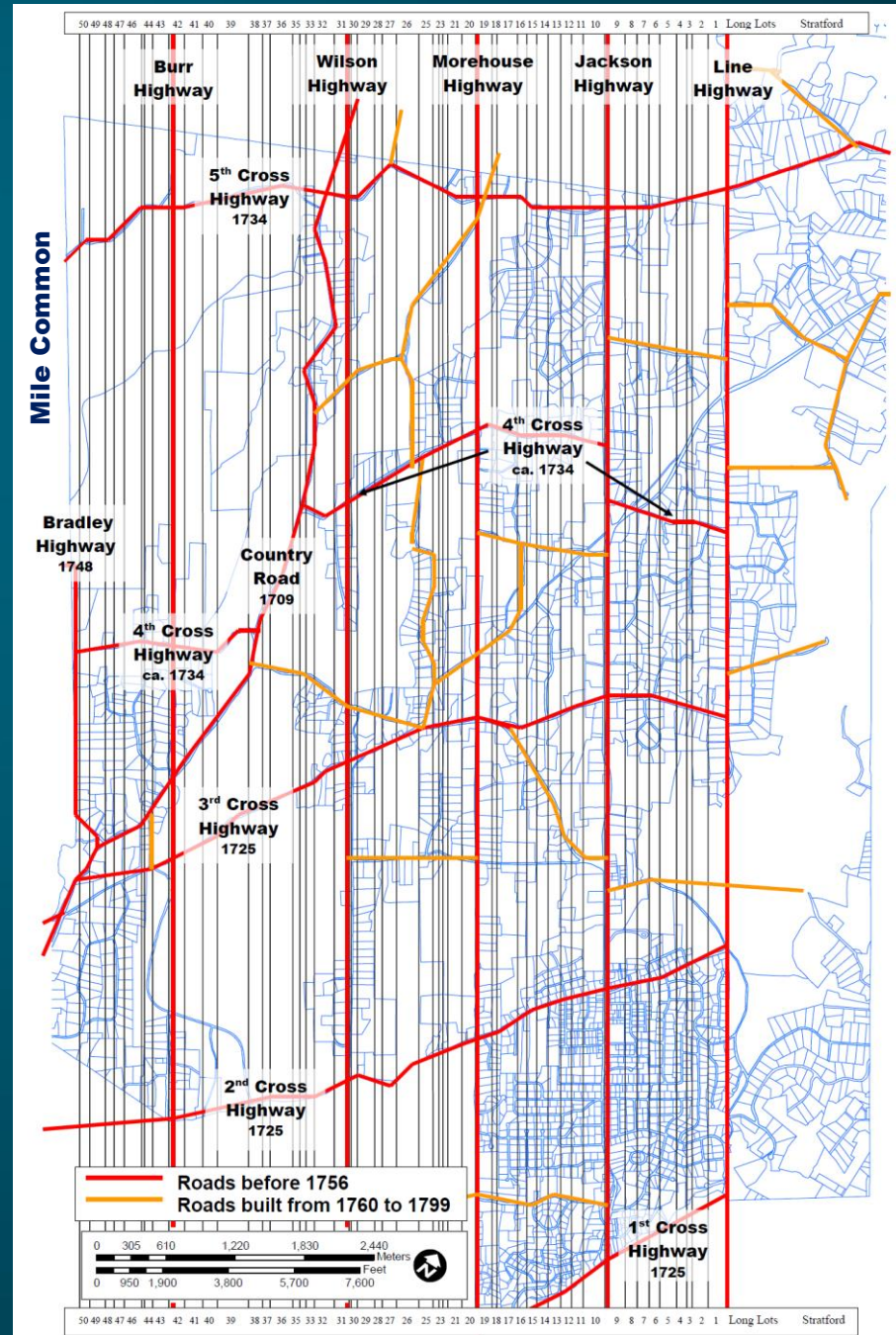
East of the Mile Common

No.	Long Lot Name - 1681	Width Feet
Stratford Town Line		
1	Wheeler, Widow	448
2	Hall, Goodman (Francis)	420
3	Whepley, Joseph	149
4	Odell, John	274
5	Treadwell, Samuel	202
6	Wheeler, Isaac	373
7	Bennett, James	272
8	Sherwood, Matthew	301
9	Hubbell, Richard	561
Mile Common		
10	Jackson, Henry	552
11	Fry, Michael	380
12	Sanford, Ezekiel	251
13	Knapp, Roger	345
14	Morehouse, Thomas	223
15	Silliman, Daniel	195
16	Oliver, Thomas	175
17	Seely, Nathaniel, Sr.	500
18	Odell, William, Sr.	215
19	Morehouse, Samuel	486
Mile Common		
20	Turney, Robert, Ensign	354
21	Adams, Edward	413
22	Patchen, Joseph, Sr.	101
23	Jones, Rev. Mr.	104
24	Turney, Benjamin	153
25	Lyon, Richard	472
26	Staples, Thomas	660
27	Grunmon, John	362
28	Meacar, Robert	227
29	Jennings, Joshua	507
30	Henricks, Henrick	119
Mile Common		
31	Middlebrook, Joseph, Sr.	446
32	Squire, George, Serg.	500
33	Squire, George, Jr.	86
34	Bennett, John	151
35	Jones, Thomas	165
36	Wheeler, John	578
37	Bennett, Thomas	258
38	Wakeman, Rev. Mr.	392
39	Gold, Nathan, Mr.	879
40	Hill, William	413
41	Ward, William	379
42	Burr, Nathaniel	368
Mile Common		
43	Burr, Daniel	
44	Wilson, Thomas	223
45	Sherwood, Isaac	64
46	Parsonage	380
47	School	190
48	Sherwood, Stephen	245
49	Bulkley, Widow	291
50	Bulkley, John	151
Mile Common		5280

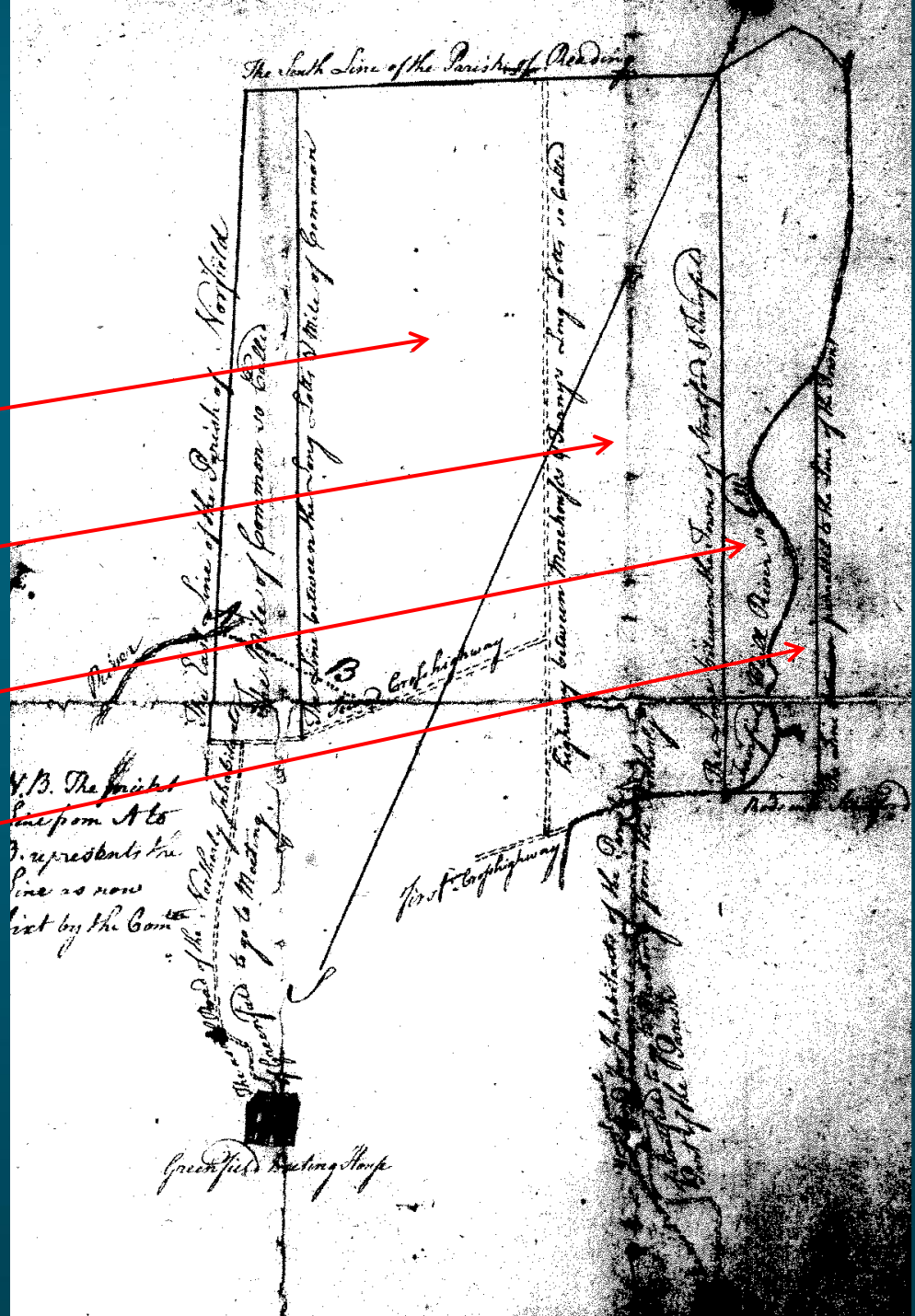
Easton's First Plan of Development

Long Lots and Roads East of the Mile Common

Easton's modern roads, property lines and many stone walls came from Colonial settlements of the Long Lots. Very few 18th Century dwellings still stand, but artifacts and foundations remain as potentially significant archeological sites.



This is Easton's first plan of development, grid-like, with north-south Long Lots (narrow black lines) and early roads (in red) Upright Highways, the Country Road, now Route 58. East-west Cross Highways were surveyed in 1725 and 1734, and surveyed again in 1756. Deeds also describe many newer roads (yellow) built from 1760 to 1799. Many modern lots (blue background) are subdivisions of Colonial Long Lots, as are stone walls, historic structures and probably archeological sites of pioneer farms.



This is the earliest map of Easton, dating to the 1762 founding of North Fairfield Parish. Documents listed estates of 119 families in various sections drawn from earlier parishes. Where did all these families live? References to structures in many deeds need to be field checked and studied, but are immensely important archeological sites.

American Revolution in Easton

Moment of Decision

September 28, 1775

The New York Journal
published the names of Fairfield
Loyalists

Daniel Wheeler, Eliphalet Wheeler, Daniel Cable, John Jackson, jun. Nathan Jackson, Adin Jackson, Samuel Bennit, James Chambers, Nathaniel Hubbel, Solomon Burton, jun. Ebenezer Edwards, Hezekiah Jennings, Eleazer Hall, Benjamin Curtis, Daniel Lyon, Gershom Lyon, Jonathan Lyon, Daniel Lyon, jun. Thomas Lyon, Gershom Lyon, jun. William Cardwell, John Mann, Ebenezer Lord, Joseph Edwards, Timothy Hubbel, Ebenezer Lyon, Abel Curtis, Joseph Lyon, Abel Lyon, Thomas Turney, Benjamin Turney, Thomas Turney jun. Ebenezer Thorp, John Thorp, Ebenezer Mills, Josiah Cable, Benoni Dimon, Moses Burr, Epaphras Murwin, Enoch Turrel, Stephen Gilbert, Gershom Dimon, Calvin Wazeler, Rev. John Sayre, Benjamin

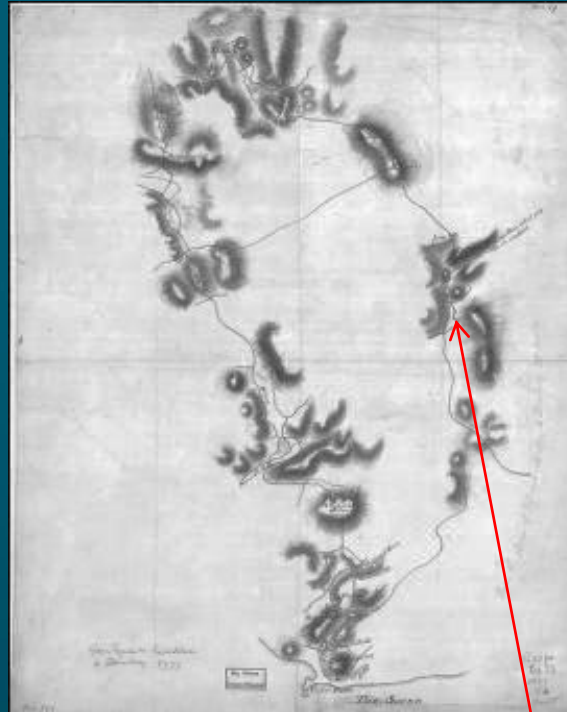
Whitcar, Samuel Adams, Samuel Turney, Stephen Gold, Archibald Campbell, John Sturgis, Ebenezer Hall, John Lockwood, Jabez Lockwood, Ephraim Lockwood, Ebenezer Gray, Lockwood Gray, Josiah Wheeler, Bailey, Stillson, Jonathan Coley, Peter Guyer, Ebenezer Guyer, Daniel Morhouse, David Morhouse, Samuel Lord, Jabez Thorpe, jun. Gideon Lockwood, Thaddeus Squier, John Adams.

The above and foregoing, is a true copy of the votes and proceedings which were ordered to be made public. Test.

THADDEUS BURR,
Clerk to said Committee.

Tryon's Raid

April 25, 1777



Easton

157 Easton men served in
the Revolutionary Army

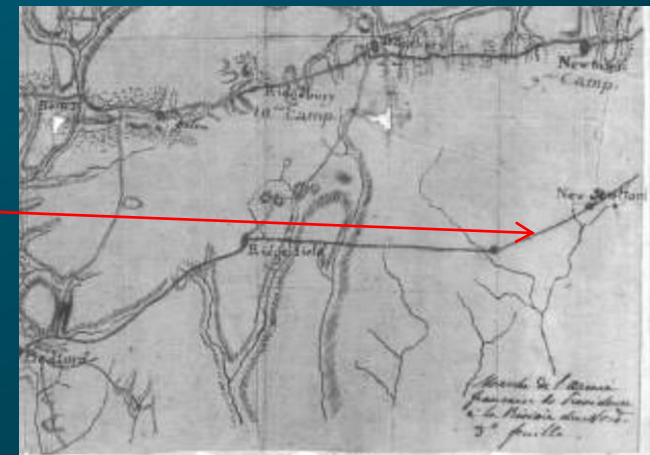
Burning of Fairfield

July 7, 1779



French Supply Train

June 1781



The American Revolution was a dangerous time in Easton. Easton's Loyalists were identified publically in September 1775, they were disarmed, often prosecuted and jailed, but continued spying and smuggling throughout the war. In 1777, General Tryon spared Easton on his march to burn Danbury. Fairfield was burned in 1779 sending refugees fleeing to interior farms. The French marched through northern Easton in 1781 on their way to victory at Yorktown.

In total, we have records for 157 Easton men serving in the Continental Army, many protecting the coast. The homes of Patriots and Loyalists are important to American history, whether standing or as archeological sites.

Town of Weston 1787

In the 1790 Census, North
Fairfield Parish contained
304 households and **1,715**
people, including **36**
African-Americans. Where
were their dwellings?



Warren 1811



Easton Center 1836, showing
the Congregational Church and
Staples Free Academy
Barber 1836

Soon after the War, the Town of Weston was founded, joining together Norfield and North Fairfield Parishes. Comparisons of Census lists, deeds and parish records indicate that in 1790 there were about 304 households and 1,715 people in North Fairfield. Buildings and archeological remains from the 1700s are important for understanding the transformation of a frontier society.

African-Americans in Easton

Slavery

New York Journal July 26, 1770

Fairfield, 24th July, 1770.
RUN away from his Master Samuel Bradley, jun. Esq; of Fairfield, in Connecticut, on Saturday the 21st of July Instant, a Negro Man named MINCER, about 23 Years of Age a stout Fellow, very black, Guinea born, speaks good English, but something slow of speech, his Shins bowing more than common outwards: He had with him when he went away, one blue Vest, and one streaked homespun ditto, each without sleeves, one or two Holland Shirts, one checked Linen ditto, one Tow homespun ditto, two Pair of Tow Trowsers, one Pair striped homespun ditto, one or two Pair of check'd do. a Pair Shoes and a Castor Hat almost new,—and is supposed to have some small Silver Money, and Silver Lace with him; its probable he will travel towards New-York Government, and not unlikely he will endeavour to get over to Long-Island. Whoever will take up and secure said Negro in any of his Majesty's Gaols, so that his Master may have him again, or bring him to his said Master, shall have Three Dollars Reward, and all reasonable Charges, paid by SAMUEL BRADLEY, jun.
 All Masters of Vessels and others are cautioned against harbouring, concealing or carrying off said Negro, as they would avoid the Penalty of the Law. 39 40

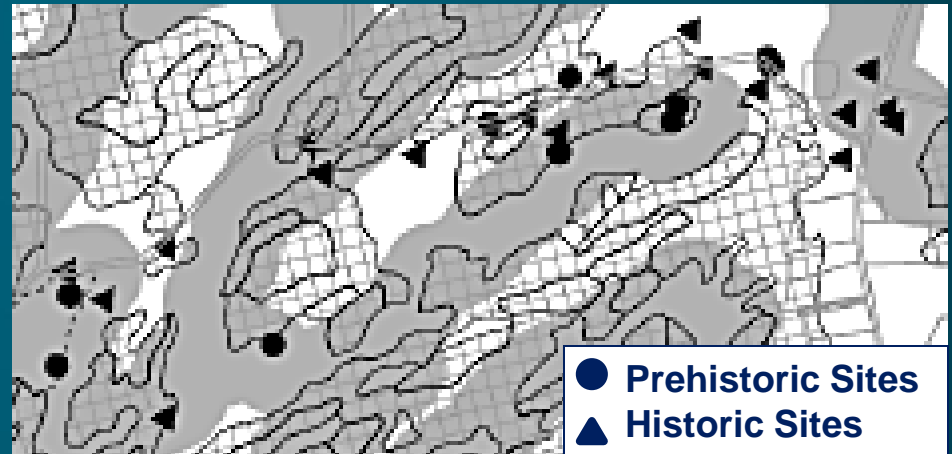
Murder

Morning News of New London July 24, 1846

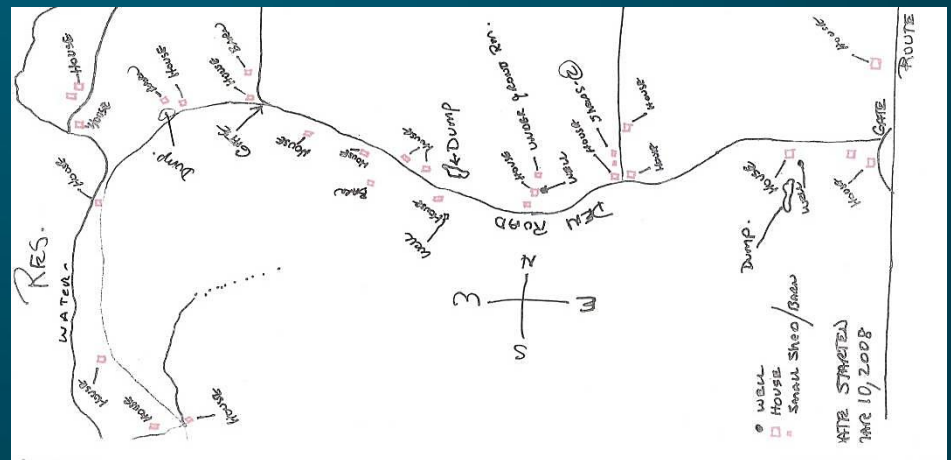
A colored man, name not given, was killed in Easton, Fairfield Co., last week, by a white man named George Godfrey.—G. had punished a black woman for an alleged misdemeanor, which enraged the blackman, and he made an attack on Godfrey, who struck him with the butt end of a dart whip, killing him with two blows.

Looting Easton's Heritage

“Little Egypt” Den Road Archeological Sites

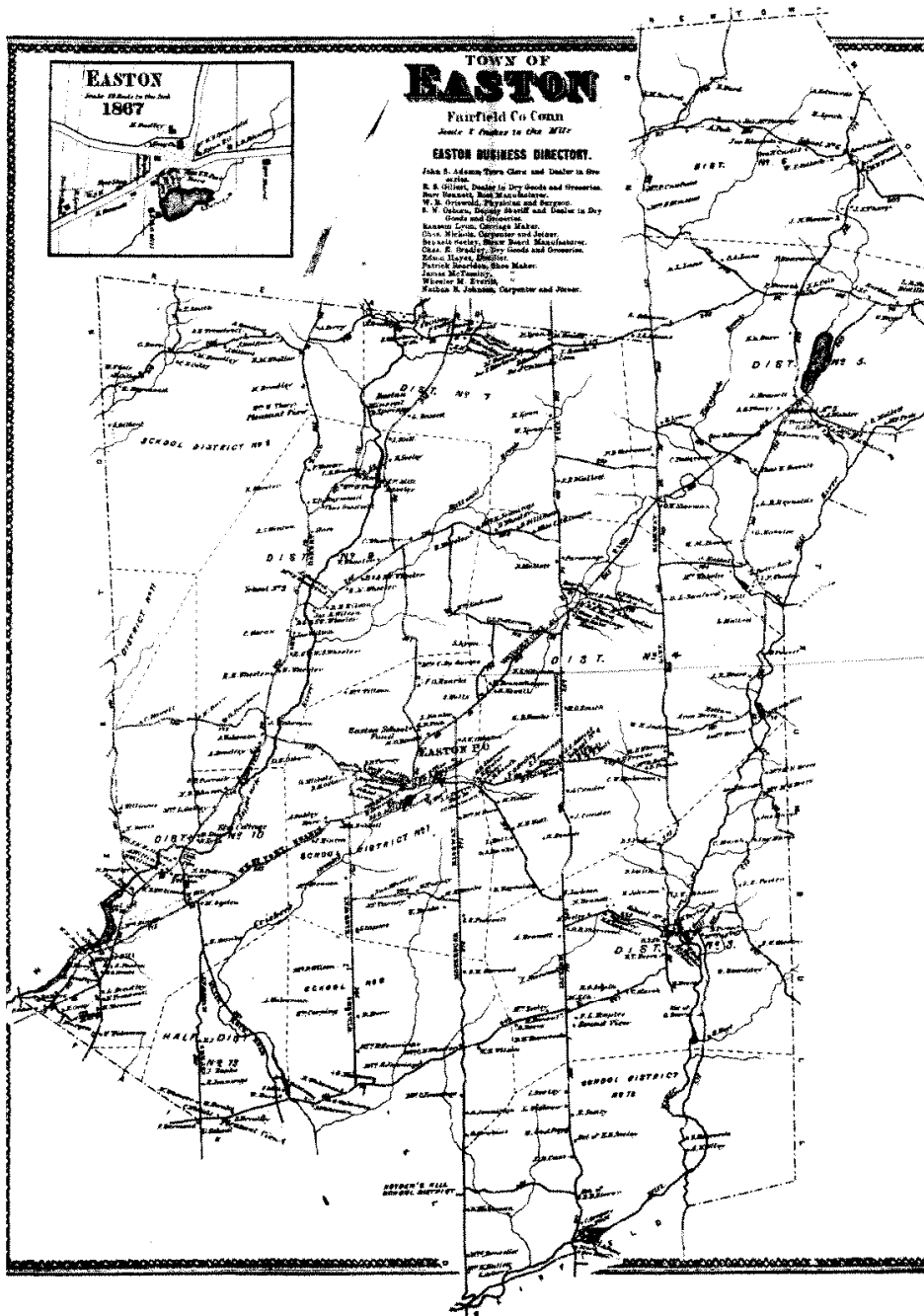


Metal-Detecting Collector's Map, 2008



Often not visible, African-Americans have been in Easton since the 1700s. Their history was not pleasant: from slavery to poverty, and worse. One of the most successful integrated communities was Little Egypt, along Den Road (the old 5th Cross Highway). The Baldwins were the largest Black family, and descendants still live in Redding. Little Egypt has been featured by Yale University in a national internet education module: Citizens ALL: African-Americans in Connecticut 1700-1850. Unfortunately, Little Egypt archeological sites are being systematically looted for private gain by metal-detector clubs. This area should be protected as an archeological preserve.

Town of Easton 1845



In the 1850 Census, Easton contained **1,432** people and **304** households. The town had 13 school districts. Most residents were farmers, supplemented by household trades and wages from local mills.

Detailed maps from 1856, 1867 and 1892 show locations of dwellings, mills, schools, churches, roads and other historic landscape features. We attempted to identify modern addresses for structures and locations on the 1867 Beers map of Easton.

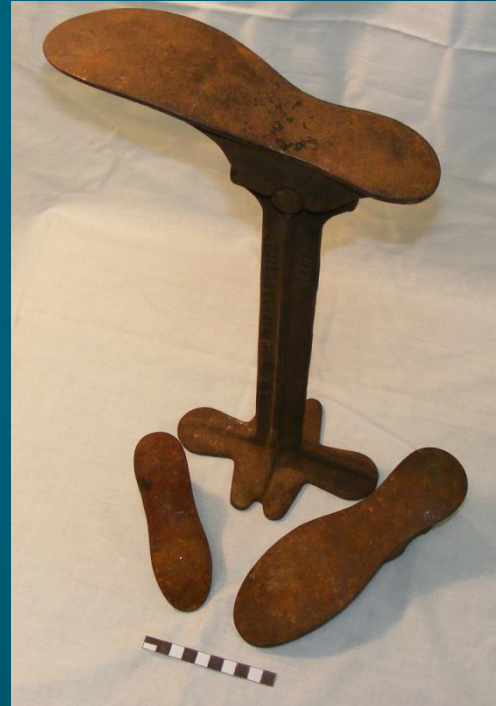
The Town of Easton was formed from Weston in 1845, losing lands in the old Mile Common. In 1850, there were 304 households and 1,432 people. Most residents were farmers, but many also practiced trades or worked in local mills. Detailed maps show roads dwellings, mills, schools and other landscape features from the 1800s.

Easton's Shoemakers

Lathes and cobbler's bench used at the Alfred Perry Cobbler Shop (46-127) in Easton Center (Courtesy of James J. Mellen)



Enterprise Mfg. Co. shoe form, likely used in a Knapp Street workshop (Courtesy of the Historical Society of Easton)



C.L. Passmore Shoe Stretcher, likely used by a Knapp Street cobbler on shoe leather to provide relief for bunions and corns. Patent No. 591 and 492, Oct. 12th, 1897 (Courtesy of the Historical Society of Easton)

Shoemakers were an especially important trade in the 1800s, run in homes and workshops. There relics remain in Easton families, but more history remains buried.

Easton's Industries



Gilbert Mill near Everett Road,
circa 1920 (Aquarion Water
Company Archives)



Gould Mill in Aspetuck, the earliest
mill site in Easton dating to the
1720s (Courtesy of the Historical
Society of Easton)

Most industries were run by water power, which became, which became less competitive through the 1800s. When the Citizens Water Company (managed by P.T. Barnum), later Bridgeport Hydraulic Company (BHC), began purchasing watershed for reservoirs, local industries were early targets.

Easton, 1896 to 1950

From an Agrarian to Suburban Community

Years	1896	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
Population	960	1,052	1,017	1,013	1,262	2,165
Dwelling Houses	276	267	300	331	461	731
Outbuildings	no data	no data	410	452	459	900
Acres of Land (Improved)	14,506	15,352	16,259	16,820	17,587	16,579
Mills, Stores, Distilleries, Manufacturing	13	4	2	0	0	0
Commercial (Stores Only)	no data	6	4	18	21	17
Horses, Asses, Mules	330	311	222	152	89	27
Neet Cattle	882	1,010	956	911	984	606
Coaches, Carriages & Pleasure Wagons	79	no data	no data	no data	no data	no data
Automobiles	no data	26	173	354	642	1,190
BHC Assessment	\$38,875	\$131,000	\$185,600	\$626,040	\$614,759	\$847,340

Sources: U.S. Census and Town of Easton Tax Assessments

This table summarizes Grand Lists from 1896 to 1950 documenting the birth of suburbia. Note the decrease of mills with increases in BHC assessments. There were 13 mills in 1896, none by 1930. In that time, BHC assessments rose from \$39,000 to \$626,000.

Easton, 1896 to 1950

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Sources: U.S. Census and Town of Easton Tax Assessments

Also note the decline of horses with increase of automobiles in Easton. In 1910, there were 311 horses and only 26 cars, but by 1940 there were only 89 horses and 642 cars.

Population of Easton and Surrounding Towns AD 1756 to 2010

Year	Fairfield	Redding	Weston	Easton	Bridgeport	Monroe	Trumbull	Newtown	Stratford	Total
1756	4,450							1,253	3,658	9,361
1774	4,863	1,234						2,229	5,555	13,881
1782	5,276	1,310						2,404	5,473	14,463
1790	4,009	1,503	2,469					2,764	3,241	13,986
1800	3,735	1,632	2,680				1,291	2,903	2,650	14,891
1810	4,125	1,717	2,618				1,241	2,834	2,895	15,430
1820	4,151	1,678	2,767				1,232	2,879	3,438	16,145
1830	4,226	1,686	2,997		2,800	1,522	1,242	3,096	1,814	19,383
1840	3,645	1,674	2,561		4,570	1,351	1,204	3,189	1,808	20,002
1850	3,614	1,754	1,056	1,432	7,560	1,442	1,309	3,338	2,040	23,545
1860	4,379	1,652	1,117	1,350	13,299	1,382	1,474	3,578	2,294	30,525
1870	5,645	1,624	1,054	1,288	19,835	1,226	1,335	3,681	3,032	38,720
1880	3,748	1,540	918	1,145	29,148	1,157	1,323	4,013	4,251	47,243
1890	3,868	1,546	772	1,001	48,866	994	1,453	3,539	2,608	64,647
1900	4,489	1,426	840	960	70,866	1,043	1,587	3,276	3,657	88,144
1910	6,134	1,617	831	1,052	102,054	1,002	1,642	3,012	5,712	123,056
1920	11,475	1,315	703	1,017	143,555	1,161	2,597	2,751	12,347	176,921
1930	17,218	1,599	670	1,013	146,716	1,221	3,624	2,635	19,580	194,276
1940	21,135	1,758	1,053	1,262	147,121	1,728	5,294	4,023	22,580	205,954
1950	30,489	2,037	1,988	2,165	158,709	2,892	8,641	7,448	33,428	247,797
1960	46,183	3,359	4,039	3,407	156,748	6,402	20,379	11,373	45,012	296,902
1970	56,487	5,590	7,417	4,885	156,542	12,047	31,394	16,942	49,775	341,079
1980	54,849	7,272	8,284	5,962	142,546	14,010	32,989	19,107	50,541	335,560
1990	53,418	7,927	8,648	6,303	141,686	16,896	32,016	20,779	49,389	337,062
2000	57,340	8,270	10,037	7,272	139,529	19,246	34,243	25,031	49,976	350,944
2010	59,404	9,158	10,179	7,490	144,229	19,479	30,018	27,560	51,384	358,901

Shading: Towns with parts partitioned to Easton

Census records indicate the relative stability of the agricultural economy from the 1700s through the 1940s, then explosive growth through the 1980s. Little regard was paid to impacts on historic and cultural resources. But these decisions must be made again.

Easton Historic Resource Sensitivity

13 cemeteries (protected by state law)

87 properties date from 1700 to 1799
(high sensitivity)

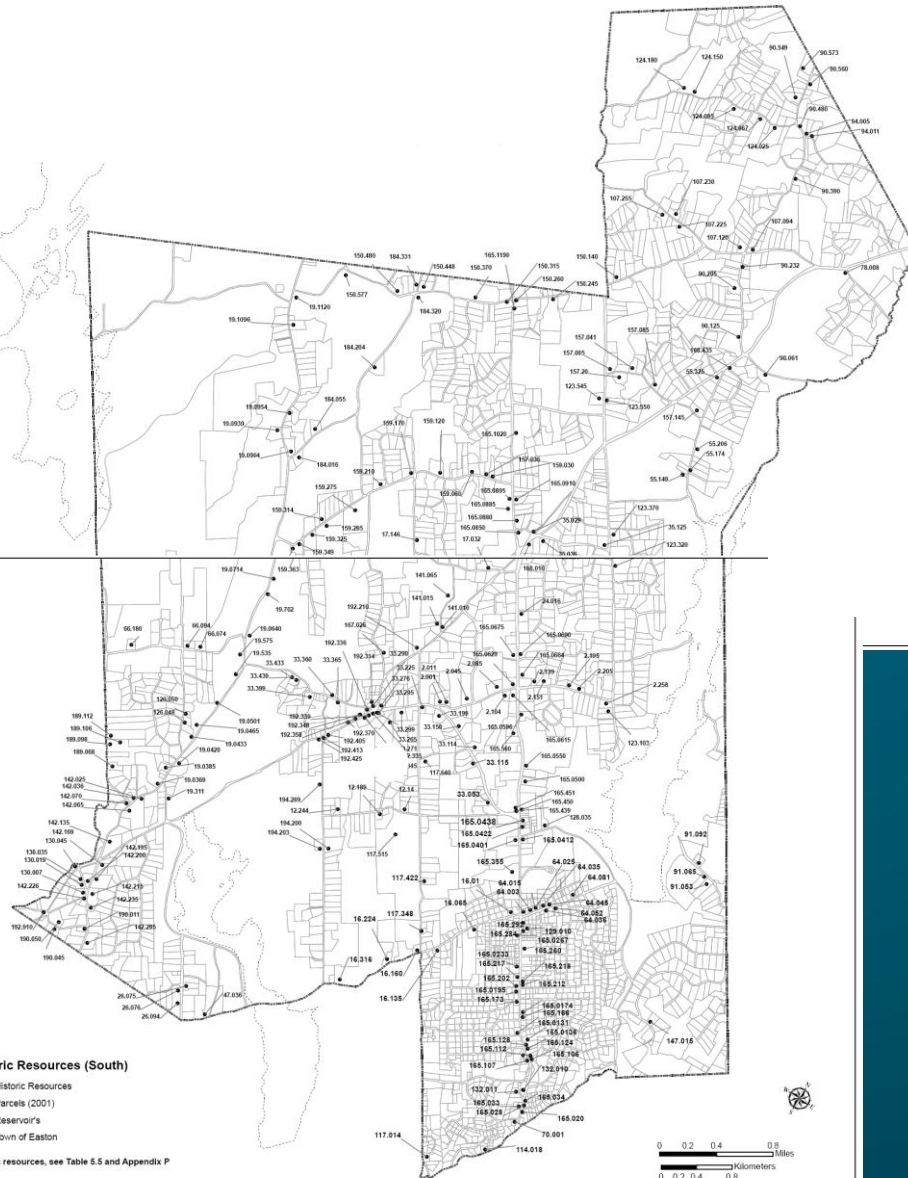
128 properties date from 1800 to 1899
(moderate sensitivity)

800 properties date from 1900 to 1959
(low sensitivity, not mapped)

Figure 5.2B.
Easton's Historic Resources (South)

• Historic Resources
□ Parcels (2001)
□ Reservoir's
□ Town of Easton

Street Codes for historic resources, see Table 5.5 and Appendix P

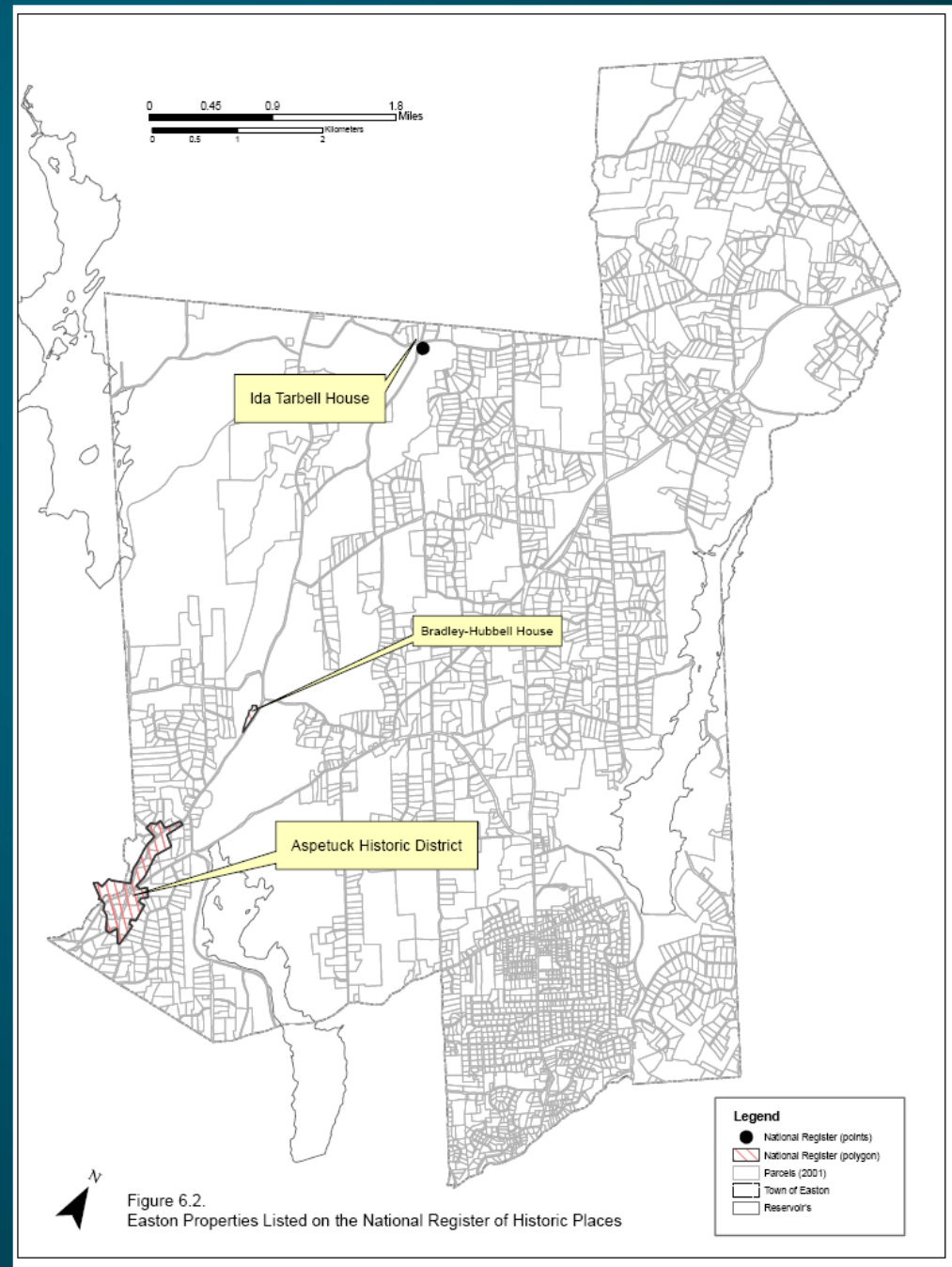


This map summarizes historic resource sensitivity listed by street addresses, including standing structures, cemeteries, buildings shown on historic maps, and other information; including 87 properties dating from the 1700s that are of high sensitivity; and 128 properties from the 1800s that are of moderate sensitivity. Another 800 properties date from 1900 to 1959 (more than 50 years old) and are presently considered of low sensitivity. Additional study is warranted to document all of these resources.

National Register of Historic Places In Easton

The National Park Service and Connecticut SHPO have described criteria for assessing historical and cultural resource significance:

- A.** that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B.** that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C.** that embody the distinctive characteristics of type, period, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D.** that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.



The National Register of Historic Places and the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Office evaluate the significance of historic and cultural resources by 4 criteria:

- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- B. that are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of type, period, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic value, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- D. that have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Only three properties are listed on the National Register, the Aspetuck Historic District, the Ida Tarbell house, and the Bradley-Hubbell house. Properties listed on the National or State Registers receive special study and consideration in permitting federal and state licensed or funded projects, such as roads, new utilities, or other projects, or for state protection of archeological preserves.

Recommendations

Aspetuck Landways has provided recommendations to assist the Town of Easton and its residents to identify preservation priorities and alternative measures to achieve preservation goals. Recommendations include:

- Support and encourage public education programs on the importance of Easton's historical development.
- The town should also encourage property owners to nominate their homes and archeological sites to the Connecticut Register of Historic Places for protections against unwanted government permitted or funded development projects "in your back yard."
- Support designations of state archeological preserves, including a Den Road-Little Egypt historical archeological preserve for a rural interracial community, and an Aspetuck River prehistoric archeological preserve containing important Paleo-Indian and Early Archaic sites and later Native American occupations.
- Review Subdivision Regulations to protect the Easton's character, its neighborhoods, and communities through preservation of buildings, open space, views, farmland, scenic roads and rivers.
- Amend Subdivision and Zoning regulations to require professional review for historic, archeological and architectural significance as part of each application.
- Support the establishment of Local Historic Districts and Historic District Commissions.
- Support an ordinance to designate Local Historic Properties.
- The Town of Easton is encouraged to seek Certified Local Government designation.
- Consider special property tax incentives to preserve historic homes.
- The Town is encouraged to investigate Historic Overlay Zoning.
- Support the establishment of an Architectural Advisory Board to review plans for commercial, municipal and institutional construction.
- Initiate adoption of additional town and state Scenic Roads, and strengthen the Town Scenic Road Ordinance.
- The Town is encouraged to identify and abandon unused public rights-of-way and protect them through historic easements.
- The Town is encouraged to support continuing historical and archeological research

Aspetuck Landways presented a number of preservation priorities and recommendations to achieve preservation goals. There are too many to discuss at this time, but I would like offer recommendations from our report into the public record. Our recommendations boil down to a simple premise: that respect for a community's history is one responsibility of citizenship. We are all stewards of Easton's past, present and future. These are among the great joys of living in a small Connecticut town.

Other Documents Submitted by *Aspetuck Landways*

- *Historical and Archeological Assessment Survey of Easton, Connecticut - **Interim Report***, November 2007, submitted to the Town of Easton Planning and Zoning Commission and The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation;
- Bi-monthly **progress reports**;
- Stipends for **7 students** who participated during 2007 in public archeological excavations at Toth Park and Samuel Staples Middle School;
- **129 Connecticut Historic Resources Inventory Forms** were submitted to the Office of the State Archeologist (OSA) and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for new Easton archeological sites (confidential);
- **Historic documents** from the Connecticut State Archives and other sources pertaining to North Fairfield Parish were photocopied and bound to aid historical research and education in Easton;
- **1,933 historic deeds** (1748-1799) from North Fairfield Parish in the *Fairfield Register of Deeds* (Volumes: 13, 14, 15 and 16) and *Weston Register of Deeds* (Volumes: 1, 2, 3 and 4) were indexed for Grantors and Grantees, abstracted, photocopied and bound to aid historical research and education;
- **Historic newspaper articles** pertaining to Fairfield and North Fairfield Parish were printed and bound to aid historical research and education in Easton; and
- Publication in the ***Bulletin of the Archaeological Society of Connecticut*** (2011).

END