



Historic Resources Annual Monitoring Report

Organization: Town of Allenstown, New Hampshire
Historic Resource Name: Old Allenstown Meeting House
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5, 2015

Phone: 603-856-4871
Date Completed: July

- This report **must be submitted** to the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources along with all required photographs. Mail to: The NHDHR, 19 Pillsbury Street, Concord, NH 03301
- Please feel free to **use additional pages** if there is not sufficient space on this form.

The checklist below is to remind and encourage you to look at your historic resource as a whole on an annual basis and to note the condition of the following elements (if applicable). This is not a comprehensive list and building elements specific to your resource should be addressed as applicable:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Foundation –
Look for moisture penetration, cracks, spalling | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Windows and Doors – Check for water seepage, cracked panes, rotted sash, etc. |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masonry (Including walls, chimneys, etc.) –
Check for cracks, missing mortar, damaged brick or stones, etc. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Paint – Check for flaking, blistering, weathering |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wood (Including siding, trim, eaves, cornice, etc.) –
Look for rot, flaking paint, deterioration | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Walls and Ceilings – Visually inspect for cracks, chips, stains and loose paint/wallpaper |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Roof (Including flashing, gutters and downspouts) –
Check for missing, cracked, broken or loose materials | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Interior Floors – Inspect for warping, excessive wear, damage |

Please use the space provided below to make note of your observations of the above items with a brief description of the condition and its location (i.e., peeling paint on north elevation below roofline). In areas where problems are observed, are there plans to remedy the problems?

The Old Allenstown Meeting House remains in excellent condition, as shown in the photographs, taken on July 4, 2015, that accompany this report. The final major component of its interior rehabilitation--the replacement of a ceiling that had been destroyed by fire in 1985--was completed in June 2013. The final major component of its exterior rehabilitation--the reproduction of a split rail fence duplicating one that had been built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1937--was completed in November 2013.

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In consultation with the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources, underpinning stones along the rear (north) foundation of the building were tightened and made vermin-proof in August 2014. Also in consultation with the Division of Historical Resources, the floor of the pulpit was reinforced to permit greater live loading, as reported below. There has been no substantive work, other than routine inspection and cleaning, since completion of the underpinning work and the pulpit reinforcement.

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Historic Resource Name: Old Allenstown Meeting House

What is the overall observed condition of the building?

Excellent Good Fair Poor

Please describe:

As noted above, all exterior surfaces and interior finishes of the Old Allenstown Meeting House are now fully rehabilitated. Although the original roof of the building was destroyed by fire in 1985, the remainder of the structure largely escaped damage and today is in better structural and cosmetic condition than it was before the fire.

Did you observe any major additions or modifications to the building?

Yes No

Document with Photos and Describe:

The Old Allenstown Meeting House remains in the same well-maintained condition that was reported in 2014. The only interior modification to the building in 2015 was the reinforcement of the pulpit floor to permit the safe occupancy of the pulpit by more than one or two individuals, as is sometimes required by the nature of programs in the meeting house. Reinforcement of the pulpit floor was carried out on November 10, 2014, following review of the proposed work by the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources under the terms of the perpetual preservation easement that safeguards the building, with approval given by the Division on September 2, 2014.

The single visible change that has not previously been reported has been the removal of the CCC-planted red pine trees in the vicinity of the meeting house (please see below, "Additional comments").

Did you observe any violations of the terms of the Stewardship Agreement/Term Preservation Easement?

Yes No

Document with Photos and Describe:

The Stewardship Agreement has been monitored by LCHIP staff and the perpetual preservation easement has been monitored by the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources.

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Did you observe any other issues or areas of concern?

Yes No

Document with Photos and Describe:

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Historic Resource Name: Old Allentown Meeting House

Please answer the following questions about completed and anticipated projects, organizational structure, and media coverage.

1. Projects completed during past year (Summarize briefly what, if any work you've done to the building over the past year. For example – You replaced the roof):

As reported above, underpinning stones along the rear (north) foundation of the building were tightened and made vermin-proof in August 2014, and the pulpit floor was reinforced for increased live loading capacity in November 2014.

There have been no substantial projects at the building in 2015.

2. Projects planned for next year (Summarize briefly what, if any work you have planned to undertake on the building in the upcoming year. For example – Front landscaping work and improvements to the parking area will be done in the upcoming year.):

No undertakings other than routine maintenance are anticipated for 2015.

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3. Organizational update (Summarize briefly any significant changes that have occurred in your organization in the past year. For example - new President or Chair of the Board with contact info, major fundraising efforts undertaken or planned, or a new tenant has moved in.):

The Old Allenstown Meeting House is now under the administrative stewardship of a town-created committee, the Old Allenstown Meeting House Committee. This committee supplants the former efforts of the Old Allenstown Meeting House Steering Committee and of the Allenstown Historical Society, both of which worked to preserve and rehabilitate the meeting house on behalf of the Town of Allenstown but were not official town committees.

The Old Allenstown Meeting House Committee was created under the following RESOLUTION:

"The Board of Selectmen hereby creates the Old Allenstown Meeting House Committee (OAMHC). The OAMHC is a committee created by the Board of Selectmen with the authority and responsibility for managing the operation of the Old Allenstown Meeting House, located at 150 Deerfield Road in Allenstown.

"The OAMHC, at the direction of the Board of Selectmen, shall maintain and operate the OAMH in accordance with the laws, rules and regulations of the Town of Allenstown, the State of New Hampshire, and the United States. Further, the OAMHC shall ensure compliance with the Historic Preservation Easement granted to the State of New Hampshire, Department of Cultural Resources, acting through the Division of Historical Resources.

"The OAMHC shall operate the OAMH in a manner consistent with its historical intent. The enhancement of public education in regard to the town meeting, and other public uses that the building has served, shall be the focus of this effort. The OAMHC may receive staff support from the departments of the town, other public, non-profit, and private entities.

"The OAMHC shall prepare an annual operating budget which shall be provided to the Board of Selectmen in accordance with the schedule of submission established by the Board. The OAMHC shall have the authority to expend funds within its approved budget to ensure the purposes as described above in accordance with the policies of the Town. The OAMHC shall submit an annual report to the Board, to be included in the Town Report in accordance with the schedule established by the Board.

"The members of the committee shall serve without compensation and shall serve at the pleasure of the Board of Selectmen. Committee members must comply with the policies and procedures of the Town. The committee shall be composed of five members. The members shall be appointed by the Board of Selectmen for a term of three years. The terms of office shall be staggered. Three out of the five members must be citizens of the Town of Allenstown. One of the five positions will be a member of the Board of Selectmen. The committee shall appoint its own officers, to include at a minimum a chairperson and vice-chairperson, on an annual basis.

"The OAMHC shall keep minutes of its meetings and comply with all applicable provisions of RSA 91-A as revised. The minutes of said meetings shall be filed with the Town Clerk in accordance with the provisions of RSA 41:58 as revised."

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In accordance with this resolution, the Old Allenstown Meeting House Committee is composed of Armand Verville (chair), Claudette Verville, Kate Walker (selectmen's representative), Roland Martel, and James Garvin (secretary).

Agendas for committee meetings, approved minutes of completed meetings, and documents pertaining to the meeting house (including previous NHDHR/LCHIP monitoring reports) are posted on the Allenstown town website at:

<http://www.allenstownnh.gov/old-allenstown-meeting-house-committee>

4. Any media attention the resource has had over past year or is upcoming (Briefly summarize any media attention you have received in the past year or plan to receive in the coming year.):

The chief media attention for the Old Allenstown Meeting House in 2014 was recognition of the rehabilitation project by the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance on May 13th as one of seven Preservation Achievement Awards recognizing outstanding accomplishment. The award paid tribute to over ten years of planning, fund raising, and work by the Town of Allenstown, the town's steering committee, and the Allenstown Historical Society.

Anticipated major media coverage for 2015 centers on the celebration of the 200th anniversary of construction of the meeting house in 1815. The celebration will occur on July 18, 2015, and is expected to attract substantial media attention.

Additional comments:

One major development has affected the setting of the Old Allenstown Meeting House, and can be seen in some of the photographs that accompany this report.

In 2012, foresters verified the presence of red pine scale in the stands of red or Norway pine (*Pinus resinosa*) that stood adjacent to the small land parcel on which the Old Allenstown Meeting house is located. These stands were planted by the Civilian Conservation Corps as part of a land reclamation effort intended to counteract the lingering effects of a major forest fire of May 1914, which had threatened to destroy the meeting house.

In 1940, CCC Veterans' Company 1107V, composed of veterans of World War I, planted 25-30,000 three-year-old red pine seedlings in a 50-acre area adjacent to the Old Allenstown Meeting House. The planting was sponsored by the New Hampshire Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, which had restored the meeting house in 1909 and maintained the building until 1991. The project celebrated the Golden Jubilee or fiftieth anniversary of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution, which had been founded in 1890. The tract was named the "Golden Jubilee Penny Pines Forest," commemorating the raising of the funds for purchase of the seedlings through

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donated pennies. The "Penny Pines Forest" was commemorated by a bronze tablet affixed to a boulder opposite the intersection of Depot Road and Deerfield Road. Dedication ceremonies for the new planting were held in the meeting house.

Red pine scale is an exotic, invasive scale insect that has no known control other than the destruction of the infested trees. Accordingly, all the red pine trees in Bear Brook State Park, including the survivors of 25-30,000 seedlings that were planted in the "Golden Jubilee Penny Pines Forest" in 1940, were removed during the winter of 2012-13, as reported in the Concord Monitor:

<http://www.concordmonitor.com/home/2857691-95/trees-pine-red-guinn?print=true>

The visual result of this operation was the removal of much of the mature forest that had provided a setting for the Old Allenstown Meeting House. Eastern white pine trees (*Pinus strobus*) are not affected by this scale, and mature white pines were left standing west of the meeting house and in and around the cemetery south of the building. Great care was taken to protect the thousands of white pine seedlings that were growing as an understory among the red pines.

Today, this understory, released from the shade of the trees planted by the CCC, is rapidly growing. In time, the white pines will mature into an extensive stand. This stand will replicate the natural white pine forest that was growing before the forest fire of 1914 in the area that later became Bear Brook State Park. Thus, while the removal of the Penny Pines has created a temporary alteration in the setting of the Old Allenstown Meeting House, the ultimate result of the removal program will be a forest cover that closely resembles the setting of the first century of the existence of the historic building.

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