

Section V.L.

Historic and Archeological Resources

I. Prehistoric Archaeological Sites

There are 25 known prehistoric archaeological sites, all shell midden/camp sites on the shore. Seventeen sites are or may be eligible for placement on the National Register of Historic Places. Systematic, professional archaeological survey is limited to a couple of areas of shoreline and one subdivision project.

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (Commission) suggests that the rest of the Islesboro shoreline and shores of small islands in the community need systematic professional archaeological survey.

II. Archaeological Sites

Islesboro's historic archaeological sites include the following eight shipwrecks:

Islesboro Archaeological Sites			
ME 214-001	"Henry L. Peckham"	American wreck, schooner	June 1910
ME 214-002	"Alice E. Clark"	American wreck, schooner	July 1909
ME 214-003	"L.V. Ostrom"	American wreck, gas screw	1873 - 1932
ME 214-004	"Alida"	American wreck, vessel	1898
ME 214-005	"Collins Howes Jr."	American wreck, schooner	1886 - October 1906
ME 214-006	"Milo"	American wreck, unidentified	1825
ME 214-007	"Pendelton's Satisfaction "	American wreck, unidentified	Unknown
ME 214-008	"Walpole"	American wreck, steam paddle	April, 1863
Source: Maine Historic Preservation Commission, June 2008			

No professional survey of historic archaeological sites has been conducted to date in Islesboro. The Commission recommends that future fieldwork could focus on agricultural, residential, and industrial sites relating to the earliest Euro-American settlement of the Town beginning in the late 1760s.

III. Historic Building Inventory

The following properties are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- Drexel Estate, The Bluff
- Philler Cottage, Main Road, Dark Harbor
- George S. Tiffany Cottage, Off Main Road, Dark Harbor
- Christ Church (Episcopal)
- Free Will (Upland) Baptist Church
- Grindle Point Light Station, Ferry Road
- Alice L. Pendleton Library

The Commission suggests that a comprehensive survey of Islesboro's historic above-ground resources needs to be conducted in order to identify other properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places.

There are a number of other locally valuable historic churches, community buildings, and private residences in Islesboro, some of which are depicted below.

- Second Baptist Church
- St Mary of the Isles Catholic Church
- Baptist Church/Sewing Circle Building
- Islesboro Historical Society

IV. Condition of Historic Properties

Most public historic properties are in very good shape and are well maintained. The Free Will Upland Church is being painted and needs steeple repairs. While it appears private historic properties are in good condition, not enough information is available to make this determination with certainty. (Friends of Midcoast Maine interviews with Historical Society members, September 2008)

V. Protection of and Threats to Historic and Archaeological Properties

A review of local ordinances reveals that historic properties are protected in two places in the Development Review Ordinance. Chapter 4 Criteria of Approval, § 4.1.8 indicates that development applications “will not have an undue adverse effect on... historic sites” Chapter 13 General Performance Standards, § 13.5 provides that “in development or subdivisions larger than fifteen (15) acres in size or which contain significant ...historic areas, the [Planning] Board may require the developer to provide up to ten (10) percent of the total area of the development or subdivision as open space.”

Identified archaeological resources are not protected in either provision nor are they defined as “historic properties or historic areas in Chapter 24 Definitions. Furthermore, the criteria of approval is vague and may not be defensible if a permit is denied based on the standard, as written. The general performance standard offers no protection for historic sites on properties that are not defined as a “development” or subdivision smaller than 15 acres. Moreover, the standard itself does not direct the Planning Board to protect the historic resource within the required open space.

The greatest threat to Islesboro’s historic properties is funding for ongoing maintenance as well as the declining population of young people who may have an interest in preserving and protecting these properties. (Friends of Midcoast Maine interviews Historical Society members, September 2008)

VI. Historical Society

The Islesboro Historical Society (Society) was established in 1964 to prepare for the 200th Anniversary of the settlement and 175th year of incorporation of the Town. It has a volunteer board of 23-25 members and employs a part-time archivist for six months per year, three mornings a week, for two hours each morning.

The Society saves \$5,000 each year to pay for the cost of a replacement roof on its building, which is located on the site of the First Baptist Meeting and Town House

(1794-1804), and served as the old town hall and high school. A museum is located on the second floor. The building also includes a photography gallery and library.

The Society recently received a grant from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to participate in the Maine Memory Network. This project involves a team of three organizations – the library, the school, and the Society – who will digitize historic photos of the island. The school will provide the labor taking photos. (Source: Friends of Midcoast Maine Interviews with Historical Society members, September 2008)

The Society has published three books that provide valuable information about the history and historic resources of Islesboro:

1. History of Islesborough Maine by J.P. Farrow a history of Islesborough 1764-1893 reprinted by the Historical Society.
2. History of Islesboro, Maine 1893-1983 published by the Historical Society.
3. The Summer Cottages of Islesboro 1890-1930 by Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. published by the Historical Society.

VII. Issues and Implications

1. Current regulations focus on historic properties. Should the Town expand its focus and extend protection to archaeological resources, as well? Should the Town conduct a systematic survey of its shorelines, as recommended by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, to identify those worthy of placement on the National Register of Historic Places and/or to provide protection in local ordinances? What changes to local ordinances are necessary to provide appropriate protection?
2. Should the Town conduct professional surveys of historic archaeological sites focusing on agricultural, residential, and industrial sites relating to the earliest Euro-American settlement of the Town beginning in the late 1760s, as recommended by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, to identify those worthy of placement

on the National Register and/or to provide protection in local ordinances? What changes to local ordinances are necessary to provide appropriate protection?

3. Should the Town amend current ordinances to provide greater protection of buildings and sites on the National Register? Should it extend protection to locally valuable historic churches, community buildings, and private residences? What changes to local ordinances are necessary to provide appropriate protection?
4. Are there other properties that are eligible for the National Register for which the Town should seek designation on the National Register?
5. What should the Town do to help generate funds for ongoing maintenance of historic resources? What might it do to create greater interest in protecting and maintaining historic properties?