City of Rockland
2002 Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 5

CULTURAL, HISTORIC and ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

State Goal:

To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Rockland's cultural resources reflect the total effects of civilization, and therefore include not only the physical improvements and artifacts, but also the customs, arts and activities of its residents, workforce and visitors. Rockland's mix of businesses has undergone major changes since the last comprehensive plan was adopted, reflecting the City's evolution from a primarily resource-based industrial community to a regional center for social and medical services, retailing and tourist-oriented activities. The 2000 Rockland-Thomaston Area Chamber of Commerce Guidebook lists 23 member restaurants and two pubs and taverns in the City, three of which have musical or other events on a fairly regular basis. Ethnic specialties include Chinese, Japanese, Mediterranean, Mexican and Thai. Restaurants range from national fast-food franchises to locally owned and operated establishments, often emphasizing regional seafood in their menus. Both year-round and seasonal operations are included.

Rockland's long-time role as a County seat is reflected in the large number of not-for-profit organizations located here. The 2000 Chamber Guidebook lists the following: American Legion, American Red Cross, Atlantic Challenge Foundation/The Apprenticeshop, Coastal Community Action, Elks Club, Friends of Rockland Public Library, Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Island Institute, Knox Golden Kiwanis, Lions Club of Rockland, Masonic Temple, Midcoast Mental Health Center, Methodist Conference Home, Rockland Kiwanis Club, Rockland Rotary Club, Rockland Share the Pride, Sea Scouts, Senior Spectrum, and The Shore Village Historical Society. Hurricane Island Outward Bound's administrative headquarters are located here.

Rockland's religious institutions have a long history with the first meetinghouse having been established in 1795. As with the non-profit organizations listed above, the City serves as a regional center for religious establishments and presents a wide diversity of denominations. In early 2000, there were fifteen religious facilities and a few other less formal religious groups within the City's limits.

Table 5-1
Religious Facilities in Rockland

Denomination	Facility	Location
Baptist	First Baptist Church	213 Limerock St.
Baptist	Littlefield Memorial Baptist Church	1 Waldo Ave.
Congregational	Rockland Congregational Church	180 Limerock St.
Church of God	Soul's Harbor	59 Main St.
Episcopal	St. Peter's Church	11 White St.
Grace Pentecostal	God's Lighthouse	78 Main St.
Jewish	Adas Yoshuron Synagogue	50 Willow St.
Methodist	Aldersgate United Methodist Church	156 Lake View Dr.
Nondenominational	Grace Bible Fellowship	Sherers Lane
Pentecostal	Living Waters Revival Center	120 Camden St.
Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints	Community Church of Christ	22 Highland St.
Roman Catholic	St. Bernard's Church	150 Broadway
Salvation Army	Church	16 Brewster St.
Unitarian-Universalist	First Universalist	345 Broadway
United Pentecostal	Calvary Tabernacle	37 Water St.

Probably Rockland's biggest cultural attraction is the William A. Farnsworth Art Museum at 356 Main Street in the downtown area of the City. Their original building was remodeled in 1993-94 to provide additional gallery space and a gift shop on Main Street. New buildings were constructed adjacent to the museum and the Farnsworth homestead between Museum and Elm Streets. The Farnsworth acquired the former Methodist Church on Union Street February 17, 1995 and has rehabilitated and converted the building into the Center for the Wyeth Family, which opened in the summer of 1998. Along with the Wyeth Center, the museum acquired a number of residential properties between Masonic and Grace Streets and razed them. The former J. J. Newberry's department store on Main Street was acquired by the museum on December 6, 1996 and, after extensive remodeling, opened as the Jamien Morehouse Wing on June 25, 2000. The Gamble Education Center, at the corner of Union and Grace Streets, opened on July 15, 2000. The museum specializes in Maine and American art and has various educational programs available to area residents.

On September 14,1998, the City accepted ownership of the Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse from the Maine Lights Program, which was created to transfer ownership of now automated lighthouses from the U. S. Coast Guard to municipalities and other private organizations. The Friends of Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse has been formed to raise the necessary funds to restore and maintain the lighthouse and to eventually open it to the public. Some maintenance and cleaning were done in 1998 and 1999, and the building has not yet opened to the public.

The Rockland Public Library was completed in 1903 as a result of a gift from Andrew Carnegie. Constructed of local granite, this building sits on a landscaped site on the west side of Union Street. After a successful fundraising campaign, ground was broken on April 8, 2000 for an addition, which approximately doubled its floor area and created space for the facilities necessary to a modern library. The library expansion was completed in August 2001.

The Lincoln Street Center for Arts and Education is housed in the former Rockland High School at 24 Lincoln Street in the heart of an historic residential neighborhood just two blocks from Main Street. Facilities include a 500-seat theater, a children's museum, and an artist's studios. The Lincoln Street Center for Arts and Education is intended as a place for artists' studios, as the home for the Mid-Coast Children's Museum and for stage performances. The Children's Museum has been known to Rockland residents primarily through its annual children's tent at the Lobster Festivals and through occasional events held at the Recreation Center and the Samoset Resort. A permanent location in the Lincoln Street Center brings to the area the advantages children's museums have brought to Portland, Augusta and Bangor.

Although major improvements were completed to the auditorium at Rockland District High School in early 2000, that auditorium is, of necessity, closely tied into the school's academic programs and is only occasionally available for events for the general public. Unlike nearby Rockport and Camden, Rockland has no publicly owned Opera House available year-round for cultural events. Thomaston's Watts Hall, though smaller than the opera houses, also features an auditorium with a stage for performances. Perhaps civic support for the Lincoln Street Center can result in creating a number of public cultural facilities available to all Rockland residents.

In early 2000, there was considerable discussion of a possible amphitheater intended for outdoor performances at Harbor Park. However, that site now contains the Public Landing and the Fishermens' Memorial and there had been no general agreement regarding any proposals.

Rockland's Recreation Center, constructed as the Community Building during the Great Depression of the 1930s, was designed primarily for indoor sports such as basketball, handball and bowling. While some activities are no longer offered, the center remains an important public recreational asset offering many after school and vacation period activities for children.

The preservation of culture through experiential education is a major emphasis of the Apprenticeshop. There, various skills associated with the building of boats and ships are taught to individuals enrolled in a wide variety of courses and programs. While some prepare individuals for positions in the commercial world of yacht and boat building and repair, others are intended to foster skills and activities associated with the repair, maintenance and use of personal recreational small craft. They have made an increasing effort to involve local youth and have been among the supporters of local sailing programs for both youth and adults. As a byproduct of their educational activities, the Apprenticeshop has constructed a number of small boats either under contract or on speculation. The Atlantic Challenge, with which the Apprenticeshop is associated, has sponsored international competition in the handling of traditional vessels under oar and sail.

The Penobscot School, a private language school, offers Rockland residents a variety of courses and programs in languages, including intensive "immersion" courses and less intensive sessions including meals featuring foods associated with a language and involving participants in speaking that language.

Many of their instructors come from foreign countries, thereby bringing both language and culture with them. The school also brings students from foreign countries to assist them in learning English.

Rockland has had movie theaters that showed first run movies. The last theater in Rockland closed in 2001. The theater has been purchased but redevelopment plans have not been announced.

In addition to the cultural facilities listed above, Rockland has a number of scheduled events that attract regional and national attention. By long-standing tradition, Rockland does not hold a major event around Independence Day, that being the occasion for the Thomaston Fourth of July festivities, featuring a major parade, barbecues, concerts and fireworks.

A fairly recent addition to the Rockland calendar is the Summer Solstice Night when Main Street is closed off for street dancing, live music, entertainment and special events.

During the summer of 2002, the North Atlantic Blues Festival celebrated its sixth year in Rockland. This festival has grown in popularity with residents and tourists and attracts more visitors every year. Major musical events of the Blues Festival are held on the public waterfront at Harbor Park, and along Main Street, which is closed off for the night. Other bands perform at local establishments throughout the City's commercial sections.

Friendship Sloop Days, a gathering of traditional Maine lobstering sloops now converted for pleasure use, takes place in late July. The parade of sloops and races held in the harbor provide the general public with a glimpse of regional history. The boats and their owners gather from many locations, most from Maine and other coastal New England harbors.

The Maine Lobster Festival, which marked its 55th anniversary in 2002, is Rockland's major seasonal event. Parades, foot races, evening entertainment, arts and crafts displays, carnival rides, and other activities and vendors are all centered on the lobster industry. Many tons of lobsters and other seafood are consumed annually and many spectators enjoy the famous lobster crate races held just off the Public Landing. King Neptune and his Court are in attendance for the crowning of the Sea Goddess, with escorts from the crews of visiting Navy and local Coast Guard vessels. The festival is held the first week in August and is staffed largely by local volunteers.

Rockland's cultural history includes the immigration of Italians to work in the limerock quarries and Irish to tend the kilns. The Italians settled primarily in the City's North End while the South End accommodated many of the Irish. Finnish immigrants were recruited to work in the granite industry, some of which was headquartered in Rockland. The Finns organized community dances to raise money for the early "March of Dimes" campaigns. Granite quarries were located nearby on Vinalhaven and Hurricane Islands and on the mainland in St. George. Rockland no longer contains any ethnic neighborhoods.

HISTORIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

History

It is important for communities to remember and preserve traces of their past - houses, churches, farms, grange halls, mills, villages and neighborhoods, town halls and libraries. Such buildings and sites contribute texture and richness to a community's character, bring history alive for children, and set a standard for our own contributions to future generations.

Little is known for certain of the pre-European settlements along the shore of Penobscot Bay. Native American camps are known to have existed; indeed, into the early 20th century, Native Americans, primarily Penobscots, occasionally migrated through and camped in the general vicinity.

The area now encompassed by the City of Rockland was not settled by European colonists until after the French and Indian War ended in 1763. John Lermond established a temporary logging camp on the shore at what is now Lermond's Cove in 1767. Sometime between 1765 and 1769, Isaiah Tolman established a farm on the shores of Madambettox Pond (now Chickawaukie Lake) and later built a grist and sawmill on Meadow Brook. The first permanent house constructed in what is now downtown Rockland was built by Reed in 1769, and sold to John Lindsey. Jonathan Crockett and his wife, Elionai, settled in the North End that same year. The area now including the City of Rockland was known as the "Shore Village" of the Middle Town, incorporated as Thomaston in 1777. At that time, Upper Town was what is now Warren and Lower Town included what are now Cushing, South Thomaston and Owl's Head.

In 1775, Thomaston formed a Committee of Safety and Correspondence and raised a company of about 250 militia from Thomaston, Shore Village and other nearby settlements. The few settlers suffered the depredations of the British during the Revolutionary War, including a raid by a British privateer at Jameson Point in 1779. Tensions between Tories and patriots continued until the end of the Revolution in 1781.

The first church service in what is now Rockland was held in February of 1784 at Blackington's Corner, near where the first frame barns were raised in 1785. Lime burning, later to become a main stay of 19th century Rockland's economy, was begun along the shore of Owls Head Bay by George Ulmer in 1789. The first store opened at Blackington's Corner in 1794. In 1798, the Shore Village voted $300 to support local schools. The first lime shed was constructed in 1804.

The Embargo of 1807 and the subsequent War of 1812 seriously affected commerce, with various local vessels taken by British naval vessels and privateers. However, no local raids were reported, perhaps because militias were posted at Lermond's Cove and Jameson's Point.

After 1815, the development of what is now downtown Rockland was steady and soon outstripped the earlier centers of settlement. In 1820, the first meetinghouse was erected on Limerock Street near Old County Road. The intersection of Old County Road and Limerock Street was known as Brown's Corner. It was the site of a store and tavern and of the first limerock quarries established by John Ulmer. Limerock Street was the road by which the limerock was conveyed from these quarries to the kilns on the shore. The first Post Office was established in East Thomaston in December 1824. Rockland Harbor, although somewhat exposed, became the focal point of three major industries: shipbuilding, lime-burning in the great kilns, which lined the shore, and fishing.

Originally part of Thomaston, Rockland, along with South Thomaston (including what is now Owls Head) voted to separate on March 13, 1848 and was incorporated as the Town of East Thomaston on July 28, 1848 by act of the Maine Legislature. In May 1850, the citizens of East Thomaston successfully petitioned the Legislature to change the name of the town to Rockland, in recognition of its predominant industry. Rockland was incorporated as a City in 1854, the eighth in Maine. In 1850, the population stood at 2,600; by 1860 it had burgeoned to 7,317.

In 1853, a series of fires in the business district beset Rockland. These occurred on January 1, February 28, March 28 and May 22. Rebuilding was immediate and such was the economic climate in

the thriving town that in spite of the capital losses, a business boom resulted. This pre-Civil War period of prosperity included the construction of a number of large homes and commercial blocks and culminated in 1860, with the creation of Knox County with Rockland as the county seat.

While never a shipbuilding center on the scale of Bath, Rockland's shipyards constructed vessels, both sail and steam, from the last decade of the 18th century through the 19th and 20th centuries. Rockland was briefly the center of clipper ship building in Maine, launching ten clippers, totaling 13,179 registered tonnage, 12 percent of the number and 14.6 percent of the sharp-modeled, heavily canvassed tonnage of the State of Maine during the 1850s. One of the more famous was the clipper ship RED JACKET, designed by Samuel H. Pook of Boston and built in 1853 by "Deacon" George Thomas under the direction of Capt. Isaac Taylor, also of Boston. Her building site, just to the north of Lermond's Cove, is currently unmarked. Her registry (Custom House) dimensions are listed as 251.2 ft. length, 44.0 ft. beam and 31.0 ft. depth of hold, for a tonnage of 2,305. She drew 24 feet of water. Following her record-breaking 1854 maiden voyage from New York to Liverpool of thirteen days, one hour and twenty-five minutes, she was chartered, then sold to British owners and engaged in the packet trade to Australia, where she also made some remarkably fast passages. Thomas, who had constructed the 370 ton clipper bark SPRINGBOK in Rockland in 1851 and the 1,691 ton clipper ship DEFIANCE and the 1,121 ton clipper ship RATTLER in 1852, moved his business to Quincy, Massachusetts following completion of the RED JACKET in November of 1853. In addition to Thomas, Horace Merriam built the 1,637 ton LIVE YANKEE in 1853, F. W. Rhodes (or Rhoades) built the 868 ton ANGLO-SAXON and the 1,119 ton PROGRESSIVE in 1853, Merriam built the 1,985 ton EUTERPE and Robert Trowbridge built the 708 ton YANKEE RANGER in 1854. Rhodes ended Rockland's clipper ship era with the launching of the 1,375-ton YOUNG MECHANIC in 1855. All but the last were built for owners outside Rockland.

Rockland's shipyards tended to construct vessels for local trades and owners. Between 1837 and 1920, 275 vessels were known to have been constructed in Rockland.[1] Repair work sustained those shipyards that survived into the late 20th century. World Wars I and II saw the last booms in wooden shipbuilding in Rockland, though two schooners for the passenger trade were constructed in the 1980s at the North End Shipyard, which regularly carries out repairs to Maine's schooner fleet. (See the Marine Resources section for further details on shipbuilding and repair.)

The Civil War brought a depression in the lime export industry with the closing of southern markets and a decline in building activity nationally, which reduced the demand for plaster. Sustained economic prosperity did not get underway until after the depression of 1873-76. The lime industry, with its heavy demands on labor, expanded through the later years of the 19th century and resulted in a compact development pattern of smaller workers houses on streets away from the more prestigious neighborhoods close to their owners' downtown offices and stores. The lime industry, which consolidated in 1900, gradually faded after the 1920s, and was essentially closed down by 1975. Its legacy includes much of Rockland's often magnificent Victorian and early 20th century architecture, long unused quarries along Old County Road, and the decaying remnants of the Limerock Railroad, constructed in the 1890s to carry lime rock from the quarries to the kilns along the harbor front.

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[1] Fairburn, William A. (1876-1947), *Merchant Sail*, Fairburn Marine Education Foundation, Inc., Center Lovell, Maine 1945-1955.

By 1888, Rockland was the largest city in the mid-coast region with over 80 lime kilns shipping 1.5 million casks of lime annually in 20 ships, 40 barks and 150 schooners. As was typical of a city of this size, Rockland also manufactured boots and shoes, carriages, harnesses and machinery. A shoe factory was located at the intersection of Broad and Limerock Streets. A pants factory was located at Broad and Park Streets.

A number of public and semi-public buildings were constructed in the City since the latter part of the 19th century. The High School opened in 1868, the Knox County Courthouse was completed in 1875; St. Peter's Episcopal Church constructed in 1883-84; the McLain Grammar School in 1892; and the Knox County Jail in 1892 (demolished in 1995). The 20th century saw construction of the Rockland Public Library in 1903, the Knox County General Hospital in 1916 and the Bok Home for Nurses in 1928. Major additions were made to Rockland High School in 1925 and 1928 and the Community Building was built in 1936 as a Works Progress Administration project during the Depression.

Since the middle of the 20th century, there have been few lots available near the City's center and most new housing has been built on the larger lots in the outlying areas. At the same time, many of the spacious 19th century residences have undergone conversion into multi-family dwellings. This trend resulted in many of Rockland's more densely settled neighborhoods having relatively few "modern" houses intruding among the older residences.

Archaeological Sites

Native American archaeological sites are important because they are the only sources of knowledge about prehistory in the time before the written word. The only way to learn about prehistoric events is through the study of archaeological remains. Sites dating from the first European-American settlement of a community often contain information otherwise lost to history. The sites must be retained for study. Once lost, a site cannot be recovered.

Most archaeological sites in Maine are near water. The ocean, lakes, and rivers provided transportation routes for Native Americans and early European-American settlers. Their shores were hunting and gathering places, natural areas to settle. Much of the state's recent development pressure has occurred in just such places.

Only one prehistoric archaeological site is known in Rockland. It is classified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission as site number 28.13 and listed as "Not a significant site, on Rockland Harbor." This site, which has not been studied in detail, is located near the shoreward end of the Breakwater. The Commission cites the need for further survey, inventory and analysis of the margins of the Bog and Chickawaukie Lake, except where Route 17 borders it. The lack of permanent development within the Bog and the slight raising of the water level in Chickawaukie Lake, probably dating from the time it served as Rockland's public water supply and was a source of natural ice, may have preserved archaeological sites which would, otherwise, have been destroyed. Local oral history includes mention of Native American campsites in the Bog.

No professional survey for historic archaeological sites has been conducted to date in Rockland. In the future such fieldwork could focus on sites relating to the earliest European settlement of the City, beginning in the 1770s, as well as remains of various significant 19th century industries.

Historic Sites

In common with many other small towns and cities, Rockland developed a compact, built-up downtown that expanded as the local population grew and access to it improved with the advent of the street railway in the late 19th century. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the City's downtown has expanded, both east and west of Main Street, resulting in the gradual redevelopment of much of the area between Main and Union Streets and most of Crocketts Point. While this inevitably led to the destruction of many earlier buildings, the more modern alternative to contiguous downtown expansion, the development of outlying highway commercial strips and shopping centers, did not affect the City until after World War II. The City was fortunate to have avoided the wholesale destruction of major portions of its downtown in the urban renewal era of the 1960s, and therefore retains a downtown with substantial brick architecture dating largely from the late 19th century fronting on Main Street. Some publicly funded improvements to Main Street have resulted in underground utilities, updated sidewalks and street furniture, tree planting and, during 1999, new street lighting.

While some historic buildings were lost to the various fires that the City experienced, others were destroyed to be replaced by more modern structures or uses. Among the lost public buildings were the Custom House/Post Office and the County Jail/Sheriff's House, which were replaced by parking lots. The home of General Tillson was replaced by the Navigator Motor Inn. The Rockland Congregational Church building on Main Street was destroyed by fire and replaced by a more modern building on outer Limerock Street. The Samoset Hotel, once the City's premier seasonal resort, was rebuilt within the neighboring Town of Rockport following its long closure and destruction by fire on October 13, 1972. Other structures suffered from long periods of neglect following the end of their economic lives. One of the most significant in terms of both history and architecture, the Knott Crockett House at 750 Main Street, was demolished in April 1997. The home of Rockland's first mayor, this residence was a fine example of a federal-style building. Its deterioration and condition forced the owners to demolish it because of the high cost to refurbish it. Similarly, the Limerock Railroad and the lime kilns it served have gradually disappeared, though the grade of the railroad remains visible where more recent development has not removed it. A few lime kilns near Main and Front Streets remain in a condition that would enable them to be restored. Cement kilns which once stood near Mechanic Street, on what is now Snow Marine Park, have totally disappeared. Traces of some of the City's shipyards have all but disappeared. The Samoset Resort modified the Civil War battery erected at Jameson Point, as much of it was lost to erosion from wave action of Penobscot Bay, in late 1999 and early 2000 as part of improvements to its golf course.

Rockland's historic sites are mostly buildings, either residential or commercial in nature. The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) has listed most of the more important ones on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places defines "historic" as being "a district, site, building, structure, or object significant in American history, architecture, engineering, archaeology, and culture" that is at least 50 years old.

Rockland has two historic districts, both of which are listed in the National Register. One is a commercial area in the Downtown Zone along Main Street, consisting of all the buildings on the waterside from Winter Street to Limerock Street and from Museum to Limerock Streets on the opposite side. It includes two buildings on the south side of School Street. The other historic district is a residential area roughly bounded by Broadway and Limerock, Broad, Masonic, Union, and Granite Streets. The district is situated in the present Residential "A" and Residential "B" Zones.

(See Map and the materials from the MHPC attached.)

A comprehensive survey of Rockland's historic aboveground resources needs to be conducted in order to identify other properties that may be eligible for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places. For example, the "roundhouse" sheltering the winch at the Rockland Marine Corporation shipyard in the South End is one of very few examples of this type of hauling apparatus still in use in the United States. There are substantial portions of three kilns, reminders of Rockland's namesake lime industry, standing along Main Street. The Ichabod Barrows house, a small, early Cape, stands on Rockland Street, outside any of the existing historic districts. The City-owned Tolman Cemetery on Lake Avenue holds the graves of many of Rockland's Revolutionary War and War of 1812 veterans. The City also owns the paupers cemetery located near West Meadow Road on the grounds of the former Poor Farm. Privately owned cemeteries include the Achorn Cemetery off Old County Road, the Lucy C. Farnsworth Cemetery on Pleasant Street, the Hebrew Cemetery on outer Pleasant Street and the Ulmer Cemetery on upper Park Street. Some former Rockland residents are buried in the Sea View Cemetery in Rockland and Rockport and the Robbins Cemetery in Thomaston. Many quarries remain unmarked, though they played an important part in Rockland's growth as a city.

Table 5-2
Rockland's Sites on the National Register of Historic Places

Site	Location
Rockland Public Library	Union Street
Knox County Courthouse	62 Union Street
Rockland Railroad Station	Union and Pleasant Streets
Farnsworth Homestead	21 Elm Street
Security Trust Building	Elm and Main Streets
Rankin Block	600-610 Main Street
General Davis Tillson House	157 Talbot Avenue
Rockland Turntable and Engine House	US 1 and New County Road
Lighthouse Station	Rockland Breakwater
Schooner American Eagle*	North End Shipyard
Schooner Isaac H. Evans*	North End Shipyard
Schooner J. & E. Riggin*	Journey's End, opposite the Coast Guard Station
Schooner Stephen Taber*	Journey's End, opposite the Coast Guard Station
Schooner Victory Chimes*	Journey's End, opposite the Coast Guard Station
Main Street Historic District	(See text)
Rockland Residential Historic District	(See text)

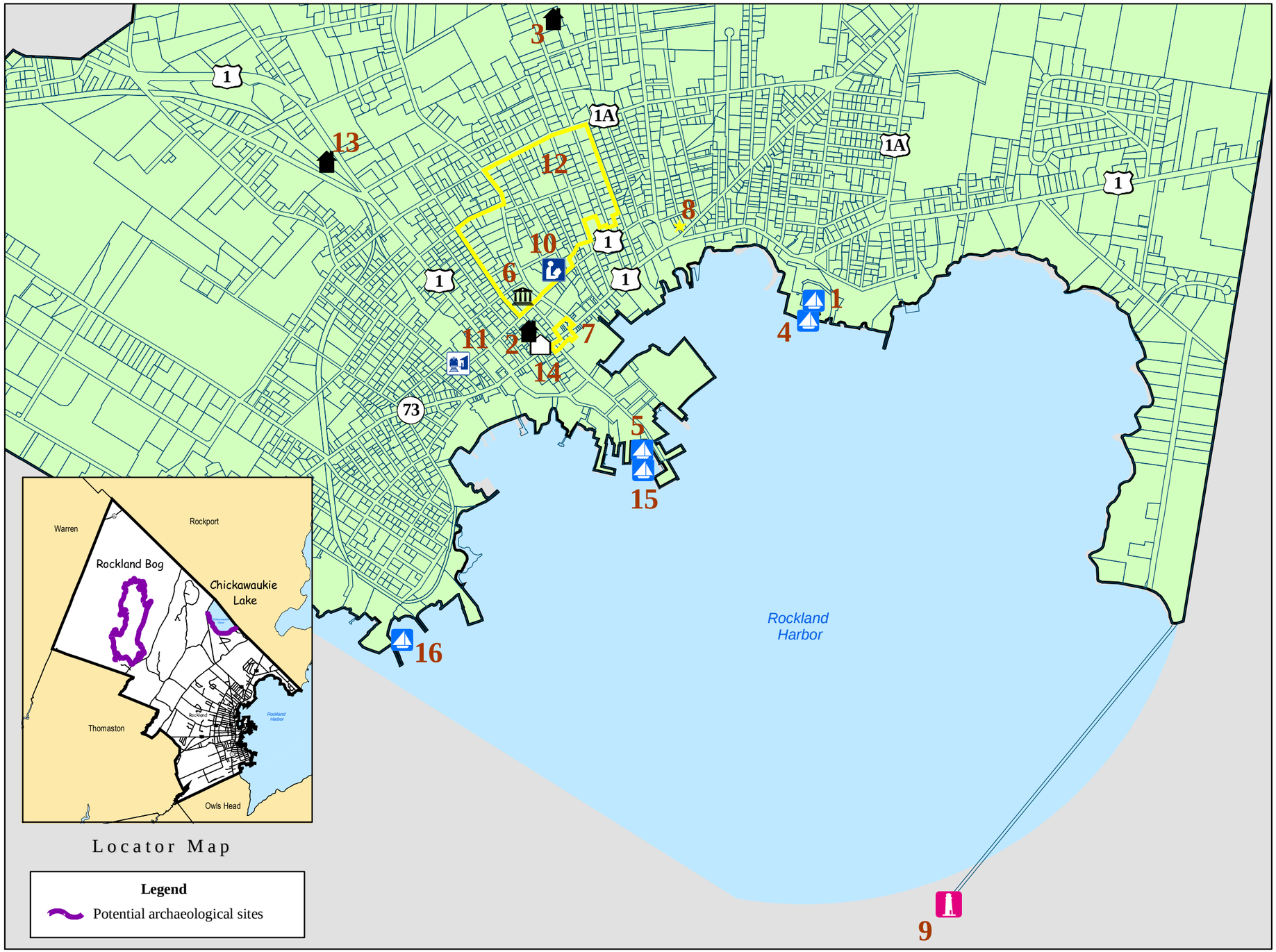
Note: The Register for Rockland also lists the schooner *Lewis R. French*, however, this schooner was berthed in Camden in 2000. * National Historic Landmark.

Historic Preservation

As Rockland's economy has evolved, tourism has become an increasingly important element. Therefore, the City's appearance has assumed greater importance as an attraction to tourists. However,

Rockland

Map 5-1: Historic Places and Potential Archaeological Sites



Locator Map

Legend

Potential archaeological sites

Legend

Historic districts

Tax parcels

Historical Sites

1 - American Eagle (Schooner)
2 - Farnsworth Homestead
3 - Gen Davis Tillson House
4 - Isaac H. Evans (Schooner)
5 - J. & E. Riggin (Schooner)
6 - Knox County Courthouse
7 - Main Street Historic District
8 - Rankin Block
9 - Rockland Breakwater Lighthouse
10 - Rockland Public Library
11 - Rockland Railroad Station
12 - Rockland Residential Historic District
13 - Rockland Turntable and Engine House
14 - Security Trust Building
15 - Victory Chimes (Schooner)
16 - Stephen Taber (Schooner)

W N S E

0 0.25 0.5 Miles

Sources: City of Rockland, Photo Science Inc. and MEGIS
Map revised: January, 2003

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Prepared by the Eastern Maine Development Corporation

this appearance is important for both business and more personal reasons. In even the less affluent neighborhoods, there remain many historic residences whose owners have put considerable time and energy into maintaining those structures and grounds. This has positive effects, not only on the well being of the residents, but also on neighbors and visitors, who can sense the pride of the owners. This, in turn, attracts potential new owners who wish to live in these neighborhoods. Rockland has, to date, accommodated a wide range of income levels and life styles in its various neighborhoods.

There seems to be growing concern for the architectural heritage of Rockland. The redevelopment of Main Street, including the major contributions of the Farnsworth Museum's creation of the Jamien Morehouse Wing from the former J. J. Newberry's store and development of their museum store on Main Street has been done in styles and building materials compatible with, and sympathetic to, the nearby architecture. Similarly, the removal of more recent wall covering materials over the former Syndicate Block's Romanesque brick façade and the tasteful renovation of the former Arvidson's Furniture building into new uses have improved the appearance of downtown Rockland. The Ulmer Block, now also called the Joy Building, a wooden building on Main Street, has been equipped with an elevator and has been restored with new clapboarding and appropriate detailing. Given their great concern for design in both Belfast and Camden, MBNA's redevelopment of the former Fisher Engineering (Douglas Dynamics) properties have greatly improved the appearance of much of the South End.

In early 2000, the City began considering ways in which to adaptively reuse some of its downtown buildings, particularly those with unused or under used upper stories. Revised zoning and public/private investment in elevators to improve accessibility are among the ideas being studied.

As the working "Lime City," Rockland was more concerned with whether or not something worked well, not with how it looked. Now, appearance has assumed greater importance. A "house tour" in the late spring of 2000 showcased examples of Rockland's various architectural styles and eras. Art as a business, as contrasted with art as displayed in museums, has established a considerable hold in Rockland, with many art galleries occupying former residential and business properties within walking distance of the Farnsworth Museum's properties.

Rockland, with its dense development patterns, has extensive public infrastructure necessary to its functioning (sewers, water lines, paid law enforcement, emergency and fire services). However, this has contributed to its higher real estate tax rates, especially as compared with nearby, more rural communities lacking sewer systems, etc. In addition, Rockland's role as a County Seat has resulted in a concentration of public service organizations and governmental agencies, most of which do not pay local real estate taxes. Some non-profit organizations have voluntarily paid taxes to the City, and many serve local residents through their social service programs or through reduced or no-cost admission to cultural events and programs. However, there remain some local concerns about non-profit organizations and other levels of government whose facilities occupy what could otherwise be tax-paying properties.

The City has no Historic Preservation ordinance or plan at this time. The only means of officially identifying historic places is through listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The community should recognize, however, that listing a property on the National Register provides protection <u>only</u> when federal funds are used for a project that would affect the historic property. However, the owner of a property on the Register may claim a federal income tax deduction for expenses incurred for restoration. [2] The 119th Maine Legislature enacted L.D. 2537, An Act to Promote Historic and Scenic

[2] *Reviving Service Centers*, Report of the Task Force on Regional Service Center Communities, September 1998, page 27.

Preservation, which was signed into law by Governor King on April 6, 2000. This law, Sec.1. 30-A MRSA Subsection 5730 reads, in part, ". . . a municipality may raise or appropriate money to reimburse taxpayers for a portion of taxes paid under Title 36, Part 2 on real property if the property owner agrees to maintain the property in accordance with criteria that are adopted by ordinance by the governing legislative body of the municipality and that provide for maintaining the historic integrity of important structures or providing a scenic view." The Maine Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for providing guidance to municipalities wishing to implement this law. In order for a Rockland property owner to benefit from this enabling legislation, the City Council would have to adopt an ordinance setting forth the criteria under which the property owner would qualify for the tax reduction.

More complete protection for historic structures could be provided by a local historic protection overlay ordinance that would protect the two historic districts.

Neither the City's Building/Demolition Permits nor the Assessor's Records have any place on them to indicate if a property has any identified historic value, especially the identification of a property being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. However, Chapter 4, Section 4-304, Demolition of Buildings, states, "No permit shall be issued for the demolition of any historic public building or structure listed on, or situated within a district listed on, the U. S. Department of the Interior's National Register of Historic Places without prior approval by vote of the Rockland City Council."

There is no mechanism for awareness of a property's potential historic value. With the exception of a single paragraph in the state-imposed Shoreland Zoning Ordinance regarding potential archaeological sites [3], the City's Zoning Ordinances do not mention historic or archaeological resources.

Issues and Implications

Cultural

(1) Rockland hosts a number of cultural events open to the general public, most of which are held during the summer tourist season. Does the City desire more "off-season" activities?

(2) Many outdoor public events, for which admission is charged, are held at the Public Landing. There is no permanent shelter available to accommodate the performers and audience during inclement weather. Does the City wish to support the creation of an outdoor amphitheater in order to provide improved performance facilities? If so, where should such a facility be located?

(3) The public halls and opera houses of adjoining municipalities provide them with year-round facilities for many public events. Public use of the Rockland District High School auditorium is limited by the demands of the school's academic schedule. Does the City wish to support the creation of a facility specifically designed for public performances (plays, concerts, dances)? Would the City be interested in supporting the efforts of the Lincoln Street Center to create such a performance space?

(4) Many of the needs of the Rockland Public Library have been addressed for the foreseeable future with the recently completed expansion and the newly created endowment. However, the future of the Community Building (Recreation Center) and the nearby playground seem less assured.

[3] "Archaeological Sites: Any proposed land use activity involving structural development or soil disturbance on or adjacent to sites listed on, or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by the permitting authority shall be submitted by the applicant to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment, at least twenty (20) days prior to action being taken by the permitting authority. The permitting authority shall consider comments received from the Commission prior to rendering a decision on the application."

The Shore Village Museum (Lighthouse Museum) and its collections are located in the former Grand Army of the Republic building on Limerock Street, which has been sold by the City. The long-term location of this museum has yet to be decided. Should the Lighthouse collection be located closer to downtown or the waterfront? Will there be long-term financial support for these important cultural resources?

(5) Rockland's cultural history includes the now vanished limerock industry and the facilities it supported. The City has also witnessed major changes in its fishing and other marine-oriented activities. Is there interest in preserving remaining artifacts and structures, creating museum displays, preparing publications, etc.?

Historic and Archaeological Resources

(1) The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) notes the need for a prehistoric and a historic archaeological sites survey. Is there interest in the City to do this? If so, how will it best be accomplished?

(2) Rockland currently has no formal mechanism for the preservation of identified historic sites. Is there interest in doing this? Would the creation of a City Historic Preservation Commission and Ordinance be supported?

(3) Section 19-317, "Design Standards," contains specific provisions intended to achieve compatibility of most new construction with Rockland's architecture. Previous administrations did not enforce its provisions adequately. More recent administrations have enforced the provisions, with guidance from the city attorney. The design standards have helped ensure that existing and new building construction is compatible with the historic character of their surrounding neighborhood. Does the City wish to add additional building design standards or guidelines, which apply to all but the Industrial Zone? The design standards do not apply uniform requirements throughout the City, but concern the surroundings of each building. Therefore, the diversity of each neighborhood can be protected. Does the City wish to retain and encourage this diversity? As an increasingly important destination for tourists and art aficionados, will the City become more aware of appearances? Is the City interested in maintaining the visual integrity of the zones in which the two historic districts are located?

(4) The Zoning, Subdivision and Site Plan Ordinances do not deal with historic and archaeological preservation concerns. Should amendments be prepared that establish standards for the consideration of these factors in subdivision and site plan approval and the issuance of Building Permits?

(5) The City's Building and Demolition Permits and Assessor's records have no spaces on them for data relating to historic value, such as date of original construction, original or other historically important owners, architect, etc. The taking of photographs for inclusion in the Assessor's records has been discontinued. Photographs can provide important information on the exterior condition and appearance of historic buildings. Are these needed?

(6) The Maine Historic Preservation Commission has provided documentation for listing known historic places on the National Register. What other historic sites or structures exist that could or should be listed?

Goals, Policies, And Strategies

Purpose

To ensure that the value of historic and archaeological resources is recognized and that protection is afforded to those resources that merit it.

Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Resources

Goal: To avoid further destruction of Prehistoric and Historic Archaeological Resources.

Policy: To obtain surveys of prehistoric and historic archaeological resources in Rockland.

Strategies:

1. Maintain contact with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) regarding prehistoric and historic archaeological surveys.
2. Contact area legislators regarding funding for such surveys.
3. Incorporate information from such surveys in reviewing development proposals that could affect them.
4. The planning commission should require that developers provide evidence that the proposed development will not negatively impact known or possible archeological sites, and as necessary to meet this strategy, the development proposal should include a plan showing the preservation of known or suspected historic or naturally significant areas.

Historic Preservation

Goal: To preserve, to the extent possible, Rockland's historic resources.

Policies:

1. To create a cultural awareness of Rockland's historic resources and their value for the present and future.
2. To create public mechanisms, both legal and financial, to assist in historic preservation.

Strategies:

1. Create a Historic Preservation Commission.
2. The Historic Resource Commission's duties should include the preparation of recommendations for improving historic resource protection in the City's land use ordinances, including but not limited to requiring assessments of potential historic archaeological resources during subdivision and site plan review.
3. Encourage voluntary compliance with these standards.
4. Have the Commission prepare a survey of historic structures and locations, in order to provide information for the Assessor and Code Enforcement Office and/or to establish historic markers, as appropriate.
5. Have the Commission work with the Assessor to include historic information and photographs on property tax cards.
6. Have the Commission work with the Code Enforcement Office to include historic information on Building Permits and Demolition Permits.

7. Obtain and disseminate information on any programs available for homeowners and other property owners to provide technical and financial assistance with the renovation/restoration of historic properties.
8. The Comprehensive Plan/Land Use Committee will review existing historic design standards and guidelines, which have been applied successfully in recent administrations, to suggest, as needed, possible revisions that would further improve enforcement and effectiveness of these regulations to help continue to protect historic resources adequately.
9. The City Manager and Community Development Office will continue to assist business property owners to secure state and federal funds for the restoration of properties within the historic district as recognized on the National Register of Historic Places.

Cultural Resources

Goal: To assist in making Rockland an interesting place in which to live and work.

Policies:

1. To support and assist private efforts to create and continue public cultural events.
2. To support and assist private efforts to create public spaces and facilities for public cultural events.
3. To continue to maintain and improve public cultural facilities.

Strategies:

1. Encourage a broad range of public events and activities.
2. Support Lincoln Street Center children's museum, theater and artistic activities.
3. Support efforts of the Apprenticeshop, Farnsworth Museum and the Penobscot School to include Rockland residents in their programs.
4. Relocate some events away from the Public Landing or maintain public access to the Public Landing during such events.
5. If the City decides to build an amphitheater, consider a location other than Harbor Park for it.
6. Encourage the setting of realistic fee levels for all public events held on City property for which admission is charged.
7. Continue to maintain and improve the Community Building (Recreation Center), Shore Village Museum, Public Library, Harbor Park/Public Landing, public cemeteries, and other public facilities that allow and encourage cultural activities.