Discovery: Historic and Cultural Resources

Shrewsbury Master Plan

ABOUT

Shrewsbury's built environment is a layered landscape of thousands of years of indigenous use of the land followed by over three hundred years of European settlement.

Shrewsbury's visible and below-ground historic resources have become increasingly threatened in recent years with ongoing development in the community. While a local historic district bylaw provides some protection for the downtown area, many of the town's historic resources remain unprotected, and even unknown. Initial preservation efforts established by the Town provide a base upon which to further protect and promote Shrewsbury's historic resources.

A community must know the location of its historic resources, and their historic and/or architectural significance, in order to make decisions about how to protect those historic resources. In Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Historical Commission produces and manages inventory forms to document historic resources and makes them available to the public via the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS). To date, Shrewsbury has completed very limited historic resources documentation work.

KEY HIGHLIGHTS SINCE THE 2016 MASTER PLAN

- ✓ Adopted the Community Preservation Act, which provides dedicated funding for historic preservation projects in addition to affordable housing and open space and recreation work.
- ✓ Opened a newly-expanded Shrewsbury Public Library, providing more space to meet the changing library needs of the community

HISTORIC PRESERVATION TOOLS

Least Restrictive → **Most Restrictive**

Zoning

Zoning can encourage or hurt historic preservation efforts by providing basic ground rules on what the community will look like.

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is largely honorary. A listing requires a consultation process if work involves state or federal permits, licensing, or funding. Typically, this has very little impact on a private property owner's use of their property.

Demolition Delay

Demolition Delay bylaws do not prevent demolition but do allow for a pause to consider alternatives to demolition. This provides a basic level of protection for a wide variety of buildings in a community.

Local Historic Districts

Local Historic Districts are established by Town Meeting and provide local regulatory review of designated properties or areas. This tool allows for the review of all changes to the exterior of a property visible from a public way.

Preservation Restrictions

Preservation Restrictions are for exceptionally historically or architecturally significant properties. A deed restriction grants a third party the right to review changes to a property, and can cover interiors and exterior areas not visible from public view. These usually run in perpetuity.

DID YOU KNOW?



Shrewsbury has an active **Historical** and **Historic District Commissions** and a **Cultural Council**



Shrewsbury's Town Center is designated as a **Local Historic District**.



Many **Cultural organizations** are active in Shrewsbury, such as the Scandinavian Athletic Club, the India Society of Worcester, & more.