

- **Cultural Resources & Community Character**

- o Background
  - Special Places & Events - (Sylvester Manor, Historical Society, artsi, musical organizations etc...)
- Goals & Objectives
- Implementation Actions

Shelter Island was formed 18,000 to 23,000 years ago through glacial advance and retreat. Before the first European settlers arrived in the 1600s, Shelter Island was home to as many as 1000 members of Manhansett tribe until 1638, when James Farrett, an agent for the Earl of Sterling, “purchased” the island, and sold it three years later to Stephen Goodyear who sold it to Barbados sugar merchants In 1651, one whom was Nathaniel Sylvester. Sylvester Manor remained in the same family for the next 350 years, even as the rest of the island grew and evolved into a diversified agricultural, whaling and fishing settlement. After the Civil War Shelter Island started changing again. The Methodist’s Shelter Island Grove and Camp Meeting Association, established in 1871, sparked the growth over subsequent decades of a vibrant resort community that continues to transform the island every summer. After World War II, growth continued in the form of residential subdivisions and individual homes lining the waterfront. Since then we have had relatively steady growth with the exception of the year following 9/11 and the most recent COVID pandemic which were periods of expedited growth and development.

Each of these eras left its mark on the island, and many historic homes and other features have been preserved and maintained by generations of Islanders. The value of these resources is most obvious in recognized historic sites like Shelter Island Heights and Sylvester Manor, but may be found throughout the Island, where each neighborhood forms a unique composition of landscape, water, and buildings. The result is an exceptional level of scenic beauty and a rich sense of place/identity. Preserving these resources in the face of ongoing social, economic, and environmental change is one of the key challenges in preserving the unique character of the island for future generations.

As we look to the future it is important that we take several factors into consideration. The visual appeal of our landscapes and historically dense areas such as the Shelter Island Heights, Shelter Island Country Club, and the Smith Ransome Japanese Bridge. The unique archaeological resources that can be found on Sylvester Manor, Mashomack preserve and the special places and events that may not have historic significance now but play a large roll in the culture and lifestyle of Shelter Island living. These cultural resources are as follows:

Centers: Places where a concentration of activities and structures create special qualities: Shelter Island Center, Shelter Island Heights, and Dering Harbor Village (though not within the Town).

Paths: Key routes connecting places, the route itself having special qualities: Bridge Street, Grand Avenue, Ram Island Causeways, Serpentine Drive, Nostrand Parkway, South Midway Road, Cartwright Rd, Winthrop Rd to Harbor Lane.

Water's Edge: Important places where Island land meets waterbodies: Ice Pond, Fresh Pond, Lily Pond, Louis' Beach, Wades Beach, Shell Beach, Reel Point, Coecles Harbor Marina, Island Boatyard, North and South Ferries, and Town landings, Bass Creek, Chase Creek, Congdon Creek, Crab Creek, Dickerson Creek, Foxen Creek, Gardiners Creek, Menantic Creek, Miss Annies Creek (Nicolls Creek), West Neck Creek.

Institutions: Important both because of the activities there and, in some cases, because of the building itself: Manhasset Chapel, Catholic, Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches, Quaker Cemetery as well as the cemeteries at Mashomack, Camp Quinipet, Shelter Island School, Shelter Island Library, Havens House (Shelter Island History Center), both Post Offices, Mashomack Manor House, Sylvester Manor Educational Farm, the Shelter Island Community Center, American Legion, and the FIT Center

Businesses: Typically, important because of their value as "third places" (places other than home or work where social interaction takes place): the Pharmacy, Chequit Inn, Rams Head Inn, Pridwin Hotel, the IGA, the Islander, the Dory, Stars Café, Goat Hill, Isola, Vine Street, 18 Bay, Slice pizza, Shelter Island Hardware

Open Space and Natural Features: Mashomack, Goat Hill Golf Course, Gardiners Bay Country Club, Sylvester Manor, Pogatticut Rock, John Tuthill's Hill, Westmoreland Farm and Bell Tower, Dickerson Pond and Park, Sachem's Woods, Shorewood (Manor, Carriage House, Boathouse, bamboo forest), Wade's Beach, Shell Beach, Louis' Beach, Menhadden Lane Town landing, Town parks and preserves.

Events Some recurrent events are as much a part of the cultural environment as are buildings: Shelter Island 10K Run, 5K Run/Walk, 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks, Annual Chicken Barbecue, Arts and Crafts Fair, Green Options Fair, Mashomack Dinner Dance, Havens House Farmers Market, the Car Show, Memorial Day and Halloween Parades

A more comprehensive list of historic sites and descriptions along with expanded information on the visual, archaeological and special places that impact Shelter Islands culture and lifestyle can be found in the appendix in the Document “Shelter Island 2020”.

Goals & Objectives (this is from previous plan; we need to define our own goals and objectives)

A basic goal is the preservation of archaeological and cultural resources in order to protect linkages between the Town's history and its present life, in order to improve community self-understanding, to strengthen the sense of community, and to protect Shelter Island's special character/unique identity. A further goal is the protection of the Island's small-town community and way of life, its rural character, and the natural resources. This requires continued matching of land use with the land's natural and visual qualities, and protection of critical visual assets, including scenic views from roads and coastal view corridors.

**Action Items:**

<b>1994 Implementation Plan Action Items</b>	<b>2008 Analysis of 1994 Action Items and Recommendations</b>	<b>Notes for 2022 Action Items</b>
<b>Organizational Actions</b>	<b>Organizational Actions</b>	<b>Organizational Actions</b>
<p>O1. Explore the creation of an Historic Advisory Commission within Town government to coordinate and advocate actions for managing cultural resources, both by the Town and by cooperating private groups, such as the Historical Society. (4. Cultural Resources).</p>	<p><b>Action Point 23 (0-1): Creation of Historical Advisory Commission.</b>  <b>Rating: 2 X</b></p> <p>Explore the creation of an Historic Advisory Commission with Town Government to coordinate and advocate actions for managing cultural resources, both by the town and by cooperating private groups such as the Historical Society (4. Cultural Resources)</p> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <p>1. It would appear the Shelter Island Historical Society ('SIHS') fulfills this role perfectly adequately and is generously supported by the Town and community.</p>	<p>The Shelter Island Historical Society/History Center and Town Historian continue to fulfill this roll.</p> <p>Consider eliminating this action item? Or establishing an annual meeting with the History Center to review plans for the upcoming year.</p>

	<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>1. Have Town board meet with the SIHS to annually review plans and objectives for the coming years. Consider providing Town support and funds to support specific projects.</p>	
<p>Z21. Amend relevant Town ordinances (Zoning, Subdivision, Site Plan Review · if adopted, Environmental Impact) to include protection of historic and archaeological assets (especially within 500 feet of the shoreline) as explicit considerations in acting on permits, and devise an objective system for assuring that those resources are in fact respected in new development. (4.Cultural Resources)</p>	<p><b>Action Point 28 (Z21) - Amend Town codes to include protection of historical and archeological assets</b>  <b>Rating: 3 E</b></p> <p>Amend relevant Town ordinances (Zoning, Subdivision, Site Plan Review, if adopted, Environmental Impact) to include protection of historic and archeological assets (especially within 500 ft of the shoreline) as explicit considerations in acting on permits, and devise an objective system for ensuring those resources are in fact respected in new development</p> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <p>1.After lengthy open hearings and discussion, the Town adopted a 'Shelter Island Colonial and Native American Graves Protection Policy 4 / 1 /05.</p> <p>2.Shelter Island Heights has been designated a State and Federal Historical District. The SIHA reports every house in the district is documented including photographs. Restrictions are, however, limited.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>1.The 'Graves Policy' appears to be working satisfactory and does not seem to need further change.</p> <p>2.Although the Historical District registration provides few restrictions on</p>	

	<p>changes to houses and lots, the designation in itself heightens community sensitivity to external changes to structures in consistent with the traditional architecture. Given the reluctance of many in the Heights to accept zoning/legal restrictions or an Architectural Review Board, we conclude the current system is working to achieve reasonable protection.</p>	
<p>S1. Undertake a program of surveying and documenting the Town's historic and visual assets, either funded for professional execution, or staged for volunteer execution over a number of years, undertaking one neighborhood each year. (4. Cultural Resources)</p>	<p><b>Action Point 24 (S-1) - Survey Town's historic assets</b> <b>Rating: 2 C</b></p> <p>Undertake a program of surveying and documenting the town's historic and visual assets, either funded for professional execution or stage for volunteer execution over a number of years, undertaking one neighborhood each year. (4. Cultural Resources)</p> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <p>1.The Shelter Island Historical Society ('SIHS') has identified and listed ten Revolutionary War houses, which are all privately owned and not protected by zoning or registration. These homes are also not on any national or state register. The SIHS also has prepared a history of Havens House.</p> <p>2.The CPAC has produced an initial list of the 50 oldest homes or structures on Shelter Island from the Town Assessors office. The attached analysis shows the following distribution of homes over 100 years old:</p> <p>YearYearStarts</p> <p>160016990</p> <p>170017493</p>	

	<p>175017998</p> <p>1800184919</p> <p>18501899143</p> <p>1900190880</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total253</p> <p>3.The NYS and National Registers list: Haven House, Union Chapel, Quinipet, SI Heights and Taylor's Island</p> <p>4.The SI Historical Society lists buildings and sights.</p> <p>5.The web site 'Shelter Island History Revisited' developed by Pat and Ed Shillingburg provides many historical stories about the Island and its history.</p> <p>6.Shelter Island Heights Association (‘SIHA’) has been designated a State and Federal Historical District. The SIHA reports every house in the District is documented including photographs. Restrictions are, however, limited.</p> <p>7.There does not appear to be any summary of neighborhoods or maps showing the historic development of Shelter Island, whereas such information is available in certain histories of the Island and in historical maps.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>1.Given the current economic climate, it is recommended that the completion of any surveys and documentation be on a volunteer basis, which has the added benefit of involving local citizens in better understanding and supporting the historical resources of the Island.</p> <p>2.The Comprehensive Plan lists so-called special Places on page 11, which has</p>	
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	<p>been reviewed and modified in attached draft list.</p> <p>3. In addition to the list of Special Places, we have added a list of scenic vistas, which are important to the character of the Island and which should be maintained.</p> <p>4. SIHA has surveyed the Heights and has detailed histories of many of the buildings in the area, which is public information but not published</p> <p>5. The Shelter Island Association should be approached to develop interest in surveying and documenting other areas of the community.</p> <p>6. The SIHS might undertake to develop copies of a series of historical maps and photographs of the Island and its development, which are scattered around and need to be consolidated.</p> <p>7. Consider posting these special places and events on the Town's Channel 22 web site.</p>	
<p>S2. Following that survey, explore the designation of additional areas or structures for the State and National Registers. (4. Cultural Resources)</p>	<p><b>Action Point 25 (S-21 - Consider designating areas/structures for State and National Registers.</b></p> <p>Rating: 3 D Following the surveys, explore the designation of additional areas or structures for the State and national registers.</p> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <p>1. Shelter Island Heights has been designated a State and Federal Historical District. The SIHA reports every house in the district is documented including photographs. Restrictions are, however, limited and</p>	

	<p>there is no discretionary review by public agencies or SEQUA review.</p> <p>2.No other areas of Registration exist.</p> <p>3.No listing of the Sylvester Manor and the windmill on the Fiske property can be located</p> <p>4.The Town is a "Preserved American Community" -with signs on Rte 114 up the hill from Piccozzi's and just north of South Ferry, which seems to have little meaning or benefit, but to be placed on a federal list of communities.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>1.Complete the surveys of AP 24 (S-1) first.</p> <p>2.Update and document the different levels of protection of the various registries available and designate the Town historian to keep current of these details.</p>	
<p>S3. Seek funding for the preparation of a manual describing the Town's history and its cultural and visual resources, highlighting the distinctiveness of the Island's varied neighborhood patterns, and suggesting guidelines for building (or maintaining) in harmony with that inheritance. (4. Cultural Resources)</p>	<p><b>Action Point 26 (S 3) - Seek funding for Manual(s)Rating 2 E</b></p> <p>Seek funding for the preparation of a manual describing the Town's history, and its cultural and visual resources, highlighting the distinctiveness of the Island's varied neighborhoods patterns, and suggesting guidelines for building and maintaining in harmony with that inheritance. (4 Cultural Resources)</p> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <p>1.Except for reprinting the current pamphlets, more research must be completed before funding is requested.</p> <p>2.We do not know what grants are currently available.</p>	

	<p>3. Given the current economic climate such grants are less likely to be available.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Determine what State and County grants are currently available.</li> <li>2. Determine if some of the research could be undertaken as school projects.</li> <li>3. Produce an outline of what the 'Manual' might include, using the SI Historical Society and/or the Shillingburg articles.</li> <li>4. Consider adding to the Town's web site (s) instead of producing a pamphlet.</li> </ol>	
<p>S4. Develop and promote a program for use of preservation easements as a tool for protecting facades, gardens, and scenic structures. (4. Cultural Resources)</p>	<p><b>Action Point 27 (S-4): A program for Preservation Easements Rating: 4 E</b></p> <p>Develop and promote a program for use of preservation easements as a tool for protecting facades, gardens, and scenic structures. Such easements are deeded agreements reached between a willing property owner and either a public agency, such as the town, or a private one such as SPLIA. Incentives and other encouragement from the Town could expand their use (4. Cultural Resources)</p> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To date, it does not appear that this conservation tool has been used.</li> <li>2. Lists of historical buildings and sites do exist with the SI Historical Society and SI Heights Association.</li> <li>3. While there are certainly a multitude of potential sites for facade and scenic structures, there does not appear to be any significant community will to enter into such a program.</li> </ol>	

	<p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>1. Consider a request to the SI Historical Society to develop a program for preservation easements, which should include a list of potential sites which might qualify, a simple easement program available through the Town or a 'not-for-profit' organization, which might provide tax benefits on the easement and protect some valued resources.</p>	
<p>C10. Explore use of community access cable TV for community education about historic and cultural assets, including broadcast of local events. (4. Cultural Resources)</p>	<p><b>Action Point 29 - Accessing Cable TV for Community Assets and Events</b></p> <p><b>Rating: 2 A</b></p> <p>Explore the use of cable TV for community education about historic and cultural assets, including broadcasting of local events. (4. Cultural Resources)</p> <p><b>Observations:</b></p> <p>1.The use of Channel 22 has greatly expanded the availability of visual/ oral information to Town residents.</p> <p>2.There are many other applications that should be considered, subject to cost/ .benefit analysis.</p> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p> <p>1.Consideration should be given to televising the meetings of various Town Committees for important hearings and to provide the community with a better idea of what each committee does.</p> <p>2.Additional topics and material, such as environmental subjects, the Comprehensive Plan, and historic and cultural subjects should be considered.</p> <p>3.Other channels could be contacted for airing of public service type materials,</p>	

	currently Ch. 20 ( <a href="http://www.cablevision.com">www.cablevision.com</a> ) and Ch 12 ( <a href="http://www.news12.com">www.news12.com</a> ).	
	4.Apprentices (possibly interested students) could be considered for participation.	
<b>Challenges From Shelter Island 2020:</b>		
Historic structures can be, and frequently are, torn down and replaced with new homes, and there is nothing in the Town Code to prevent it.		
Documenting and interpreting historic structures and other cultural riches is time-consuming but critically important.		
The Covid Pandemic has underlined the need to help the Island’s cultural institutions become more economically self-sufficient.		
The importance of historic and cultural resources to sense of place and tourism is not widely understood.		
The historic value of viewsheds, farms and the cultural landscape is recognized but not well-documented – though		

Sylvester Manor is showing the way.		
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