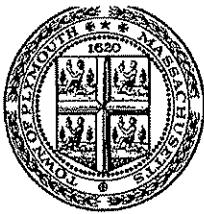


**ARTICLE 12:**

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. c. 44B, to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund estimated annual revenues, fund balance, or reserves, or otherwise fund, the sum of \$75,000, to be expended by the Town Manager in consultation with the Community Preservation Committee, for the preparation of an Historic Structures Report for the preservation of the historic 1820 Plymouth County Court House, or take any other action relative thereto.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

**RECOMMENDATION: Approval \$75,000 (Unanimous).** The Advisory and Finance Committee advises Town Meeting to approve Article 12. Approval of this article will authorize Community Preservation funds be transferred from Article 13B of the April 4, 2009 Special Town Meeting to be used for an Historic Structures Report for the preservation of the historic 1820 Plymouth County Court House.



**TOWN OF PLYMOUTH  
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION  
COMMITTEE**

# **Memo**

**To: Town Managers Office**

**From: Community Preservation Committee**

**Date: Friday, September 4, 2010**

**Re: Community Preservation Act Articles for  
2010 Fall Annual Town Meeting**

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**ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to G.L. c. 44B, to appropriate from the Community Preservation Fund estimated annual revenues, fund balance, or reserves, or otherwise fund, the sum of \$75,000, to be expended by the Town Manager in consultation with the Community Preservation Committee, for the preparation of an Historic Structures Report for the preservation of the historic 1820 Plymouth County Court House, or take any other action relative thereto.**  
**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**

**CPC RECOMMENDATION:** Approval (unanimous)

The Community Preservation Committee voted 5 to 4 in favor of article 12 at their meeting held Thursday, August 13, 2010

**SUMMARY:** The intent of the CPC was to set aside \$75,000.00 for the purpose of Historical Structures Report for the 1820 Courthouse.

## **1820 Plymouth Courthouse Corridor Preservation and Master Plan**



### **Master Plan Overview – September 2010**

#### **Introduction**

The Town of Plymouth, through the Plymouth Redevelopment Authority (PRA), has a unique opportunity to revitalize its downtown and strengthen its historic townscape through the preservation of a centrally located historic courthouse and the redevelopment of an adjacent underutilized set of publicly owned properties. By combining civic uses with new commercial and retail activity, market-rate and affordable housing, transportation and other public improvements, this project seeks to be a model of sustainable public-private development and land-use planning for downtown Plymouth. The following is an overview of the 1820 Courthouse redevelopment project—how it came about, what it is trying to accomplish, and how it will be implemented.

The focus is the former 1820 Plymouth County Courthouse and Commissioners Building in the heart of the downtown, one block from the waterfront and minutes from Plymouth Rock and the Mayflower II.

The Courthouse is a handsome Federalist style structure built in 1820 and expanded in 1857, behind which are later additions of a more utilitarian character. The front portion houses the beautiful Daniel Webster Courtroom, which still contains a witness stand, jury box, judge's bench and other period furniture. The total floor area of the building is around 22,000 sq. ft.

The Courthouse sits on a classic New England town green, Court Square, which overlooks both Court and Brewster Streets with views down Brewster Street to the

waterfront. With its stately façade, elegant setting, and rich history, the Courthouse is one of the most prominent buildings in Plymouth.

Behind the Courthouse is the County Commissioners Building, a structure of lesser architectural and historic importance but non-the-less significant, with a floor area of approximately 10,000 sq. ft. Built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as a jail, it was later converted into an office building for Plymouth County officials.

By the beginning of this century, both buildings, after successive additions, modifications, and patchwork repairs, and with little in the way of modern amenities or utilities, reached the end of their useful lives for the County, and the County Commissioners put them up for sale. The State opened a new courthouse facility outside the downtown in 2007.

In April of 2009, Plymouth Town Meeting overwhelmingly approved a \$1,400,000 grant from the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) for the Town of Plymouth, through the Plymouth Redevelopment Authority, to acquire the two buildings and underlying .91-acre lot. In the fall of 2009, the PRA negotiated the purchase of the property from the County for \$840,000, at which time the town gave control of the property to the PRA through a 99-year ground lease, and the PRA began stabilizing the buildings using the remaining \$560,000 from the original appropriation.

## **Opportunity & Challenge**

The Plymouth Redevelopment Authority came to Town Meeting with not only a request to purchase the property, but with a strategy for how it could be redeveloped. They recognized that this was an opportunity to not only preserve a historic building, but to create a catalyst for downtown economic growth and a centerpiece for Plymouth's 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration in 2020.

But they also understood this would be a challenging task. Significant financial resources would be needed to upgrade one or both buildings in a fashion that would make them attractive and compliant with modern building and fire codes, as well as economically self-sufficient—particularly in light of the community's desire to see that the Courthouse continue to serve public and/or non-profit uses.

To meet this challenge, the PRA presented a strategy that calls for the integration of the Courthouse into a larger mixed-use, public-private development—one that could subsidize the preservation and adaptive reuse of the Courthouse through revenues derived from retail, commercial and residential development on the site.

The Redevelopment Authority also recognized that if the site were larger, this would be easier, because a larger site could generate greater economic benefits and be more likely to attract the kind of experienced developer a project like this requires. More land would also allow for more structured and/or surface parking, a limiting factor for most commercial development in downtown areas, and greater flexibility in building design,

circulation, land use options, etc. Fortunately, conditions around the Courthouse would allow for such an expansion.

Behind and beside the 1820 Courthouse and Commissioners Building is approximately two acres of underutilized town-owned land. This land, much of it largely vacant parking lots, is the legacy of 19<sup>th</sup>-century school buildings and other structures, now long gone. Also, immediately adjacent, are three private homes. As suggested at Town Meeting, if some or all of these properties could be combined with the former county land, this approximately three-acre site could provide the critical landmass needed for such a development. This combined site is collectively called the Courthouse Corridor.

## **The Preservation and Redevelopment Process**

A strategy for moving ahead with this project was also presented at the April 2009 Town Meeting. It called for the creation of a community advisory board called the 1820 Courthouse Consortium, representing the Selectmen, Planning Board and other groups in the community. Together, the PRA and Consortium presented to the community, in their June 2010 Interim Report, a specific plan for preserving the Courthouse and implementing the broader redevelopment plan. It begins by breaking the task down into three manageable, but highly interdependent steps:

1. **Stabilize and protect** the former county buildings;
2. **Occupy** the buildings, if possible, **on an interim basis**; and
3. **Preserve and adaptively reuse** the buildings as part of a larger redevelopment effort with a private development partner.

**Stabilize:** The stabilization phase is well under way. Old oil tanks and asbestos have been removed from the site and restoration of the roof and cupola will begin shortly. Contractor bid documents for a fire protection and security alarm system, and temporary repairs to windows, entry porticos, and brickwork are now being prepared. The goal is to have the buildings weather-tight by late fall of this year. The window and portico repairs will only be temporary fixes, awaiting more information about their condition, authenticity, and future uses of the buildings.

**Occupy on an interim basis:** The Commissioners Building is currently occupied by the County Commissioners, in accordance with an agreement made with the Redevelopment Authority. This building, in its present condition, can continue to be occupied for office use with few additional and relatively inexpensive improvements. The PRA acknowledged this at Town Meeting and has every intention to keep this building occupied and, hopefully, income producing, through the long-term planning process.

The Courthouse, on the other hand, is not currently occupied and can't be reused, even on an interim basis, until some significant investments are made. For the Courthouse to be re-occupied it will have to be refitted to meet modern building codes and the interior spaces refurbished and made more attractive. Currently there is no ADA access to the

building, no fire suppression system, and the utilities in the building—an old single-zone boiler, old and inadequate bathrooms, old wiring system, etc.—haven't been updated in decades (see existing conditions photos). The fuel bill alone for heating the building in 2006/2007 was over \$60,000.

Making this building code compliant, attractive, and economically self-sufficient, even for interim occupancy, will most likely require some form of subsidy to compensate for an inadequate income stream. These subsidies could come from the town or through other sources, but the availability and commitment of these resources should be determined in advance of investing serious money in the building for the sole purpose of allowing interim uses. The PRA, through the 1820 Courthouse Consortium, is refining its economic analysis of these options at the present time.

**Preserve and Adaptively Reuse:** This is the third part of the process—realizing the long-term vision.

Irrespective of whether interim occupancy of the Courthouse is possible, a long-range plan for both the buildings and corridor will have to be developed, and in sufficient detail to justify a multi-million dollar investment, even for upgrading the Courthouse alone. This will involve an assessment of long-term uses and the creation of architectural plans in sufficient detail that the capital costs can be determined. This will require professional assistance in the form architects, preservation planners, engineers and others—an investment a private developer is unlikely to make at this time given the uncertainties surrounding additional land availability, community expectations about the Courthouse, and willingness of the community to make the public investments that might be required. The scope of this planning work has already been identified.

With the planning study in hand, it will be possible to begin the outreach process needed to secure both the public and private sector investments that will be needed. From here, the process could go a number of ways. If the PRA is successful in securing a private-sector development partner, that partner will be required to subsidize, in whole or part, the preservation and rehabilitation of the Courthouse. If a developer is not in the picture when costs are known, the PRA will seek grants to do this work on its own. Most likely it will a combination of the two, with the Courthouse work started with grants. This will allow occupation of the Courthouse well in advance of a full corridor build-out. The PRA has already identified likely funding sources for these grants. Given the historic importance of Plymouth and the Courthouse, and the attention Plymouth will be seeing as we get closer to the 2020 celebration, the PRA is confident that it will be able to get this needed support.

In the spring of 2010 the Courthouse Consortium organized a series of eight presentations with well-recognized architecture, planning and preservation firms to discuss the project and get feedback on the approach. All had done work relevant to this project and all confirmed that the PRA and Consortium had a realistic vision of what needed to be done, and what was possible.

## **The Planning Process**

Two major barriers to all ambitious development projects are: (1) getting community support, and, (2) finding the right development partner. This project was designed, from the start, with these two challenges in mind. The work plan for the design study calls for community input at every critical stage. Plymouth has done this successfully before in a number of planning processes, so both the importance and mechanics of doing it are well known to the community.

Building community consensus about how this site should be developed, prior to seeking a development partner, will lay the groundwork for a smoother design development and final approval process. The PRA will be asking the community to essentially embrace plans for the Courthouse reuse and associated new construction in advance of a developer commitment. This will be codified in our zoning bylaw as a new development district, as was done for the Pinehills and Cordage Park.

The PRA will also explore options for integrating the town-owned and privately owned lots in the corridor into the Courthouse development. For the town, this will result in far greater benefits than if they attempt to develop the lots separately at some future time. For the homeowners, there will be a number of options, ranging from moving the homes onto new foundations further up Russell Street, in a more residential area, to an outright purchase. Under no condition will eminent domain powers be used to acquire the properties.

With design and development guidelines in place, and the conditions and costs of site assembly known, developers will be in a better position to assess this as a business opportunity. This, in and of itself, will make it easier to attract development partners to Plymouth.

The scope of community participation, analysis, and design needed to accomplish the above goals is clearly spelled out in a designer Request for Qualifications (RFQ) solicitation issued by the Redevelopment Authority on August 5, 2010. The planning process will take between 12-15 months and the deliverables will include a Historic Structure Report, master plan for both the former county property and remaining corridor, and a marketing plan and promotional materials needed to attract developers.

## **Community Goals**

### **Preserve and Adaptively Reuse the 1820 Courthouse: For What?**

We know that we want to preserve the Courthouse. How do we want to use it?

There have been a number of suggestions: a new Town Hall, home for the Plymouth 2020 celebration planning group and/or Plymouth Growth and Development Corporation, a visitor center, a museum in the Daniel Webster Courtroom. What can these groups afford? How much and what kind of space will they need? How should the

building circulation work? Where do you locate the elevator? How can you integrate sprinklers into a historic building without destroying the character of the spaces? What will any of this cost?

The first step in answering these and other questions will be creation of a Historic Structure Report. This is a study that documents the physical condition and historic merit of the buildings, making determinations about what should be saved and how, while also looking at future uses. This report is a prerequisite for all Federal and State preservation grants.

The question of future uses and users will be explored in a series of public meetings and negotiations with different groups. Depending on the outcome of these discussions, physical plans will be drawn and cost estimates made for the rehabilitation. Depending on the state of the economy and other factors, the town, at that point, could begin seeking additional CPC and/or other grant funds and begin the restoration itself, or it could wait to find a development partner, and share the burden of costs with them. This cannot be known until more is understood about future uses and costs.

### **Enhancing Economic Activity in the Downtown**

When the Plymouth Superior Court and Registry of Deeds moved to Obery Street, many people and a lot of money left with them. Those facilities spawned not only jobs for legal professionals, but secondary business activity like law offices, notaries, banks and real estate offices, plus the restaurants, shops and other services that supported them.

The challenge for the Courthouse and Corridor redevelopment will be to restore that energy, to create new reasons for people to come to the downtown—visitors, shoppers, residents, business people, as well as tourists. Where the county facilities offered only daytime and weekday activity, the downtown needs to be active year-round, 24/7. This will require a greater diversity and concentration of activities, including a greater variety of retail establishments. A mixed-use development, hedged by the inherent advantages of economic diversity, can provide this. Exactly what that mix should be is yet to be determined. This will require an assessment of not only market demand, but also parking needs, density, acceptable building heights and design, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and many other things.

The adaptive reuse of the Courthouse and redevelopment of the corridor will not only bring life to the site. It will spawn other economic activity around it, as did the Courthouse in its heyday. This will mean not only more customers for existing businesses, but new businesses and other development opportunities. Substantial properties around the Courthouse, like the former Registry building, now currently for sale, will also get a lift. It is even possible that the same developer interested in the Courthouse might also be interested in investing in the Registry and other nearby properties, giving them greater control of Court Square and Courthouse surroundings.

## **Improve the Downtown Streetscape**

The Plymouth Open Space Action Plan, created in 2007, recognizes the 1820 Courthouse as one of Plymouth's most important buildings, not only because of its history and architectural character, but because it is at the crossroads of a pedestrian network that connects many important destinations in the downtown – Burial Hill, Plymouth Rock, Mayflower II, Town Wharf, Pilgrim Hall, Town Square, the Forefather's Monument, Memorial Hall, and the list could go on and on.

The Open Space Plan also recommends ways these connections could be enhanced to improve the pedestrian experience, making it easier to move about the downtown. These suggestions include reworking Court Square to create more direct access to the Courthouse entrances, widening the sidewalks and adding street trees to Brewster Street, and creating direct pedestrian access to Burial Hill from Court Square (see Court Square and Brewster Street site plan). Other improvements were also suggested, such as creating a Water Street promenade, with a widened, landscaped sidewalk along the harbor edge, and possibly new piers and docking facilities to further activate the area.

These are improvements that would enhance the desirability of the entire downtown and waterfront, including the Courthouse redevelopment. These might even be funded, in whole or part, by the Courthouse developer.

## **Downtown Transportation Gateway**

One of the impediments to downtown growth is the lack of a centralized and attractive arrival point, a place that welcomes visitors and sets the tone for their visit. The 1820 Courthouse is the logical place for that facility, being centrally located and only minutes from most downtown tourist attraction and other destinations.

The PRA envisions an inter-modal transportation gateway in this location to serve not only the corridor development, but also the broader downtown-waterfront district. What this hub will offer is a transfer point for people entering and leaving the downtown, with regional and local bus service, taxis, free jitney service to nearby tourist attractions, and bike rentals.

For tourists, it will be an arrival point that provides for an exciting orientation experience, through a state-of-the-art visitor center. Films, brochures, exhibits and other media will preview what there is to see and experience in Plymouth, resulting in both heightened expectations and better-planned tour routes. Starting tours in the vicinity of the Courthouse will also eliminate the lines of buses on the waterfront and encourage visitors to make better use of our many excellent shops and restaurants on Court Street.

The gateway and enhanced transportation options will also serve local residents, shoppers and business people, allowing many to get into and out of the downtown without having to use their cars. Bus service routes could also take people to the commuter rail stations at Cordage Park and Kingston, and further afar to destinations such as the Industrial Park, Plymouth Plantation, the Pinehills, other village centers, and

elsewhere. Because transportation services involve the coordination of both private groups and government planning organizations, this too will require close study.

### **Enhance and Diversify Housing Opportunity in the Downtown**

Over the past ten years Plymouth has made a concerted effort to accommodate more affordable housing, partnering with the State on a number of new programs and taking steps in that direction on its own. Plymouth has an inclusionary zoning bylaw (since 2005) that requires all new multifamily housing above a certain unit count to include a fixed percentage of affordable units. We have an approved Affordable Housing Plan (2007), and are participating in the Commonwealth's Community Preservation Act (CPA) grant program that also promotes affordable housing. Since the adoption of the CPA program in Plymouth (2002), the Community Preservation Committee has set aside more than two million dollars for affordable housing.

The Town also recently adopted the State's very aggressive Smart Growth Zoning and Housing Production provision, MGL Chapter 40R, which it is using to shape the redevelopment of Cordage Park in north Plymouth. Chapter 40R encourages smart growth, increased housing production and mixed-use development near transportation hubs, and requires a higher percentage of affordable units than required by our local zoning bylaw. The feasibility of applying 40R standards to the Courthouse and Corridor redevelopment will also be explored.

The importance of housing in the Corridor cannot be overstated, both for amenity and sustainability reasons. The Courthouse Corridor abuts a residential neighborhood on two sides. A major reason the downtown survived the impact of suburban shopping center growth over the last thirty years is the proximity of housing to downtown jobs and shopping opportunities. As economy and life-style needs change, more people of every income bracket will be looking to live and work in walkable communities. Downtown Plymouth offers that now, and with a dynamic new mixed-use development at its center, the downtown will become even more attractive.

The Plymouth Redevelopment Authority, as will be explained in greater detail below, has been an important contributor to meeting the housing needs of low-income families in Plymouth. The way it will be done in the Courthouse Corridor is yet to be determined, but it could involve tying affordable housing requirements to not only the number of market rate units in the project, but also to retail and commercial uses. This will ensure a balance that sustains the economic and social diversity that has always characterized downtown Plymouth.

### **Plymouth 2020 and the Courthouse Corridor**

In 2020, Plymouth will celebrate its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary in a year-long event that honors Plymouth's history and tells its story as the first permanent European settlement in America. The celebration will generate a lot of attention from public and private organizations worldwide, and will attract millions of visitors. This event will be

landmark for Plymouth, as were the 300<sup>th</sup> and 350<sup>th</sup> birthday events, and with it will come many special opportunities.

The Plymouth Redevelopment Authority sees a number of ways the Courthouse and Corridor redevelopments could contribute to and benefit from that event. At one level, it is an opportunity to make a symbolic statement about Plymouth and the role the Courthouse has played in its history. The 1820 Courthouse will be 200 years old that year, half the age of the town. In fact, the completion of the Courthouse in 1820 was rushed so it could play a role in the town's bicentennial celebration. These facts alone suggest many exciting possibilities for joint promotion of these projects. At a more pragmatic level, as in 1820, this building should play a major role in the 2020 celebration, with exhibits inside and on Court Square, and ceremonial events in the Daniel Webster Courtroom.

Long before that, however, we hope to be able to host the Plymouth 2020 planning group in the Courthouse, providing them with offices, exhibit and meeting space where they and their planners and designers can shape the 2020 event.

The PRA has on its advisory Consortium James Baker, a local historian with deep roots in Plymouth cultural institutions. He also serves on the Plymouth 2020 planning committee. With Jim's help, we look forward to wedding the goals of both projects, which could lead to joint grants and other forms of support that neither group alone could qualify for. This effort will require both lead-time and start-up funds, which is why the PRA and Consortium are working on many fronts.

## **What is the Plymouth Redevelopment Authority?**

The Plymouth Redevelopment Authority was established in 1959 to undertake what was then the largest urban renewal project in the Commonwealth. It is a municipal agency chartered under M.G.L. 121B with offices in Town Hall, whose sole purpose is to assist the community with redevelopment and special projects, such as providing housing assistance. The PRA is guided by a five-person, publicly elected board. The current board members are Robert Wollner, Chairman; Steven Grattan, Vice Chairman; Chester Bagni, Treasurer; Dean Rizzo, Secretary; and Paul Curtis, Member at Large. Laura Schaefer is the Executive Director.

In 1971 it completed the 32-acre urban renewal project in the downtown, on and around the site of the Governor Carver Inn. The project provided revitalized infrastructure (roads, bridge, pedestrian ways, parking lots, utilities), new open space and affordable housing units, a hotel, and new office and retail space. It also preserved three historic properties.

In the 1980s, the PRA revitalized the Bradford Street area with improvements to infrastructure and housing. In 2007, the PRA completed a \$2.5 million brownfield remediation of an abandoned industrial site on the Plymouth waterfront, then resold the site to a developer for multi-family housing, with the requirement of affordable units as called for in Plymouth's zoning bylaw.

The PRA also focuses on assisting lower income residents with housing rehab and down payment/closing cost assistance, housing counseling, and building affordable housing. The PRA has been a HUD approved Counseling Agency since 1999. It services over 500 clients annually under a counseling program that focuses on foreclosure prevention, pre-purchase counseling and education, and reverse equity mortgage counseling.

### **PRA-Consortium Courthouse Corridor Leadership**

#### **Laura L. Schaefer, Project Administrator**

Laura Schaefer has been the Executive Director of the PRA for the last 13 years. She holds a BA in Economics from Middlebury College and an MBA in Investment Finance from Boston University. Before joining the PRA, she was Senior Vice-President in charge of the Commercial/Construction Division of a Boston bank. Her expertise is in real estate finance and development and she will be responsible for the administration of the project and grant reporting. For the last 10 years Ms. Schaefer has administered a HUD Housing Counseling grant plus several USDA Rural Development grants and several more HUD and state sub-grants administered through the Commonwealth Department of Housing and Community Development. Laura Schaefer will be assisted by PRA administrator Patty Heylin.

#### **Dean Rizzo, Project Director**

Dean Rizzo is an elected Commissioner of the PRA and is chairman of the 1820 Courthouse Consortium. He has over 20 years experience in construction management, planning, economic development, preservation and transportation. Dean holds a masters degree in Public Affairs and has several certifications in related fields. He is currently the Executive Director of an economic development agency in the City of Quincy, which is a partner in the implementation of a \$1.4 billion public/private partnership in the redevelopment and revitalization of city's downtown commercial center. He also serves as the lead to our partnership with the Old Colony Regional Planning Council.

### **1820 Courthouse Consortium: Primary Courthouse Advisory Group**

The Courthouse Consortium was formed in November 2009 to serve as an advisory body to the PRA. This is a nine member committee representing and reflecting the interests of the PRA Board of Commissioners, Board of Selectmen, Planning Board, Plymouth Growth and Development Corporation, Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce, historic and museum community, cultural/tourism community, corridor residents, and downtown business interests.

Current members of the group are: Dean Rizzo – Chairman, Michael Babini, James Baker, Lieza Dagher, Bill Fornaciari, Samantha Nichols, Nina Peters, Chris Pratt, and Larry Rosenblum. Many of these individual bring professional skills and experience to

the Consortium, some with multiple backgrounds applicable to this effort—in planning, architecture, urban design, property management, real estate, marketing, history, historic preservation, and business.

This is a very active group and they will continue to provide close oversight and direction for the project. They meet bi-weekly and have been actively engaged in defining how the project should unfold. They produced the 78-page Interim Report in June 2010, which lays out the strategy and timeframe for the project. They collaborated on the design consultant Request for Qualifications package (RFQ), which was issued in early August 2010, and they have been actively reaching out to many groups and individuals in the community—Selectmen, Planning Board, Town Meeting Precinct Chairs, Finance and Advisory Committee and others. This level of participation will continue throughout this master planning process.

## **PRA Partners and Collaborators**

In addition to Plymouth 2020, the PRA and Consortium are pursuing partnerships and collaborators on many other fronts:

- **State and Federal funding:** Plymouth has been very aggressive in responding to smart growth, affordable housing, expedited permitting, transfer of development rights, and other planning and environmental programs and initiatives – working with both state and federal entities and funding sources. This history and these relationships will make it easier for us to leverage ongoing resources for this project in the future.
- **Preservation planning and funding assistance:** The 1820 Courthouse and Commissioners Building is listed on the Massachusetts Register of Historic Places as contributing structures to the Plymouth Local Historic District, making it eligible for all the benefits, protections and grant opportunities that designation affords. Preservation Massachusetts, a statewide preservation advocacy organization with connection to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is interested in assisting us with this project. In a recently written support letter for a HUD-Courthouse challenge grant, they said:

“The rehabilitation of this site is extremely important to the future of Plymouth and its historic downtown... We believe that the Town of Plymouth is embarking on a very well thought out planning program and we are confident that it will result in the best possible project for the community.”

The National Trust for Historic Preservation is the major federal granting agency for preservation projects of this type, and their assistance will be sought as Courthouse planning gets underway.

- **Local planning partners:** The PRA will also be coordinating its efforts with the:

- Board of Selectmen;
- Planning Board;
- Plymouth Growth and Development Corporation;
- Plymouth Area Chamber of Commerce;
- Plymouth Industrial Development Commission; and
- Old Colony Planning Council.

- **Construction grants and financing:** The PRA is in contact with following additional organizations that make construction grants and loans:
  - USDA/Rural Development: Community Facilities Program;
  - Mass Historic Commission: Project Preservation Fund;
  - Mass Department of Housing and Community Development: Downtown Initiatives Program (a source of public works and economic grants, satellite trans-modal parking grants, community development economic grants); and
  - MassDevelopment (economic loans, bonds, and grants).

## Conclusion

The Town of Plymouth has a unique opportunity to reinvent its downtown as we move into our fifth century. Plymouth understands the need for change and growth and we have been very aggressive in seeking new development models and methods, not only for the downtown but elsewhere. We also have been successful in attracting quality private-sector developers. The Courthouse Corridor redevelopment is the next step in this evolution. It is a smart growth project that will have multiple benefits for the downtown and set precedents for future development. While this project requires careful planning and the support of many partners and stakeholders, it has great potential. We know it can be done and we know it's worth doing.

## Contemporary Courthouse Photos



1820 Courthouse today



Commissioners Building behind Courthouse



View from cupola towards harbor



Daniel Webster Courtroom



Stair railing



Courtroom chandelier

## Contemporary Courthouse Photos



Typical office



Entrance hallway



Single zone boiler



Telephone room

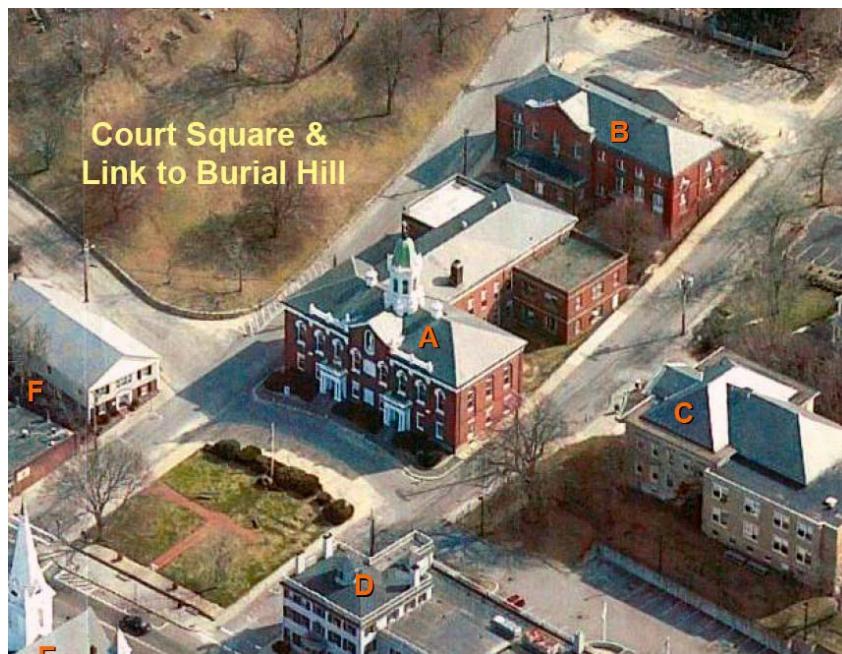


Entry portico



Entry columns

## Land Ownership and Control of Courthouse Corridor



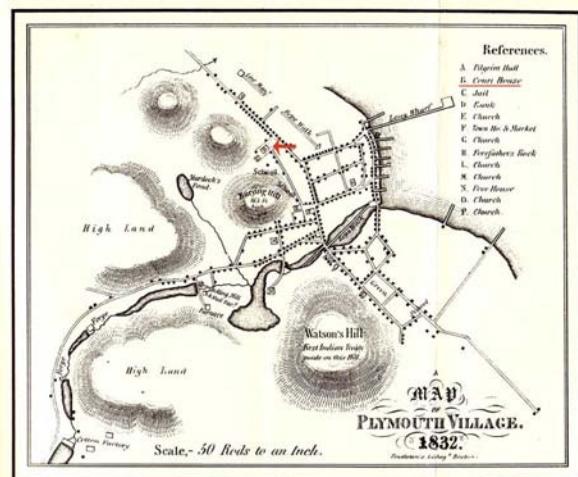
**A. 1820 Courthouse**  
**B. Commissioners Building**

**Court Square at bottom left**

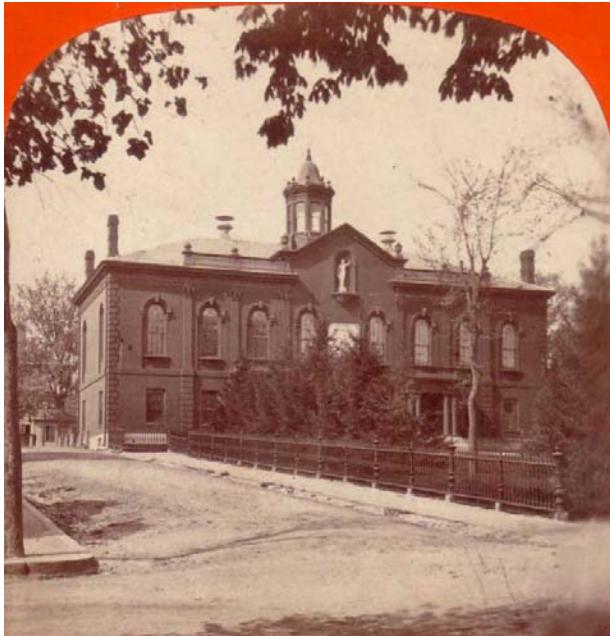
## 1820 Plymouth Courthouse – Historic Images



Court Square and original Courthouse ca. 1845



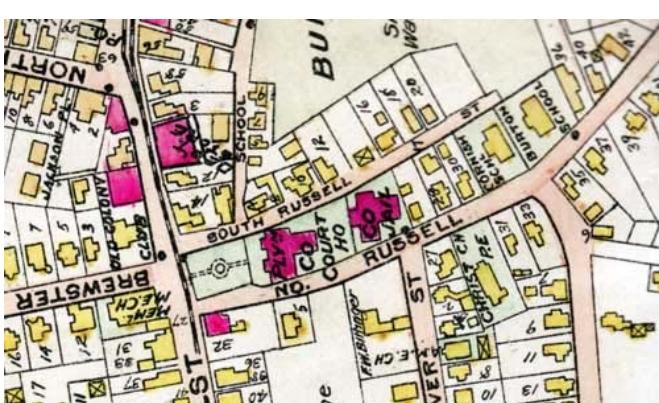
Courthouse setting (red arrow) 1832



Courthouse 1880



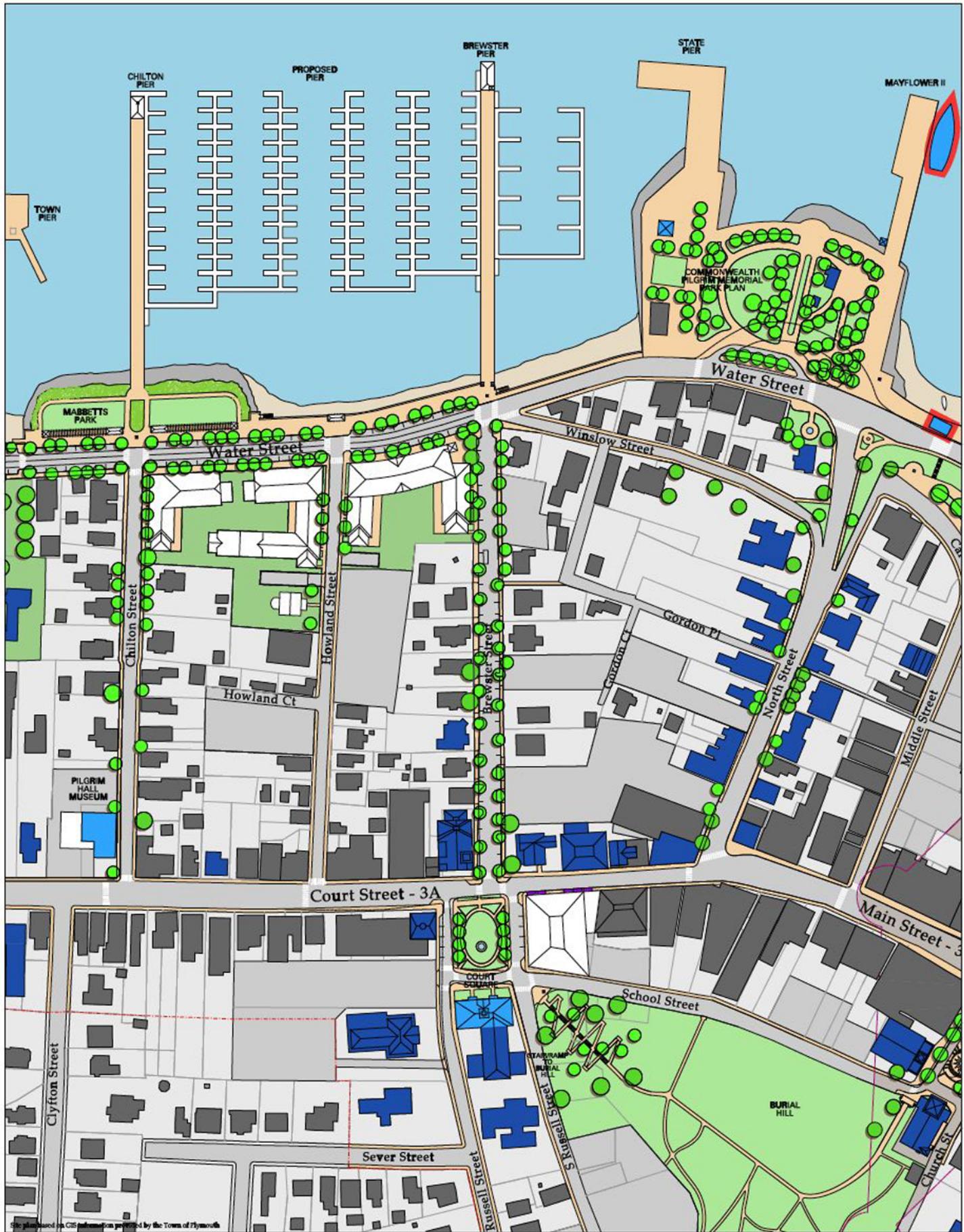
1857 – Courthouse from H. F. Walling & Co. Map of Plymouth County



Court Square, Courthouse, House of Correction 1903



Painted Courthouse, ca. 1915



## Court Square & Brewster Street

Town of Plymouth, Massachusetts

Carlone & Associates Architecture Urban Design Implementation

Bluestone Planning Group CDM/Camp Dresser & McKee Inc.

GLC Development Resources, LLP Vollmer Associates LLP

## Downtown/Harbor District Study Phase I: Public Space Action Plan

0 30 60 120 240

March 21, 2007