**Historic and Archaeological Resources**

**A Brief History of Fayette**

The town of Fayette is largely identified by its location near Echo Lake and Parker and Lovejoy Ponds. It is also home to many smaller ponds. Fayette is bordered on the north by Chesterville, on the east by Readfield and Mount Vernon, on the south by Wayne, and on the west by Livermore Falls. Augusta, the state’s capital, is just over 15 miles to the east and the biggest community in the region.

**Early Settlement:**

Prior to the Revolutionary War, the great majority of Maine’s population was found in the southwestern reaches of the state. Just 15 or so percent of Mainer’s lived east of the Androscoggin River. A once fearful relationship with natives was replaced with an allied relationship and the eastern frontier was pushed back. As a result, many residents of New Hampshire and Massachusetts moved to the area. Soldiers, farmers and mechanics came in particularly large numbers, incentivized by the government’s offer of 150 acre tracts of land for 1 dollar.

Prior to incorporation, Fayette, then known as Sterling Plantation, was home to 53 families and 166 residents in 1790. The effort to incorporate Fayette as a town began on December 20, 1794 with a petition made to the Massachusetts Senate which began as such:

“Your Petitioners (Inhabitants of a Plantation called Sterling in the County of Lincoln containing about seventy Families) humbly sheweth that we labour under many disadvantages in consequence of our unorganized State such as want of means for the education of our youth laying out and Repairing Roads etc. which can be removed only by Incorporation. We therefore pray your Hons to take our case into your wise consideration and Incorporate us into a town by the name of New Sterling.”

On February 28, 1795 incorporation was approved and the first town meeting was held on April 13, 1795 in the house of Cyrus Baldwin in which the Act of Incorporation was read. During this inaugural meeting selectmen/assessors, a town clerk, a treasurer, and a constable were all elected. Funds were appropriated to highways, town charges, and schooling.

By 1796 the number of families in Fayette had grown to more than seventy. By 1800 the population had reached 532, 804 in 1810, and broke 1,000 by 1830.

The mainstay of the early economy was agriculture, with the majority of residents making their living from this activity. Surprisingly, and contradictory to the ways of the region at the time, just a couple of mills were in operation. The principal agricultural interests were livestock, grain, potatoes, and orchards, specifically apples and pears.

By 1840 a significant uptick in manufacturing and trade began. A fulling mill, three tanneries, a gristmill, and four sawmills were all in operation at this time.

Fayette Corner emerged as the center of activity at this time, with several taverns and general stores. The post office was also here and served as a meeting place for residents on Saturdays when they went to pick up the mail.

During the second half of the 1800's, Fayette's population started to fall from its peak in 1850 and agriculture would again stand at the forefront of the economy. Of particular reputation were Fayette’s cattle breeders, with the Underwood family breeding the oldest herd of Herefords in the country.

By 1900, the population was 560, about the same as in 1800. Reasons ventured for this decline include the growth of cities, American westward expansion, and the town's lack of good access to a railroad. Without this it was too difficult to expand its industrial production and make a profit doing so.

**Recent History:**

Going in to the 1900's, there were still sawmills operating in Fayette and agricultural production remained the back bone of the community. Owing to its location in a choice lake region, seasonal businesses emerged as a real driver in Fayette’s economy. Echo Lodge and two well-known summer camps for school children come into operation.

-Add to summer camp history for both Vega/Winnebago

Were there any major/defining events to take place that need/deserve mentioning?

-Flood of 1987? Didn’t find anything on this with regard to Fayette, yet.

Does Fayette have a good historical resource for the 20th century?

**Prehistoric and Archeological Sites**

Fayette, like most of Maine, had residents far before settlers with European roots migrated to the area from the settlements of the coast. Prehistoric archeological sites reveal information about these Native American inhabitants, who rarely left any records. The following four types of sites are significant in the state of Maine:

* Campsites
* Village locations
* Rock quarries and workshops
* Areas containing petroglyphs and rock carvings

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) has not identified any pre-historic sites in the Town of Fayette. Surveys, inventory studies, and analyses to determine the occurrence of pre-historic sites along lake shorelines have been identified as needs, especially along the shorelines of Echo Lake and other smaller ponds and along the western border of town where glacial outwash/eolian soils exist. Given the reach of the natives and the large nature of Maine, it is highly likely that sites exist. Some of these potential sites are unknowingly protected due to the set-back requirements imposed by the Town’s Shoreland Zoning Ordinance. Due to the changing landscape of the waterbodies’ shoreline, sites may be under water. It is recommended that the Town place into its ordinances a demand that any proposed development in close proximity to a probable archeological site be reviewed by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

**Historic Archeological Sites**

Historic archeological sites statewide often include early houses foundations and cellar holes, foundations for various farm buildings, mills, boat yards and wharves, and forts. Since transportation, and then power generation, were largely provided by the State’s many waterways, they are often the location for these historic sites. No historic archaeological sites have been documented in the Town.

No professional survey of the Town has ever been conducted, however, and one should be carried out with a focus on the potential identification of resources attributable to Fayette’s industrial, residential, and agricultural past, particularly those associated with the early settlers of the 18th and 19th centuries.

**Listed Historic Buildings and Structures**

Fayette does, however, have identified historic buildings. Formal identification and protection for historic structures is embodied in listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register currently lists three properties in Fayette:

Kent Burying Ground: Oak Hill Road

Joseph H. Underwood House: 1957 Main Street, surveyed in 2003, and built between 1815 and 1820, this single family, Greek Revival home was inventoried in 2012.

Starling Grange #156: 2769 Main Street, Surveyed in 2003, the Town owned grange is now the home of the Historical Society. The building was constructed between 1870 and 1880 and was the oldest continuously operating grange hall specifically built for that purpose. There is some controversy as to the correct spelling; Fayette was known as the Sterling Plantation and it was later corrupted in the 1790 census report.

**Buildings Eligible for Historic Register Listing**

Main Street Barn. 1820-1825. Need more information.

Main Street School. 1835-1840. Need more information.

**Local Historic Sites and Places**

Other structures in Town are known to exhibit historic qualities, but for a variety of reasons, are not listed on the National Register.

The Mills of Fayette: The mills are gone and only the sites remain; a sawmill on Fayette Mills Stream, Jackman Mills between David and Tilton Ponds, Brown and Berry Box Mill at the outlet of Schoolhouse Pond, and Richmond Mills at the outlet of Hales Pond.

-Smith Sawmill

North Fayette Community Church: It was built in 1832. With the exception of some modern conveniences it remains as originally built. This building has a capacity of 120 and religious services are held every Sunday.

The Fayette Baptist Church: It was built in 1835 to replace an earlier church. It is of federal style architecture and is being restored to its original style. Religious services are held every Sunday and the church has a capacity of 200 people.

-David Pond fire pits?

-Dunn Edge Tool Company remains?

-Talk to DOT about survey during recent bridge work

Buildings and infrastructure such as these must be considered as part of Fayette’s architectural heritage.

**Cemeteries**

Cemeteries are also important areas linking present day Fayette to its storied past. The Town has an obligation to protect and maintain some cemeteries, while others are private or family cemeteries. The following is a listing of known cemeteries in Fayette:

* Berry Family Cemetery
* Fayette Corner Cemetery
* Fayette Mills Cemetery
* Fellows Cemetery
* Kent Cemetery
* North Fayette Cemetery
* Old Fayette Mills Cemetery
* Old North Fayette Cemetery

**Scenic Areas:**

Would we want to include any particular scenic areas that can draw to the past?

-Fayette Baptist pull-out?

**Other:**

Church Camps on the west side.

**Historic and Archaeological Resources**

A. **State Goal**

To preserve the State's historic and archaeological resources.

B. **Analyses**

To generate minimum analyses to address state goals, use Conditions and Trends data in Section 3.1(C) to answer the following questions.

(1) Are historic patterns of settlement still evident in the community?

(2) What protective measures currently exist for historic and archaeological resources and are they effective?

(3) Do local site plan and/or subdivision regulations require applicants proposing development in areas that may contain historic or archaeological resources to conduct a survey for such resources?

(4) Have significant historic resources fallen into disrepair, and are there ways the community can provide incentives to preserve their value as an historical resource?

C. **Condition and Trends**

Minimum data required to address Analyses:

(1) The community’s Comprehensive Planning Historic Preservation Data Set prepared and provided to the community by the Historic Preservation Commission, and the Office, or their designees.

(2) An outline of the community's history, including a brief description of historic settlement patterns and events contributing to the development and character of the community and its surroundings.

(3) An inventory of the location, condition, and use of any historical or archaeological resource that is of local importance.

(4) A brief description of threats to local historic resource and to those of state and national significance as identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

D. **Policies**

Minimum policy required to address state goals:

Protect to the greatest extent practicable the significant historic and archaeological resources in the community.

E. **Strategies**

Minimum strategies required to address state goals:

(1) For known historic archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archeology, through local land use ordinances require subdivision or non-residential developers to take appropriate measures to protect those resources, including but not limited to, modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, and/or extent of excavation.

(2) Adopt or amend land use ordinances to require the planning board (or other designated review authority) to incorporate maps and information provided by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission into their review process.

(3) Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community’s historic and archaeological resources.