

# MHC Reconnaissance Survey Town Report

## FAIRHAVEN

Report Date: 1981

Associated Regional Report: Southeast Massachusetts

**Reconnaissance Survey Town Reports**, produced for MHC's Statewide Reconnaissance Survey between 1979 and 1987, introduce the historical development of each of the Commonwealth's municipalities. Each report begins with an historic overview, a description of topography, and political boundaries. For the purposes of the survey, the historic period has been subdivided into seven periods: Contact (1500–1620), Plantation (1620–1675), Colonial (1675–1775), Federal (1775–1830), Early Industrial (1830–1870), Late Industrial (1870–1915), and Early Modern (1915–1940/55). Each report concludes with survey observations that evaluate the town's existing historic properties inventory and highlight significant historic buildings, settlement patterns, and present threats to these resources. A bibliography lists key secondary resources.

Town reports are designed for use together with a series of town maps that demarcate settlement patterns, transportation corridors and industrial sites for each historic period. These maps are in the form of color-coded, polyester overlays to the USGS topographic base map for each town on file and available for consultation at MHC. For further information on the organization and preparation of town reports, readers should contact MHC.

Users should keep in mind that these reports are now two decades or more old. The information they contain, including assessments of existing knowledge, planning recommendations, understanding of local development, and bibliographic references all date to the time they were written. In some cases, information on certain topics was not completed. No attempt has been made to update this information.

Electronic text was not available for digital capture, and as a result most of the reports have been scanned as PDF files. While all have been processed with optical character recognition, there will inevitably be some character recognition errors.

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MHC RECONNAISSANCE SURVEY  
REPORT

DATE: December 1981

COMMUNITY: Fairhaven

I. TOPOGRAPHY

Fairhaven has an extensive coastline on the Acushnet River and on Buzzards Bay. Drainage in the eastern portion of the town is via the Nasketucket River to Nasketucket Bay. Terrain is very gently rolling with interspersed moderate swamp lands. Soils are generally sandy to gravelly.

II. POLITICAL BOUNDARIES

Fairhaven was incorporated as a town from part of New Bedford on February 22, 1812. Annexed part of Freetown in 1815 and part of Rochester in 1836. Part was established as Acushnet in 1860.

III. HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Fairhaven is a suburban/fishing/resort community on Buzzard's Bay. The establishment of the whaling industry in the New Bedford area in the late 18th century had a profound effect on the development of the Fairhaven/Acushnet area. The town had two principle nodes in this period, Oxford Village and the Twenty Acre which is now Fairhaven. Although Oxford Village had an early lead economically due to shipyards that specialized in whalers, the construction of the first Fairhaven/New Bedford bridge in 1798 caused siltation in the river which eliminated Oxford Village's harbor. The Twenty Acre with potential waterfront sites south of the bridge then had the opportunity to develop; although physically constrained by a surrounding farm, the village did develop as a satellite of the New Bedford whaling industry. The Quaker influence predominant in the other Old Dartmouth towns was not as strong in Fairhaven although a Congregational Church was not built in the village until 1794. The town's prosperity continued until the depression of 1857, like other towns with a specialized economic base there was an abrupt disintegration of economic activity and Fairhaven entered a period of relative quiescence until the 1870s, when resort activity began to contribute to the recovery of the town. This activity was prompted by the construction of the New Bedford/Fairhaven Street Railway. Expansion of the line's routes in the town contributed to the suburbanization of the town in the early 20th century. While there had been some agricultural development of the town in the early 19th century, the bulk of the agricultural lands were included in Acushnet at its incorporation, so that there has been less of an agricultural base in the town during its more recent history.

IV. CONTACT PERIOD (1500-1620)

A. Transportation Routes:

Several conjectured native trails extended through the western portion of Fairhaven providing access to large tracts of potential agricultural land and the area's rich riverine and marine resource base. A probable primary north-south route, possibly originating in Taunton, branched at the Acushnet/Fairhaven line. One probable route was oriented along Adams St. while the second followed Alden Rd., a small portion of Washington St. and Sciticut

Neck Rd. A probable extension of the Acushnet trail (Rochester) cut through the interior of present Fairhaven along Washington St., ultimately terminating near the eastern edge of the Acushnet River. The Acushnet River, Nasketucket and Buzzard's Bays provided access to the area's river and offshore islands, Cape Cod and Narragansett Bay.

#### B. Settlement Patterns:

The remains of a pre-1650s native village and burial ground were discovered in the vicinity of Cooke's Garrison House, immediately NW of the Riverside Cemetery. The burials included a Contact/Historic Period burial. Bartholomew Gosnold reported the presence of a large native population when visiting the Old Dartmouth area (i.e., mouth of Acushnet River; Round Hill, Dartmouth; Gooseberry Neck, Westport) in 1602 (Ricketson 1858: 122-23). Additional settlement likely occurred on the Acushnet River Islands, Long and West Islands. Coastal settlement was probably heaviest during the late spring and summer months. The onset of cooler weather probably witnessed native migration to interior locations particularly the upper reaches of the Acushnet River (Acushnet) and the lowlands west of the river.

#### C. Subsistence Base:

Fairhaven's coast and the lower reaches of the Acushnet River offered the area's native residents a wealth of marine and riverine resources including extensive supplies of fish, shellfish, birds and marine mammals. The coast was also probably the scene of 16C and early 17C European-Indian trade when considering Gosnold's presence in the area and Fairhaven's proximity to Narragansett Bay, an area of known 16C European-Contact (e.g., Verrazanno, 1524).

Additional hunting likely was undertaken in the town's interior woodlands. Potential planting grounds were situated along the eastern bank of the Acushnet River, the Fairhaven coast and throughout the town's interior.

#### D. Observations:

Fairhaven was part of a densely populated region of native Contact Period settlement which extended from Buzzard's Bay to Narragansett Bay. The political boundaries of the Old Dartmouth area natives appear to be defined by river drainages with the New Bedford, Fairhaven, and Acushnet natives, designated the Acushnets. However, some sources apply a specific label to the Fairhaven area natives referring to them as the "Sconticuts". The Acushnets, along with the nearby Apponagansetts and Acoaxets (Dartmouth and Westport, respectively) fell within the domain of the Pokanokets (Wampanoags) centered in Mt. Hope, Rhode Island. The greatest likelihood of extant archaeological evidence of native Contact Period settlement may be located on Long Island, the eastern half of West Island, the southern two thirds of Sconticut Neck, the shores of Little Bay and the interior of Fairhaven.

### V. FIRST SETTLEMENT PERIOD (1620-1675)

#### A. Transportation Routes:

The available sources failed to provide data concerning the colonial transportation network. However, it can be assumed the settlers utilized the pre-existing native trails, particularly since the pre-war homes were

situated adjacent to several conjectured native trails. The area's waterways also functioned as an important means of transportation.

B. Population:

There were no complete figures for the area's native or white population. A large native population inhabited old Dartmouth at the time of the area's first colonial settlement (1650's). In 1671, 40-50 natives living "near or in the town of (Old) Dartmouth" stated their obedience to the English (Hurd 1883:50).

The majority of the English settlers were Quakers who migrated from Portsmouth, Rhode Island; Plymouth and Taunton.

C. Settlement Patterns:

Native settlement continued to focus along the Acushnet River and the Fairhaven coast.

Present Fairhaven was one of the earliest settled portions of Old Dartmouth. Settlement was limited and scattered with several homes erected within the present bounds of the village of Oxford and Sconticut Neck in the 1650's and 1660s. John Cooke, possibly the area's first settler, built a home north of the Riverside cemetery on the "road leading from Fairhaven to Acushnet (probably Main St.). The Fairhaven area settlers probably attended religious and town meetings in present Dartmouth since this settlement was Dartmouth's civic/religious center. Two defensive structures were constructed prior to the outbreak of King Philip's War. A "block house" was reputedly built in c. 1652 on the Sconticut Neck Rd. "near the Mattapoisett Rd., and the log house of Thomas Pope. A garrison house was constructed by John Cooke shortly before King Philip's War.

D. Economic Base:

The sources provide no information dealing with the native economy. The colonial economy was poorly documented. Subsistence agriculture along with hunting and fishing were the settlers' economic pursuits. A grist mill was built by Thomas Pope on Sconticut Neck in c. 1652 (Judd 1896:19).

E. Observations:

Future research should examine the poorly researched pre-war native community, paying particular attention to the dynamics of Anglo-Indian interaction. The Fairhaven area's pre-war colonial settlement was established as part of a Quaker refuge encompassing Old Dartmouth. By the late 17C or early 18C, the larger community probably possessed the largest Quaker population in the Southeastern Massachusetts study unit. Despite the Fairhaven settlement's ready accessibility to major waterways and an extensive coastline, it would be more than half a century before the area (along with New Bedford) gained prominence as a center of maritime activity. Archaeological evidence of the town's pre-1675 settlement may well remain on the light-moderately developed southern two thirds of Sconticut. Heavy development on the eastern bank of the Acushnet River probably destroyed virtually all of Fairhaven's river settlement.

## VI. COLONIAL PERIOD (1675-1775)

### A. Transportation Routes:

The early 18C witnessed the first evidence of the development of a substantial overland network between the homes situated along the eastern side of the Acushnet River and the Sconticut Neck residents. These included a route laid out in c. 1728 which probably extended along Adams St. from just south of the Woodside cemetery to a point immediately north of Huttleston St. A second road was laid out in c. 1730 from Lemuel Pope's house south to Sconticut Neck probably following Sconticut Neck Rd. In c. 1736, a route was constructed which was oriented along Spring St., a fragment of Washington St. and Green St. Considerable expansion of the road network within the Acushnet River settlement probably took place in the mid-late 18C in response to this area's development as Fairhaven's residential/commercial center.

### B. Population:

There were no post-war figures for Fairhaven's native and colonial population. Old Dartmouth (included Fairhaven until 1787) consisted of 30 homes in c. 1675. By 1765, Old Dartmouth had 4506 residents. The population increased 50% to 6773 residents in 1776.

### C. Settlement Patterns:

Fairhaven retained a native population until the 1860's (Judd 1896: 25) although their location is unclear.

Although details are limited, it is apparent the Fairhaven area settlement suffered heavy damage during King Philip's War. A number of homes were destroyed while at least 4-5 residents were killed. Post-war settlement occurred several years after the end of King Philip's War with the construction of several homes in the vicinity of the villages of Oxford and Fairhaven. However, it is not until the mid-18C that extensive settlement took place. At this time, two primary residential/commercial nodes began emerging on the Fairhaven waterfront. The first entailed an area bounded by North, Adams and Elm Sts. (Oxford village) while the second node was situated within the bounds of Spring, Adams and Church Sts. (Fairhaven Village). Despite this growth, the Fairhaven area continued to lack civic/religious facilities. Old Dartmouth's town meetings were held in Dartmouth while two Quaker and one Congregational meetinghouse were available in Dartmouth and Acushnet, respectively.

### D. Economic Base:

No documentation of the native economy. Agriculture remained the basis of the area's colonial economy up until the mid-18C. By this date, the focal point of the Fairhaven area's economy was shifting toward maritime related activities. As with New Bedford, the vast majority of these activities took place on the community's Acushnet River waterfront (Judd 1896: 25). Preparation and storage facilities were erected in this area including a "try works (whale rendering) and oil shed" in the vicinity of the junction of Cherry and North Sts. (Gillingham 1903: 15). Shipbuilding was undertaken on the Oxford village waterfront prior to 1775. The Fairhaven village node was also an active local maritime center during the mid-late

18C although the specifics of its development are not as well documented. The Old South Wharf was erected in c. 1760 on the site of present Kelley's Wharf. Here, whalers and merchantmen arrived and departed with local and foreign goods. A try works was built in the 1760's by Richard Delano in the area between Washington St., Middle St. and the Acushnet River. In c. 1763, a tavern was established by Gamaliele Church on the east side of Water St. and north of Center St.

#### E. Architecture

Residential: Although the town was settled comparatively early as part of Dartmouth and suffered losses in King Philip's War, no houses earlier than 1742 are known to survive. The earliest house now standing in town, the William Wood House (1742) on Main Street, is a center-chimney dwelling with Georgian detailing. Other houses of the period standing in the town date from the 1760s; these include the Avery Parker House (1768), a three-quarter plan, center-chimney house on a raised basement, and two other three-quarter plan center chimney houses of the 1760s, as well as one double interior chimney house dating from the end of the period. Surviving Colonial period cottages are not recorded, but several examples are likely to survive and at least two cottages probably dating to the period were observed, a center-chimney cottage on Adams St. at North Fairhaven and a center-chimney cottage with flues placed longitudinally, on Sconticut Neck Road. Portions of the Taber House at Oxford Village stood into the 20th century; remains indicated that it was a stone-end chimney house.

Institutional: No institutional buildings are known to have been constructed in Fairhaven until after its incorporation from Old Dartmouth in 1787. One schoolhouse is thought to have predated the Revolution, but a construction date was not recorded.

#### F. Observations:

The Fairhaven area was part of regional maritime center which emerged on the lower portion of the Acushnet River in the mid-late 18C. Despite the severe economic losses suffered by the maritime industries of Fairhaven and New Bedford during the Revolution, the pre-1775 economic development served as the foundation for this area's golden age as a national shipbuilding, whaling and trade center in the early-mid 19C. A substantial number of homes connected with Fairhaven's pre-Revolutionary War growth survive in the vicinity of the town's original waterfront. Archaeological evidence of this period of colonial settlement probably remain on the southern two-thirds of Sconticut Neck.

### VII. FEDERAL PERIOD (1775-1830)

#### A. Transportation Routes:

New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge 1798 Improvement of existing colonial roads.

#### B. Population:

Population figures unavailable prior to incorporation in 1812, growth from 1820 to 1830. First Congregational Meeting House in the town constructed 1794 at Center and Laurel Streets.

### C. Settlement:

Well defined hamlets at Oxford Village and at the Twenty Acres at beginning of the period. Construction of Fairhaven-New Bedford bridge severely curtailed further development of Oxford Village as port and shipbuilding center. The Twenty Acres (Fairhaven Center) assumed Oxford's role although physical expansion of the town was constrained by refusal of owner of surrounding farm to sell prior to 1830's. A well defined waterfront section did develop in the center, a reminder of village settlement patterns were basically linear with farmsteads along existing roads.

### D. Economic Base:

The early development of Oxford is well represented by Fairhaven's earliest industry of note: shipbuilding, which was begun at Oxford in 1781, following the lead of Acushnet Village. With the construction of the Fairhaven-New Bedford toll bridge in 1796, Oxford was rapidly eclipsed by the settlement around the mill dam, where the town's second shipyard (1804) was constructed.

The war of 1812 became a major source of dispute with neighboring New Bedford. Fairhaven's largely agrarian population sided with the Republican Madison, while New Bedford's votes were cast for Clinton and peace. The two towns parted company the same year (1812).

After the War of 1812, New Bedford's whaling prosperity was mirrored by Fairhaven across the river. The 1820s and '30s were a period of overall prosperity and community growth for Fairhaven. By 1832 Fairhaven boasted of men employed in whale fishery (vs. 129 ships and over 3,000 men in New Bedford), in addition to rope and salt works.

For a brief period in the century's first decade, Oxford village also experienced a cottage industry in straw bonnet and hat making.

### E. Architecture:

Residential: With the beginnings of maritime industry in Fairhaven, residential construction increased with clusters of houses built at Oxford Village and at Fairhaven center. Isolated Federal period houses and cottages were built along Alden Road, Washington Street and Sconticut Neck Road. The prosperity of the period created a tight cluster of settlement at Fairhaven center with closely-spaced houses with the sidehall plan associated with urban density. Of some seventy Federal houses surviving in the town, more than half of some have half (three bay) or three-quarter (four bay) plans with either sidehall entrances or entrances in either of the two interior bays. Most of the houses at the town center have interior chimneys, raised basements (probably as a safeguard against high tides), stoops, and pedimented entrance surrounds with semicircular leaded or wooden fanlights. Such houses were probably first built around the turn of the century and remained popular into the 1830s. In addition to the sidehall plan houses in town, a number of more traditional double interior and end chimney houses with five bay facades and center entrances were built as well. Many of these retain the steep-pitched hip roof and interior chimneys of the Georgian period, with end chimney, shallow-pitched hip roof houses being less common. At least one house with a center chimney and steep pyramidal hip roof is recorded for the period and stands at the town center. In addition to these houses, a regionally distinctive three-story end-chimney hip-roofed Federal house type was also constructed; some

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three or four houses of this type, dating c. 1820, are known in the town. Often these houses incorporate a two-story frontispiece with a tripartite second story window and side and fanlit entrance surround; at least one example with a one-story veranda of the period is known. Some twenty to thirty Federal period cottages, almost all with center chimneys, were also built in the period; as with Fairhaven's two-story houses, three quarter and half plans are comparatively common. At least one Federal period half-plan cottage was identified on Causeway Street at West Island. Almost all of Fairhaven's Federal period houses are very well-detailed and most are in an excellent state of preservation. Also notable is the preservation of period streetscapes at the town center, especially along the banks of the Acushnet River.

Institutional: The first institutional building built in Fairhaven was the Congregational meetinghouse (the second parish of New Bedford), built in 1794. In 1812, Fairhaven was incorporated as a separate town.

Other churches organized in the period were the Washington Street Christian, established in 1819 even though a church was not built until 1832, the Methodist Episcopal Church (1829), and the New Boston Chapel (1830). The only one still standing is the New Boston Chapel, a one-story, center entrance chapel, two bays wide by four bays long. Portions of the 1794 meetinghouse are incorporated within the 1853 Phoenix Hall. Also founded in the period was the New Bedford (later Fairhaven) Academy (1798), a domestic two-story end chimney five-bay house with a Georgian pedimented entrance surround, still standing at the town center. The only other institutional building known to survive is a rare stone schoolhouse of 1828, a one-story hip-roofed building on North Street.

Commercial: Several commercial buildings of the Federal period survive along the waterfront. These include several two-bay wide two-story frame office buildings and one three-story stone building associated with the Rodman Candle Works.

## VIII. EARLY INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1830-1870)

### A. Transportation Routes:

Fairhaven Branch Railroad connection with the Cape during this period. Improvement of existing roads and expansion of internal grid.

### B. Population:

Steady population growth, particularly rapid increase between 1830-1840, continued to 1850 then decline in 1860 due to incorporation of Acushnet, decline continued to the end of the period. In 1855 foreign born population 5% of the total.

### C. Settlement:

Continued expansion at Twenty Acre to late 1850's. Waterfront area continued to expand with numerous whaling related industries along Main Street. Continued infill along existing roads although this, too, was halted to a great extent by the depression of 1857.

### D. Economic Base:

The Early Industrial period was Fairhaven's greatest boom period. Like

New Bedford, Fairhaven merchants made their fortune in the whale fishery. By 1838, the town was the second busiest whaling port in the nation. At its peak, Fairhaven boasted 46 ships and 1324 men engaged in bringing back over \$600,000 worth of whale products.

Whaling reached its peak in Fairhaven, as in New Bedford, about 1857. The nationwide depression that began the same year had a devastating effect on the whaling business. The enormous quantities of whale oil soon overstocked a market much less inclined to buy. Prices fell and disaster struck many firms. Sperm oil, which sold for \$1.72 per barrel in 1855, sold for \$1.21 in 1858. Any possible recovery of the business was further compromised by the discovery of petroleum in Pennsylvania in 1859, in the long run virtually eliminating the demand for sperm and whale oil as illuminants. Like New Bedford, Fairhaven played an early role in kerosene production in the state because of its existing refining capability and expertise. In the 1860s, Harris wrote, oil companies were springing up like mushrooms in Fairhaven -- with names like the Empire Rock Oil Co., the Fairhaven Rock Oil Co., or the Keystone Oil Works. Although none appear to have outlasted the decade, the business was enough to send Henry Huttleson Rogers to Pennsylvania to learn the business.

Like New Bedford, Fairhaven investors also attempted cotton manufacture, building the Acushnet Mill in 1843, though unlike the Wamsutta in New Bedford, the Fairhaven mill was notably unsuccessful, closing in 1850, its buildings taken over by the Fairhaven Iron Foundry, which, with the American Tack Co., became the town's replacement for the employment lost in the collapse of the whaling industry.

The American Nail-Machine Co., which relocated to Fairhaven in 1865, was one of the few manufacturing industries to replace the prominence of whaling. Reorganized as the American Tack Co., by 1875 the company's product, worth \$250,000, dominated Fairhaven's manufacturing economy.

In 1854 the Fairhaven Branch Railroad provided a rail connection linking Fairhaven and the Buzzards Bay ports of Marion and Mattapoisett with the Cape Cod Branch Railroad at Tremont, was this to unite the whaling ports to bring to Fairhaven and New Bedford oil for refining?) .

#### E. Architecture

Residential: Residential construction continued at a pace equal to or exceeding that of the previous period. The sidehall plan remained almost universal, and was quickly assimilated within the Greek Revival style which was widely adopted by the 1840s. In all, some sixty-five well-detailed sidehall Greek Revival houses and cottages are recorded in the town along with a similar number of sidehall houses with Italianate detailing. The tight setting of houses at the town center was retained, with narrow houses set close to the street filling most of the neighborhoods along the waterfront at Fairhaven center. North Fairhaven began to develop with smaller numbers of Greek Revival and Italianate houses. While the sidehall plan predominated, several other plan types were also used. The most common variations are traditional center and double chimney plans with five bay facades and center entrance; at least three houses are known which incorporate the traditional center entrance plan with the more stylish Greek Revival pedimented front gable (ridge perpendicular to street). Several Italianate villas with towers were also built at the town center (Fort Street) and at North Fairhaven (Main and Coggeshall Streets) along with a few Gothic Revival houses. The finest Gothic Revival cottage in Fairhaven was the Jenne Mansion, a center entrance house with

crenellated eaves, elaborate bargeboards with pendants and a triple gable motif on the facade; it was demolished for the Unitarian Memorial Church. At least one other Gothic Revival house is known (Jabez Delano, Washington Street); this is a center gabled stone house with lancet windows. The finest house still standing in Fairhaven is the Ezekial Sawin House (1840-44) on William Street, a very highly-styled two-and-a-half story Greek Revival mansion with a classical attic with anthemion and a scrolled parapet, wide pilasters on the facade and a one-story Ionic peristyle. Although the architect is unknown, the house is undoubtedly the work of a major designer in the Greek Revival style. Conjectured architects for the design are Russell Warren or possibly Elias Carter; based on decorative and scale similarities to the R.B. Forbes House in Milton, as well as Sawin's Boston area (Needham) origins, Isaiah Rogers might also be a contending architect. In general, the quality of detailing is quite high on many Fairhaven houses with many houses of the period retaining stylish finishes such as flushboarding and rustication; period details are also quite well-preserved.

Institutional: Several institutional buildings were constructed during the period of which a few still stand. In 1830, the Methodist Episcopal Church built a two-story transitional Federal/Greek Revival meetinghouse with a double entrance facade and lancet windows with blind fanlights; in 1852, that building became Fairhaven's first high school. It was demolished in 1920. In 1841, the Center Congregational Church built a \$5600 meetinghouse to the designs of "Mr. Eaton", probably Solomon K. Eaton of Mattapoisett, a prominent local builder and designer; this may be the two-story Federal/Greek Revival meetinghouse on Washington Street, presently functioning as the Boys Club.

The only other institutional buildings of the period known to survive are the Fairhaven Grange (c. 1845), a two-story Greek Revival/Italianate building, and the Friends Meetinghouse (1849) on Brodgate Street. The Riverside Cemetery was organized in 1850.

Commercial: The most stylish commercial building of the period is the Phoenix Block (1853), a two-and-a-half story Italianate building with flushboarding, pilasters, bracketted window hoods and end gable pediment with deep eaves and bracketting; originally, the building had a fanciful square belfry with an open Gothic cupola. Another important surviving commercial building is the Union Hotel (1831), a three-story late Federal end chimney double pile plan building with a two-story veranda. In addition to these structures, at least a few two-story frame commercial buildings survive along the waterfront.

Industrial: Among the surviving period industrial structures are the Purrington and Taber paint shop (c. 1864), a two-story frame Greek Revival/Italianate structure, the Stetson Shoe Shop (c. 1850) on Rodman Street, and the Birtwhistle building (c. 1840), a two-and-a-half story frame building on Fort Street.

## IX. LATE INDUSTRIAL PERIOD (1870-1915)

### A. Transportation Routes:

New Bedford-Fairhaven Street Railway ran horsecars in 1872, by the end of the period the line was extended to Mattapoisett. Improvement of existing roads and extension of internal street grid at Center.

### B. Population:

Population growth begins 1870-80, 1880-90 population stable then continuous growth to the end of the period. Although absolute foreign born population is

less in 1885 than in 1855 the relative percentage of foreign born individuals is 13.5% of the total population. By 1915 foreign born total reached almost 25%. (It should be noted that while the total population increased by 119% between 1885 and 1915 the foreign born population increased by almost 700% in the same period.

#### C. Settlement:

Residential, commercial and industrial development of the town stagnated to mid-late 1870's when area began to develop as a summer resort and as a suburb of New Bedford. Residential development along Main Street joined Oxford Village with the Twenty Acres. Some resort development on Sconticut Neck as well as on Washington Street.

#### D. Economic Base:

The American Tack Company, by 1903, with a new plant constructed along the Fairhaven Branch Railroad, was said to be the largest and best tack mill in the world, employing 450 hands. With the substantial investment of the town's most prominent son, Henry Huttleston Rogers, in library, school streets, and water system, Fairhaven developed increasingly as a residential suburb of New Bedford-across-the-bridge. In an unusual municipal gesture, income from the Rogers-built water company was allocated to maintain the Rogers-built Millicent Library. Farming in rural areas remained the principal use of Fairhaven acreage.

#### E. Architecture:

Residential: Fairhaven began to develop as a summer resort during the Late Industrial period; in addition, the establishment of the American Tack factory mitigated the effects of the declining whaling industry and created working class neighborhoods to the east of Fairhaven center with a secondary working class neighborhood developing at Oxford. Elite summer houses were built along Sconticut Neck Road. The most substantial house built in the period was the Rogers summer house, a vast three- and-a-half story Georgian Revival building opposite Fort Phoenix, built in 1895 and demolished in the early 1960s. All that remains of the complex, built for Fairhaven's benefactor and most successful native son, Henry Huttleston Rogers, are the walls and several outbuildings, also in the Georgian Revival style, now converted to residential use. There was little residential construction before the 1890s in the town, so that most of the town's substantial houses are turn of the century Craftsman and Colonial Revival buildings, with the majority of the houses of the period being modest-sized vernacular Queen Anne and Colonial Revival buildings. Two-family houses and single-family cottages and bungalows predominate in the northern half of the town at Oxford and also east of the center while smaller single-family houses and some bungalows were built along Sconticut Neck. Three deckers are rare but not unknown, especially along Adams Street at North Fairhaven and Oxford.

Institutional: In the Late Industrial period, Fairhaven received one of the state's finest collections of public buildings, almost all designed by Boston architect, Charles Brigham, through the benefaction of oil millionaire, Henry H. Rogers. These buildings include the Rogers Grammar School (1885, Warren R. Briggs, Bridgeport, Ct), the Millicent Library (1891-3), the Town Hall (1894), the Memorial Unitarian church (1901-4), Parsonage and Parish House and the High School (1905-6). In addition to these buildings, Rogers gave the municipal water system and all the landscaping surrounding the major public buildings at the town center. The Brigham buildings (the last

six listed above) are each built in a different style and are all outstanding examples of their style with elaborate detailing of the finest quality materials and workmanship. Period landscaping is preserved intact at the town center and provides a unifying setting for the disparate buildings. In addition to the Rogers' buildings, several other notable institutional buildings of the period were constructed. Among these are the Oxford School (1896), a well-detailed red brick Colonial Revival schools (c. 1910), one at East Fairhaven and one on Main Street (Anthony School), the Fairhaven Fire Station (1890), a frame Federal Revival building two bays wide, and the Public School Administration building (1915). In the Riverside Cemetery is an Eastlake style sexton's cottage, built in 1881 at a cost of \$1800; it is a rare local example of that short-lived style.

Commercial: Several two and three story commercial buildings were erected at the town center during the period. These include the Masonic Building (1903), a three-story masonry Renaissance Revival building in buff brick, and the Tabitha Inn (Charles Brigham, 1904-5), a two-and-a-half story Tudor Revival building with a brick first story and half-timbered upper floors, given to the town by Henry H. Rogers. Other commercial buildings of more utilitarian character are located along Center Street and on Adams and Main Streets at North Fairhaven.

Industrial: Several large industrial structures were built in the period including the American Tack factory works on Fort Street, a long three-story masonry building, the Babbitt Loom Company, a one-story utilitarian building on Water Street, and a number of utilitarian buildings for the Hathaway Machine Company, also on Water Street and built between 1880 and 1925.

## X. EARLY MODERN PERIOD (1915-1940)

### A. Transportation Routes:

Washington Street designated Route 6 major e/w auto route to the Cape.

### B. Population:

Accelerated growth to 1930 then stable to end of period. Foreign born population dropped to 23% of total in 1930.

### C. Settlement:

Continued resort development at Sconticut Neck with continued residential development along Washington Street and its side streets.

### D. Economic Base:

No new industries identified. Agriculture still dominates land use despite growing suburban population. Maritime industry represented by four boatyards (1937) engaged in overhaul, repair, and refitting of pleasure craft.

### E. Architecture:

Residential: Modest workers and summer house construction continued through the 1920s at North Fairhaven and along Sconticut Neck. Somewhat more substantial houses in the Colonial Revival and Dutch Colonial Period were built along Washington Street toward East Fair-

haven and at the town center. Small hip and gambrel roofed cottages and bungalows were built both at North Fairhaven and on Sconticut Neck Road, but at North Fairhaven, simple two-family houses were built too.

Institutional: Several churches were built in the period including the Church of the Good Shepherd (1922), a one-story stucco Gothic Revival chapel at North Fairhaven, the Church of the Sacred Heart (c. 1920), a brick Craftsman/Gothic church at North Fairhaven and St. Joseph's Church (1924-5), a brick two-story Gothic Revival building with a central square entrance tower. The Sacred Heart Academy, established in 1908, also built a three-story yellow brick streamlined Gothic Revival building at Main and Coggeshall Streets during the period.

Commercial: Modest one-story commercial buildings were built at North Fairhaven and at Fairhaven Center during the period. Also built were the Fairhaven Institution for Savings (1939), a one-story limestone Georgian Revival building, the Park Oldsmobile dealership on Middle Street, a one-story concrete, glass block and vitrolite auto showroom, c. 1935, and a one-story gasoline service station (the Modern Garage, c. 1925) with a drive-through covered pump area, at the intersection of Main and Adams Streets at North Fairhaven.

#### XI. SURVEY OBSERVATIONS:

Fairhaven's survey is one of the best surveys encountered in the Reconnaissance project; forms are thoroughly documented and most significant buildings, pre-1920, seem to have been recorded. Future inventory efforts should include more individual forms on buildings especially at North and on back roads; post-1920 buildings should also be recorded. Several institutional buildings seem to have been omitted (Oxford School, for example), along with later commercial buildings of the 1920s. In addition, mapping does not seem to have been accurate; a number of properties listed on the USGS base map appear to have been misidentified.

#### XII. SOURCES

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