

MASTER PLAN FOR WAYLAND RAILROAD INTERPRETIVE SITE

MARCH 2005



PREPARED FOR:
WAYLAND HISTORICAL COMMISSION

PREPARED BY:
HINES WASSER & ASSOCIATES

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

SHARY PAGE BERG, FASLA
PRESERVATION PLANNER

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Figure 1. The passenger depot, circa 1920, (courtesy Wayland Historical Society).

Introduction

Planning for Wayland's railroad interpretive site is an unusual and unique effort for many reasons. The numerous railroad related structures and features located within the site constitute an important historic and archeological resource for the town of Wayland. The railroad corridor lies between the commercial district along Route 20 and important public facilities and institutions and the proposed redevelopment of the Raytheon Site (currently called the Wayland Business Center). This location provides the potential for the site to serve multi-purposes to the community as a whole and to adjacent properties and institutions which are important to the fabric and future of Wayland. It also provides an opportunity to showcase a key factor in the history and development of the town.

This study was undertaken by the Wayland Historical Commission to develop a vision for the preservation and future use of the site to serve the citizens of Wayland. Key objectives for the study include historic preservation of the buildings, structures and artifacts; educational and interpretive programming; active and passive recreational use; and accessibility to the site. The Master Plan should be viewed as a guide that establishes the overall direction for site preservation and development. This master plan should not be viewed as immutable. As the future unfolds, modifications to the recommendations which better achieve project goals may become apparent, and opportunities to preserve and improve the site should be taken.

The Wayland Railroad Interpretive Site Study encompassed information collection from a wide variety of sources. It is also based on several field investigation visits by our team and has included numerous meetings and discussions with town committees, residents and stakeholders to collect relevant information about the existing conditions and potential future for the site. Several design alternatives for the railroad alternative site were prepared to facilitate these discussions among the stakeholders and imagine future scenarios for the preservation and development of the site to serve the citizens of Wayland. Two open public forum meetings were held: one through the Town Center Committee and one through the Historic District Commission. An open public meeting to discuss the preferred approach for preservation and use of the site was held on March 9, 2005. Summaries of the information gathered from all these sources are reported in the *Existing Conditions and Analysis* and in the *Public Collaboration* sections of this report and were used in the development of the Master Plan (Figure 21).

Guiding Principles

The guiding principles of the study build on the mission of the Wayland Historical Commission to provide community-wide preservation planning for the town's historic assets. The guiding principles articulate the fundamental ideas used in determining the planning approach and recommendations.

1. PRESERVE & INTERPRET HISTORY

The resources associated with Wayland's railroad history must be valued by the community in order to receive long term funding for preservation and enhancements. Interpretation is the means to generate broad community understanding and support.

2. BUILD/STRENGTHEN/CREATE CONSENSUS

Building alliances between many town agencies, other town organizations and non-profit societies is essential to developing a long-term constituency for the property. Wherever possible, build on mutual areas of interest.

3. PROVIDE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

The railroad corridor presents a unique opportunity to establish a new non-automotive connection between the commercial center on Route 20, the library, nearby neighborhoods and the redevelopment of the Raytheon site.

4. SECURE FUTURE MAINTENANCE/LIFE

An essential component of a successful interpretive site is a commitment to long-term and low-maintenance design. The freight house (and depot) must have a meaningful function in order to gain long term support for their preservation and maintenance.

The report is organized in four sections:

- I. *Historical Overview* – summarizes and evaluates the historic information gathered to date by the client and study team.
- II. *Existing Conditions and Analysis* – describes the physical and cultural site conditions and reviews the opportunities and constraints the site presents to meeting the project's goals.
- III. *Public Collaboration* – summarizes the viewpoints and jurisdictions of the various stakeholders and government agencies.
- IV. *Recommendations* – outlines the specific recommendations of the plan.



Figure 2. An historic view of a train passing the passenger station, circa 1956, (photograph by Paul Foskett).

I. Historical Overview

Site History and Significance

The Wayland railroad site is significant and unusual because it still contains both the 19th century passenger station and the freight house. Both structures remain largely as originally constructed without having undergone major alteration. Together with the foundation structures and the collection of historic artifacts, the site is unique in Massachusetts and has been included in the Wayland Center National Register Historic District and the Wayland Center Local Historic District.

The history and significance of the site has been thoroughly documented in *Archaeological Site Examination, Wayland Center Railroad Complex, AT&T and Omnipoint Telecommunications Complex, Wayland, Massachusetts*, prepared by Public Archaeology Laboratory Inc. in 2001 (subsequently referred to as PAL report). This section summarizes the findings of that report as they relate to the current proposal for a railroad interpretive site.

Many communities west of Boston had rail service by the 1840s. At that time Wayland Center was a small village with little or no industry. The Post Road provided the primary link with Boston and other communities. There were proposals for a railroad line to Wayland as early as 1843, but train service did not reach the community until 1881. Arrival of the railroad was a key factor in transforming Wayland from a rural agricultural community to a residential suburb of Boston. The railroad created new economic opportunities for local farmers, who could ship milk and other farm products to urban markets, and helped to create a new industrial base for the community.

Ownership of the railroad changed hands several times in the 1880s, resulting in breaks in service that lasted up to two years. In 1887 Wayland became the turning point for some round trips to Boston, which required construction of a steam locomotive servicing terminal. A turntable, engine house and water tank were built west of the passenger station and Wayland became a terminal where engines were stored and took on water.



Figure 3. Boxcars in front of the freight house, 1969, (photograph by Richard Conard).

In the early twentieth century the railroad was heavily used for both passenger and freight service. Freight traffic included shipments of coal, lumber and animal feed, with warehouses along the tracks west and east of the depot. Passenger traffic was heavy during World War I but dropped off in 1917, resulting in the closure of the Wayland steam locomotive terminal. In the 1930s the water tank and engine house were torn down as they were no longer needed. In the years between World War I and II, the passenger station remained an important center of social activity, with a station agent responsible for managing freight and passenger service. During World War II, passenger usage once again increased and the rail line through Wayland was also used to transport munitions to the nearby Ordway munitions depot.

After World War II the town grew rapidly and took on an increasingly suburban character. Despite the growing number of automobiles, there was still heavy commuter rail traffic, although freight traffic decreased. After the station agent's position was discontinued in 1949, the station was abandoned. It was derelict through most of the 1950s and 60s and was nearly demolished. Ironically, it was about this time that the station became a symbol of small town life. It was featured on the cover of the *Christian Science Monitor* in 1945 and *Yankee Magazine* in 1964. In 1965 it was included in the newly created Wayland Center Historic District. By the early 1970s, passenger traffic had dropped off as well and passenger rail service finally ceased in late 1971. Freight service continued on a limited basis a few years longer, with regular service finally ending in 1980. The town purchased the station in 1970, and in 1980 it was restored for use as a non-profit handicraft shop.

The Wayland Center Railroad Complex was developed over a period of about 40 years, from 1880 to about 1920. It was at its prime from 1887 when all major features, including the locomotive servicing terminal, were completed and in use until 1917 when the servicing terminal was discontinued and ridership dropped off after World War I. A key finding of the PAL report was that the,

“identified historic and archaeological buildings, structures and features that comprise the Wayland Center Railroad Complex. . . are significant resources that should collectively be considered eligible to the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A, C, and D. The Wayland Center Railroad Complex played an important role in the socioeconomic development and transformation of the town in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Taken collectively, the surviving structural and archaeological resources at the complex represent key components of a typical late-nineteenth-century passenger, freight, and locomotive servicing facility.”



Figure 4. The passenger station with the engine house in the background in 1915, (courtesy Walker Transportation Collection, Beverly Historical Society).



Figure 5. The appearance of the passenger station in 2004, (photograph by William L. Patton).

Historic and Archaeological Resources

This list of historic and archaeological resources is based on the PAL report and onsite observations made during 2004. Extant features are in **bold type**. Visible changes since the time of the PAL report were observed at the whistle post near Millbrook Road, the switch stand and tracks in the Route 27 and 126 crossing, the spare rail racks, the derail mechanism, and the freight house.

Passenger Station

Built by Massachusetts Central Railroad in 1881, the Wayland Center **Passenger Station** (the depot) (Figure 4 and 5) is one of six surviving Central Mass Railroad stations and is currently occupied by the Wayland Depot, Inc., a non-profit handicraft gift shop. It is the best preserved of this group and the only one open to the public. The station was a symbol of the community in the mid-twentieth century and was featured on the cover of several magazines. It is described in the PAL report as:

“a quintessential example of a suburban railroad passenger station . . . designed in a distinctive, picturesque hybrid of the Gothic Revival and Stick styles that characterized many small American railroad stations built between the Civil War and the 1880s.”

Volunteers from Wayland Depot, Inc. use the depot for their gift shop on a seasonal basis. While the Town of Wayland pays for major improvements, Wayland Depot, Inc. has provided up-keep and minor repair of the structure. The depot building appears to be for the most part in good condition, largely due to the efforts of Wayland Depot, Inc. and other involved citizens. The design of the access improvements and the handicap ramp could be more in keeping with the character of the time with use of more appropriate materials.

A related feature is the **Passenger Platform**, which lies north of the station adjacent to the tracks. It has a packed stonedust layer surrounded by a concrete curb. The passenger platform is in a deteriorated condition, is overgrown with vegetation and negatively impacts the depot building's appearance.



Figure 6. The track siding and freight house in the fall 2004 looking toward the library parking area. Note the NSTAR transmission tower, (HWA, 2004).

Freight House

Built by the Massachusetts Central Railroad in 1881, the Wayland **Freight House** is the only surviving example of this building type on the Central Mass Railroad line and is described in the PAL report as “a rare surviving type of railroad building.” Such buildings were typically located between a railroad siding and an access road to facilitate transfer of freight between freight cars and road vehicles. The freight loading dock along the south side of the building is no longer extant. The freight house appears to have suffered additional deterioration since the PAL report. In several areas, the bottom siding is missing and the foundations appear to have shifted causing some of the building joists to not be supported on the sills. It is in need of stabilization to ensure its long-term life.

The freight house is currently used as auxiliary storage by the Friends of the Wayland Public Library, the Wayland Fire Department and the Parks and Recreation Department; however, these uses may not easily justify funding its maintenance and preservation over time.

The location of the freight house on the east side of Route 126 at the edge of the library parking lot further complicates the preservation issue. Its isolated location separate from the concentration of historic railroad features on the west side of this intersection makes it difficult to include in an interpretive path. Moreover, in its current separate location, a rehabilitated freight house may not be appealing for use other than storage.

There is a **Stone Retaining Wall** south of the freight house.

Track Structure and Related Features

The **Tracks** consist of a pair of steel rails mounted to wooden ties with cinder and gravel ballast. The 1927 Sanborn map indicates that there were two sidings east of Route 126, one immediately adjacent to the freight house and one south of the main line. The track structure consists of a single main line track (two parallel rails) from Route 27 with a long siding track running parallel to the main track at the western edge of the site. A separate spur track from this siding once served the lumber storage building.

Only portions of the track structure remain. Some of the remaining tracks are covered over with soil, leaves, vines, and grasses. The most notable break in continuity occurs at the crossing of Routes 27 and 126 where the track structure has been completely removed to accommodate the new roadways intersection, and relocated to temporary storing next to the depot. It is clear that the tracks are in very poor condition due to the on-going deterioration of the ties.



Figure 7. Main line and siding, east of the freight house (HWA, 2004).

There are also some **Spare Rail Racks** (Figure 8) west of the passenger station, consisting of three t-shaped reinforced concrete posts. These have been broken since the PAL report. Other extant track-related structures include **Switchstands**, which were used to switch trains onto side tracks. They consist of a 5' high steel mechanism mounted to a pair of long parallel wood ties. One of the switch stands has been relocated from the middle of the new roadway intersection to temporary storage next to the depot (Figure 9). The **Derail Mechanism** consists of a cast steel clamp attached to the head of the north rail. Since the PAL report, the derail mechanism has toppled over and its metal pieces are broken (Figure 10). There is one remaining **Stop Sign Post**, a 5' wooden post located southwest of the freight house (Figure 11); two concrete **Whistle Posts** - one has been toppled and broken since the PAL report (Figure 12); one cedar **Lamp Post** with an ornamental scrollwork bracket and a globe lamp fixture located about 110' west of passenger station; and four **Telegraph Poles**, two near the freight house and two west of Routes 27 and 126.



Figure 8. Broken spare rail racks (HWA, 2004).



Figure 9. Switch stand moved from the intersection to a pallet at the depot (HWA, 2004).



Figure 10. Broken derail mechanism (HWA, 2004).



Figure 11. Wood stop post, (HWA, 2004).



Figure 12. Toppled and broken whistle post, (HWA, 2004).

Steam Locomotive Terminal

The Steam Locomotive Terminal was built in 1887 when Wayland became a turning point for passenger trains serving Boston to Wayland commuter traffic. It provided a means for steam locomotives to reverse their direction after each run; a place for locomotives to be stored and maintained; and provided water for the locomotives. Original features of the terminal included the engine house, turntable and water tank. The servicing terminal was discontinued in 1917 and demolished in the mid to late 1930s. Extant features associated with the terminal include the foundations of the **Turntable Pit** (Figure 13), **Engine House** (Figure 14), and **Water Tank** (Figure 15 and 16), all located about 250' west of the station.

One of NSTAR's transmission towers is sited on a large concrete foundation within the turntable pit foundations. It appears that a significant portion of the turntable foundation was demolished or buried under soil when the tower foundation was constructed. At some date several slabs of concrete appear to have been built to cover over the pit and have now fallen into it. The engine house foundations are obscured at certain times of the year due to overgrowth, and at the time of our investigation were not visible. Interpretation of the turntable structure and engine house may need some reconstruction to discern their shape and function. This might include some new construction feature that outlines the building foundation and track locations to reveal the interrelationships between the turntable, engine house and track alignments. The water tank foundations are seasonally visible due to accumulated vegetation. These foundations also need to be revealed in a setting that includes some interpretive materials or signage to show the relationship between the stones and the former tower structure.



Figure 13. Debris covering turntable pit foundation, (HWA, 2004).



Figure 14. Historic view of engine house, in 1938, (photograph by Henry Gibson, courtesy Beverly Historical Society).



Figure 15. The water tank in 1915, (courtesy Walker Transportation Collection, Beverly Historical Society).



Figure 16. The foundation remains of the water tank, (HWA, 2004).

Section House and Freight Car

The section house would have been used to store track inspection and maintenance equipment and was located just east of the water tank. Nothing remains of the building. The ruins of a **Freight Car** exist near where the section house would have been, although they were undetectable at the time of the investigation – brush and leaves may have covered over the remains. They have deteriorated considerably since the PAL report. The PAL report surmises that the freight car might have been used as a bunk house for the section crews in the early twentieth century.

Features Associated with Ancillary Businesses

There is a **Coal Pit** north of the siding track east of freight house on the site of the former Atwood Coal Company. At one time there was also a milk shed, but no evidence of it was found during archaeological testing.

II. Existing Conditions and Analysis

The following section describes the existing conditions of the project site. The site was evaluated with respect to the project guiding principles to determine opportunities and constraints for use and preservation of the historic structures and features.

Project Boundaries

The study site defined in the Request for Proposal encompasses both town owned and Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) owned land of the railroad corridor from “BECO tower #112” (located due west of the turntable foundations near the whistle post) to Millbrook Road. The study area is bisected by the at-grade intersection of Routes 27 (Cochituate Road) and 126 (Concord Road). The town owned land west of Route 27 encompasses the historic turntable pit and engine house foundations, the passenger depot, several smaller historic elements, as well as the stonedust parking area. A significant portion of the study site, including the track, passenger platform and water tank foundation remains within the MBTA ownership. East of Route 27 the town owned land is contiguous (or part of) with the public library property and includes the freight house and a narrow strip of land up to Millbrook Road. South of this town owned parcel is a strip of MBTA property that includes the historic trackway. Between these two town owned parcels is the intersection of Routes 27 and 126 which is under the jurisdiction of the Town of Wayland and is under reconstruction. For holistic planning purposes, the study site has been extended west to include the remaining portion of the railroad corridor up to Route 20 (Boston Post Road) near Russell’s Garden Center (*Figure 17*). Expanding the study site increases the potential of the site to serve as an alternative non-vehicular circulation link and greenspace between the commercial district, the library and the redeveloped former Raytheon site (currently called the Wayland Business Center).

The MBTA ownership of a large portion of the study site creates several critical issues that will present significant obstacles to the re-use of the site for public access/recreation and historic preservation. The MBTA classifies the corridor as having a classification of level 2 (out of 4), which is defined as being “not in planning [for reuse], but retained for future use.” (This was characterized as a 25% chance that the corridor will be redeveloped as a functioning transit line at some time in the future.) Use or leasing of any part of MBTA land would require very specific restrictions on types of improvements and would require clear acknowledgment of the retained right of way for future transit use. Therefore all improvements made to the site would be at risk of being ordered to be removed. Furthermore, the Town would be required to indemnify the MBTA for all liability associated with the reuse of the site—again increasing the level of monetary/liability risk on the Towns’ part. The MBTA is open to negotiating lease agreements for the use of their corridors.

Site Overview

The site is fundamentally a linear space with an east/west alignment extending from Route 20 across Routes 27 and 126 to Millbrook Road. The terrain and visual character of the railroad site is a result of its long use and subsequent abandonment as a railroad. The corridor is largely defined by mature trees that line the abutting property lines except adjacent to the Wayland Free Public Library, where the space is open along its northern boundary extending across the library parking lot to the library building. The intersection of Routes 27 and 126 divides the project site into two pieces, physically and visually separating the depot and the freight house, the two largest remaining historic structures.

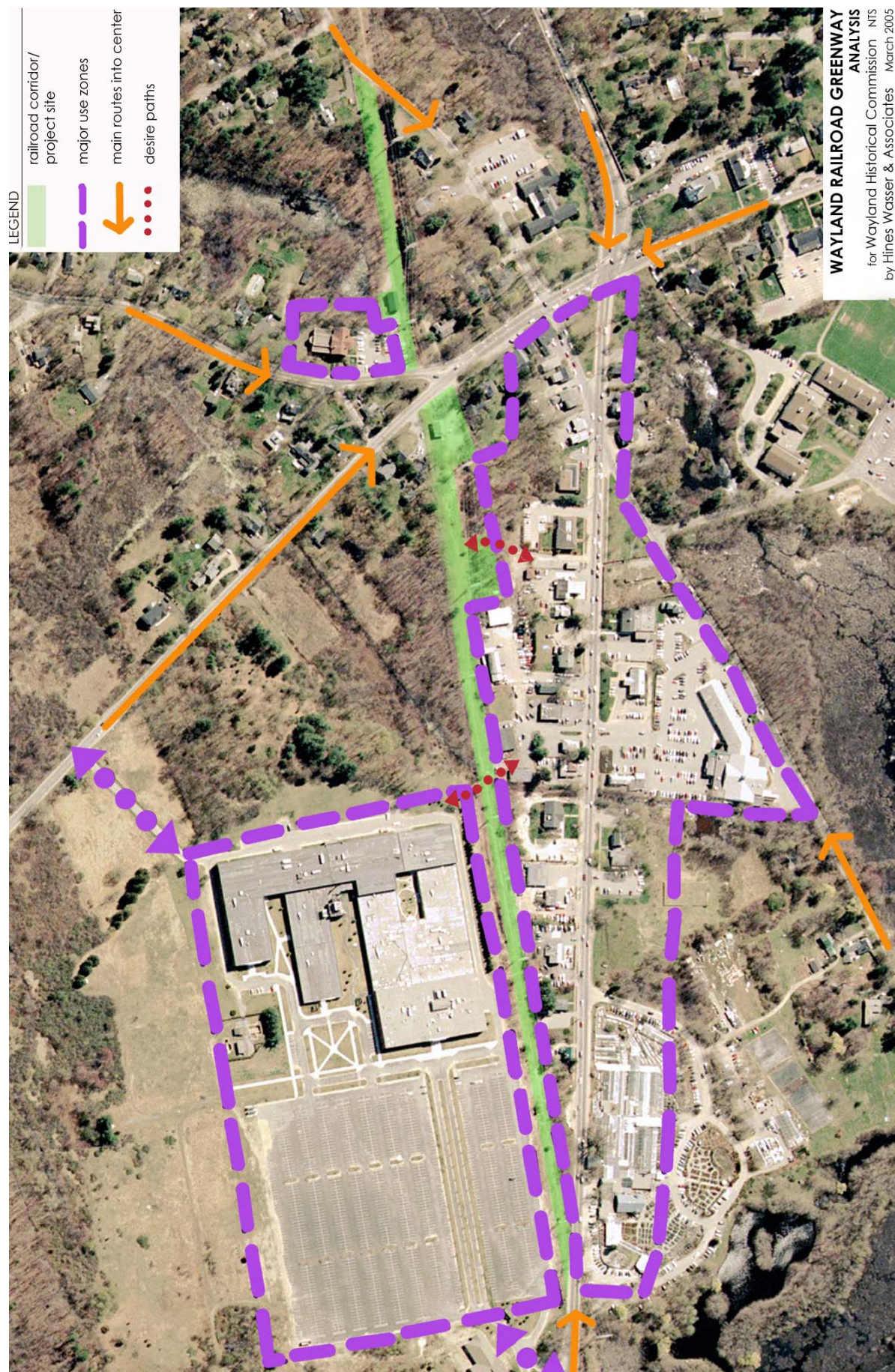


Figure 17. Site Context Analysis/Overview, (HWA 2005 using Orthophoto data from Wayland Surveyor's Office)

Views are most strongly defined and oriented east west along the railroad corridor. Secondary views down Route 27 and Route 126 right-of-ways are also prominent where the site crosses these roads. The two most significant visual features of the site are the freight house and library on the east side of 126 and the depot west of the intersection of Routes 27 and 126. Views of adjacent housing, including the Wayland Historical Society's Grout-Heard House, also characterize the space.

Negatively affecting the historic character of the railroad corridor is the prominence of the NSTAR (formerly Boston Edison Company) high voltage transmission towers (a.k.a. BECO towers) which utilize the railroad right of way (*Figure 6*). Also negatively characterizing the visual character of the site is the ill-defined stonedust parking lot at the depot and the large barren expanse of paved and gravel parking at the library. The disheveled tangle of invasive bittersweet and knotweed along the corridor obscures many of the historic railroad features and adds a sense of neglect (*Figure 18*).

Circulation and Access

A. Within the Project Site

The site is currently most accessible via Routes 27 and 126, where entrances into the parking lots for the depot and for the library are located. There is a stonedust parking lot at the depot for customers and volunteers of the depot gift shop (*Figure 19*). It also appears that it is used for park-and-ride use, and more and more it seems to be used by visitors and workers of the businesses along Boston Post Road. There is an asphalt-paved parking lot adjacent to the freight house which is used mainly by library patrons.

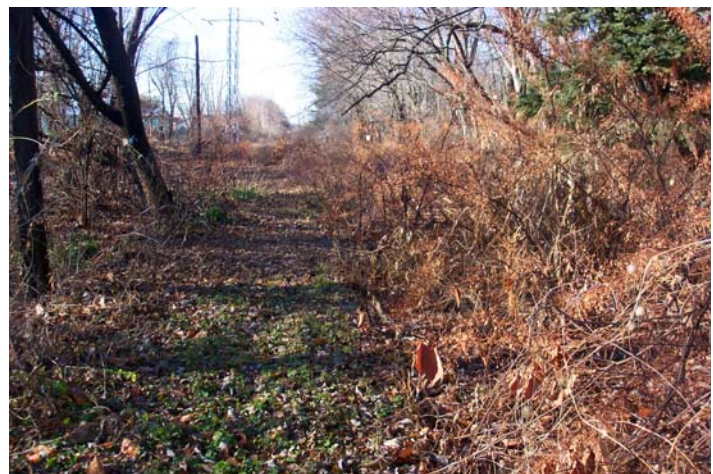


Figure 18. Tangled overgrowth of vegetation obscures views and impedes walking along corridor, (HWA, 2004).

The intersection of Routes 27 and 126 is under reconstruction as part of a large Mass Highway roadway improvements/enhancement project in the downtown area of Wayland. The plans show curb cuts into the depot parking lot at approximately their existing location. The new reconfiguration of the intersection will improve safety of the pedestrian crossing but also will visually alter the historic character of the corridor.



Figure 19. The parking lot at the depot tends to be in high demand, (HWA, 2004).



Figure 20. A path from the corridor to the commercial area along Route 20 is apparent near the engine house foundation, (HWA, 2004).

Access along the corridor is difficult due to vegetation overgrowth; however, during the course of this study in 2004, several informal pedestrian paths were identified. A narrow beaten path extends from Millbrook Road to the library parking area and another beaten path extends through the dense growth beyond the depot towards the west (*Figure 18*). It is also apparent that the corridor serves as a pedestrian shortcut between the depot and the commercial center down the lane that accessed the engine house (*Figure 20*). Another shortcut from the former Raytheon site crosses the railroad tracks to the commercial area on Route 20. After the cutting of invasive species (especially Japanese knotweed and bittersweet) by volunteers and bush-cutting/mowing by NSTAR in the fall of 2004, the entire width of the corridor was opened up, creating the possibility of easier pedestrian access.

To some degree, the corridor has been used by mountain bikes and other recreationists, and there have been significant planning efforts directed at establishing a formal recreation pathway through Wayland. The initial planning effort, lead by the Commonwealth's Department of Environmental Management, was on-going for several years with the objective of building a Central Massachusetts rail trail from Waltham through Weston, Wayland, Sudbury, and Hudson to Berlin (a.k.a. the Wayside Rail Trail). This effort was thwarted due to opposition from the Town of Weston. Currently, a modified assembly of the Wayside Rail Trail Committee including Waltham, Wayland, Hudson, Berlin and Belmont is slowly negotiating an agreement with the MBTA for a rail trail. More recently, there has been a change in the policy at the MBTA which looks less favorably upon the reuse of railroad corridors for recreational use.

B. Adjacent to the Project Site

The site is also accessible from the east at the intersection with Millbrook Road and from the west at the crossing of Route 20. The existing relationship between the project site and surrounding properties is relevant to its proposed use as a railroad interpretive site (and wider public use as a bike and pedestrian path). Due to the project site's location parallel with and adjacent to the commercial area, the project site represents an important opportunity for improving access for the commercial center. This potential is being explored by the Town Center Committee which has focused on making the commercial center more viable and less congested with traffic. Of particular interest is eliminating the numerous curb cuts and driveways that congest traffic and detract from the appearance of the

commercial area. We understand from conversation with the Town Center Committee, that one option they are exploring involves consolidating all the sundry driveway entrances from Route 20 into two points that access a common drive to be located along the north edge of the commercial district parallel with the railroad site. This new drive would provide access to the rear of all the commercial properties. It would presumably provide several places where access from the railroad corridor could be joined with access to commercial establishments along Boston Road.

Another major focus of the Town Center Committee is the recommended redevelopment of the Raytheon site as the Wayland Business Center including a new public road connecting Routes 20 and 27 through that site. This would establish a new commercial center that should have a pedestrian link through the railroad site with other commercial properties along Route 20 (shown in *Figure 17*) as well as to the library and neighborhoods east of the town center along a rail trail.

Vegetation and Maintenance

For the purpose of this study, the existing vegetation was evaluated relative to its maintenance requirements and impacts on historic features. As a railroad corridor, the site has remained open and largely free of trees and shrubs for more than one hundred years. Well-established low nutrient native grasses and forbs cover parts of the site, except for several areas where large thickets of invasive knotweed and oriental bittersweet have become established just west of the depot. Knotweed and in particular bittersweet are invasive, troublesome plants throughout the corridor and obscure site artifacts and make passage extremely difficult. In addition to knotweed and bittersweet, multiflora rose, buckthorn (two other invasive species), blackberry, black raspberry and numerous sapling trees have established themselves along the edges of the site and over time have overgrown the trackway and site artifacts. Several major efforts by volunteers have worked to cut back these plants to uncover obscured structures and open up passage to them. In late summer 2004, NSTAR contracted brush clearing machines with steel tractor treads to grind down the tangle of vegetation. In the course of this effort some of the site's historic features were damaged or displaced. This recent maintenance effort by NSTAR included sawing down several 20-30' trees growing near the passenger station platform and lamp post.

III. Public Collaboration

The successful preservation of historic structures and the improvement of the site for public use will depend upon building alliances and collaboration with several town commissions, town agencies, non-profit institutions, abutting property owners and interested citizens of the town. To date our efforts have revealed broad support for the improvement of the site to provide non-vehicular/recreational access and to preserve features of the town's history. Potential conflicts with the library expansion were engaged with a positive spirit of finding mutually beneficial solutions. There was broad recognition that the structures were worthy of preservation and an awareness that all the positive improvements envisioned would require a significant expense by the town which will be difficult to accomplish. In particular, there is strong interest on the part of the members of the Wayland Historical Commission, Wayland Historic District Commission, Wayland Historical Society and neighbors that the two buildings and railroad artifacts and structures be preserved.

Due to the project site's location at a juncture of activity in the downtown area, there is an obvious opportunity for creating a public recreational trail and access between neighborhoods adjacent to the rail corridor with the library and commercial district. The site location is also between two major town improvement efforts – the expansion of the library and the Town Center Committee's efforts to develop a master plan for the improvement of the existing commercial center along Route 20 and its expansion into the Wayland Business Center. The developers of the former Raytheon site view the railroad corridor linkage as an amenity to their project.

The Wayland Free Public Library expansion feasibility study committee has been overseeing the development of preliminary plans for the expansion of the library facility. This effort has potential major impacts on the railroad historic site, and the study team has discussed with the architect (Lerner Ladds + Bartels) and with members of the committee possible conflicts and accommodations that might facilitate the accomplishment of both projects. The linkage of the library to the commercial center through the railroad corridor was particularly an interest for the library committee. As one library trustee exclaimed "we don't want to be an island unto ourselves". The library site is significantly constrained by the wetland located east of it and is in particular need for expanded parking. Clearly the location of the freight house represents a potential impediment to planning for parking and circulation which might be located adjacent to or on the MBTA property. We have considered possible minor shifting of the location of the freight house as well as relocation of it to facilitate the library project. In turn, the library architects also looked at how the freight house might be renovated as a children's reading room and joined with the expanded library facility. Although this scenario would in one sense preserve the building, it would result in the structure being almost completely rebuilt. Moreover, this reuse of the building would completely remove its historic character and its relationship with the railroad and therefore was not seen as a positive means of preserving it.

An important focus of our study was to explore various options for new uses for the freight house. This focus was based on the intuition that the expense of long overdue building improvements (new roof, new siding and foundation work) would be very difficult to garner at town meeting if its use continued to be ancillary storage for the friends of the library (until the library expansion was complete), and for the town's fire and parks and recreation departments. The concern was that the building would be easy to neglect and that the accumulation of benign neglect would eventually result in its becoming a hazardous structure in need of demolition.

The planning effort also included discussions with the Wayland Historical Society to determine whether the relocation and rehabilitation of the freight house to provide additional storage (and possible display space) for their historic collections (either now or in the future) was needed. At this time the Historical Society did not see this need and saw the freight house as presenting an added burden for them.

We have also discussed with the non-profit Wayland Depot, Inc. their current use of the depot. The Wayland Depot, Inc. has been instrumental in the preservation and maintenance of the depot building for many years and has given this structure an important use for public benefit. The Wayland Depot group expressed interest and support for the railroad interpretive project. The potential of the site to provide connections to the Route 20 commercial area was an appealing possibility to the Wayland Depot, Inc. Board. In fact, they have hoped to ‘green up’ the surroundings of the depot to attract bicyclists or other recreationists who may find it a good resting spot. We also discussed with them whether they have any additional needs for display or storage space that might be served by use of the freight house (if this structure was relocated to the west side of the Route 126/27 intersection). They reported that at present their group is being stretched to staff the depot gift shop and cannot consider staffing additional space without an expanded number of volunteers and new energy.

Our study also included meeting with the local arts group Arts/Wayland. Arts/Wayland is interested in pursuing the possibility of participating in the interpretive project. Some potential art-related uses that they envision for the site might include: an art exhibit space in the rehabilitated freight house; a performance space, e.g. for individuals or small ensembles in the rehabilitated freight house; and a sculpture park (with interpretive sculptures) on the site.

The project team met with an MBTA representative from Transit Realty Associates and met with the local leader for the rail trail conversion. It is clear that the redevelopment of the railroad corridor as a public recreational/transit trail would be an enormous benefit to the railroad interpretive site project. Because this trail development would offer a unique opportunity to link numerous neighborhoods to the town commercial center, it would thereby bring much needed visitation and “energy” to this historic site. As discussed above, the use of the corridor for a recreational trail would create added liability to the town as well as additional maintenance expense.

Agency Jurisdictions

Several town agencies as well as the MBTA and NSTAR have jurisdiction over improvements that may be proposed for the railroad interpretive site. The Wayland Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over improvements within 100 feet of two wetland areas – one to the north of the site near the water tank and turntable foundation; and the other north of the freight house. The Wayland Historic District Commission also has jurisdiction over the study site, including the depot and freight house because they are located within the local historic district. Mass Highways is currently rebuilding the Route 27/126 intersection and would be responsible for pedestrian and bicycle crossing at the intersection, although the Town has jurisdiction over Routes 27 and 126. The MBTA has ownership of the corridor for possible railroad re-use of the corridor in the future. Lastly, NSTAR (formerly Boston Edison Company) has an easement for their transmission lines and a right to cut and control vegetation below and adjacent to their transmission lines.

IV. Recommendations

The project goals and objectives outlined below were developed using the guiding principles and represent needs that were identified for the railroad interpretive site during the planning process from numerous meetings and research gathering. The section following, which describes the recommendations, is based on the site analysis and provides specific actions for achieving the project's goals and objectives. A Master Plan drawing is included as a visual representation of the recommendations (*Figure 21*).

Goals and Objectives

1. **PRESERVATION** - Preserve/maintain extant historic structures and archeological features associated with the historic railroad site.
 - a. Stabilize major extant structures such as buildings and turntable foundation.
 - b. Preserve smaller features in their original location if possible.
 - c. Store in a safe place those historic features which are more ephemeral, (if weathering/biodegradation threatens to deteriorate the historic artifact).
 - d. Enhance artifacts such as the engine house and turntable pit foundations to make their historic function clearer.
 - e. Support and foster the long-term viability of the Wayland Depot, Inc. enterprise that utilizes the depot structure. As much as possible, maintain the original interior finishes and partitions and provide some display space showing historic photos of the building.
 - f. Find, support and foster a long-term use for the freight house to support its preservation.
2. **INTERPRETATION** - Develop the Railroad Interpretive Site as a connective thread within the community and as an important landmark for the town's history.
 - a. Expose and highlight foundations and outline of historic railroad structures to reveal their original structure, interrelationships and functions.
 - b. Develop a path system through the site that passes near the significant features.
 - c. Use interpretive media/graphics to tell the story of the railroad site and interpret the site as a catalyst for the development of the town from an agrarian to a bedroom community — “bring railroad history alive”. In particular, develop interpretive graphics for foundations, the depot and the freight house.
 - d. Showcase artifacts which have been brought indoors as a preservation method.
 - e. Consider adding railroad features (such as passenger or freight cars) that can provide supplemental interpretation, display or commercial space as may be needed.

- f. Work with library and historical society to reinforce railroad story through exhibits, historic photographs and other means.
- 3. **BUILD ALLIANCES AND CONSENSUS** - Join with other town non-profit groups and organizations to assure that buildings and site have meaningful functions. Consider relocation of the freight house as may be required to facilitate its reuse for other than storage purposes.
 - a. Establish relationships with the Wayland Free Public Library, Wayland Historical Society, Wayland Depot, Inc. and Arts/Wayland.
 - b. Establish alliance with rail to trails constituency.
 - c. Develop relationships with Town Center Committee, Wayland Business Center and local merchants.
 - c. Foster cooperation among town agencies and committees.
- 4. **RECREATION TRAIL AND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR** - Develop an initial segment of passive recreation trail along the length of the corridor from Route 20 to Millbrook Road. Connect this trail with businesses along Route 20 and with the new Wayland Business Center at the former Raytheon site, as is feasible and permissible.
 - a. Work with other rail trail groups to resolve legal obstacles to use of corridor and to learn from other precedents.
- 5. **MAINTENANCE** - Establish a low maintenance landscape treatment along the railroad corridor. Utilize native dry season/low nutrient species.
 - a. Minimize obstacles that must be trimmed around.
 - b. Design paving and other site improvements to require minimal upkeep.

The goals described above provided a framework for developing the several alternative scenarios that explored how the site might be developed in the future. From the evaluation and refinement of these scenarios, the proposed master plan for the railroad interpretive site was prepared. The recommendations described below represent the elements of this plan.



Figure 21. Master Plan (HWA, 2005)

Site Overview

The entire project site from Route 20 to Millbrook Road should be considered the extent of the railroad interpretive site.

- Improvements and maintenance of the site should extend from Route 20 to Millbrook Road and not be limited to improvement and maintenance of individual features.
- The overall spatial organization of the site should remain linear in character with pathways running parallel with the trackway (or in the same location as the trackway).

Views and Visual Character

The visual character of the site should be defined by a simple low-maintenance design approach that preserves views down an open, linear corridor.

- Develop simple and bold design concepts to stabilize and reduce maintenance around the various foundations and artifacts.

Historic Structures and Preservation

There is at present no program for the stabilization and preservation of the historic railroad features. Two factors contribute to the on-going deterioration of the site. Corridor maintenance by NSTAR using tracked mowers appears to have damaged site features, since they are heavily obscured by vegetation. Also, weathering by natural forces, erosion, rain and biodegradation continues to deteriorate historic structures such as the freight house, railroad ties, the stop sign post, etc. As first steps to preserving the historic features we recommend the following:

- Stabilize all remaining extant structures and artifacts. Since a number of them are on private property, obtain permission to perform preservation techniques.
- Establish a maintenance agreement with NSTAR that allows for the removal of invasive vines, knotweed and sapling growth near these structures so that NSTAR maintenance equipment can be kept away from damaging these elements.

Passenger Station/Depot

- Continue lease and maintenance by the Wayland Depot, Inc.
- Design ADA access into the building with materials more consonant with historic character of building.



Figure 22. Bedford's adaptive reuse of their freight house as a railroad memorabilia and snack shop next to the Minuteman Bikeway, Bedford, Massachusetts, (HWA, 2004).

Freight House

Rehabilitation of the structure for a new non-storage use is recommended, although a specific new use has not been identified. Some of the new uses could include rehabilitating the structure to be a three-season display space for railroad memorabilia, for historic artifacts or for art exhibit display. Recommended future actions include:

- Complete detailed structural assess to determine all needed repairs and improvements.
- Stabilize building to minimize further near term deterioration.
- Further explore future use of freight house for non-storage use. *Figure 22* shows the reuse of a freight house in Bedford, MA.
- Consider reconstruction of the loading dock as part of any major repair/refurbishment treatment of the building.
- Provide ADA access as needed in a manner that expresses the former wooden loading dock.
- If the town finds reason to move the freight house — then relocate the freight house along the tracks in another location, maintaining its proper relationship parallel with the trackway.

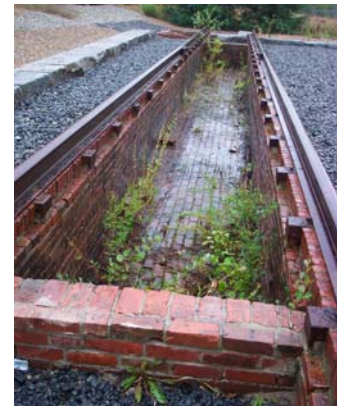


Figure 23a and b. Turntable and enginehouse foundations at Whitman Roundhouse Archeological Park, Whitman, Massachusetts, (HWA, 2004).

Trackway

While the Wayland Historical Commission sees the value of maintaining the rails, it could envision the removal of portions of the rail to facilitate maintenance.

- Reveal/reestablish the railroad tracks up to the edge of the sidewalks at the newly constructed intersection of Routes 27 and 126. This will minimize the visual intrusion/ impact of the intersection.
- Reconstruct the trackway next to the depot and freight house to show the relationship of these buildings to the railroad.
- Consider the inclusion of appropriate freight or passenger cars if these cars can be programmed for exhibition/display or storage space associated with the depot and freight house reuse.
- Consider renovation/reconstruction of switches to show trackway technology.

Turntable and Engine House Foundations

- Reveal the walls of the turntable pit by excavating debris and stabilizing the granite stone walls with mortar (resetting stone blocks where they have fallen off the structure). Surround the structure with a low maintenance path surface. *Figures 23a and b* illustrate how the town of Whitman stabilized and interpreted their historic turntable and engine house foundations.
- Show the shape of the engine house and the arrangement of the trackways with flush set concrete or stone materials that would eliminate the need to trim grass.

Vegetation and Maintenance

- Re-grade areas of the site as necessary to establish slopes and surface conditions that are easy to mow. Reduce the embankment grade at the brook or take other measures to reduce bank erosion and maintenance requirements.
- Minimize mowing obstacles. Utilize “mow strips” at the edge of vertical surfaces to eliminate trimming and places where invasive plants can become established.
- Eradicate thickets of invasive bittersweet and knotweed with a concerted mowing and herbicide treatment.
- All improvements should be designed with minimal maintenance requirements.
- Establish a low-growing, low nutrient grass meadow that requires only twice yearly mowing at 6" height.

Circulation and Access

- Establish the primary entry to the interpretive site as the depot parking lot.
- Formalize and define the parking lot at the depot with curbing. Depending on other parking opportunities and limitations in Town, restrict the use of the parking lot at the depot to only gift shoppers and railroad interpretive site visitors.
- Create a 8-10' wide, accessible, asphalt pathway that extends the length of the site from Millbrook Road to Route 20 (*Figure 24*).
- Adopt “Best management practices for Controlling Exposure to Soil during the Development of Rail Trails” as outlined by the Department of Environmental Management, to decrease liability.
- Establish links to the commercial area along Route 20, to the Wayland Business Center and to the library.
- Provide handicap access to the freight house with an appropriately designed wooden ramp reflective of the materials and design associated with a freight house.

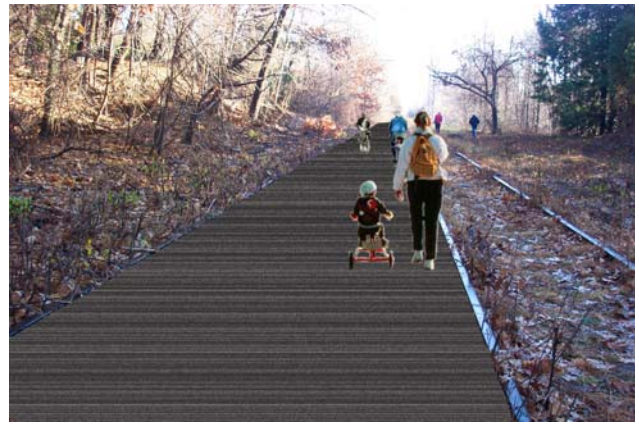


Figure 24. Photosimulation of rail trail along Wayland corridor, (HWA, 2004).

Interpretation

Informal guided tours and a promotional slide show about the railroad complex have been made available by members of the Wayland Historical Commission and concerned citizens; however, there is no official venue for presenting and displaying interpretive information. Many of the railroad features are often obscured by vegetation or are not apparent to the visitor. Nor are there formalized paths to guide a visitor through the site.

There are two main interpretive themes to the story of the Wayland railroad that should guide the development of interpretive materials:

1. Railroad as Lifeline and Community Focal Point

The railroad was instrumental in changing Wayland from a rural agricultural town in the mid 19th century to an residential community that became a suburb of Boston. It was the lifeline of the community, which brought goods and services to and from town, and transported passengers between Wayland and the outside world. The station was a form of community center, while the freight house was the center of commercial and industrial activity. The PAL report documents the artifacts but there are other stories to be told that link the railroad with all aspects of town history over the past 125 years.

For many of Wayland's older residents, traveling by train was a way of life — husbands and fathers went off to work every day; mothers and children made a special trip to the city; relatives arrived for holiday visits. The station was a center of community life — a place to pick up mail order purchases, see family members off to work or vacation. The railroad was also an important economic link — lumber, coal and other goods arrived via rail, during the war munitions traveled through town by rail from Ordway Depot.

The station master was an important person in town. He knew everyone's comings and goings; celebrated the arrival of a long awaited purchase; helped children and senior citizens up the steps; welcomed visitors to the community; and took care of the station, even planting flower beds at times. He knew everyone in town.

This theme will appeal to a wide audience, including children and senior citizens. It is fairly abstract and can best be told by oral history and photographs, perhaps in time supplemented by a passenger rail car parked at the station.

2. Railroad Technology

The Wayland railroad site also offers an opportunity to tell the story of railroad technology. The depot, the freight house and the track corridor are the most obvious extant features of the railroad in Wayland but the site also offers an unusually rich collection of artifacts that tell other parts of the story. Many of these are fragile, ephemeral and difficult for a casual observer to understand. Preservation of extant features is of paramount importance. Some, such as the whistle stop and other signs, might be reconstructed and integrated into the design of the park. Others, such as foundations of the turntable, could be enhanced through landscape treatment to make the story clearer. Still other might best be interpreted through interpretive signage, perhaps using historic photographs and/or engravings, to convey the physical form and use of particular features.

Interpretive Media and Message

Signs identifying the railroad interpretive site should be located at the eastern and western ends of the site and at major crossroads. These would provide basic information about the site and help to define it as a distinctive place with a clear identity. A more detailed interpretive panel should be located near the depot, which is the focal point of the site. There are opportunities for exhibits and other expanded interpretation at the depot, the library and the historical society. These might include historic photos, exhibit panels, readings of railroad related books, reminiscences of local residents, a slide show. A scale model located at the library or historical society would be an ideal way to help visitors envision what the site once looked like. Addition of a passenger car parked on the siding should be considered as a long range possibility that would greatly enhance the story of the site.

Implementation

The railroad interpretive site project is a complex project that it is located in the core of the community and is subject to multiple jurisdictions, ownerships and points of view. Clear vision and strong public support will be needed to bring the project to fruition.

- Work with other regional and statewide rails to trails groups to learn about legal precedents, enabling legislation, funding opportunities and other mechanisms that can facilitate implementation of the project.
- Work closely with all town groups that have a role in shaping the future of the railroad interpretive site, particularly the Town Center Committee, the Wayland Library, the Wayland Depot, Inc., and the Historical Society.
- Aggressively pursue linkage opportunities that may provide funding opportunities for the railroad site, particularly the development of the former Raytheon site.
- Identify clear priorities for implementing the project. These should be based on preservation priorities such as the need to stabilize important features such as the freight house, and should also result in visible improvements that garner further support for the project.
- Explore a wide range of funding sources. These might include town funds such as Community Preservation Act money; state funds such as Mass Historical Commission and Department of Conservation and Recreation; and possibly federal transportation enhancement funds.