



**Historic & Archeological Resources / Arts & Culture Subcommittee**

**Meeting Agenda**

**Friday, June 9, 2023 – 1:00PM**

**Location: Remote via Zoom (pursuant to the Committee's Remote Meeting Policy)**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

<https://us05web.zoom.us/j/87977491792?pwd=UGJYb3duaVNZYkNMeUlzbFhpL1JFdz09>

**Meeting ID: 879 7749 1792**

**Passcode: 04543**

1. Call to Order
2. Continued Review of Draft 1: Historic & Archeological Resources Inventory & Analysis
3. Continued Review of Draft 1: Arts & Culture Inventory & Analysis
4. Committee/Public Comment
5. Set next meeting date
6. Adjournment



## Historic & Archeological Resources / Arts & Culture Subcommittee

### Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 19, 2023 – 3:00PM

Location: Remote via Zoom (pursuant to the Committee's Remote Meeting Policy)

Present: Ann Jackson (Lead), Mary Devlin (Member), Adam Jeffers (Member), Isabelle Oechslie (Consulting Planner)

1. Call to Order: The meeting began at 3:01pm.
2. Review of Draft 1: Historic & Archeological Resources Inventory & Analysis: Isabelle walked the group through the draft chapter related to Historic & Archeological Resources. Ann Jackson noted that the subcommittee had compiled additional buildings and sites for the inventory and that she would send any research or information available to Isabelle for incorporation. Mary Devlin asked why the Goals, Policies and Strategies section only focuses on SMART goals and not the more up-to-date SMART-ER goals, which incorporate evaluation and revision criteria and is commonly thought to be the best practice for long-range plans. Isabelle explained the history of incorporating SMART goals into the Plan, noting that the 2014 Plan's Goals, Policies and Strategies were not specific, measurable, or timely in most instances. After discussion by the group, Isabelle asked Mary to bring this point to the broader Comprehensive Plan Committee at the next meeting.

Ann Jackson noted that some potential actions or strategies that the subcommittee had discussed were: (1) doing a brochure about historic preservation generally for the benefit of the community; (2) seeking funding for a Museum in the Streets project. After discussion, the group also agreed that we should seek to include any indigenous information as well, including any policies or strategies that they might have separately. Isabelle noted that she would seek to find this information or someone to speak with.

3. Review of Draft 1: Arts & Culture Inventory & Analysis: Isabelle walked the group through the draft chapter related to Arts & Culture, reminding them that this is not a Topic Area specifically required through the State's Growth Management Act but one that the Committee decided to add based on survey results received thus far. Adam Jeffers noted that, broadly, residents like what is happening in this regard and want it to keep happening. It was discussed how we accomplish this. Suggestions were provided to review the Town's Land Use Ordinances: are we prohibiting arts and cultural events from occurring through existing land use or noise regulations? The group also suggested that a policy or strategy could be for the Chamber to create an Arts subcommittee and



that the Town could fund said subcommittee through the annual budget process. It was noted that the YMCA may have classes related to the arts, which Isabelle said she would look into.

4. Committee/Public Comment: Mary asked Isabelle to provide the Topic Areas in a way that the group could leave comments on next time rather than as pdfs.
5. Set next meeting date: The group agreed that they would review the results of a Doodle poll and would confirm the next meeting date via email. Note: the date was set for June 9th at 1pm.
6. Adjournment: Adjourned without objection at 4pm.

Pending Review

# Historic & Archeological Resources

## History of Damariscotta

The area that would become Damariscotta was once inhabited by the Wawenock (or Walinakiak, meaning "People of the Bays") Abenaki people, who left behind 2,500-year-old oyster shell middens along the banks of the Damariscotta River. The Whaleback Shell Midden is now [an individually listed](#) state historic site.

The land that comprises Damariscotta was originally part of the Pemaquid Patent, granted by the Plymouth Council in 1631 to Robert Aldsworth and Gyles Elbridge, who were merchants from Bristol, England. At Pemaquid (now the Town of Bristol, Maine), they built a fort and trading post.

The first attempts at settlement in the area that would become Damariscotta occurred in approximately 1640. However, the area was under near constant strain during the French and Indian Wars (1676-1763). According to the Lincoln County Historical Association, "villages and homes were deserted and often burned out during these years of conflict."<sup>1</sup> In 1748, the settlement of the villages of Damariscotta and Newcastle began in earnest. Damariscotta was incorporated as a separate municipality on March 15, 1848, officially separating from parts of Bristol and Nobleboro.<sup>2</sup>

It has been recorded that the first permanent settler in Damariscotta was Anthony Chapman, a surveyor from Ipswich, Massachusetts who arrived ~~in in the year~~ 1749. Legend says that he convinced his ~~half-step~~brother Nathaniel to join him by noting that the people returning to the area after the upheaval of the wars would be interested in replacing their crude log structures with more permanent housing. ~~Nathaniel, being a carpenter, would do well here, Chapman told him.~~ Nathaniel built what is now the Chapman-Hall House for his family when he arrived in 1754. He subsequently built a number of other houses in the surrounding area and once owned nearly all of what is now Damariscotta's Main Street, until a fire destroyed many of the original buildings in 1845.<sup>3, 4</sup>

The early industries of the area included two sawmills, a match factory, and a tannery. Additionally, several brickyards were established along the Damariscotta River.<sup>5</sup> Though situated too far from the ocean to be an important seaport, Damariscotta was ideally suited for shipbuilding.<sup>6</sup> It was shipbuilding in particular that brought Damariscotta wealth in the 19th century, when clipper ships were launched at the town's shipyards. During that time, many ~~fine~~

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lincolncountyhistory.org/visit/museums/chapman-hall-house/early-history/>

<sup>2</sup> Maine League of Historical Societies and Museums (1970). Doris A. Isaacson (ed.). *Maine: A Guide 'Down East'*. Rockland, Me: Courier-Gazette, Inc. p. 258.

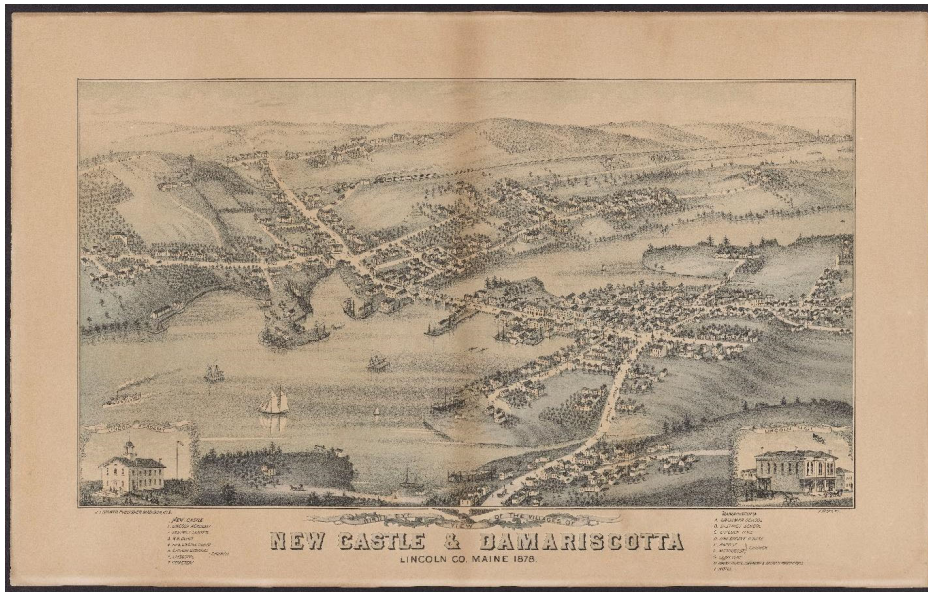
<sup>3</sup> <https://www.lincolncountyhistory.org/visit/museums/chapman-hall-house/early-history/>

<sup>4</sup> Historic District Nomination, 1979.

<sup>5</sup> Varney, George J. (1886). "Damariscotta". *Gazetteer of the State of Maine*. Boston: Russell.

<sup>6</sup> Historic District Nomination, 1979.

examples of Federal, Greek Revival, and Italianate style architecture were built in and around Damariscotta's downtown village erected, including the rebuilding of what is now Main Street, using bricks from the brickyards. By 1875, almost all of the buildings on lower Main Street were constructed essentially much as we know them today (with the exception of three more modern structures).



Surrounding the downtown village area are two unique residential areas consisting mainly of one- and two-story residential buildings and smaller lot sizes. Historic patterns of development are still evident in and around the village. However, Damariscotta's growth as a service center in the region has caused retail and service sectors to sprawl beyond the compact Downtown Village up Route 1B. Outside of these areas, Damariscotta is still quite rural.

#### **Inventory of Known Historic Buildings/Sites**

The below Inventory of Historic Buildings/Sites includes those that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, the Town has recognized the Main Street Historic District (including the Boundary Expansion) as a Local Historic Preservation District, regulated by a Historic Preservation Ordinance. This is described further and is mapped in the Protective Measures section below.

#### **Inventory of Historic Buildings/Sites**

The following buildings or sites are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register is considered the "official" list of places throughout the United States deemed worthy of preservation by the federal government. The National Register was created as a result

of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Individual sites and buildings are added to the National Register when they meet the National Register Criteria for Listing on their own.

**Commented [1]:** This page to include a graphic outlining the National Register Criteria for Listing (see <https://www.maine.gov/mhpc/sites/maine.gov/mhpc/files/inline-files/NR%20Criteria.pdf> )

Address	Name or Description	Tax Map & Lot	Condition	Use
270 Main Street	Chapman-Hall House	006-084	Excellent	Non-profit museum (owned by Lincoln County Historical Assoc.)
60 Main Street	Matthew Cottril House	006-026	Good	Single-family home
220 Bristol Road	Huston House	001-028-001	Good	Hotel/inn (currently for sale at the time of plan drafting)
4 Bristol Road	Damariscotta Baptist Church	006-120	Good	Church
170 Main Street	Stephen Coffin House	006-077	Good	Office space
	<a href="#">Damariscotta Oyster Shell Heaps</a>			

### Inventory of Historic Districts

The following historic districts are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Historic districts are added to the National Register when, taken together, structures contribute to the National Register Criteria for Listing. Structures within an historic district may also individually meet the Criteria, but, more likely, the overall architectural integrity and feeling of the district is what tells the story of the history of development in the area. This is an important note, since changes to one property that do not contribute to the overall architectural or historic integrity of the district may have an adverse impact on all of the surrounding properties.

Main Street (see map below)	Main Street Historic District	006-026, 006-027, 006-029, 006-031, 006-032, 006-034, 006-035, 006-036, 006-075, 006-076, 006-008, 006-009, 006-010, 006-011, 006-012, 006-013, 006-014, 006-014-001, 006-015, 006-016-001, 006-016, 006-017, 006-018, 006-019	In general, the overall character of the district is Fair. In recent years, especially prior to the adoption of the local Historic Preservation Ordinance, signage not consistent with a historical development pattern (such as LED signage) has	Primarily commercial and mixed-use spaces consistent with village pattern of development (except for single-family home called out above)
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			been added to buildings.	
Main Street (see map below)	Main Street Historic District – Boundary Expansion	006-077, 006-078, 006-079, 006-080, 006-081, 006-082, 006-083, 006-084, 006-136, 006-120		Primarily commercial and mixed-use spaces consistent with village pattern of development (except for church and museum called out above)
	<u>Damariscotta Shell Midden Historic District</u>			

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In general, the condition of known historic resources within Damariscotta is considered “good” or better.

#### Inventory of Historic Archeological Sites

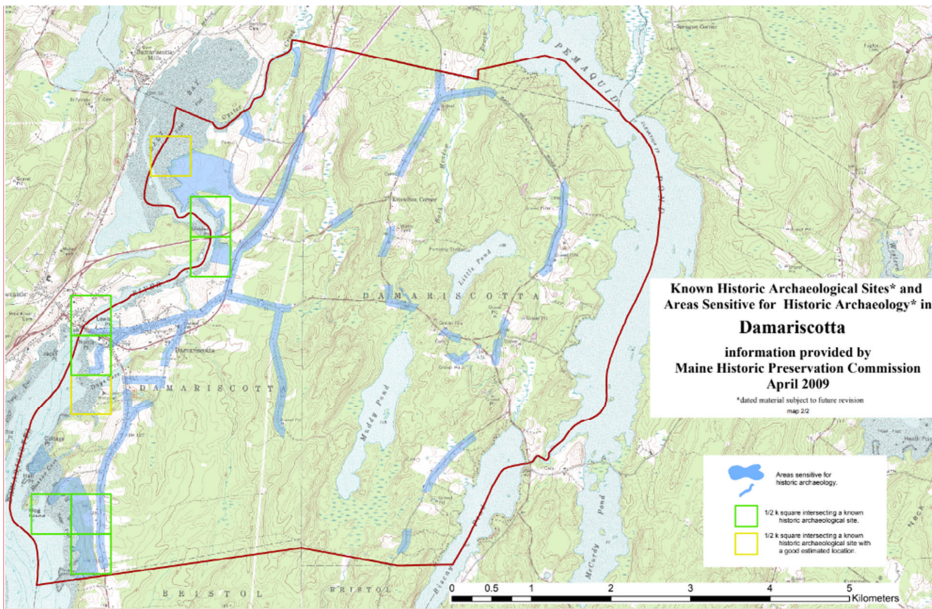
Per the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, “Historic archaeological sites may include cellar holes from houses, foundations for farm buildings, mills, wharves and boat yards, and near-shore shipwrecks. Historic archaeological sites can be predicted most often by a review of historic records, maps and deeds. Settlement often focused on transportation corridors, first rivers, then roads as they were built. Archaeological sites from the first wave of European settlement in any town are likely to be significant (National Register eligible).”

Name or Description	Site Number	Site Type	Period of Significance (if known)
Brown’s Farmstead	ME 115-001	Farmstead	1620 - 1675
Vaughan’s Fort (military fort)	ME 115-002	Military, fort	c. 1745
Jedediah Preble House and Mill	ME 115-003	Domestic and mill	By 1742
Erie (shipwreck)	ME 115-004	Shipwreck, schooner	November 14, 1890
Florida (shipwreck)	ME 115-005	Shipwreck, vessel	1838
James G. Huston Brickyard	ME 115-006	Brickyard	
Huston Brickyard	ME 115-007	Brickyard	
West View Acres Brickyard	ME 115-008	Brickyard	19th Century
Lois M. Candage (shipwreck)	ME 115-009	Shipwreck, schooner	
Norris/Metcalf Shipyard	ME 115-010	Shipyard	
Pier	ME 115-011	Wharf	



Holmes Shell and Fertilizer Co.	ME 115-012	Industrial, shell processing	1886-1891
Georgianna (shipwreck)	ME 115-013	Wreck, gas screw	

A map of documented historic archeological sites, courtesy of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, is included below.

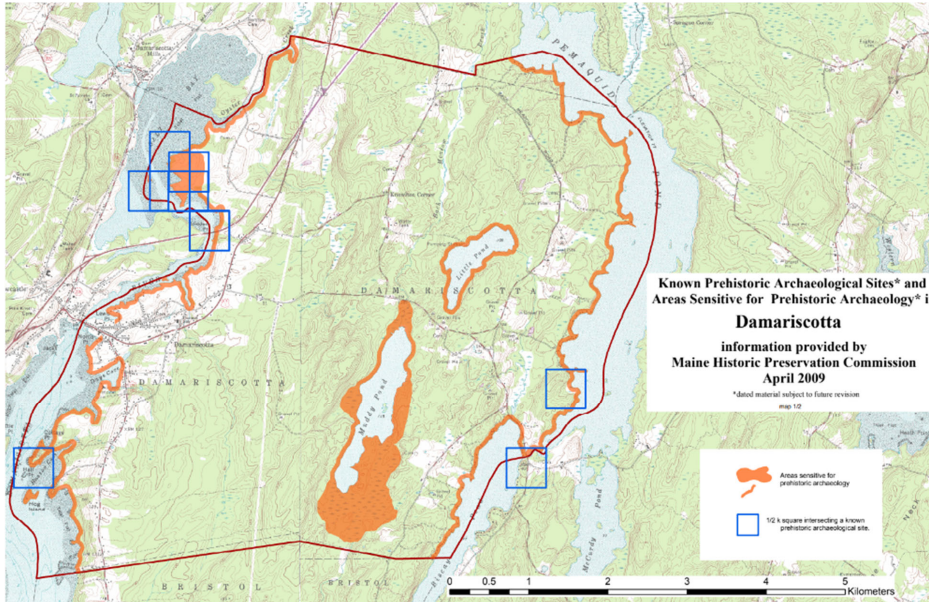


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**Map of Prehistoric Archeological Sites**

A map of documented prehistoric archeological sites, courtesy of the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, is included below. Per the Maine Historic Preservation Commission, "Prehistoric sites in Maine may include campsites or village locations, rock quarries and workshops (from making stone tools), and petroglyphs or rock carvings. Prehistoric archaeological site sensitivity maps are based on the current understanding of Native American settlement patterns (known site locations and professionally surveyed areas) within the portion of the state where the municipality is located. Most commonly, prehistoric archaeological sites are located within 50 meters of canoe-navigable water, on relatively well-drained, level landforms. Some of the most ancient sites (>10,000 years old) are located on sandy soils within 200 meters of small (not canoe- navigable) streams."



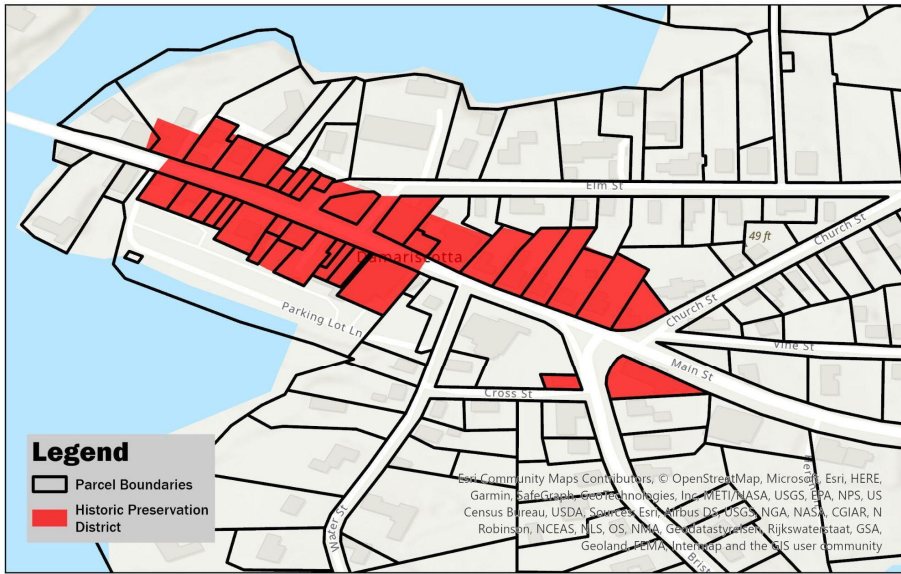


**Protective Measures: Local Ordinances**

There are multiple Town ordinances and policies that require preservation efforts or documentation by applicants proposing new development or alterations to existing historic structures.

In March of 2020, the Town adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance (subsequently amended in June of 2021) which requires the alteration, demolition or replacement of buildings within the Town's Main Street Historic District (see map below), or construction of new buildings within the same, to be reviewed by the local Historic Preservation Review Committee.

## Local Historic Preservation District



The Subdivision Ordinance also requires documentation be submitted by the applicant from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission regarding the documented presence of any historical or archeological resources on the subject property, and the Planning Board must make a finding that the proposed subdivision “will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites, [or] significant wildlife habitat ...” (Subdivision Ordinance, Section 103.2.1).

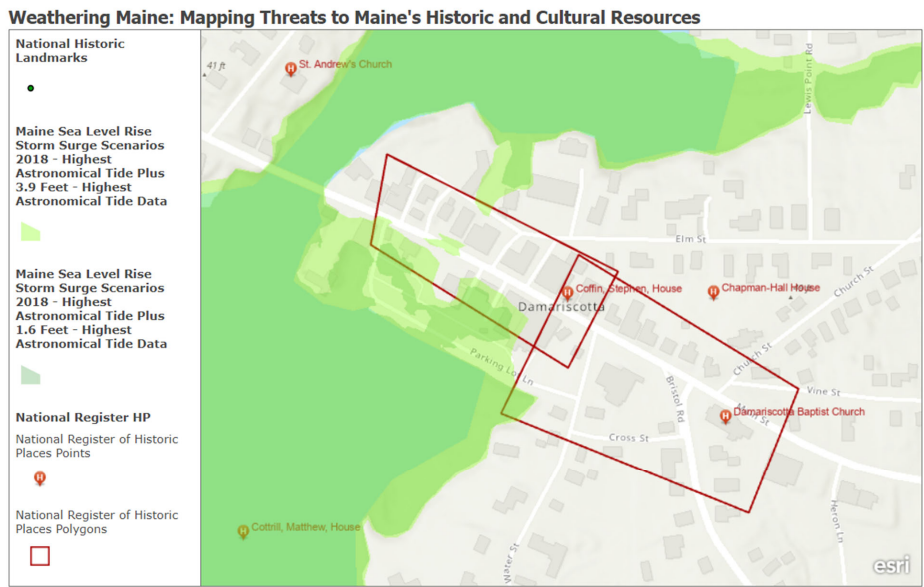
Additionally, the Town’s Site Plan Review Ordinance requires that applications for new development reviewed under that Ordinance (any commercial project, any multi-family development, or the addition of more than 5,000 s.f. or more of impervious surface) document the presence of any identified historic or archaeological sites or areas sensitive to prehistoric archaeology and take steps to protect them through modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, or extent of excavation (Site Plan Review Ordinance, Section 102.6.P).

Concerns about the impact of modern lighting and signage within the Main Street Historic District have been voiced by residents. In addition, there is a desire to regulate new construction outside of the established Main Street Historic District to ensure that it is in keeping with the historic resources of the community.

### Threats to Local Historic Resources

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The biggest threat to known historic and archeological resources in Damariscotta comes from climate change and its associated impacts, such as sea-level rise and storm-surge scenarios. The Main Street Historic District is situated along Damariscotta River, which is a tidal river. The map below includes data which approximates the potential inland extent of inundation from the intermediate (1.6 feet) and intermediate high (3.9 feet) sea level rise or storm surge along the Maine coastline on top of the Highest Astronomical Tide.

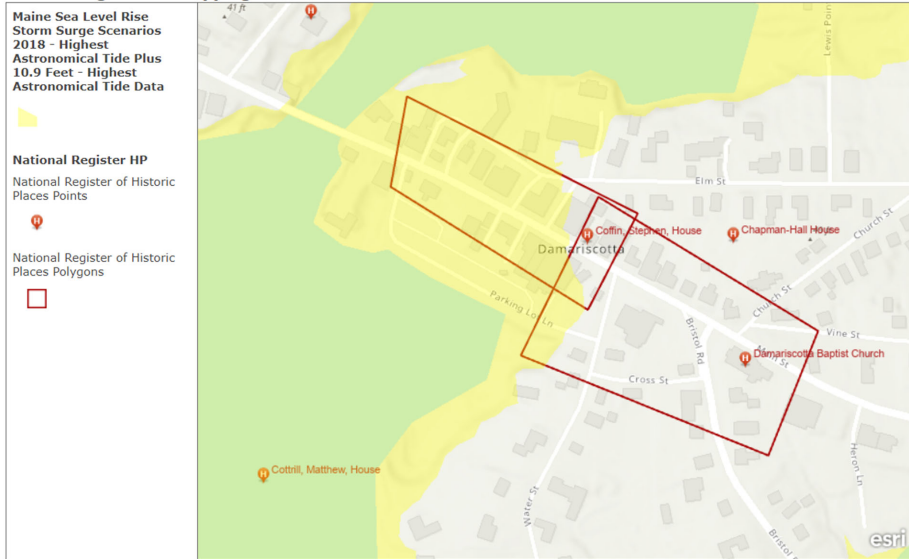


Locations of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or museums/archives with layers depicting potential threats to these properties including flood, fire, sea-level rise, storm surge. Map also has NOAA hazards and watches.

Esri Community Maps Contributors, © OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA | NOAA/NOS/OCS nowCOAST and NOAA/NWS/SRH | NOAA/NOS/OCS nowCOAST and NOAA/NWS/CRH | Matt Stutts, Cultural Resources GIS, National Park Service | National Historic Landmarks Program, National Register of Historic Places, Interior Region 1 GIS Program

The map below indicates the approximated highest extent of inland inundation (10.9 feet) sea level rise or storm surge on top of the Highest Astronomical Tide.

### Weathering Maine: Mapping Threats to Maine's Historic and Cultural Resources



Locations of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or museums/archives with layers depicting potential threats to these properties including flood, fire, sea-level rise, storm surge. Map also has NOAA hazards and watches.

Esri Community Maps Contributors, © OpenStreetMap, Microsoft, Esri, HERE, Garmin, SafeGraph, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS, EPA, NPS, US Census Bureau, USDA | National Historic Landmarks Program, National Register of Historic Places, Interior Region 1 GIS Program | Matt Stutts, Cultural Resources GIS, National Park Service

The Highest Astronomical Tide data is based on the maximum predicted astronomical high tide for the current National Tidal Datum Epoch (1983-2001). The sea level rise scenarios were developed by using available long-term sea level rise data from Portland, Bar Harbor, and Eastport tide gauges and the US Army Corps of Engineers Sea-Level Change Curve Calculator and sea level rise scenarios established by NOAA et al. (2017) prepared for the US National Climate Assessment. The data were developed with a static inundation model that uses LiDAR topographic data as a base digital elevation model, and first adjusts Highest Astronomical Tide tidal predictions to take into account variability in elevation datums along the Maine coastline, and then adds the storm surge/sea level rise scenarios to that initial starting elevation.

As you can see from the above maps, even in the intermediate predicted storm surge scenarios, historic structures adjacent to the municipal parking lot would be under water. The Town is working, thanks in part to a grant from the Economic Development Administration, to add a flood wall adjacent to the municipal parking lot that could be deployed in heavy storm events in an effort to protect the downtown historic buildings. The Town should also consider providing guidance to owners of downtown buildings in flood-proofing their properties and making this information readily available on the Town's website. Generic guidance is available in the Secretary of the Interior's [Guidelines on Flood Adaptation for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings](#) (2021).

In addition to threats posed by the changing climate, future development in the areas of Town determined to be eligible for historic district designation but not yet locally regulated via existing mechanisms (such as the Historic Preservation Ordinance) would be another major threat. It is a common misconception that simply being listed on the National Register of Historic Places means that a property is protected from demolition or change. In actuality, unless a building owner is utilizing either federal or state historic preservation tax credits, no review of changes to National Register properties takes place.<sup>7</sup> Local regulation is often considered one of the most important ways to guarantee that no changes take place to historic properties, because changes will require review and must meet local designated standards. ~~In Damariscotta, a variety of buildings have been identified as eligible for National Register of Historic Places or local designation, but have not been designated at the time of the drafting of this chapter.~~

In Damariscotta, a variety of buildings have been identified as eligible for National Register of Historic Places or local designation, but have not been designated at the time of the drafting of this chapter. Specifically, a Bristol Road Historic District (encapsulating the properties fronting Bristol Road between Cross Street and Miles Street) has been determined by Maine's State Historic Preservation Office to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places due to the concentration of Greek Revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, and Craftsman styles in the area. Per the State Historic Preservation Office: "A large percentage of the resources in the survey area are Federal and Greek Revival [illustrating] the initial expansion of the residential part of the community along the road to Bristol in the first half of the 19th century." It was also noted that later styles represented continued development. The character defining features of the district are: shared design, massing, scale, materials, common road setbacks, as well as the presence of carriage houses, retaining walls, and stone curbing/steps. The district's period of significance is ~~from about~~ 1800 to ~~approximately~~ 1930. The Town may wish to consider ~~designating~~ ~~creating~~ another local historic district in an effort to protect these properties from demolition or changes that would impact the overall character of this historic neighborhood.

Concerns about the impact of modern lighting and signage within the existing Main Street Historic District have been voiced by residents. In addition, there is a desire to regulate new construction within the residential neighborhoods outside of the established Main Street Historic District (which include the potential Bristol Road Historic District) to ensure that new construction and changes to existing buildings are in keeping with the historic character of the village.

Finally, a threat to historic and archeological resources is simply lack of data or concrete information on the location of said resources. The Town has never undertaken a full survey of

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<sup>7</sup> It may still be helpful for property owners to have the district or subject property listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Historic preservation tax credits, available at both the state and federal level in Maine, allow income-generating properties (including rentals) listed on the National Register to receive significant credits for the rehabilitation of listed properties. At the time of drafting of this Plan, the federal income tax credit for the rehabilitation of historic structures consists of a 20% credit. In Maine, tax credits are available in addition to the federal credit and consists of a 25% credit. There are also additional credits available for the qualified rehabilitation of structures to be used as affordable housing.

archeological or historic resources and relies on the Maine Historic Preservation Commission and State Historic Preservation Office for data. Protection of resources that are unknown is clearly not feasible, which means that resources may be being lost without anyone being aware of it. No professional surveys for historic archaeological sites have been conducted to date in Damariscotta. Future archaeological surveys could focus on the identification of potentially significant resources associated with the town's maritime, agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those associated with the earliest Euro-American settlement of the town in the 17th and 18th centuries. Similarly, architectural surveys to date have been limited to the areas in and around Damariscotta's village downtown. Future architectural surveys could focus on the more rural areas of town to identify historic farmhouse or barn properties.

### Overarching Policies

#### State Goal

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

#### Local Goals

1. Identify and protect all of the significant historic and archeological resources.

### SMART Strategies

1. **Amend Subdivision Ordinance within 1-3 years.** Require that applicants for Planning Board projects are explicitly required to protect known historic and archeological sites and areas sensitive to prehistoric archaeology through modification of the proposed site design, construction timing, or extent of excavation within the Subdivision Ordinance.
2. **Within the next year, work to become a Certified Local Government through the State Historic Preservation Office in order to gain access to grants for planning and survey work.**
  - a. **Begin to earmark matching funds through the annual budget process to conduct a comprehensive community survey of Damariscotta's above-ground historic resources, beginning with the Bristol Road Historic District and surrounding residential areas.**
3. **Following the completion of the survey in 2.A above, consider expanding the local historic district and strengthening regulations for review of new construction within those districts to ensure that the character of existing historic neighborhoods is not impacted.**
4. **Complete a brochure about the importance of historic preservation to the community and resources for those seeking to undertake renovations.**
- 3-5. **Within the next 3-5 years, collaborate with the Damariscotta Historical Society to seek funding for a Museum in the Streets project (approx. \$25,000 for 12 signs).**

**Commented [5]:** At this point, there are simply my own recommendations/notes. We will plan to discuss policies and strategies after July 26th when the survey results come in. At this time, we are focusing our discussion on the background inventory and analysis data required by Chapter 208: Comprehensive Plan Review Criteria Rule (excerpted on the following pages)

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# Arts & Culture

## Overview

A vital component to a thriving community, especially in the downtown area, is ensuring that local arts and culture have a living, tangible presence. This chapter will focus on the links between Damariscotta and the community's creative culture and how even more connections might be made to the benefit of both. The community survey conducted as part of this Plan highlighted resident's pride in their downtown, indicating that residents like what is happening in this regard and want to ensure that similar arts and cultural events continue into the future.

Existing Arts and Cultural amenities in Damariscotta include the following:

Name	Primary Location	Offerings
Skidompha Library	184 Main Street	Per their website, the stated mission is: "to support and enrich our community by fostering literacy, providing ready access to information and resources, encouraging lifelong learning, and promoting cultural and social interactions."
Heartwood Theater	Either the Skidompha Library or the Parker B. Poe Theater at Lincoln Academy	The education of the region's youth and adults in theater arts, and an annual performance schedule that is open to the public
Lincoln Theater	2 Theater Street	Year-round entertainment venue whose stated mission is to "present diverse, high-quality programs that provide entertaining, artistic, educational and social experiences that enrich our community" (per their website)
River Arts	36 Elm Street	Art gallery promoting the work of area artists
The Peace Gallery	112 Main Street	A mixed-use community resource space that boasts a gallery for veterans to sell their work, an open space for movement and creation, and an event space for lectures, classes, presentations, and community gatherings. In all they do, veterans are featured, prioritized, and encouraged to engage in creatively based healing practices.
Salt Bay Chamberfest	All over Lincoln County throughout the summer, primarily at the Lincoln Theatre	Per their website, "The mission of Salt Bay Chamberfest is to enrich the cultural life of Midcoast Maine by producing musical concerts of the highest artistic

**Commented [1]:** It seems like we really rely on the Skidompha Library for Arts and culture events. It might make sense to reach out to them to understand if there are barriers to hosting more events (such as lack of space, lack of funding, etc)

		level. Salt Bay Chamberfest advances the vitality of chamber music by featuring standard chamber music literature as well as new and existing works of living composers performed by today's finest musicians.”
River Company	All over the Midcoast; theater in residence at the Skidompha Library	Community theater group
<a href="#">CLC YMCA</a>	<a href="#">525 Main Street</a>	<a href="#">Various arts-related camps and programming for kids, teens, and adults (with membership)</a>

In addition to the above, Damariscotta is home to a wide variety of private art galleries and craftsperson studios housing a thriving arts community. Throughout the summer, restaurants also play host to music performances and similar cultural events that enhance the vibrancy of the community.

#### **Community Events Highlight the Arts**

An important facet of economic vitality and a vibrant downtown is ensuring that the local arts scene is marketed well and has a tangible presence in the community. The Chamber of Commerce does just that with marketing materials available on their website and in brochures.

In addition, the Chamber brings together artists, downtown businesses, and the community as a whole with its signature community event, the annual Pumpkinfest and Regatta, which was originally begun to bring people into the downtown and entice visitors to patronize downtown businesses during the off-season. Additional events put on or co-sponsored by the Chamber include the Pemaquid Oyster Festival, held in late September at Schooner Landing restaurant, and the Villages of Light, which lights up downtown Damariscotta and Newcastle with lights to kick off the holiday season. What these events have in common is that they make Damariscotta a year-round destination for artists and draw tourists to the community.

#### **Arts and the Downtown**

There are strong connections to be made between arts/culture, a community's downtown, and its pedestrians, bicyclists and even motorists. When vehicular traffic is calmed, pedestrians and bicyclists feel more comfortable and are more likely to use the sidewalks and roads. When people get out of their cars and walk, they are more likely to explore and duck into a shop or visit a restaurant they haven't been to before. When a community's downtown features art and culture, both in the public and private realms, people tend to slow down, linger, and explore.

One way to enhance the existing downtown would be to create a public arts program and invest in community murals, art installations and similar that invite people to linger in the downtown and see what else it has to offer.

Along the same vein, creating an attractive open space in the downtown for people to gather, host music performances, story-telling, reunions, and/or get togethers adds to a downtown's

sense of vitality simply by letting people know that those spaces exist purely for them, their friends, and their families to enjoy.

While Damariscotta has a pleasant and walkable downtown (something that many other communities envy), there are few public open spaces in which to gather. Currently, the only public area like this in Damariscotta's downtown is the small strip of land adjacent to the downtown parking lot.

### **Culture**

Food, especially food produced locally and prepared by local chefs, has become an important addition to the arts and cultural scene in Maine. In Damariscotta, the local farmer's markets contribute to the overall fabric of the community, allowing farmers and other local artisans the opportunity to interact with the public and sell their wares. Additionally, Damariscotta's downtown is home to a variety of restaurants and bars. As of this writing, a new 40-seat Mediterranean restaurant called Bred in the Bone has just opened in Damariscotta's downtown, adding to the existing local coffee shops, bakeries, pizza places, sandwich shops, and more. Because of its existing year-round population and destination as a service center for surrounding communities, Damariscotta has the capacity to accommodate more local restaurants in and around its downtown.

A challenge identified by Damariscotta residents as part of the community survey conducted in the development of this plan is that it is difficult to find a place that serves food past 8:00 or 9:00 pm. Attending a performance at the Lincoln Theater or an art show and being able to grab a bite afterward is a common desire that is hard to accommodate in Damariscotta because of this. Some communities have recognized that people also like to shop after going out to dinner and have shops that stay open late, especially on weekend nights. If more people lived in and around the downtown area, Damariscotta would likely look more attractive to restaurateurs looking to open restaurants, to other business people looking to start small performing arts venues, or even to existing business owners thinking about expanding their hours to meet a burgeoning need. With more people in and around the downtown, it would be easier to engage the "feet on the street" and keep them visiting downtown amenities and spending money locally.

### **Overarching Policies**

#### *State Goals*

1. None required.

#### *Local Goals*

1. Develop a robust public arts and culture program to improve livability and support economic vitality.

### **SMART Strategies**

1. The Town should consider creating an Arts and Culture Committee with the goal of promoting the arts as a means of improving the local economy, enriching cultural and intellectual life, promoting lifelong learning, and protecting Damariscotta's rich cultural heritage.
  - a. The Arts and Culture Committee should formulate an outreach effort that highlights the value placed on Lincoln Academy's arts and performances, and seeks to integrate them more fully into the community.

**Commented [2]:** Consider hosting an Annual Maker's fair

- b. The Arts and Culture Committee should create a collective and comprehensive calendar of events related to arts and culture in Damariscotta.
2. Continue to work with the Town of Newcastle and the Damariscotta Region Chamber of Commerce to coordinate community events and public art initiatives that strengthen ties between the two historic downtown areas. Consider allocating annual funding to the Chamber of Commerce to continue making headway in this regard.
3. Explore opportunities for volunteer-led, inexpensive, short-term community art projects or demonstrations that demonstrate the impacts of public art in a visible way.
4. Consider adopting a “1% for Art” policy for all capital improvement projects, requiring 1% of the total cost of the project to be set aside in order to incorporate digital and interactive public art formats that enable public places to reflect current values and ideas, draw on the evolving energy and ideas of Damariscotta’s thriving arts community, and promote interaction among friends and strangers alike.
5. Work with the Town of Newcastle to create a downtown park, with maintenance shared by the two communities, in order to create an open and attractive space for residents of the two communities to gather and hold performances.

**Commented [3]:** As a reminder, there is no specific State goal related to arts and culture. This was a Topic Area that we added as a result of community input. This section so far is just my own notes/experience working with Public Arts Commissions in other communities, but we will discuss and refine further after all results of the community survey are received.

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