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CT Trust for Historic Preservation,
Preservation DE, PreservatiON MASS,
ME Preservation, NH Preservation
Alliance, Preservation NJ, Preservation
League of NY, Preservation PA,
Preserve RI, Preservation Trust of T

Statewide Main Street Programs

CT: Connecticut Main Street Center
DE: Delaware Main Street Program
MA (Boston): Boston Main Streets
ME: Maine Downtown Center
NH: New Hampshire Main Street
Center
NJ: Main Street New Jersey
PA: Office of Community Development,
Pennsylvania Downtown Center
VT: Vermont Downtown Program

www.nationaltrust.org

Seeking Proposals for “the Very Sweetest Spot”

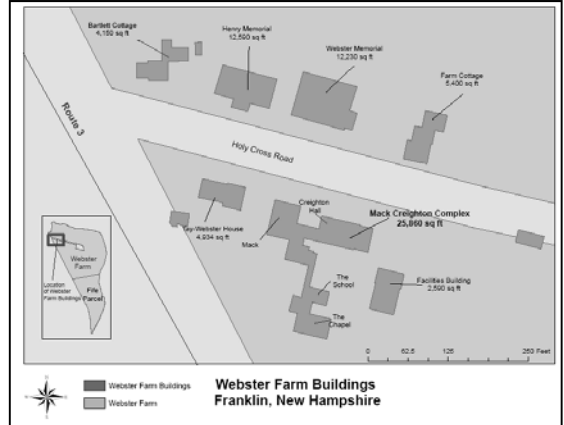
Now is the time for preservation-minded developers, organizations, individuals and agencies to join the Campaign to Protect the Daniel Webster Family Farm, which Webster himself described as “the sweetest spot in the world.” The Trust for Public Land (TPL) and its partners are seeking [requests for preliminary proposals \(RPP\)](#) from qualified developers and/or occupants for economically viable reuses of all or some of seven buildings on this remarkable site.

“Looking out at the east windows at this moment, with a beautiful sun just breaking out, my eyes sweep a rich and level field of a hundred ages. At the end of it, a third of a mile off, I see plain marble grave-stones, designating the places where repose my father, my mother, my brother Joseph, and my sisters Mehetabel, Abigail, and Sarah...”

So wrote statesman and orator Daniel Webster in 1846, while on respite at his family’s farm along the banks of the Merrimack River in Franklin, NH, just north of the capital, Concord. One hundred and sixty years later, a coalition of land and preservation organizations is working to ensure that the property stays sweet and that the expanse of rich and level fields remains planted.

In June 2005, the Webster Family Farm was listed on the National Trust’s list of *11 Most Endangered Historic Places*, in response to the imminent threat of a housing development on the 141-acre property. The development would have replaced farm fields with homes and there was no plan for the complex of extant historic buildings. The buildings include the National Historic Landmark Webster “Mansion,” known as the Webster-Tay House, and six other buildings associated with the New Hampshire Orphans Home, established in 1871 for children of Civil War soldiers, and with the property’s subsequent tenure as the residence and retreat center for the Sisters of Holy Cross.

TPL bought out the housing developer’s interest in the property in August 2005, as a temporary measure to protect the property. New Hampshire’s Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP), along with the Webster Farm Preservation Association (WFPA)—a newly formed advocacy group—and the U.S. Farm & Ranchland Protection Program stepped in with significant funding to help finance the purchase.



A sketch plan of the buildings at the Daniel Webster Farm. Click the image to see a larger view. Courtesy of the Trust for Public Land website.

During the last year, TPL, LCHIP, WFPA, the New Hampshire Preservation Alliance, the National Trust’s Northeast Office, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, the Franklin Historical Society, and the Clarence Fife Trust have collaborated to protect both the land and the buildings. Agricultural easements are being established for the surrounding fields and preservation easements will protect the historic buildings.

While there is clearly much to celebrate, Webster’s Family Farm is not yet saved. The buildings suffer from deferred maintenance and require considerable investment to stabilize and rehabilitate them for new uses. The variety of building types—ranging from wood frame cottages to brick school buildings to a chapel—offers not only challenges in identifying reuses, but also immense opportunity given their bucolic campus setting.

Several promising and creative reuse scenarios have been identified, and additional ones are being sought through the preliminary process established to collect these ideas. [Click here to view the RPP.](#)

Interested parties are encouraged to contact TPL at www.tpl.org or Rebecca Williams at rebecca_williams@nthp.org by September 19. The campaign to protect Daniel Webster’s Farm is an excellent illustration of how important partnerships and perseverance are in protecting whole cultural landscapes—those “very sweetest spots” around the country like the Webster Family Farm.

Restoration and Renovation Grant Opportunity

The National Trust is delighted to announce the availability of a second year of grant funding for the preservation of significant historic properties in the Northeast. This opportunity is made possible by the Lowe's Charitable & Educational Foundation, which is donating \$1 million to the National Trust to be used to award restoration/renovation grants in the ten Northeastern states, from Maine to Delaware.

The application deadline is September 30, 2006. Before submitting an application, please be sure to review the very specific eligibility and selection criteria listed here and in the application:

- The building must be open to the public.
- Only non-profit organizations may apply.
- Buildings cannot be currently used for religious purposes.
- The project must be completed by December 2007, with no more than 20% of the award going toward professional services.
- Multi-year projects will not be considered.

Awards will range up to \$100,000 and require no match. For a copy of the application or to discuss a potential project, contact Brent Leggs, Program Assistant, at (617) 523-0885 or nero@nthp.org, or contact your state's Northeast Office staff representative in Boston or Philadelphia.

Dates, Deadlines and Announcements

September 20—The **Massachusetts Historical Commission** presents the 2006 Statewide Historic Preservation Conference, "**Serving Neighborhoods Through Preservation**" in Boston. For details, visit www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc.

October 1—Deadline for applications for the **National Trust's Preservation Fund** and **Battlefield Preservation Fund** grants. Available to non-profit groups or municipalities the grants require a dollar-for-dollar match and cannot be used for bricks-and-mortar construction. For more information, write to nero@nthp.org or visit www.nationaltrust.org.

October 11—The **Maine Downtown Center** hosts its annual conference in Waterville. Featuring keynote speaker Nick Spitzer of NPR's "American Roots," and numerous educational, interactive breakout sessions. For more information, please go visit www.mdf.org/downtown.

October 13-14—The **American Association for State and Local History** in partnership with the National Trust, presents "**Historic Landscapes**," an Advanced Training Workshop for Historic Site Managers, in Washington, D.C. Participants will receive in-depth training and new ideas for conserving and improving the cultural landscape of their historic site. For more, visit www.aaslh.org/workshop.

October 21—**Preservation New Jersey** and the **Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia** host a luxury bus tour of The Wildwoods' (NJ) architectural gems. This expertly guided tour of famous

fifties motels includes lunch at the Fabulous Fifties Doo-Wop Street Fair. Space is limited and an advance reservation is required. Call (609) 392-6409 or email info@preservationnj.org for details.

October 26-27—**Project for Public Spaces** holds its bi-annual training course "**How to Turn a Place Around**" in New York, NY. This workshop is designed for those who help plan towns and cities. Details available at www.pps.org.

October 27—The **New Jersey Historic Preservation Office** presents a one-day "**Best Practices**" workshop to enhance current knowledge of applicable preservation laws, to identify and discuss problems experienced working with these laws and to seek solutions to at least some of these problems through small group discussions. For more, visit www.nj.gov/dep/hpo.

October 30—The **Green Building Alliance** and the **Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation** host a National Summit on the greening of historic properties, in Pittsburgh, PA. The Summit will feature experts in the disciplines of both green building and historic preservation in a discussion regarding existing LEED certification requirements as they relate to historic preservation: www.phlf.org.

October 31-November 5—The National Trust hosts the **National Preservation Conference** in Pittsburgh, PA. The conference is the premier educational and networking event for those involved with the preservation movement. For more information: www.nthpconference.org.

New Circuit Rider in CT

The National Trust and the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation recently announced that Gregory Farmer will succeed Nina Harkrader as a second Circuit Rider for Connecticut. The Connecticut Circuit Rider Program is a partnership of the Connecticut Trust and the Northeast Office of the National Trust. Circuit Riders bring technical preservation services and grant funding to local organizations and communities to help them preserve the places they care about.



With more than 20 years of historic preservation experience and a background in architectural history and regional planning, Farmer's areas of expertise include research and planning, feasibility studies, historic structure reports, National Register nominations, tax-advantaged rehabilitation, and regulatory review and compliance. Farmer is "particularly concerned about agricultural landscapes and urban neighborhoods, both of which are threatened by the tide of new development in Connecticut."

Farmer is also a free-lance preservation consultant in neighboring western Massachusetts, and has been involved in a number of historic rehabilitation projects to create affordable housing in Holyoke, Montague, Pittsfield, Springfield, and Westfield, MA. He is currently completing the National Register nomination and the tax certification application for the Mahaiwe Theatre, a 1905 vaudeville playhouse in Great Barrington, MA.

Helen Higgins, Executive Director of the Connecticut Trust says, "We are excited to bring to our very successful program such an experienced professional who seems to love being on the road! Greg has his tool box stuffed already with National Trust materials, a digital camera, and a number of measuring tools. He is all set for site visits."

Join the National Trust and Keep Up with News of the Northeast

To learn about the latest developments in preservation and how you can become a member of the National Trust, send an e-mail to nero@nthp.org to join our mailing list or to request membership information, or please visit www.nationaltrust.org.