

2009 Morris County's 10 Most Endangered Historic Sites

		<p>Category of the Year — Preservation Funding The <i>Category of the Year</i> listing was introduced to define a broad category of historic resources which are endangered and under pressure as a group. The economic pressure causing site stewards to defer needed maintenance and historic preservation projects today will create an even greater need for funding in the future. With all levels of government experiencing deep budget cuts through lost revenues, declines in philanthropic giving, and the state's failure to fund historic preservation through preservation agencies or legislation, this year's <i>Endangered Category of the Year</i> is <i>Preservation Funding</i>.</p>
1		<p>Morris County (Boonton Twp., East Hanover, Jefferson, Kinnelon, Montville Twp., Parsippany) — Susquehanna-Roseland Electric Corridor *Development *Lack of recognition *Degradation of context Historic resources known and unknown are threatened along the length of the Susquehanna-Roseland Electric Corridor. Designed to carry power from a coal-fueled electrical generation plant from Ohio to Roseland NJ, the corridor will pass through the northern portion of Morris County and impact Sussex and Essex counties. Significantly higher new towers in the existing power line right-of-way, primarily along mountaintop ridges, will drastically change the scenic and historic look of rural Morris County. The consultant is using an artificially narrow area of adverse potential effect (APE) which in the current design shows construction obliterating known historic sites; proposed mitigations are inadequate. Highlands Council staff negotiated a seven-mile APE, an improvement over the existing plan, but in return agreed to deferred mitigation plans and withdrew objections, plans unseen. Known resources threatened include sites listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, locally listed sites, farmsteads, stone walls, and mines. (First year on the list)</p>
2		<p>Harding — Glen Alpin 685 Mount Kemble Avenue at Tempe Wick Road *Lack of funding *Lack of local support Despite over a million dollars in restoration funds raised by the Glen Alpin Conservancy through county, state, and federal granting agencies and private donations, this municipally-owned, 1847 Gothic Revival gem may be mothballed by in an effort to save tax dollars. Conservancy members are deeply dissatisfied with the township committee's lack of transparency in grant project management and long term intentions for the site. Municipal politics, project management issues, and lack of understanding of the building's significance and potential use are all conspiring to lose the township's support for Glen Alpin's preservation. (First year on the list)</p>
3	<p style="text-align: center;">Photo not available</p>	<p>Lake Hopatcong (Jefferson, Mt. Arlington, Roxbury)— Boathouses of Lake Hopatcong *Lack of local protection & recognition *Demolition by neglect *Development There are many old boathouses on Lake Hopatcong. Many of them are historic. Development, teardowns, and updates to properties along the shoreline over the last two decades has altered the shorescape, despite efforts by the local historic community to document historic structures and resist inappropriate changes. Among the losses was the c. 1895 Kil Kare Castle boathouse built for Col. George G. Green; it was dismantled and its deteriorated elements numbered, but it still awaits reconstruction. Like many secondary structures that provide context to a primary historic building, utilitarian outbuildings like boathouses are often overlooked and rapidly disappearing. The historic boathouses on Lake Hopatcong should be formally recognized, protected and saved so that future lake residents and visitors may experience the nostalgia they represent. (First year on the list)</p>
4		<p>Boonton — Iron Works and Morris Canal Sites (The Hollow), circa 1830-1863 Includes iron sites (mill pond, supervisor's house c. 1832, 1863 brick building) & Morris Canal plane. Plane St. *Development *Lack of recognition *Lack of local protection Commercial and residential developments still threaten and degrade the context of this important area, which has been continuously endangered since the list began in 2001. Recently approved new zoning would negatively impact the Hollow's historic resources if a proposed development goes forward. Archaeological and park preservation would allow interpretation of the historically significant ironworks and canal which were integral to New Jersey's industrial development. (First listed in 2001)</p>
5		<p>Dover — Bassett Highway Redevelopment Area *Development *Lack of recognition *Lack of local protection Bassett Highway was built over a filled section of the Morris Canal which included three canal locks. A canal spur leads to the adjacent site of a demolished 19th-century industrial structure. The proposed redevelopment project (which failed to recognize these historic resources) recently lost funding but the site is still at risk from other insensitive approaches. The underground resources in this area should be carefully excavated, interpreted, and celebrated as a vital part of Dover's iron manufacturing history. Efforts by local citizens to strengthen the new Historic Preservation Commission are needed now more than ever. (First listed in 2007)</p>
6		<p>Morristown — Oak Dell *Development *Demolition *Lack of local protection Listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places, this large-scale early Colonial Revival house is one of four remaining mansions on Madison Avenue's former "Millionaire's Row," now overwhelmed by office buildings and the Morristown Memorial Hospital complex. Set back from the street in a grove of large oak trees, the house survived last year's threat of loss of context when a proposed condominium project fell through. Now threatened by demolition because it is zoned for single family/residential use, a zoning change to business use— like many properties around it — would allow the mansion to be adaptively reused and still retain its historic character. (First listed in 2008)</p>
7		<p>Morristown — Central Business District, 19th and early 20th centuries Washington, South, Elm, Morris and Spring Sts.; Cattano and Speedwell Avenues *Development *Lack of local protection * Inappropriate zoning Redevelopment sites are burgeoning in downtown Morristown, threatening the tapestry of architecturally diverse, older commercial buildings and altering the town's once historic character in favor of ever-taller, monolithic new construction projects. The town center, once a haven for shoppers, now offers a rich selection of banks and investment firms as restaurants and retailers seek affordable storefronts away from the Green. Speedwell Avenue's busy sidewalks and active storefronts, arguably the most vibrant street in town, may soon be lost to a redevelopment that will erase its historic character and displace numerous successful businesses. The Historic Preservation element of the town's Master Plan (enacted but never implemented by ordinance) supports greatly-needed regulatory protection for the Morristown Historic District. (First listed in 2004)</p>
8		<p>Netcong — Downtown Area & Musconetcong Iron Sites, 19th and early 20th century Main Street *Development * Lack of recognition *Lack of local protection Site includes 1903 DL&W railroad station owned by NJ Transit. Better understanding and implementation of the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation is needed in the municipal revitalization effort; community consultation required under Section 106 review has not taken place. Preservation appears to be losing to replacement. (First listed in 2001)</p>
9		<p>Parsippany — Greystone Administration Building Central Avenue, Greystone Park *Lack of funding *Needs maintenance *Demolition by neglect *Development *Lack of local protection & recognition The 1876 administration building was designed by architect Samuel Sloan with Dr. Thomas Story Kirkbride, a pioneer in mental health care. Declared surplus by the state and now vacant, one asset monetization plan includes selling the magnificent stone building with some 130 acres of land. The old administration, or "main" building offers unique historic preservation challenges, but similar adaptive use projects are underway in former hospitals across the eastern United States. (Listed in 2008 as an individual building; originally listed in 2002 with entire campus)</p>
10		<p>Rockaway Twp. — Mt. Hope Mining District, 19th and 20th centuries Mt. Hope Road & Mt Hope Avenue, Rockaway *Lack of funding *Needs maintenance *Neglect *Lack of local protection & recognition Containing extensive former mining acreage with museum-quality industrial relics, the district was a major site in the northwest NJ mining industry. Artifacts continue to be stripped from the buildings, stored improperly or sold for scrap. Buildings are rented for uses incompatible with local zoning regulations. (First listed in 2001)</p>

Moved to Watch list:

Morristown – Olyphant Park District

Olyphant Parkway, Olyphant Place, Olyphant Drive, and Jardine Road

***Development *Degradation of context *Lack of recognition**

Major development projects surround and endanger this quiet oasis of late 19th- and early 20th-century houses, one of the first planned neighborhood developments in Morristown. The Lafayette Avenue extension of I-287 cuts a destructive swath through the neighborhood, isolating the single block called Olyphant Place. Ironically, the Dr. Jabez Campfield (Schuyler-Hamilton) House, listed on the New Jersey Register of Historic Places, was moved in 1895 to Olyphant Place from Morris Street to make way for residential development. The neighborhood is not currently designated as a historic district, leaving it unprotected from encroaching redevelopment. (First listed in 2008)

Long Hill Township – Millington School House/Old Town Hall

***Lack of local ordinance *Needs maintenance *Neglect *Development**

The oldest public building still owned by the township, the Millington Schoolhouse provided continuous service to its community over the 136 years of its existence, demonstrating the adaptability of well-constructed early buildings. The Township received a grant from the Morris County Preservation Trust Fund in 2008 for a preservation plan, and resources have been allocated to maintain the building; preservation is expected to begin soon. (First listed in 2007)

Washington Township – Andrew Dufford House and “Asylum”

***Vandalism *Neglect *Needs maintenance *Development**

The last major farm in Middle Valley unprotected by farmland preservation, the circa 1780 stone asylum once belonged to Dr. Ebenezer Sherwood. The asylum, barn, and 1892 Queen Anne house on the property are the unfortunate victims of a multiple-heir inheritance tangle. Buildings are undergoing demolition by neglect; the site was moved to the Watch list for lack of movement and to make way for newly threatened sites. (First listed in 2007)

Saved:

Morristown – Willow Hall, 1840s

330 Speedwell Avenue, Morristown

***Development *Lack of local protection & recognition *Degradation of context**

An 1840s Italianate puddingstone mansion once owned by Speedwell Iron Works owner George Vail, Willow Hall is set in one of the largest remaining tracts of open space in town. Recently purchased by the Passaic River Coalition with assistance from county and state historic preservation grants, the mansion will be the nonprofit organization's headquarters. Kudos to the Coalition's tenaciousness, creativity, and sensitivity to all parties involved — even implementing a federal program to offset some of Morristown's reduced tax revenues by its change of use. (First listed in 2005)

Compiled by the Morris County Endangered Sites Committee

Representing the Morris County Heritage Commission, Morris County Historical Society, Morris County Trust for Historic Preservation and the Morris County Visitors Center

New sites are listed in alphabetical order by municipality; carryover sites are listed in alphabetical order by municipality following the new entries.

The Morris County Heritage Commission, The Morris County Historical Society, The Morris County Trust for Historic Preservation and The Morris County Visitors Center announce the 2009 **10 Most Endangered Historic Sites** in Morris County. Three new applications were received this year for consideration. Three 2008 listings moved to the Watch list (*Morristown: Olyphant Park District, Long Hill Township: Millington Schoolhouse and Washington Township: Andrew Dufford House and “Asylum”*), where they join a host of other sites. Only one property from the 2008 Watch list moved to the Saved list: Morristown's Willow Hall.

The list of **10 Most Endangered Historic Sites** in Morris County draws attention to the value of our county's historic resources and encourages public and private involvement in their maintenance, preservation and interpretation. The *Category of the Year* listing was introduced to define a broad category of historic resources which are endangered and under pressure as a group.

The organizations plan to continue to release an annual list and update the status of previously listed sites. Local citizens and groups are encouraged to forward their suggestions for sites to be considered in 2010 to any of the above named organizations. A nomination form is available at www.morrisheritage.org.