

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	TPF.Z
Historic Name:	Newburyport Turnpike - U. S. Route One
Common Name:	
Address:	
City/Town:	Topsfield
Village/Neighborhood:	
Local No:	
Year Constructed:	
Architect(s):	
Architectural Style(s):	
Use(s):	Other Engineering; Other Road Related; Other Transportation
Significance:	Community Planning; Engineering; Politics Government; Transportation
Area(s):	
Designation(s):	



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



Sketch Map

See Attached Map

Assessor's Sheets	USGS Quad	Area Letter	Form Numbers in Area
7, 8, 12, 19, 26, 34, 41, 49, 57, 64, 69, 76, 81	<i>Greenville</i> Topsfield	Z	901, 902, 924, 938-943

Town Topsfield

Place (neighborhood or village)

Name of Area Newburyport Turnpike – US Route One

Present Use Transportation corridor lined with mixed uses

Construction Dates of Period – 1804 - 1972

Overall Condition – Good

Major Intrusions and Alterations – 20th century pavement changes, bridge reconstruction, guard rails

Acreage approximately 6 miles of 50' right-of-way

Recorded by Gretchen G. Schuler
Shary Page Berg

Organization Department of Conservation and Recreation / Essex National Heritage Commission
Heritage Landscape Inventory Program

Date (month/year) January 2006

RECEIVED

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☒ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form*

AREA FORM

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION *Describe architectural, structural and landscape features and evaluate in terms of other areas within the community.*

The Topsfield section of the Newburyport Turnpike has three names: US Route One, Newburyport Turnpike and Boston Street. As the first name implies it is part of the east coast national highway. The road was constructed as the Newburyport Turnpike, which is the way in which historical records refer to it. Locally, the turnpike often was referred to as the old road to Boston and eventually took on the name of Boston Street when street numbers and addresses were assigned in the late 20th century. Thus for the purposes of this Area Form the description of the Newburyport Turnpike will be referred to as Boston Street in order to use addresses to describe the scenic resources adjacent to the roadway.

The Newburyport Turnpike (US Route One) extends through Essex County on a direct northeast-southwest route that appears as a straight line on maps; it slices through Topsfield cutting into the existing topography. This north-south link, between Boston and towns north to Newburyport and New Hampshire, is now a local and regional route that is heavily traveled with a speed limit that varies between 30 mph and 50 mph. The six-mile Topsfield stretch of the Turnpike, known as Boston Street, begins at the Danvers town line on the southern end and cuts diagonally through Topsfield in a straight line to the Ipswich town line. The road retains its narrow width with one travel lane in each direction and a wide striped bike lane or breakdown lane on each side as it traverses the hills and valleys. Some widening has occurred at major cross streets such as Salem Road, High Street and Ipswich Road. The drama of this series of hills and valleys through which the road travels is enhanced by the rural landscape of wooded areas and farmland on each side. The roadway (MHC #938), which has no structural curbs, has sections that are lined with stone walls and others lined with SS-type metal guardrails. Most of the breaks in the road edge are intersecting roads. Properties with access onto Boston Street are few with the exception of two commercial areas. Utility poles line the road edge for the full length, but streetlights are found only in the commercial areas near Route 97 (High Street and the Topsfield Fair Grounds) and north of Ipswich Road.

This description of the Topsfield's Boston Street has been divided into five segments, each varying slightly in character. These segments extend from the Danvers line to Garden Street at Witch Hill; from Witch Hill north to the Ipswich River; from the river and South Main Street to High Street; from High Street to Ipswich Road; and from Ipswich Road to the Ipswich line. The first two, the most picturesque sections, are rural in nature; the middle segment from the river to High Street and the northern-most section are commercial and show the most change; they also are the locations of the two four-way traffic lights. The section between the two commercial areas is narrow and hilly with high banks and thick growth of trees, vines and groundcover. The following description starts on the southern end and proceeds northerly to the Ipswich line. While the focus is on the roadway, its character is defined by view of adjacent properties, therefore those also are described in order to convey the experience of traveling along Topsfield's section of US Route One.

Danvers Line to Witch Hill: This segment is characterized by two distinct hills and valleys. The highway edges display a rural landscape and the only curb cuts are two narrow roads: Rea Farm Road and Garden Street. At the southern end the

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road rises immediately after leaving Danvers, offering a dramatic view of the stretch of road ahead. Part way up this first short hill is a simple wood sign nailed to a tree on the east side (northbound) of the road. This sign, at the entrance to Topsfield from Danvers, states "Committed to Preserving Our Rural Character." On the west side (southbound) of the road nearly opposite this "Rural Character" sign is the official "Entering Topsfield" sign (MHC # 939) which notes that the town was incorporated in 1650. The edges of the road are naturally vegetated and slope up from the road. A small dip follows after the first short hill, only to rise again to the top of Rea Farm Hill. A low stone wall marking the edge of farm fields lines this part of Boston Street rising to and descending from Rea Farm Hill. On the west side of the ascent up Rea Farm Hill there is a large corn field as well as an area that has been bulldozed. From the top there is a fine view of the rolling hills through which this ancient roadway was cut. On the east side of Boston Street at Rea Farm Hill is the entrance to the Nike Village marked by a blinking light. The 1950s Nike Missile Launcher Site and Housing was constructed on part of the old Rea farm, hence the name of Rea Farm Road. Today the road leading from Boston Street provides access to the military housing and is part of the government property. From Rea Farm Hill Boston Street descends into a valley where the road is edged by metal SS-type guardrails. The road then rises from the valley to Garden Street on the west side, where both sides of the highway are lined with a stone wall that varies from other sections of stone walls along Boston Street. These stone walls, which wrap around the corners to the narrow scenic town road known as Garden Street and continue along both sides of Boston Street up Witch Hill, are high stone and mortar retaining walls (MHC #940) that were rebuilt or constructed in 1929 according to Mass Highway plans. In the valley noted above there are natural habitats, a pond, wetlands and agricultural land. Vistas, both east and west, are colorful and varied depending upon the season. Small ponds and wetlands have provided natural habitats for the Golden Wing Warbler and Blandings Turtles; additional study would be necessary to determine the continued viability of these species.

Witch Hill to South Main Street: The next series of hills pass through an important part of Topsfield's agricultural landscape with broad prospects of farmland, stone walls, farm buildings and houses. The road seems narrower along the first part of this stretch only because of the high stone retaining walls (MHC # 940) built into the banks and the tree cover growing on top of the walls. At the crest of Witch Hill is the old Crowninshield-Peirce Estate, which is also known as Witch Hill (MHC Area Form T). The main house and some remaining outbuildings are on the west side at 116 Boston Street (Crowninshield House is MHC #94, Peirce Stable is #335), approached by a driveway cut into the high stone retaining wall mentioned above. On the east side of the highway is 111 Boston Street (MHC #95), the ca. 1870s Peirce Farm Manager's House, which is close to the road, the foundation remnants of Peirce outbuildings and structures (MHC #923) as well as drainage system remnants (MHC #924) which are found on both sides of Boston Street. The outbuilding foundations are from large dairy barns that once stood on this part of the farm-estate.

Farmland lines both sides of Boston Street as the road descends Witch Hill and begins to rise again to Pingree Hill. The high stone retaining wall tapers down as the road descends and adjoins with guardrails on the side of the road. The valley, north of Witch Hill, comprises meadows and pasture land with the drainage structures noted above and a former cow crossing (part of MHC #924) under Boston Street laid out by surveyor and landscape gardener, Ernest Bowditch, and reconstructed by Mass Highway in 1972). A low stone wall of a different design begins on the west side of Boston Street as it ascends Pingree Hill (aka Wheatland Hill), named for former owners. A green swath separates this wall from the road pavement and provides a buffer so that the highway which remains the same width appears wider than at Witch Hill. This stonewall (MHC #941), made of dry-laid large rounded stones and capped with rectangular granite blocks (along part of the wall), marks the 19th and early 20th century property line of the Perkins-Pingree Farm, which abutted Witch Hill on the south side and included land on both sides of Boston Street and Salem Road. This wall along the west side of

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Boston Street has one curb cut, an old entrance to the Perkins-Pingree Farm (1806-ca. 1900, 45 and 49 Salem Road, MHC Area S) where there is an old rusted chain link fence on top of the wall. The wall wraps the corner of Salem Road (west of Boston Street) and runs along much of the length of Salem Road to Hill Street, again marking the early holdings of the Perkins-Pingree Farm. This same wall sets off the Pingree (or Wheatland) Sledding Hill (MHC # 937) on the northwest corner of Boston Street and Salem Road.

From the top of Pingree Hill (at Salem Road) one can see the valley of the Ipswich River below and Topsfield Village beyond to the northwest. Low stone walls, some of which are retaining walls, (MHC #942) are covered with thick underbrush and young voluntary trees along both sides of Boston Street and taper to guardrails just before the river. On the east side, only a few hundred feet north of Salem Road, there are square stone piers marking an old entrance to the former Marsh Estate (70 Salem Road, MHC #337). Large boulders have been put at the opening formed by the piers and there is much overgrowth in the former lane that led to the house. These stone piers and surroundings are just outside the Boston Street/Route One right-of-way. The intermittent low stone walls taper to SS guardrails which are found on both sides of the bridge (MHC # 901), once known as Stone Bridge, carrying Boston Street over the Ipswich River. This bridge, originally built in 1853 as a common stone-arched bridge, was reconstructed and faced with concrete in 1922 at the time of a road widening, when the date was etched in the concrete on the side of the bridge. Additional work on the 32 foot span Bridge T-6-3 (as it is identified in Mass Highway records) was completed in 1968 and recently in 2005. Wetlands on both sides of the river blend into agricultural fields.

South Main to High Street: South Main Street joins Boston Street on the west side and marks the beginning of one of two commercial strips on Topsfield's Boston Street. Through this section the roadway is separated from the adjacent land uses by dirt and green swaths and by parking lots. It is crossed by Maple Street, the old railroad right-of-way and Central Street. The Maple Street intersection is an ordinary perpendicular intersection, while Central Street crosses on an angle. The railroad crossing also was on an angle, and is evident due to the tracks which meet the right-of-way on each side of Boston Street; the tracks have been paved over. The roadway ascends another hill between Maple Street and High Street which is marked by a traffic signal.

On the east side of Boston Street is the Topsfield Fair Grounds (207 Boston Street, MHC Area Form R), the permanent home of the Essex Agricultural Society since 1910, which has a green chain link fence at its perimeter and some young trees inside the fence forming a buffer between the highway and the many Fair buildings beyond. The open landscape of the 63+ acres of the Fair Grounds extends from the Ipswich River northerly to Maple Street. A large sign at the entrance gates announces the Fair Grounds and its programs. When traveling southbound on Boston Street there is a fine view of three of the earlier Fair Ground buildings close to the corner of Boston Street and Maple Street. They are the Flower Building (1924, MHC #309), the Poultry Building (1925, MHC #310) and the Fruits and Vegetable Building (1921, MHC #311). All three buildings are long, gabled roof, wood clapboard structures with wide raking bracketed eaves. On the west side of Boston Street between South Main and Maple Streets are the Essex County Cooperative Society store and barns (146 South Main Street, MHC Area Q), the State Police Barracks (210 Boston Street) and the Lower Cemetery (1828, no inventory form). Lower Cemetery, also called the Boston Street Cemetery, is set off by a low fieldstone wall and has several large mature trees among the many old slate and marble stones. There are other commercial enterprises including several mid to late 20th century car dealerships and a former early to mid 20th century gas station. The railroad right-of-way mentioned above is between Maple and Central Streets. Central Street is approximately half way between

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Maple and High Streets. A few other commercial establishments line the road which ascends another hill to the traffic signal at High Street (Route 97).

High Street to Ipswich Road: Boston Street continues north, climbing hills and descending into valleys with wooded areas, more high stone retaining walls, and some rubble stone walls that are laid into the banks on the side of the road. In addition there is the bridge crossing at Howlett Street and a road crossing of the Mile River just before the traffic light at Ipswich Road. This section is rural, has two hills (Towne and Great Hills), and the valley between them. At the main intersection of Boston and High Streets there is an historic marker (MHC # 943) for the Parson Capen House (1692-1992)(MHC # 1), designed in the style of the Massachusetts Bay Colony Tercentenary Commission, but erected by the Topsfield Historical Society in 1992. This First Period structure, the subject of the marker, is in the center of Topsfield at the western end of High Street. In addition to this historic marker the northwest corner features the Perkins-Gleasons House (78 High Street, MHC #63) a large Greek Revival House constructed in 1848. The buildings on this property are set back from the road and some fine old trees and a barn make it a picturesque site. Several other older dwellings and outbuildings are obscured from view along the roadway. As one climbs Towne Hill, a section of the highway appears narrow due to the four foot high retaining walls (MHC #940) similar to those at Witch Hill. Both Towne and Great Hill also have low retaining fieldstone walls (MHC #942) Two small intersecting streets are located on the east side only: Dover Hill Road, which leads to modern housing; and Averill Road, which is nearly at the traffic light intersection with Ipswich Road. The 1922 concrete bridge (MHC # 902), historically known as Dry Bridge, carries Boston Street over Howlett Street. Prior documentation indicates that the 1805 dry-laid bridge was covered with concrete during the road widening of 1922. However, highway plans of 1947 refer to it only as a concrete bridge which is all that is visible from Howlett Street under the bridge and on top of the bridge where the 1922 date is etched into the aggregate facing. During winter months one can see one of Topsfield's First Period dwellings, the French-Andrews House (ca. 1675, 86 Howlett Street, MHC #112), which is on the east side of Boston Street, set down on Howlett Street. The exit from Boston Street to Howlett Street is on the west side of the highway north of the bridge and can only be accessed from the southbound direction.

Ipswich Road to the Ipswich Town Line: The right-of-way of this section of Boston Street, from Ipswich Road north to the Ipswich town line is ordinary highway with consistent width, marked shoulder lane, and varying degrees of vegetation on the sides. Most of the bordering land consists of modern commercial development including two modern gas stations at the intersection of Boston Street and Ipswich Road, a few small stores, a stretch of residential properties, the Campmeeting Road crossing, Howlett Brook, an office park, an industrial park and the Meadowview Golf Course. A blinking light marks the intersection of Campmeeting Road and the roadside is wooded north and south of this intersection. The hills traversed on this segment are not as dramatic as on the southern sections of Boston Street. The most significant hill descends to Campmeeting Road when heading north. Residences are scattered along this section necessitating many curb cuts unlike the other sections. The largest cluster is on the east side just north of Ipswich Road where a string of mid 20th century modest sized houses are set back from the roadway. At the industrial park there is a large retention pond at the road edge, built to accommodate the drainage system of the site. There is less development and more vegetation on the sides of Boston Street near the Ipswich line. Guard rails are located intermittently along this northern stretch.

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HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *Explain historical development of the area. Discuss how this relates to the historical development of the community.*

Topsfield lies at the geographic center of Essex County, within the relatively flat coastal strip of territory called the New England Seaboard Lowland. The Topsfield area is generally hillier than the rest of the Seaboard Lowland however; and the community has been valued for its rolling terrain of low hills, most of which are less than 300 feet in height. The highest elevations are aligned north to south through the center of the town, from which point the land slopes east and west. These topographic features are interesting to note when considering the significance of the early transportation route known as US Route 1, which became an important north-south link.

Route 1 extends from Key West in Florida to the international boundary at Fort Kent at the Canadian border. According to the 1989 United States Numbered Highway report Route 1 has an entire length of 2593 miles 93 miles in Massachusetts. In 1979 the recorded mileage was 2557 miles in length with 78 miles in Massachusetts. In 1989, Route 1 in Boston was rerouted away from the city streets to Route 95 south of the city and Route 93 to the Tobin Bridge to bypass the city. This of course altered the mileage. Formerly, Route 1 was the Old Post Road in many states and the King's Highway in Virginia and passed through town and city centers along city streets. Now many bypasses re-direct Route 1 away from urban areas, which in turn have changed the mileage over the years.

Originally constructed as a toll road, the Newburyport Turnpike was the 25th turnpike to be chartered in Massachusetts. The first Massachusetts toll road or turnpike was incorporated in 1796 and built in 1800 passing between the towns of Palmer and Warren in the western part of the state. Between 1796 and 1806, 135 turnpike corporations were chartered in New England, of which only three were for roads of 50 miles or more. Funding for the construction of the Newburyport Turnpike was raised through the sale of 995 shares at \$420 each. This accounted for the \$417,000 needed to construct the full 26 miles of road between Newburyport's State Street and the Malden Road near the Chelsea Bridge.

Planning for the Newburyport Turnpike began in 1803 by the Boston and Newburyport Turnpike Corporation, which laid out the route and worked out compensation for land owners along the way. The clear instructions to build a road "as nearly in a straight line as practicable" and "in a course south 24 degrees west as nearly as possible" were closely adhered to in building the road. Construction began in Newburyport and the first 11 miles from State Street in Newburyport to Peabody's mills on the Mile River in Topsfield were completed in 1804. The next segment from this northern part of Topsfield south to Malden was constructed in 1804 as well. The section of the turnpike through Topsfield was reported to have been the most difficult to build due to the hills and the crossings, particularly over the Ipswich River. A wooden bridge carried the turnpike over the river. This section was one of the most expensive and challenging to construct due to the marshland and hill south of it, later known as Pingree or Wheatland Hill. A dry-laid bridge was built over Howlett Street so that one could pass along the ancient way of Howlett Street without crossing the Turnpike.

Topsfield's location midway between Newburyport and Boston, and the construction of the Newburyport Turnpike through the geographic center of the town contributed to the town becoming a major stop-over point on a busy stagecoach and wagon route. Taverns and hotels proliferated as a result. The town grew and became more prosperous as local businesses catering to travelers were established. Hotels or inns built along the Turnpike were Perley's (1808), Meady's (1809, later called Munday's and the Topsfield House) and the large and well-known Topsfield Hotel (1804). The newly built turnpike was a toll road with one of the three toll houses in Topsfield at Salem Road. The other two toll houses were

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located in Newbury to the north and Chelsea to the south.

After 1818 there were daily stage coach connections run by the Eastern Stage Company, and Topsfield became known as the stage center of Essex County, due to its location at the half way point. Farming was the mainstay of the local economy and the Turnpike provided an early route for transporting products locally and regionally. Early in the 19th century some farms were purchased by prominent shipping and railroad industrialists who established rural retreats in Topsfield's rich agricultural landscape. Some of the early rural retreats were on or near the Turnpike which was an important link for those who traveled from Salem and Boston to their Topsfield farms. On Salem Road Captain Thomas Perkins established his farm beginning in 1806. This later became known as the Perkins-Pingree Farm (45 and 49 Salem Road, MHC Area Form S) and included land on both sides of the Turnpike and Salem Road. It was inherited by Perkins nephew Asa Pingree (hence the name Pingree Hill – the 20th century owner was Richard Wheatland which is why Pingree Hill now is better known as Wheatland Hill). On Witch Hill Benjamin Crowninshield established his farm (111 and 116 Boston Street, MHC Area Form T) beginning in 1821. Farming remained an important function of the land and these same wealthy part-time residents played a significant role in the founding of and success of the Essex Agricultural Society (EAS), established in 1818 by 20 men who met at Cyrus Cumming's Topsfield Hotel (no longer extant), located at the corner of High Street and the Turnpike. The EAS held its first Cattle Show and Exhibition in Topsfield in 1820. For a number of years the venue rotated among Essex County communities until 1910 when the EAS decided to use its Topsfield, the Treadwell Farm, as a permanent site, now known as the Topsfield Fair Grounds (207 Boston Street, MHC Area Form R). Clearly the transportation link between Topsfield and other towns was an important feature of the early meetings, exhibitions and permanent location of the EAS.

This early 19th century route was soon eclipsed by the railroad (Danvers-Georgetown line in 1854) as the most efficient mode of travel; however, the Turnpike's connections among Essex County communities remained an important part of local and regional history. By 1850 the tollhouses were phased out and the road was taken over by the county. The tolls for the section of the turnpike passing through Rowley, Ipswich, Topsfield, Danvers and Peabody were abandoned in 1849 and those in Lynnfield and Saugus in 1852. The road's significance was not diminished by the new status and it continued to serve locals as well as those from out of town. Another significant change was the shift of Topsfield's center from the Turnpike to the present center about a half mile west of the Turnpike. The 1831 Methodist Church which had been located near the intersection of High Street was moved to its new location on the Town Common in 1854.

After the mid 1800s some of the early rural retreats became firmly established, retaining the farming component as farmhouses were converted to second homes, some as mansions. Witch Hill on Boston Street is one of the better examples. Col. Thomas Wentworth Peirce purchased Crowninshield's Farm in 1856 and in the 1870s transformed the property into a true "gentleman's farm." The house was enlarged to a country mansion, state of the art farm buildings were erected and Ernest Bowditch was hired to lay out the grounds. His picturesque landscape included the design of an extensive water-supply and drainage system and a cattle crossing under Boston Street. Peirce also leased the old Treadwell Farm, which by then was owned by Essex Agricultural Society, now the Topsfield Fair Grounds (207 Boston Street) and the Essex County Cooperative Society (144 South Main Street).

The important link between farming and the Newburyport Turnpike continued to be enhanced with the expansion of the Perkins-Pingree Farm including the purchase of the large field on the northwest corner of Salem Road and Boston Street, which was used for crops and pasture by Pingrees and later owners, the Wheatlands. Today the field, an important view

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from the Newburyport Turnpike (Boston Street), is owned by the town and known as the Wheatland Sledding Hill for David Pingree Wheatland, 20th century owner of the Farm and nephew of Asa Pingree II. The 1910 decision to locate the Cattle Show and Exhibition at the Treadwell Farm, owned by the EAS by the 1850s further confirmed the importance of farming in Topsfield. This link continued in 1917 with the organization of the Essex County Cooperative Society on land owned by the EAS on the opposite side of the Turnpike from the Fair Grounds. The direct route of the Newburyport Turnpike contributed to this choice of a permanent site.

In 1907 there was a survey of the Newburyport Turnpike when the Massachusetts Highway Commission's Annual Report stated that the Third Division of the turnpike (that portion at Topsfield) had been improperly laid out with excessive grades and near a sparse population all reasons for it not to become a state road. The 1907 Massachusetts Highway Report stated that "in its building, no change of direction was made, either to avoid hills or to accommodate populations to the right or left of a straight line." Another reason for denying the state road status was that the selectmen of Topsfield and nearby towns had not petitioned for this designation; therefore the cost per mile of \$12,940 to reconstruct the road was not warranted. Although not made a state road the Massachusetts Highway Commission reported in 1913 that from 1910 to 1913 the Commission had widened, graded and generally improved the Newburyport Turnpike through eight towns and that as a result of the improved condition of the 27 miles of the turnpike, three times as many vehicles passed over the road. This work had been completed under Special Acts and Chapter 525 of 1910.

This decision was reversed in 1921-22 when the State Highway layout was undertaken and the Newburyport Turnpike became part of the New England Interstate Highway System in 1923 and was known as NE-1 (New England Route 1). The layout included a road widening and re-construction of the two bridges (the Stone Bridge over the Ipswich River and the Dry Bridge over Howlett Street). This followed the earlier Federal Aid Act of 1916 which was a result of congressional discussions about the need for a federal road policy. The act provided for the federal government's participation in financing and constructing state roads and it also required the establishment of state highway departments to administer federal highway funds in each state. The act also directed funds to rural post roads. The act also set the stage for the development of the United States Highway System which began in 1924 when the American Association of State Highway Officials (AASHO) conferring with the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Public Roads developed a list of federal highways. The selection of roads, primarily roads linking cities, was finalized in 1926. Route One over old post roads was on the list extending 2328 miles from Fort Kent, Maine to Miami Florida. Once accepted it was shown on the Rand-McNally Atlas of 1926 as US Highway One. In 1940 US-1 was extended to Key West accounting for the additional mileage noted above.

Once part of the newly established United States Highway System, construction and reconstruction projects were completed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Works often using federal aid. Records of early reconstruction projects show that the Topsfield section was modified in 1929-30. Working on the 1921-1922 State Road Layout, the 1929 project showed construction or reconstruction of the stone retaining walls at Garden Street and along the Witch Hill part of the Newburyport Turnpike. Highway plans showed profiles of stone retaining walls with variable slopes. Cement rubble masonry walls on the east side sloped away from the wall and turnpike. On the west side the stone masonry walls were shown with slopes above the wall. The road was recorded to have a "bituminous macadam asphalt surface." In these same plans the Howlett Street Bridge (MHC #902) was shown as a reinforced concrete beam bridge (Bridge T-6-6) with an 18' span over Howlett Street, which had an oiled gravel road surface.

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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Area(s) Form No.

Z	901, 902, 924, 938-943
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Early to mid 20th century improvements to accommodate automobile travel such as gas stations and some commercial ventures changed the character of part of the Turnpike; however, these changes were minimal in Topsfield compared to other towns and contained in two areas – near the Topsfield Fair Grounds and at Ipswich Road to the north. The stretch of road near the Fair Grounds (still referred to in the early to mid 1900s as the Cattle Show and Fair) catered to motorists as well as visitors to the fair site. In 1934 the brick Colonial Revival State Police Barracks (210 Boston Street) was built on a lot formerly part of the Topsfield Fair Grounds adjacent to the Essex County Cooperative Society. On the other side of the Lower Cemetery (corner of Maple and Boston Streets) were several businesses found on early to mid 20th century highways: Doane's Cabins built in 1935-36 and demolished in the 1980s; a garage leased to mechanics who repaired automobiles, and the Clipper Ship restaurant opened just after World War II. Two more garages built after World War I served travelers. Harris Perkins ran a garage and restaurant, no longer extant located on the east side of the Turnpike between Maple and Central Streets. Another garage was located just north of Central Street on the west side from ca. 1920. Access to the Topsfield Fair Grounds continued to be an important function of Route One as the permanent home was firmly established from 1910 until the present day. However, this alone was not enough to sustain the garages and restaurants once through traffic was re-routed to an interstate.

Route 95 was laid out and constructed in 1950-54. It ran parallel to Route 1 and connected with this highway just south of the Danvers-Topsfield line. At this point Route 95 ran north in a northwesterly direction cutting through only the southwestern corner of Topsfield, therefore by-passing the businesses along Route One in Topsfield. Just a couple of years later the Federal Highway Act of 1956 amended the Federal Aid Act of 1916. It created a national system of interstate highways, which included US – 1 from Fort Kent, Maine at the international border with Canada to Key West, Florida, and became part of that interstate highway system.

In spite of the effects of I-95 on the volume of traffic using Topsfield's Route One, improvement of the road continued; but with no major changes in the character of the roadway. Spot improvements that were Federal Aid projects included safety improvements at the Salem Road intersection in 1965-66, the Stone Bridge (now concrete) over the Ipswich River in 1968 and the cattle crossing at the Peirce Estate in 1972. In each instance the plans offer information about the road features. The Salem Road intersection plans showed the stone masonry dry-laid walls rounding the intersection. The primary goal of the project was to improve sight lines. The Stone Bridge T-6-3 over the Ipswich River showed the 1921 State Highway Lay-out, the cross section of the hill leading north down to the bridge and the 18" drainage pipes crossing the road. It also noted that the granite block arched bridge was concrete faced with reinforced concrete posts and rails leading to it (these have been replaced with metal guard rails). The cattle crossing under Boston Street at the Crowninshield-Peirce Estate (MHC Area Form T) is one of the more interesting resources that was maintained during road projects. It had been built in the 1870s so that the Peirce cattle could use both sides of the road. It was shown on 1948 plans and again in 1972 when it was the subject of the spot improvement. The plans show the cattle underpass detail and note that "the existing underpass shall be drilled and doweled to the proposed underpass extension. Dowels to be 12" into existing underpass" and leads from the area of the pond on the west side of Boston Street to a four foot stock fence on the east side of the pike.

In the mid 20th century the Rea Farm on the southern end of the Turnpike was taken by the Federal government for a Nike Missile Base installation. The launcher facility was constructed here as well as government housing. The Nike Base was operational at this location from 1956 to 1974. At that time some of the land stretching from Rea Farm Hill down into the valley between Rea Farm Hill and Witch Hill was deeded to the Salem-Beverly Water Board. The houses remain and

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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are used as government housing. Another late 20th century change was the removal of the at-grade crossing of the old railroad line which was located between Maple and Central Streets. Passenger service to Topsfield ran until 1950 but it was not until 1981 that the route was abandoned, but remains in the ownership of the MBTA. The tracks crossing Route One were paved over in the 1980s. Since that time there has been an effort to develop a trail along the old railroad right-of-way. One obstacle is the Route One crossing.

Today the Newburyport Turnpike continues to serve as a major north-south route for local and regional users. The Turnpike also functions as a destination route as it leads hoards of visitors to the Topsfield Fair Grounds for the annual fair in October. Seasonal changes contribute to the experience of traveling through Topsfield on this section of Route 1. These same attributes as well as the scenic quality of the views from the hills and the farmsteads at the road edge are enjoyed by local travelers and visitors alike.

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

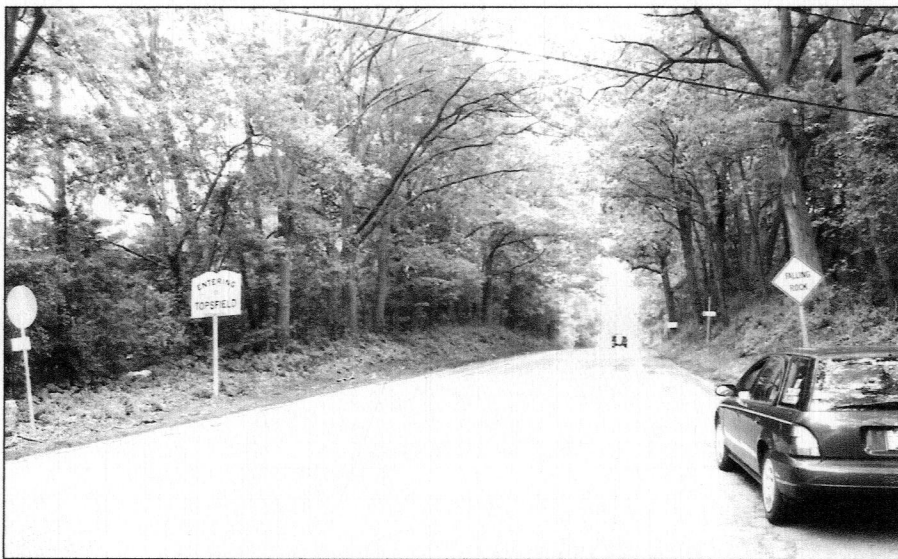
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Route One – Boston Street, At Danvers-Topsfield town line



Route One – Boston Street north of Danvers line – looking north

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Route One – Boston Street, Valley south of Witch Hill



Route One – Boston Street, At Garden Street looking north

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Route One – Boston Street, North of Salem Road looking north to Fair Grounds



Route One – Boston Street, Looking south from Ipswich Road Area

TPF. Z

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

Community
TOPSFIELD

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Z 901 902 924
938-943

National Register of Historic Places Criteria Statement Form

Check all that apply:

- ☐ Individually eligible ☐ Eligible **only** in a historic district
☐ Contributing to a potential historic district ☒ Potential historic district

Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Statement of Significance by Gretchen G. Schuler / Shary Page Berg
The criteria that are checked in the above sections must be justified here.

The Newburyport Turnpike section in Topsfield is known as Boston Street locally and is significant for its importance as a major regional transportation route begun in 1803-04. Its history and its physical attributes contribute to the understanding of regional and local historical development, including the agricultural history of Topsfield and that of the Essex Agricultural Society and Topsfield Fair, important regional features. Boston Street is significant under Criterion A and C and sections of the highway retain integrity of location, setting, design, materials, association and feeling. The Topsfield section of the Newburyport Turnpike retains its straight path with no deviation for any topographic irregularities. The hills and valleys are retained and show little evidence of elevation changes in plans of improvement projects from the 1920s to the 1990s. Characteristics such as single travel lanes in each direction, stone retaining walls of varying character, few curb cuts and vistas of the road corridor itself as well as those to abutting property are similar to those of the early 20th century when the road was taken over by the state and a State Highway Lay-Out was prepared in 1921-22. As a segment of the 2500+ stretch of US Route One, this area is also significant particularly as it retains much of the character of the early period of the United States Highway System.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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Town
TOPSFIELD

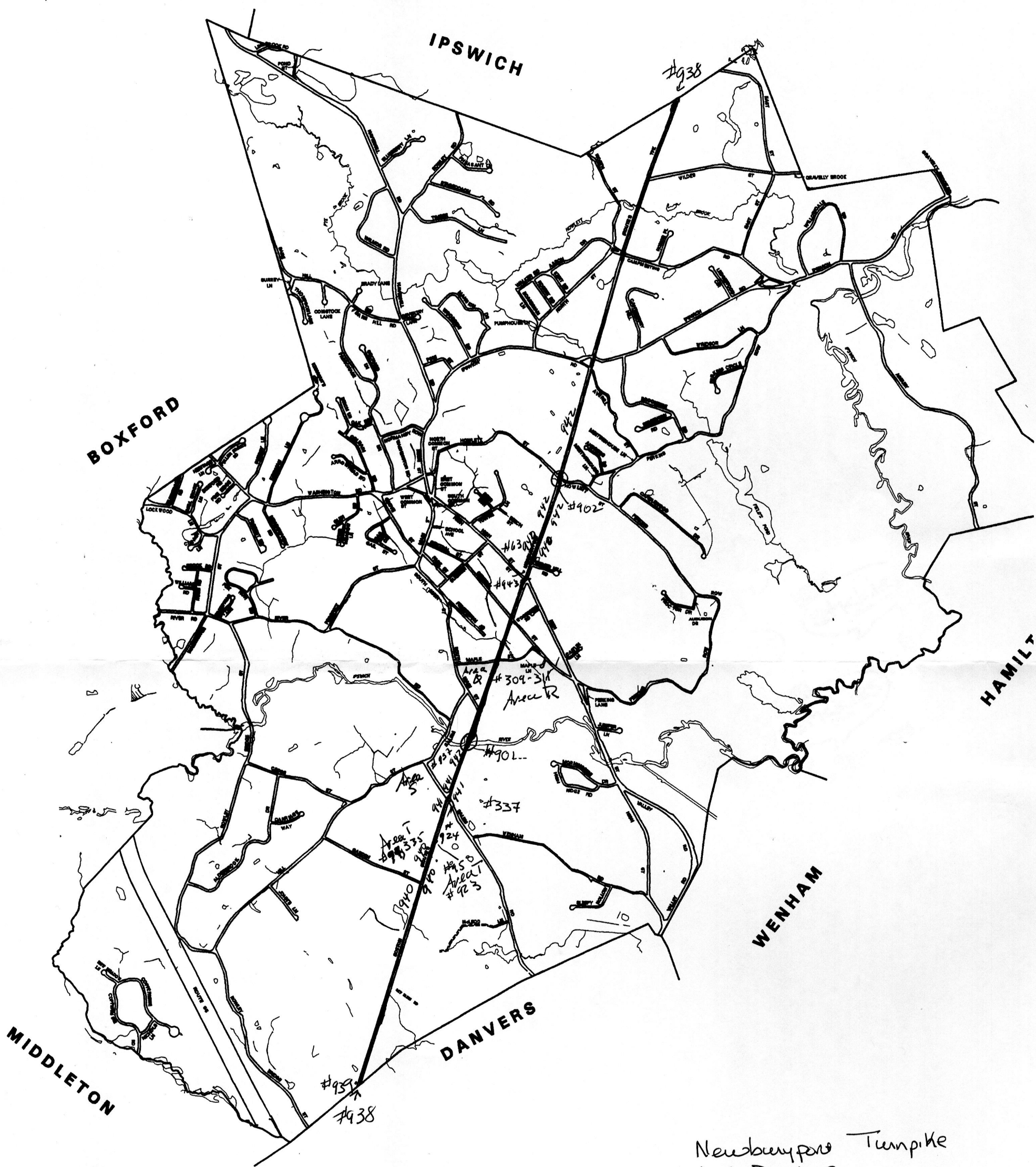
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TOPSFIELD NEWBURYPORT TURNPIKE - BOSTON STREET - ROADWAY DATA SHEET

MHC #	ASSR MAP # ST #	STREET NAME	HISTORIC NAME	STYLE	DATE	TYPE
<i>Green</i> - 901	57	Boston Street	Stone Bridge (over Ipswich River)		1853/1922/2005	St
<i>Green</i> - 902	34	Boston Street	Dry Bridge (over Howlett Street)		1808/1922	St
<i>Salmon</i> 924	63, 69	Boston Street	Former Cattle Crossing under Boston St.		1875/1970s	St
<i>Green</i> 938	8, 12, 19, 26, 33, 34, 41, 49, 57, 63, 64, 69, 76, 81	Boston Street	Roadway		1804/1922/late 20th century	St
<i>Salmon</i> 939	81	Boston Street	Entering Topsfield Sign		late 20th c.	O
<i>Salmon</i> 940	41, 69	Boston Street	Stone & Mortar Retaining Wall		1920s	St
<i>Salmon</i> 941	64	Boston Street	Dry laid wall with Granite Coping		late 19th c.	St
<i>Green</i> - 942	34, 57, 64	Boston Street	Low stone walls at edge of road and fields		late 19th c.	St
<i>Green</i> 943	41	Boston Street	Historic Marker (similar to Tercentenary)		1992	O



Newburyport Turnpike
U.S. Route One
Area Form Z

STREET MAP
TOWN OF
TOPSFIELD
ESSEX COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS
SCALE: 1 INCH = 2400 FEET

DATE OF REVISIONS:	1-1-2000
	1-1-2001
	1-1-2002
	1-1-2003
	1-1-2004
	1-1-2005

