

PTV Highlights: 2004

One of the big stories of the year in Vermont was the National Trust for Historic Preservation naming Vermont one of the Nation's Eleven Most Endangered Places. The threat? Seven new super-sized Wal-Marts which were planned for St. Albans, Morrisville, Derby, St. Johnsbury, Bennington, Rutland, and Middlebury. The designation was nominated by the Preservation Trust and the announcement stirred debate. Newspaper editors across the state urged Vermonters to take a careful look at the implications of megasized Wal-Marts in out-of-town locations on our historic downtowns and village centers.

In the spirit of compromise, the Preservation Trust urged Wal-Mart to build smaller scale stores in our downtowns. (link to St.Albans plans and commentaries). By year's end, Wal-Mart and their local developers were focused on the northern locations. In Bennington the local citizens, the Preservation Trust, and the Vermont Smart Growth Collaborative encouraged and supported efforts by the Bennington Planning Commission and the Selectboard to impose a size cap on new big boxes in the community. The effort stopped developers from making a proposal for a 170,000 square foot supercenter. Wal-Mart also appeared to back off from proposing new stores in Rutland and Middlebury. In St. Albans, where the only formal proposal has been submitted, the application is being reviewed by the Development Review Board. Review in the Act 250 process will begin in 2005. Local citizens and the Vermont Natural Resources Council are leading the opposition in the permitting process.

While the big box battles took a lot of time and energy, our basic work and service to Vermont communities continued at an ever expanding level. (For a visual reference on our work in 2004, please see the "Where We Worked 2004" map.)

Here's a sampling of our 2004 Highlights:

- Our two part-time Field Service Reps provided assistance to 178 community preservation projects in 154 different cities and towns. This program is a partnership with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.
- Seed grants from our Robert Sincerbeaux Fund were provided to 63 projects around the state.
- A total of \$750,000 in grants was provided to 25 projects through our partnership with the Freeman Foundation. These grants supported over \$5,400,000 in rehabilitation work on town halls, churches, meeting houses, community centers, affordable housing

projects, and performance spaces. Since 1994, our partnership with the Freeman Foundation has provided over \$7.5 million in support for more than 300 local preservation projects. These grants played a key role in over \$88 million in rehabilitation work around the state.

- In partnership with the Burlington Free Press and the Gannett Foundation, we were able to provide technical assistance and planning grants to help save historic barns.
- Working with a variety of partners, we're doing our best to strengthen our downtowns and community centers. Fighting big box development in sprawl locations is a critical piece of our work to protect the character of Vermont. We believe that encouraging large retailers like Wal-Mart to locate smaller scale stores in our downtown is the right solution.
- In partnership with the Vermont Forum on Sprawl, we continue to be active in Montpelier encouraging the Douglas Administration and the Legislature to provide the resources necessary to strengthen our downtowns and village centers.
- Building local capacity is critical to our success, and our training sessions, retreats, and publications reached citizens and organizations throughout the state.
- We now hold facade easements on 29 significant historic properties including the Farm Barn at Shelburne Farms, Officers Row at Fort Ethan Allen in Colchester, and the Latchis Theater in Brattleboro. As stewards of the easements, we monitor each property annually and provide technical assistance to the owners.

2004 Preservation Grants. A partnership of the Freeman Foundation and the Preservation Trust of Vermont.

Bristol, Masonic Lodge

Colchester, Colchester Schoolhouse

East St. Johnsbury Third Congregational Church

East Topsham, United Presbyterian Church

Ferrisburgh, Ferrisburgh Town Hall

Landgrove, Landgrove Community Church

Lincoln, Burnham Hall

Moretown, Moretown Methodist Church

Northfield, The Gray Building

Putney, Putney Town Hall and Noyes House

Randolph, Kimball House

Reading, Gilbert A. Davis Library

St. Albans, St. Albans Historical Society

Strafford, Strafford Town House and South Strafford Universalist

Sudbury, Sudbury Meeting House and Hill School

Thetford Center, Rice's Mills Community Center
Waterville, Town Hall
Westmore, Westmore Community Church
Wilmington, Memorial Hall
Windsor, American Precision Museum

2004 grants from the Preservation Trust's Robert Sincerbeaux Fund

Arlington Community House, Dorothy Canfield Fisher House
outbuildings
Barre Partnership
Bennington, Project Against Violent Encounters
Bennington, Project Independence, Harwood Hill Farm
Braintree Hill Meetinghouse
Building a Better Brattleboro
First Baptist Church of Brattleboro
Brattleboro, Goodenough Farmstead Trust
Bristol, Howden Hall
Brownington Village Congregational Church
Burlington, Fletcher Free Library
Burlington, First Unitarian Universalist Society
Preservation Burlington
Castleton Federated Church
Charlotte Burns Property and West Village Planning
Chelsea Town Hall and Library
Danville Town Hall
Fair Haven, Our Lady of Seven Dolours Church
Hardwick Memorial Hall
Huntington Baptist Church
Irasburg United Church
Isle La Motte Reef Preservation Trust
Johnson, Vermont Studio Center
Lunenburg Congregational Church
Lunenburg Methodist Church
Marlboro College Mumford House
Memorial Baptist Church of Middlebury
Middlebury Community House
Middlebury, Counseling Services of Addison County
Morrisville, Lamoille Grange #233
Morrisville, Grist Mill, River Arts
Mt. Holly Community Historical Museum
Montpelier, Two Rivers Center for Sustainability
Montpelier, Vermont Land Trust
North Danville Baptist Church

Norwich Historical Society
Orwell Old Town Hall
Pawlet Historical Society, Braintree School
Pittsfield Town Office and Library
Pittsford Library Association
Pittsford Preservation Corporation for the Forrest Farm
Poultney, Green Mountain College
Putney Town Hall
Reading Christian Union Church
Richmond, Audubon Vermont Barn
Rockingham Arts & Museum Project
Royalton, Hope Farmhouse and Barn
Rutland, Unitarian Universalist Church
St. Albans for the Future
St. Johnsbury Unitarian Universalist
Salisbury, Peterson Property, Vermont Land Trust
Sandgate United Methodist Church
Shoreham Newton Academy
Vermont Conference UCC
Vermont Council on Rural Development
Vermont Employee Ownership Center Conference
Vermonters for a Clean Environment
Friends of Wardsboro Library
Warren Timber Crib Dam, Mad River Valley Rural Resource
Commission
West Addison United Methodist Church
West Brookfield Congregational Church
West Fairlee Center Community Club
Whiting Town Hall and Schoolhouse
Wilmington Congregational Church
Wilmington Historical Society
Worcester Town Hall
Worcester, White School