

Moultonborough Heritage Commission Annual Report 2024



December 2024 brought exciting news to Moultonborough, when Lucknow (the Castle in the Clouds) was designated as a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of the Interior, the highest level of recognition for a historic property. This highlights the national significance of the Lucknow estate for its architecture, landscape design, and conservation efforts. The NHL designation covers more than 5300 acres of the original 6300-acre estate created in 1913-1914 by retired shoe manufacturer Thomas Gustave Plant, and includes the main house, two gatehouses, stable and garage complex, and an extensive road and bridle trail system (now hiking trails) linking seven mountain peaks. Today, this landmark estate property is owned and managed by the Castle Preservation Society and the Lakes Region Conservation Trust.

The Moultonborough Heritage Commission works toward the proper recognition, use, and protection of the significant historical and cultural resources throughout the Town. In summer 2024, the Commission continued to promote historic barn preservation, with visits to the 12 properties now participating in the RSA 79-D (historic barn easement) program. Following on the award-winning Main Street Banners project, Commission members also continue to focus attention on Moultonborough Village, where Village gateway signs were recently installed to define the historic downtown area. Additional recommendations for ongoing Village revitalization appear in professional Planning studies, including two Plan NH community charrettes (2012 and 2018), the Village Vision report (2015) and the UNH First Impressions assessment (2019).

In late March 2024, the Commission's first town-wide historical resources survey was completed in collaboration with architectural historian and preservation consultant Mae Williams. This priority project was conducted in phases (field work and photography, research and documentation, and the preparation of 90+ individual property surveys, database, and a final report with recommendations for areas of further study). The Moultonborough Community Planning Survey is now online on the Town's website. This survey will provide critical documentation to help guide Planning and other Land Use decisions in the future, with its town-wide inventory of significant historic buildings and sites, which are broadly understood as the irreplaceable resources that define Moultonborough's character and overall cultural landscape.

Respectfully submitted, and with thanks to our many community partners,

Cristina Ashjian, Chair

Steve Buy

Karel Crawford, BoS Representative

Michelle Frahm, Alternate

Scott Lamprey

Diane MacArthur, Secretary