

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

'Seven to Save' Community Landmarks in Moultonborough Village



Community heritage: The Plaisted brothers stand with the new sign on the front door of the Taylor House. Significant for its history and architecture, the French-Taylor House was added to the statewide 'Seven to Save' endangered properties list in 2017.

What is the future of community landmarks in Moultonborough Village? Key character-defining buildings, most noticeably the French-Taylor House and the Moultonborough Grange Hall, are now under threat by neglect, lack of planning, and development pressures. Both are significant for their community history and for their architecture, and both are on the NH Preservation Alliance's statewide 'Seven to Save' most endangered properties list. Will these at-risk buildings at the center of our village survive, and find new uses?

The town-owned Taylor House, as it is known locally, was added to the 'Seven to Save' list in 2017. It stands directly across Route 25 from the Moultonborough Grange Hall, owned by the Moultonborough Historical Society and listed to 'Seven to Save' in 2012. Loss of either or both of these buildings on 'Main Street' at the center of the historic village would severely impact Moultonborough's rural character, streetscape, and sense of place. What role could these unique buildings play in the revitalization of Moultonborough Village?

Both the Moultonborough Grange Hall and the Taylor House are associated with important community leaders and key events in our Town's history. Can these vacant, at-risk, and underutilized historic buildings be transformed into vibrant community assets once again? The July 20-21st Plan NH charrette, focusing on the expanded Moultonborough Village overlay district, is an ideal opportunity to fully explore the potential of these buildings for appropriate public or commercial uses through a community input and planning process.

Detailed reports on the history and architecture of both of Moultonborough's 'Seven to Save' buildings, prepared by James L. Garvin, state architectural historian and author of the acclaimed source book *A Building History of Northern New England*, are available for public review on the Town website. Historic Building Condition Assessment Reports for both buildings (funded by LCHIP) are also online (Moultonborough Grange 2012, Bedard Preservation & Restoration; French-Taylor House 2017, SMP Architecture, Concord).

84% of respondents to Moultonborough's recent Village Vision survey supported preserving and repurposing historic buildings in the village area. Could the Grange Hall be transformed into a dining and theatre establishment, with its upstairs raised stage? Could the Taylor House become a community building, or professional offices? Programs such as RSA 79-E, the Community Tax Relief Incentive, assist in the redevelopment of historic properties, while promoting mixed-use development and enhanced downtown vitality.

In discussion of economic development strategies, the Village Vision Report (endorsed at Town Meeting in 2015) encourages the active re-use and redevelopment of existing historic buildings (rather than demolition) in order to maintain our village character, scale, and streetscape. Saving community landmarks and retaining small-town character are seen as essential in statewide efforts to attract investment, draw new residents and visitors, support local businesses, and promote economic vitality and year-round tourism.

Community members are encouraged to participate in planning for the future of Moultonborough Village, and the future use of all town-owned properties in the Village Center Overlay District, by attending the Plan NH Charrette public input sessions (3:30-5 PM; 6:30-8:00 PM) and community BBQ on Friday, July 20th at the former Lions Club.



Community heritage: Kathy Garry, president of the Moultonborough Historical Society, with Maggie Stier (NH Preservation Alliance) and Steve Bedard (Bedard Preservation & Restoration) at the Moultonborough Grange Hall ('Seven to Save' 2012).