Baseline Documentation Example

For Historic Resource Projects
Legal Description of Property

A certain tract or parcel of land with the buildings thereon situate in the Town of Unity, County of Sullivan and State of New Hampshire, being Lot #1 as shown on Plan prepared by Twin State Surveys of “Land Owned by James P. Fusscas, Jr. and Helen K. Fusscas”, hereinafter referred to as the “Plan”, recorded in Planfile 3, Pocket 43 of the Sullivan County Registry of Deeds, said tract is more particularly described as follows:

Beginning at an iron pin on the southerly side of Correy Town Road, which pin marks the northwesterly corner of the tract herein conveyed; thence South 87º 28’ 55” East along a stone wall on the southerly side of Correy Town Road a distance of 74.9 feet, more or less, to a point at the end of said stone wall; thence south 86º 27’ 10” East along the southerly side of Correy Town Road a distance of 307.4 feet, more or less, to an iron pin, which iron pin marks the northeasterly corner of the tract herein conveyed; thence South 03º 53’ 15” West along a stone wall a distance of 123.9 feet, more or less, to a point in said stone wall; thence South 04º 56’ 15” West along said stone wall a distance of 227.2 feet more or less, to an iron pin, which iron pin marks the southeasterly corner of the tract herein conveyed; thence North 86º 27’ 10” West a distance of 363.6 feet, more or less, to an iron pin, which marks the southwesterly corner of the tract conveyed; thence North 01º 30’ 45” East a distance of 349.9 feet, more or less, to the iron pin marking the point or place of beginning. Lot 1 is said to contain 3.01 acres, more or less.
Term Historic Preservation Easement
Chase's Tavern, Center Road, Unity, New Hampshire

Exhibit C (Baseline Documentation)

Extra copy for Grantee


2. Significance of property:

Chase's Tavern is significant for its association with the era of turnpike travel and transportation, ca. 1800-1850. The improvement of roads by the turnpike corporations promoted the linking together of local, regional, and state economies into a more coherent national economy. It also made possible better communication between parts of the country and helped to break down isolation and encourage the creation of a more truly national culture. Chase's Tavern clearly owed its prosperity to its location on the turnpike.

The Tavern is also significant for its association with the lives of Abner Chase (1746-1838) and Francis Chase (1772-1850), prominent citizens of Unity. They were important to the history of the town for their roles as innkeepers, for the many public offices which they held over the years, and for their roles as real estate speculators in the development of the village of Unity as a commercial center on the Second New Hampshire Turnpike.
Finally, Chase’s Tavern has architectural significance as an example of a small country tavern built in a style which is intermediate between the center-chimney Georgian style and high Federal style. It has a boxy floor plan (4 to 5 ratio of depth to width) under a gable roof, but with two chimneys and a central hallway. It appears to be the work of modestly skilled country craftsmen attempting to follow the latest styles in building. The rather crudely feathered edges of the door panels and the method of installation of the staircase balustrades are examples of this somewhat flawed attempt, which may very well have been inspired by study of Asher Benjamin’s 1797 *Country Builder’s Assistant*. The Tavern exemplifies the dissemination of new ways of building from urban centers, such as Portsmouth, to rural settings, where they were adopted somewhat awkwardly.

3. Physical evolution of property (including major additions and alterations):

Chase’s Tavern, built ca. 1800, is of full two story, wood frame construction and is stylistically transitional, containing elements of both the Georgian and Federal styles. The house measures 40 feet long by 32 feet deep with its principal facade oriented toward the north. The house has a full cellar and is built upon a stone foundation with granite underpinnings. The original foundations on the south and east have been replaced with foundations of poured concrete and concrete block, while the north foundation has been heavily buttressed. The west foundation had been heavily damaged before restoration and has been replaced (except for the granite underpinnings at its north end).

The exterior is finished with clapboards and the windows are proportionately spaced across the front, with those of the first and second stories vertically aligned. The windows on the rear are somewhat irregularly spaced and have been left in (or restored to)
their original location, except that one window has been replaced by the door to the police office. Only the transom over the front door has retained its original sash. None of the frames are original, but most of the window locations do not seem to have changed. Sometime around 1900 the older, presumably 6 over 6, sash were replaced with 2 over 2. Sometime in the last fifty years 6 over 6 sash were installed, in new window frames.

The interior floor plan is that of a two room deep ‘double’ house with interior chimneys on either side of the entry hall. The front door, located at the midpoint along the north wall, leads into a wide entry hall with a staircase to the second floor. The hall extends southerly until it terminates at a back room which served as the kitchen. To the left (east) of the front door was the parlor and to the right of the hall was the taproom. At the rear of the house is the dining room (now the police office) to the east and the kitchen (now the Town Clerk’s office) to the west. In the restoration a new wall has been built in the former kitchen, making its east end into a new rear hallway.

Climbing the stairs, one first encounters a door that leads into the library. Originally at the head of the stairs, it has been moved slightly to the east out of safety considerations. This room, which extends the entire width of the building, has been returned to its original configuration. In the late 20th century it had been divided into three rooms, with a bathroom at the mid-section and a bedroom at either end. The door frame of one of the two original folding partitions used to temporarily divide this meeting room into three chambers has survived.

At the front of the house, divided by a center hall are two additional bedrooms at the east and west ends. The stairs to the attic begin at the north end of the hallway and lead to the mid-section of the attic, which shows no signs of ever having been finished. Flanking this room at the east and west ends are two early/original sleeping chambers with plastered surfaces and wood trim, with a closet in each room. For fire safety reasons, kneewalls and two additional partitions have been built in the attic.
The Tavern has two large chimneys, on either side of the central hallway. They rest on impressive brick chimney vaults in the basement. There are eight fireplaces, apparently built following the designs of Count Rumford. The kitchen fireplace includes a bake oven. The fireplaces have all been restored, but they have been sealed and their use is not contemplated at present.

Sometime in the early twentieth century a bathroom was installed in what had been the taproom. In the 1960's this bathroom was replaced by one on the first floor between the northeast and southeast rooms. A new bathroom has been installed in this space, but without the small window. Later, a large bathroom was built on the second floor, in the middle of what had been the meeting room. This bathroom has been removed and a new bathroom installed in the closet directly over the downstairs bathroom.

When first built, the house included a small wing at the west end. Soon thereafter this wing was incorporated into a much larger addition that pushed the north wall of the original wing to within approximately eight feet of the northwest corner of the main block. The east/west dimension was more than doubled in length. There is good photographic evidence showing details of this larger addition, built in part as a carriage barn. At an unknown date another smaller carriage shed was built which connected the west addition to a large barn to the west. This shed was removed prior to the demolition of the barn in the 1960's.

About 1989 the west wing was torn down and replaced by a smaller addition. This has been removed and replaced in turn by a new addition which approximates in size and design an early stage in the evolution of the original west wing. This addition houses a second stairway to the second floor, a lift to meet ADA requirements, a handicap accessible bathroom, and a vault for town records. The addition connects to the main building by three doors in their original locations and one new door (leading into the northwest chamber on the second floor).
4. Condition of property (from visual inspection):

As of March 2003, the preservation of Chase's Tavern, located on the Center road in the Town of Unity, New Hampshire, has been completed. Its condition at this time is as follows --

Exterior: Most of the late 20th century siding has been removed and replaced with new clapboards. The only original siding left on the building was found on the north elevation and all of this siding was allowed to remain with only some minor repairs being necessary. The cornice work was also left undisturbed and much of this appears to be original. All of the 20th century windows were in dire need of replacing and all windows were replaced with Pella 6 over 6 double hung windows. An addition is now in place on the west end of the original Tavern building, which serves largely to meet ADA and life safety requirements. The roof, too, has been replaced and has been recovered in asphalt roofing shingles. The entire exterior of the building has also been repainted, leaving early/original paint wherever possible.

Interior: The interior work has also been completed, restoring much of the original floor plan to what it was when first built. Little original plaster work had remained at the start of this project, and most of what was left was unsalvageable. The original small hall off of the NE second floor room still retains its original plaster while other areas of original plaster in lesser condition have been covered in sheetrock. The second floor ballroom, now the library, has had its wainscoting restored and what was missing has been replaced with new. The original taproom, now the Selectmen's
Meeting Room, has had its wainscotting restored as well. In the case of this room, most of it is the original. The crumbling brick arches in the basement have been repaired and a new concrete slab has been poured throughout. All of the original flooring was saved and lightly sanded and finished with a clear finish. Original trim was also preserved and where missing, new trim was milled to match. Many of the original six-panel doors were still intact and those that were missing were replaced with new doors that match the existing. All finished surfaces throughout the building have been entirely repainted.

5. Site plan: Attached

6. Sketch floor plans: Attached
   a. Plan showing location of Tavern, garage, and parking lot
   b. First floor plan
   c. Second floor plan
   d. Cellar plan
   e. Attic plan
7. Photographic record: Attached

1. Roll 2, no. 19a: Common from in front of Tavern

2. Roll 2, no. 9a: S façade (from SW)

3. Roll 2, no. 11a: W façade (from W)

4. Roll 2, no. 12a: N façade (from N)

5. Roll 2, no. 13a: NE corner (from NE)

6. Roll 2, no. 10a: Garage (from S)

7. Roll 2, no. 17a: Garage (from W)

8. Roll 2, no. 14a: Front door (from N)

9. Roll 1, no. 1: Front door (from inside)

10. Roll 2, no. 22a: Front door latch

11. Roll 1, no. 3: Main staircase (from E)

12. Roll 2, no. 20a: Bottom of balustrade (on ground floor) (from NE)

13. Roll 1, no. 4: Selectmen’s meeting room, E wall
14. Roll 1, no. 5: Selectmen’s meeting room fireplace

15. Roll 2, no. 18a: Selectmen’s meeting room ceiling (from E)

16. Roll 1, no. 6: Selectmen’s Secretary’s fireplace

17. Roll 1, no. 7: Police Dept. china closet and fireplace

18. Roll 2, no. 23a: Police Dept. china closet (from SW)

19. Roll 1, no. 8: Main entry (rear door) with wainscotting to the left

20. Roll 1, no. 9: Town Clerk’s fireplace

21. Roll 2, no. 25a: Service window between Town Clerk and main entry hall (from W)

22. Roll 2, no. 1a: 2nd floor meeting room fireplace (from N)

23. Roll 2, no. 2a: 2nd floor meeting room, door to hall (from SW)
24. Roll 2, no. 3a: Historical Society, fireplace and closet door (from NE)

25. Roll 2, no. 4a: Library, E fireplace (from S)

26. Roll 2, no 5a: Library, wainscot on S wall (center section) (from NW)

27. Roll 2, no. 6a: Library, folding partition jamb (from W)

28. Roll 2, no. 8a: Library, folding partition jamb, close-up of N side (from S)

29. Roll 1, no. 10: Basement, W vault (from NW)

30. Roll 1, no. 12: Basement, E vault (from NW)

31. Roll 1, no. 13: Basement stairs (from top)

32. Roll 1, no. 14: Balustrade and wall at E side of attic stairs (from NE)

33. Roll 1, no. 15: Door at foot of attic stairs (from E)

34. Roll 1, no. 17: Attic, E chamber (from SW)
35. Roll 1, no. 19: W chamber, NE corner (from S)

36. Roll 1, no. 21: Attic, W chamber, S wall (from N)

37. Roll 1, no. 22: Attic, rafters and ridge (from E)

38. Roll 1, no. 23: Attic, E chamber closet (from N)

39. Roll 1, no. 24: Attic, E chamber, S wall (from N)

40. Roll 1, no. 25: Attic, E wall (from SW)
Plan showing location of Tavern, garage and parking lot.
6d. CELLAR ELECTRIC.

PLUMBING, HVAC, FIRE
Baseline Photos

PLEASE READ:

IF YOU ARE USING THIS DOCUMENT AS A MODEL FOR YOUR OWN BASELINE DOCUMENTATION, READ THIS BEFORE YOU VIEW THE PHOTOS

- The following photos are a few selected photos from the complete baseline photographic record
- All photos should be labeled clearly on the back in pencil (NOT at the bottom, as shown in the examples – these captions are placed below the photos for illustrative purposes only)
- Photos size: 4x6 black & white
Chase's Tavern 12/30/02 Roberta Calkum
Common from in front of Tavern

Chase's Tavern 12/30/02 Roberta Calkum
S façade (From SW)
Chase's Tavern 12/30/82 Roberta Callum

W façade (from W)

Chase's Tavern 12/30/82 Roberta Callum

N façade (from N)
Chase's Tavern 12/30/02 Roberta Callum
Main entry (rear door) with wainscoting
to the left

Chase's Tavern 12/30/02 Roberta Callum
Town Clerk's Fireplace