Working with Traditional Cultural Properties and Rural Historic Landscapes

2007 Mn/ DOT Environmental Workshop
St. Paul
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Section 106 and Traditional Cultural Properties

- The National Register of Historic Places contains properties that reflect many kinds of significance in architecture, history, archeology, engineering, and culture.
Culture

• “the traditions, beliefs, practices, lifeways, arts, crafts, and social institutions of any community, be it an Indian tribe, a local ethnic group, or the people of the nation as a whole.”
Traditional

- "Traditional" refers to those beliefs, customs, and practices of a living community of people that have been passed down through the generations, usually orally or through practice.
Traditional Cultural Significance

• The traditional cultural significance of a historic property, then, is significance derived from the role the property plays in a community's historically rooted beliefs, customs, and practices.
Traditional Cultural Property Definition

• A place that a community regards as important for its association with cultural practices or beliefs...
  - rooted in a community’s history
  - important in maintaining a community’s cultural identity
Inyan Karan Mountain

- a location associated with the traditional beliefs of a Native American group about its origins, its cultural history, or the nature of the world
Hancock Shaker Village

- a rural community whose organization, buildings and structures, or patterns of land use reflect the cultural traditions valued by its long-term residents
Honolulu’s Chinatown

• an urban neighborhood that is the traditional home of a particular cultural group, and that reflects its beliefs and practices
Minnesota TCP Examples

Boiling Springs

Pilot Knob

Monastery Woods
Rural Historic Landscape

• An area used by people, or shaped or modified by human activity, or intervention

• An area that possesses a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of areas of land use, vegetation, buildings and structures, roads and waterways, and natural features . . .
Rural Historic Landscape Characteristics

- Land uses and activities
- Patterns of spatial organization, cultural traditions, buildings, structures, and objects
- Cultural traditions affect the ways that land is used and shaped, and religious beliefs, social customs, and ethnic identity may be evident in physical features and land uses
Minnesota
Rural Historic Landscapes

Sogn Valley, Nerstrand

Sister of the Order of St. Benedict Fields, St. Joseph
Other Landscapes

• Designed Historic Landscapes (Bulletin #18)
• Mining Landscapes (Bulletin #42)
• Geographic Features of Historic and Cultural Significance
Designed Historic Landscapes

Minneapolis Parkway System: Grand Rounds
Mining Landscapes

Eveleth, Mesabi Iron Range
Geographic Features of Historic and Cultural Significance

Barn Bluff
Case Study:
St. Joseph, Minnesota
Field Street Corridor Alignment

Existing NRHP Historic District

Convent and College Property
Evaluation of Potential TCP

- NRHP Bulletin #38
- Conduct literature search
- Collect oral history: significance as explained by community
- Develop historic contexts
- Examine relationship to broader Catholic cultural area; refer to criteria considerations for religious properties
- Inventory and assess integrity of features; determine boundaries
Landscape Chronology

- Rule of St. Benedict: stability, self-sufficiency
- **1863-1880**
  - Early subsistence garden/farm; 80+ acres
  - Founding of St. Benedict Academy and Indian School
  - Community of 300 sisters and students
- **1880-1900:**
  - Expansion of acreage and dairy development
- **1900-1930:**
  - Maximum farm output; addition of barns and outbuilding
    - First mention of woods in Bulletin (1907)
    - Planting of Grotto Walk (by 1908)
    - Planting of Woods Walk (1925)
    - Description of woods and walk and farm in Bulletin
    - Construction of Lodge (1925)
    - Dedication of Shrine (1933)
    - Community 400+
• **1900-1930**
  Maximum farm output; addition of barns and outbuildings; extensive orchards
  - College expansion; first women’s lay retreat (1920); beginning of retreat movement in Minnesota

• **1930**
  Development of Woodland Turkey Farm

• **1948**
  Establishment of St. Isidore Hog Farm

• **1950-1960**
  • Expansion of cattle and hog business; new butcher shop (1954)
  • Development of aviary and bulb business
  • Dairy barn moved (1957)

• **1960s-1990s**
  - Sale of dairy herd (1961)
  - Revitalization of lay retreats and Spirituality Center
  - Masterplan; new campus buildings
  - Benedicta Performing Arts Ctr. (1964)
  - Prairie restoration (1992)
Stearns County Catholic Hamlet, 1854-
Parish Founding, 1856, and Church Construction
Convent Founding and Development, 1860s-; Rule of Saint Benedict
Early Parish and Community
Parish and Community Continuity
Sacred Woods?
Existing NRHP Properties

- Church of St. Joseph and Rectory NRHP
  (Ethnic Hamlet Churches: Stearns Co. Catholic Settlement)

- St. Benedict’s Convent and College
  National Register Historic District
Landscape Evaluation

St. Benedict’s Convent and College NRHP District

“Sacred Woods”

Convent Fields

Historic Main Street

Church and Rectory NRHP
Our Lady of Grace Shrine (1933)
Lodge and Shrine (1925)
Analysis: Convent Woods and Agricultural Landscape

ca. 1950

ca. 1857
Research Institutional History
Collect oral histories and stories of community traditions
Prepare for Surprises
Assess Landscape Change and TCP Historic Integrity
Rural Historic Landscape Features

• Rural may be a misnomer following suburban and urban development
• Identify surviving field patterns, roads and paths, and fence lines as well as buildings and structures
St. Benedict Campus and Farm Development
Evaluation of Potential Rural Historic Landscape

- NRHP Bulletin #30
- Conduct literature search
- Develop historic contexts
- Examine relationship to statewide agricultural contexts
- Inventory and assess integrity of features; determine boundaries
Campus and Farm Development

c. 1950
St. Isidore Hog Farm
1948-1978
Results
Sisters of the Order of St. Benedict and St. Joseph Parish Community Historic District

- Incorporates an existing convent and college historic district
- Includes a rural historic landscape related to farm operations
- Includes the TCP of the Monastery Woods and Shrine
- Reflects the development of the surrounding Catholic parish and community