

## **Chapter A: Historical & Archaeological Resources**

### **1. Purpose**

Historical and archaeological resources are vital elements of a community's identity. A comprehensive plan must identify important historical and archaeological resources not only for the sake of the historical record, but also to preserve the present-day value of the town's identity and character while encouraging tourism. Specifically, this chapter:

- a) presents a brief history of Gouldsboro;
- b) describes its historical and archaeological resources;
- c) assesses threats to these resources, and
- d) assesses the effectiveness of existing measures to protect and preserve these resources.

### **2. Key Findings & Issues**

The growth and resilience of the Gouldsboro Historical Society in the 18 years since the last comprehensive plan was updated highlights the community's support and concern for history and legacy of the town. Gouldsboro has a large diversity of historic and prehistoric sites (i.e., those predating European settlement) along its salt and freshwater shores. While the Town has many buildings of historic interest, only four are on the National Register of Historic Places. There are many other places that may be eligible for listing. Gouldsboro has generated many published histories, but to date there is no systematic and comprehensive inventory and evaluation of all its historic structures and sites. There is no specific program for widespread public recognition and preservation of these resources.

### **3. Key Findings & Issues from the 2005 Plan**

While more information has been gathered on historic and archaeological resources since the last plan was prepared, further research on sites is needed. Otherwise, there is the risk of sites being unknowingly altered or damaged due to the lack of adequate information. Given the many older homes in town, there is the potential of more buildings being placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **4. 2022 Public Opinion Survey Results**

83% of respondents felt that Historic Buildings and Museums were Important or Very Important. 88.61% responded that the Town should support research, documentation and preservation of historical and archeological sites and artifacts.

### **5. History of Gouldsboro**

Plato described in "The Republic", the ideal city, or polis, was one based on justice and human virtue. It was a form of social and political organization that allowed individuals to maximize their potential, serve their fellow citizens, and live in accordance with universal laws and truths. To this end it is the people, both those in the past and those in the future that make a town a town. Gouldsboro, like all other towns, has played a role in history since the dawn of time. In this section we briefly explore the history of Gouldsboro, starting with the earliest human inhabitants and dwelling on the development of what has evolved into the present Town of Gouldsboro.

## **Pre-Colonial History:**

Indigenous people known as Paleoindians, began living on the Gouldsboro peninsula after the ice age (10-11,000 years ago). They were initially from west of the Hudson River. At that time and forward the climate was warming rapidly; as hunters, gatherers, and fishers they enjoyed herds of caribou, deer, moose, mastodon and even swordfish from the Gulf of Maine. The land was similar to that of today's Labrador. Approximately 3,500-4,000 years ago the climate began cooling, the amplitude of the tides began to increase. Over time the sea level was rising rapidly, and the Maine coastline moved farther inland. About 3,000 years ago the Susquehanna migration started bringing people into the area from the Susquehanna River Valley and as far south as the Savanna River; they brought with them new cultures and new tool-making skills. They established camps, or small villages on the coast. Along the coast today, the evidence of many small settlements has been documented by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC). A second influx of peoples from southern New England occurred around 1,700 BCE. These Algonquin speakers used different tools, natural resources and land use patterns, which distinguish them from earlier inhabitants. From this second migration arose numerous tribes known collectively as the *Wabanaki*, or "people of the dawn land". There are 28 such camps, or small villages and historical sites within the confines of Gouldsboro.

## **European exploration and early settlement:**

The history of European settlers in Maine and New England is a complex subject and better pursued in detail in other sources. As a summary, European seafarers probably visited the Maine coast earlier than the first written records of the 16th and 17th centuries but by the end of the 16th century, France and England started documented in-depth exploration and initiated settlements along the coast of New England. Throughout the end of the 16th century and to the mid-17th century France, England and their various Native American allies faced off militarily. Early French settlement in Maine and Maritime Canada focused on trapping and trading efforts, while early English settlers were primarily involved in fishing on the Grand Banks. England won out after the Seven Year War ended in 1763, giving England France's New England and Canadian territories. Massachusetts acted quickly and assumed control of the former French land from the Penobscot River to Nova Scotia.

English settlements began springing up after the French & Indian wars in 1763 and England took possession of France's former North American territories. A few people of European descent were probably living in what was then called Township 3, Plantation of Gouldsborough prior to 1763. At the time, Township 3 was part of Lincoln County, one of just three established counties in Maine. The boundaries of Gouldsborough were surveyed in 1763; today they are much the same (minus Winter Harbor which seceded in 1895 plus portions of Steuben which were annexed in 1845 & 1870).

Early white settlers saw the potential to create a thriving town with development opportunities. The forests would provide lumber and hunting, the streams would provide transport for logs and power to run sawmill, plus opportunities for fishing. Harvesting trees for the mills would leave open spaces for agriculture and housing construction. Furthermore, the new town was already on the established shipping route between Boston and Halifax.

Three of those white settlers applied for, and received, land grants in 1764 to develop these opportunities. Francis Shaw, Robert Gould and Nathan Jones, all of Boston became the new proprietors. However, only Jones, along with his family actually moved to the area where he stayed until his death. Several of Shaw's children took up residence and raised their own families.

The forecasted opportunities didn't work out well for the proprietors. As much as two-thirds of the land in the Gouldsborough Plantation proved to be unsuitable for farming. The Revolutionary War with coastal blockades curtailed shipping. Of significant impact was the four-year depression that followed the

Revolutionary War. Both Gould and Shaw died. The settlement languished. Much of the land was eventually conveyed to William Bingham, a Philadelphian who already owned two million acres of land in Maine.

In February 1789, Township 3 became the incorporated Town of Gouldsboro recognized by the General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, of which Maine was a part. Later that same year, the new County of Hancock was incorporated and included part of Lincoln County. Gouldsborough then became part of the new county. In 1790, the first U.S. Census was taken and showed Gouldsborough to have a population of 267.

In 1794, William Bingham hired General David Cobb, who had fought under George Washington in the Revolutionary War, as his agent. Cobb was charged with laying out roads, guarding against timber trespass, building mills, bringing in settlers and eventually developing the town into a city. The first road into the town was designed and constructed by Cobb; today portions of that road bearing his name are still usable.

Maine achieved statehood in 1820 and General Cobb left Gouldsborough. Cobb's envisioned city had not materialized. Instead, the population was just 559 persons, and they were living in several villages within the town. Each of the villages were self-contained and connected by a network of Cobb-designed roads.

Between 1800 and 1900, shipping and shipbuilding became major industries. In 1893 telephone service was installed by New England Telephone & Telegraph Co. At the time, Gouldsborough was a stop on the Shore Stage Line but by 1900 steamboat and railway service became available seven miles away at Hancock. The "Bar Harbor Express" rail line ended its run at the Waukeag Ferry dock. The ferry serviced the Frenchman Bay area.

As a result of an uneven coastline, Gouldsborough developed into many historically separate fishing villages, summer colonies and communities, including Birch Harbor, Prospect Harbor, South Gouldsborough, West Gouldsborough, Summer Harbor, Wonsqueak Harbor, Bunker's Harbor, Chicken Mill, Jones' Pond, Westbay, and Corea. Each of the villages generally had its own grammar school, church, general store, a mill and a post office. Some villages had inns and livery stables for travelers. Traveling salesmen included itinerant dentists, photographers, peddlers, artists, and theatrical troupes. The occupations of the village inhabitants included farmers, fishermen, lumbermen, carpenters, shipbuilders, seafarers, and tradesmen. Coastal freighters supplied stores with year-around goods. Sawmills provided barrel staves and long lumber; gristmills produced flour. The mills were variously powered by water, steam, or tides.

Silver was discovered in 1879 in the West Bay area of Gouldsborough and four mines were soon opened along the vein. One of the mines was operated as a driven shaft at the end of an open cut. Today the shaft of this mine has been filled in but the cut can still be seen from Guzzle Road. The prosperity from the mining operations was short-lived: By 1881 the population increase of 116 that occurred during the silver boom reversed itself.

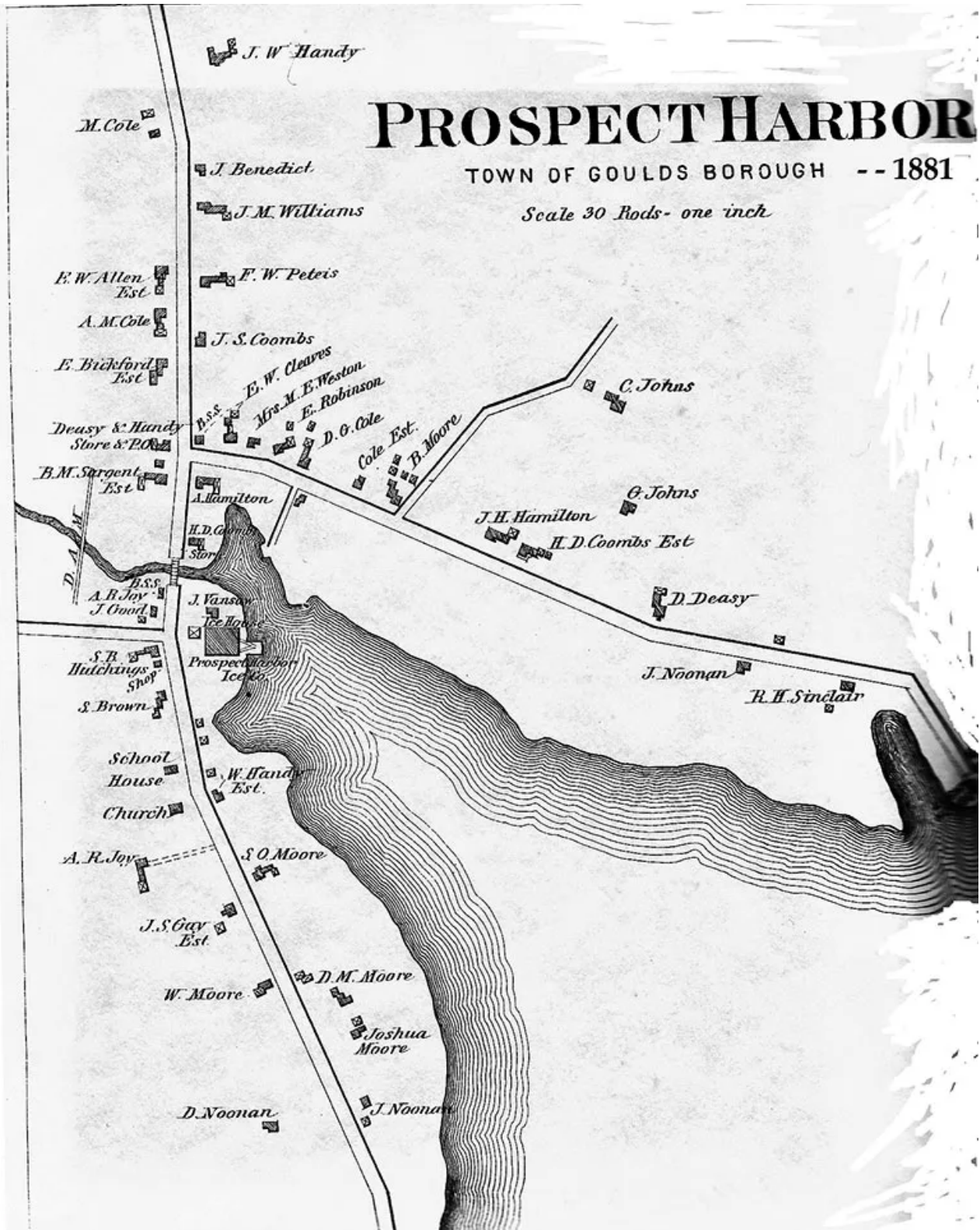
In 1887 the Legislature changed the spelling of the town name to Gouldsboro.

Gouldsboro never had its own high school, instead it paid tuition to other schools for its students. In 1952 Gouldsboro, along with several other towns, built a consolidated high school in East Sullivan. In 1956 a consolidated grammar school was opened on Pond Road. The new grammar school combined the separate village schools and made busing necessary for the first time. In 2009 a new grammar school was opened in Prospect Harbor and the earlier schools closed. In 2022 the original consolidated high school was replaced by a newly constructed school on the same property.

In 1983 the Town built a new Community Center adjacent to the grammar school. The Center replaced the old Town House, which had served for more than a century as a place to conduct Town business and hold Town meetings. The old Town House was subsequently deeded to the Gouldsboro Historical Society (GHS)

to serve as a museum devoted to the history of the Town. The GHS has since acquired an additional building in town which was then modified to store digitized Town records dating back to its founding in 1789; all the old handwritten records have now been digitized and cataloged by a team of dedicated volunteers.

Map A-1: Prospect Harbor, 1981



source: Schoodic National Scenic Byway

### 6. Archaeological and Historic Sites

## Pre- Colonial Archaeological Sites:

A common definition of an archaeological site or "site" means a location where there exists material evidence of the past life and culture of human beings. Gouldsboro is fortunate to have two well defined pre-European historic sites. One type of common archaeological sites are shell heaps, or middens. These human generated shell piles offer valuable insight into the lives of New England's early people.

Gouldsboro is home to the Taft Point midden. (Figure A-1). Taft Point is one of a few sites in Maine with archaeological evidence of Wabanaki habitation, as well as predecessor peoples dating back to the Archaic period. Archaic Period sites date to 3,000 years ago or older. The hunter gathers of these periods tend to winter along the coast eating shellfish and other marine foods where they went inland during warmer periods following game and fishing opportunities along the numerous rivers and streams. Eventually exposure to the Iroquois peoples from the West spurred the adoption of agriculture, which cushioned seasonal food and resource supplies.

Relative distribution of artifacts at Taft Point	Lowest Horizon of black humus	Lowest Horizon of shells & fire dirt	Upper Horizon of shells & fire dirt
Plummets	59	1	0
Hammerstones	36	5	15
Slate points	12	3	0
Adzes	8	22	7
Grooveless axes	2	8	7
Knives			
large	11	5	1
small	13	18	12
Arrowheads			
straight stemmed	23	1	0
notched	21	52	43
Scrapers			
large	19	7	0
small	13	63	44
Projectile points (stone)	8	10	0
Drills	3	9	6
Bodkins	0	21	6
Needles	0	3	6
Awls	3	10	20
Projectile points (bone)	2	0	0
Harpoons			
large	11	2	2
small	0	16	7
(moose and deer bone)	0	4	0
Flakers (antler)	6	9	3
Beaver teeth (artificially sharpened)	27	53	38
Bone beads	7	0	0
Stone ornaments	8	1	0
Pottery	0	35%	65%

**Figure A-1:** Tally of Taft Point artifacts (Abbe Museum)

Gouldsboro is also home to the Jones Cove Shell-Heap located in West Gouldsboro. The Jones cove midden provides an excellent example of a Wabanaki related midden. An archaeological dig at Jones Cove midden was undertaken in 1928.

*Several interesting features were exhibited. It was plain to be seen that the surface of the ground upon which the shells were piled was uneven and that the hollows, particularly, were pretty well filled with very dark dirt in which could be detected ashes, charcoal, crumbling shells, disintegrating bone fragments, and occasional stone arrow points scrapers, and "flint" chips. No bone tools were found in this bottom stratum. Fire-blackened stones, arranged in a crescent or maybe a circle, told of an old time fireplace as old at least as the beginning of the shell-heap which covered it. Several other fireplaces were unearthed during the digging, and evidence of fires—charcoal and calcined bones and shells—were not uncommon in various parts of the heap.*

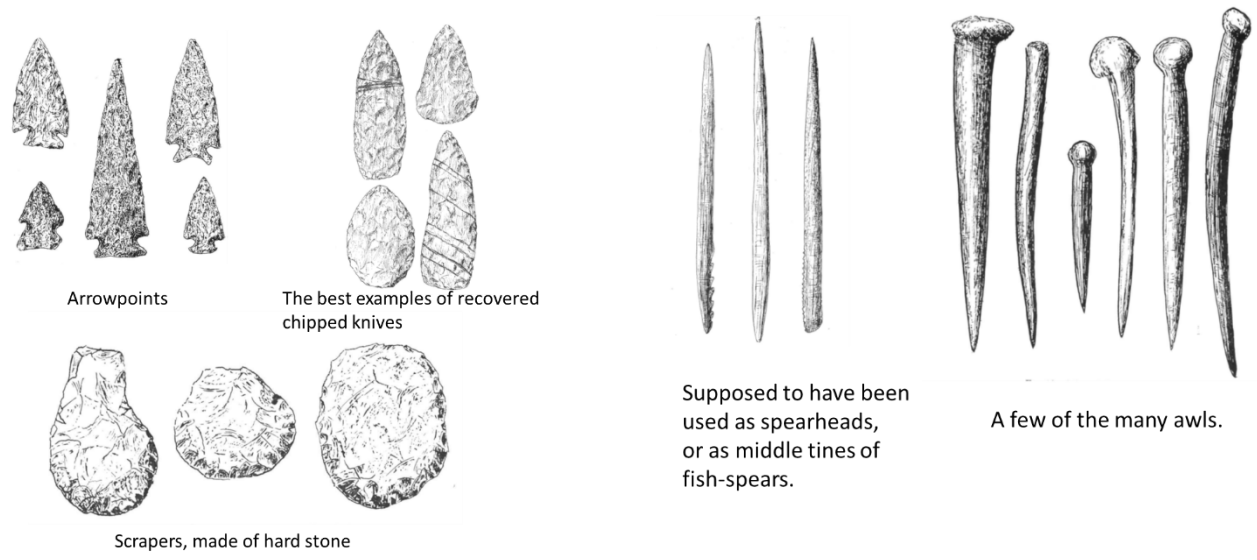


Figure A-2: Tools found at the Jones Cove Site (*The Jones Cove Shell-Heap At West, Gouldsboro, Maine, Walter B. Smith, Sherman Publishing Co., Bar Harbor, Maine (1929)*)

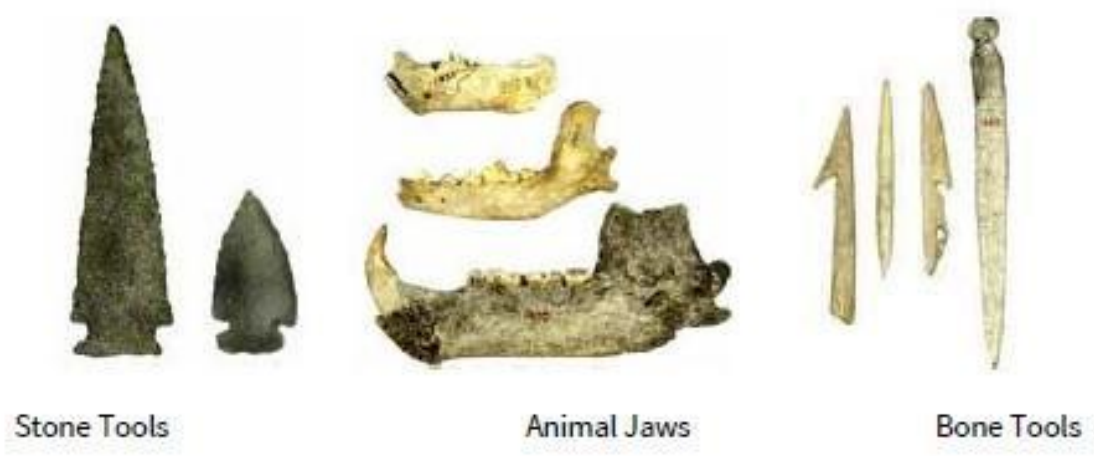


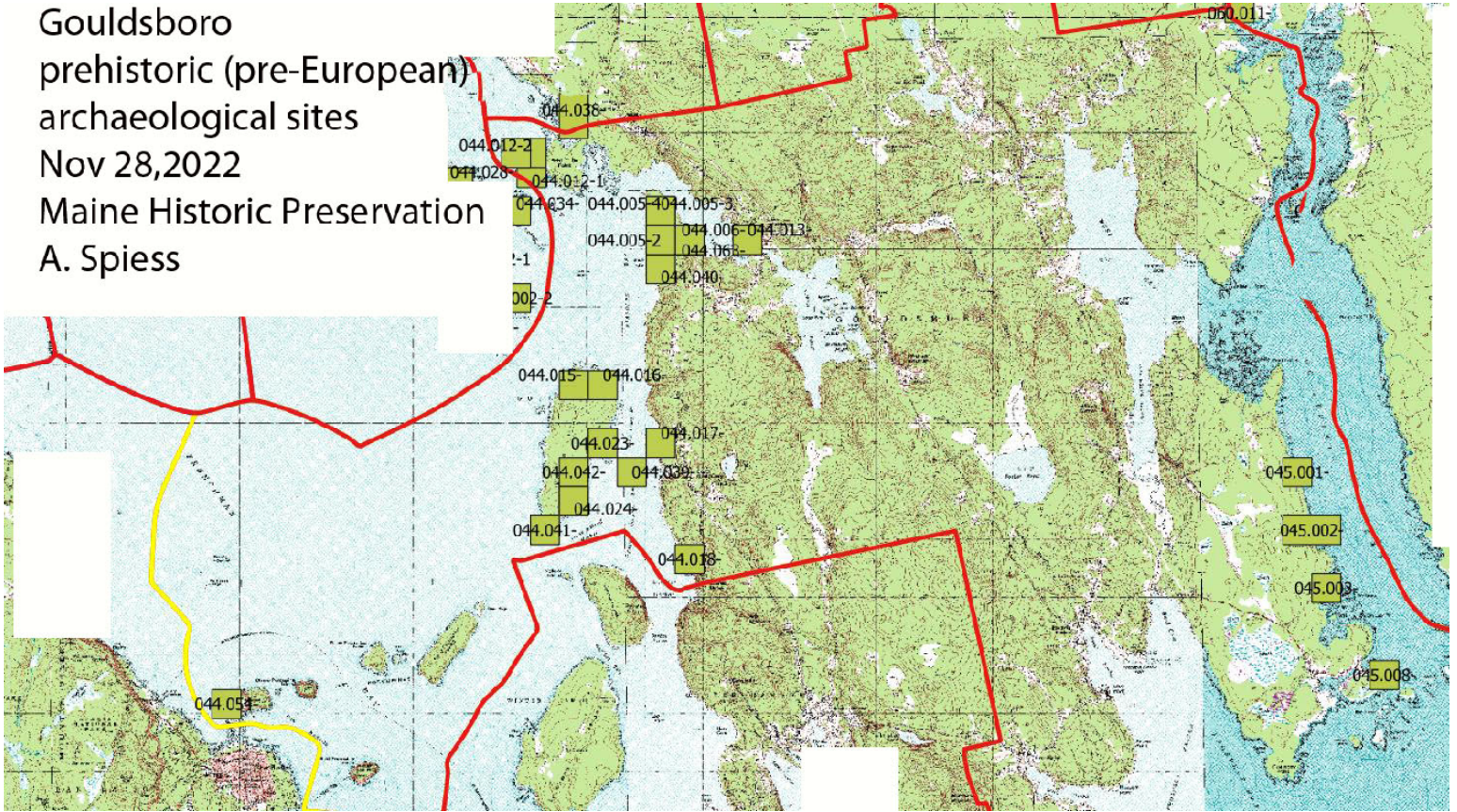
Figure A-3: Items found at the Jones Cove Midden (Abbe Museum)

**Official Historic Sites:**

The Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) has been very active identifying historic and prehistoric sites. The term 'prehistoric', refers to sites which pre-date written history. MHPC has researched many sites including early Native-American sites. All of these sites are along the Gouldsboro shoreline. The artifacts recovered during the digs have been removed to the Abbe Museum for display and safe storage.

Map A-2: MHPC Known Native American Sites Gouldsboro

Gouldsboro  
prehistoric (pre-European)  
archaeological sites  
Nov 28, 2022  
Maine Historic Preservation  
A. Spiess



MHPC recommends that additional surveys for significant pre-historic sites continue, especially in the Prospect Harbor and Birch Harbor areas.

Table A-1: Listing of MHPC Known Native American Sites Gouldsboro

Table A-1	
Summary of Historic Archaeological Sites, Gouldsboro	
Site Number	Type
044.005-1	Retouched flake & flakes from test pit. Core on beach
044.005-2	Flakes & bone from test pits
044.005-3	Flakes, fishbone, mammal bone, charcoal.
044.005-4	Numerous flakes and bone, especially fishbone
044.006-	Stone tools, bone tools, grindstone, fauna, ceramic

044.012-1	Stone & bone tools, grindstone, fauna, ceramic
044.012-2	
044.012-3	
044.013-	Stone & bone tools, grindstone, fauna, ceramic, scrapper
044.015-	No cultural remains. Rich in shell incl. mussel.
044.016-	2 proj pt frags, potsherds, bone & variety of shell

044.017 -	Proj. point, stemless w/basal thinning, fishbone, flakes
044.018 -	One flake.
044.023 -	Site could not be located
044.024 -	Midden on small island, one of pair
044.039 -	None
044.040 -	Ceramic period stemmed biface(Smith PC).Many flakes
044.041 -	None
044.042 -	None
044.043 -	1 pp frag(tri w basal thinning),1HS, flakes in bank

044.044 -	
044.054 -	
044.055 -	
044.063 -	quarry reduction debitage
045.001 -	
045.002 -	
045.003 -	Thin deposit of shell
045.008 -	midden almost destroyed by house construction

Gouldsboro also has many post European settlement archeological sites. Table A-2: list those sites MHPC deem important.

Table A-2		
Summary of Historic Archaeological Sites, Gouldsboro		
Site Number	Name	Type
ME173-001	Ash's Point Fort	Not Historic Site
ME173-002	"Wreath"	Wreck, bark
ME173-003	"Waldron Holmes"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-004	"Jane Ingram"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-005	"Castilian"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-006	"Helena"	Wreck, vessel
ME173-007	"Hamilton"	unidentified wreck, schooner
ME173-008	"E.T. Russell"	Wreck, gas screw
ME173-009	"Thetis"	Wreck, oil screw
ME173-010	"William G. Edie"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-011	"Wawenock"	Wreck, gas screw
ME173-012	"Louis A. Surette"	Wreck, schooner
ME173-013	Ash's Point Quarry	Quarry, granite
ME173-014	Schieffelin Point boat	Unidentified wreck, boat
ME173-015	Schieffelin Point barn	Outbuilding, barn
ME-173-016	Schieffelin Point water tower	Water tower
ME173-017	Schieffelin Point camp?	Domestic, camp



ME173-018	I. Tracy/General David Cobb (?) house and farmstead	Domestic
ME173-019	Dike/Marsh road	Dike
ME173-020	C. C. Perry (?) Dam	Dam
ME173-021	cellar	Domestic
ME173-022	George Foss	Domestic
ME173-023	Samuel Wood	Domestic
ME173-024	Smith	Domestic
ME173-025	Samuel Wood	Outbuilding
ME173-026	D. Bunker House	Domestic
ME173-027	Stave Island #6 & #7	Domestic
ME173-028	W. Woods Summer Residence and Fish House	Anglo-American Domestic
ME173-029	Rodick Homestead	Farmstead
ME173-030	Roddick Fish Processing Center	Fish House
ME173-031	Mount Desert Canoe Club	Resort
ME173-032	The Bungalow estate	Domestic, Summer House
ME173-033	Stave Island steam sawmill	Mill, Sawmill
ME173-034	Stave Island tidal sawmill	Mill, Tidal mill
ME173-035	Stave Island shipyard	Shipyard
ME173-036	J. A. Webster	Wreck, Schooner
ME173-037	Providence	Wreck, Schooner
ME173-038	Jones Pond Mills	Mill, Sawmill and Gristmill
ME173-039	Grand Marsh Dike/Road	Dike/road
SOURCE: Maine Historic Preservation Commission recorded inventory, as of March, 2021		

## 7. Historic Buildings

The following properties are listed in the National Register of Historic Places:



### Prospect Harbor Light Station

Prospect Harbor Light Station consists of a conical tower, a detached one-and-a-half-story frame keeper's house built in 1891. In 1905 an oil house was added. The building replaced a lighthouse that was erected in 1850.



West Gouldsboro Union Church, Route 186

West Gouldsboro's Union Church, which was erected between 1888-91, is a wooden frame building of unusual architectural character. Its eclectic, highly picturesque composition is particularly noteworthy when studied in the broader context of Maine's church architecture of the 1880s.



West Gouldsboro Village Library, Route 186

The West Gouldsboro Village Library was completed in 1907 and is a one-story, three-bay Tudor Revival style building of handsome design. It features a tall rubble stone foundation that rises to the windowsills, stucco exterior walls and chimney surfaces, and a steeply pitched gable roof framing half-timbered peak. The library stands in a rural location adjacent to the West Gouldsboro Union Church. Ellis Soderholtz contributed to its design and construction.

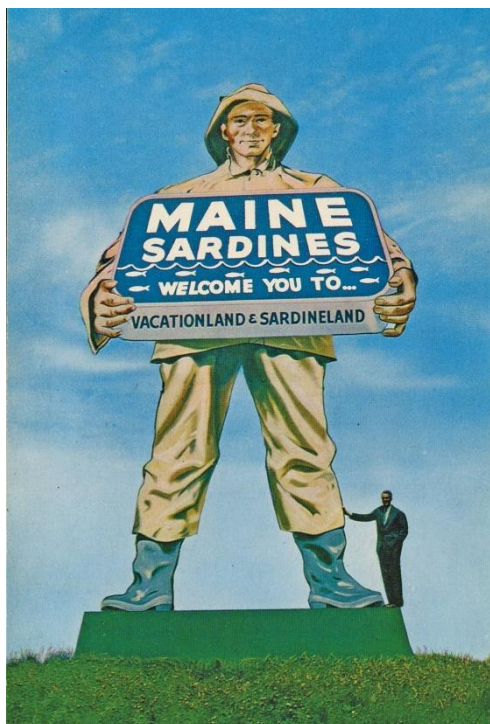


Eric E. Soderholtz Cottage, Route 186

Initially constructed about 1902 and enlarged at an indefinite time thereafter, the Soderholtz cottage is a rambling one-story masonry and frame building that overlooks Frenchman Bay. It was designed and occupied as a summer residence by Eric Ellis Soderholtz, a noted nineteenth century architectural photographer and twentieth century potter.

### **Other Historical Sites:**

The village of Prospect Harbor is home to what was the last operational sardine cannery in Maine. It is also home to “Big Jim”. Big Jim is the 40 foot tall sign depicting a Maine fisherman. It was originally erected by the Maine Sardine Council in the late 1950s just north of the Portsmouth Kittery bridge over the Piscataqua River. It was relocated in the 1980s to the Stinson Sardine Factory. Stinson’s added a can of Beach Cliff sardines to the sign. After Stinson’s closure, a follow-on owner changed the sardines to a lobster trap.



(Down East Magazine)



(Ellsworth American)

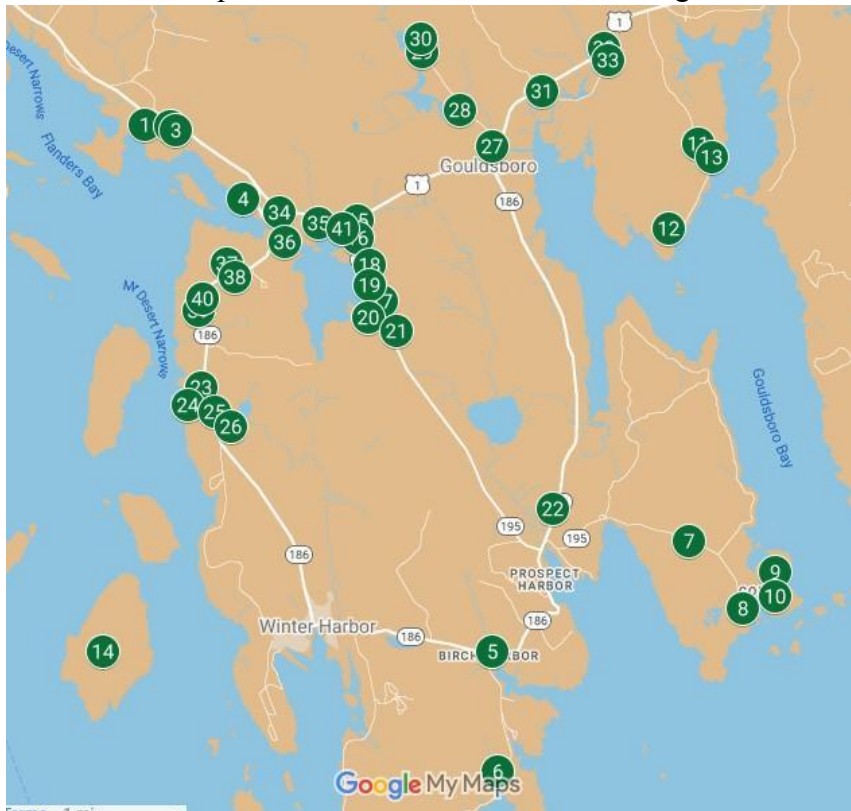


(Roadside America)

**Cemeteries:**

Nothing provides a better glimpse into a town's history than its cemeteries. Gouldsboro has 41 cemeteries providing a stratified view into the former residents of the town.

Map x.x Gouldsboro Cemeteries Listing



- A.B. Bunker Cemetery (23)
- Alexander Nutter Cemetery (13)
- Alfred Young Cemetery (17)
- Ashe Point Cemetery (35)
- Beech Hill Cemetery (38)
- Bunker Family Monument (1)
- Bunker Memorial Cemetery (26)
- Bunker-Robbins Cemetery (40)
- C. Bunker Cemetery (24)
- Capt. Higgins Monument (6)
- Capt. Joseph & Abigail Stevens (33)
- Corea Cemetery (7)
- Crowley Island Cemetery (10)
- David Sargent Cemetery (25)
- David Young Monument (8)
- Goodwin Cemetery (2)
- Gouldsboro Point Cemetery (11)
- Hill Cemetery (4)
- Hillcrest Cemetery (18)
- Hillside Cemetery (5)
- Hodgkins-Wallace Cemetery (3)
- Ironbound Island Cemetery (14)
- John Pherson Cemetery (41)
- Joy Cemetery (21)
- Lakeview Cemetery (36)
- Mill Pond Cemetery (9)
- Nathan Jones Monuments (15)
- Nathan Martin Cemetery (16)
- Nathaniel Shaw Cemetery (12)
- Orcutt Cemetery (19)
- Prospect Harbor Cemetery (22)
- Robert Ash Cemetery (28)
- Rolfe- Woodworth Cemetery (20)
- Samuel Libby Cemetery (31)
- Sargent Cemetery (39)
- Taft Cemetery (37)
- Thomas Workman Cemetery (32)
- Tracy-Rolfe Cemetery (30)
- West Bay Cemetery (27)
- Whitaker Cemetery (29)
- William Wood Cemetery (34)

### **(Gouldsboro Historical Society)**

The Gouldsboro Historical Society has organized an effort to help stabilize the Town’s various cemeteries. Additional efforts would be greatly assisted by organized funding.

### **Threats to Historic and Archaeological Resources**

#### **Threats:**

Gouldsboro faces the same threat to its historical architecture and archaeological sites as every seaside town in Maine. Moisture, weather, and decay are always constant threats. Further inappropriate repairs, reuse, demolition for other uses, and fire provide a wide spectrum of threats. Restoring or rehabilitating historic buildings to maintain an acceptable historic presentation is expensive and usually out of the reach of most homeowners. It is also possible that owners of parcels or buildings may not know or fully appreciate the historical significance of their holdings.

Historic archaeological sites are also under the constant threat of being plundered or attacked by souvenir hunters.

Potential sea level rise could be a threat to the continuity of existing sites as well as hinder the identification of undiscovered sites.

#### **Assessment of adequacy of protection:**

Gouldsboro has few protections to mitigate threats to historic or archaeological sites. The Planning Board could unknowingly approve a development application. This threat could potentially be minimized if a professional historical survey of the Town could be completed. The language of the town ordinances has been updated but further clarification would probably be prudent. According to MHPC no professional surveys have been conducted that could further identify potentially significant resources. A future survey should focus on resources associated with the Town’s maritime, agriculture, residential and industrial heritage, particularly those connected with the earliest Euro-American settlements of the 17th and 18th centuries.

MHPC also recommends a comprehensive survey be conducted to further identify historic homes or buildings that could qualify for National Register listing. At the present time just four are marked: Prospect Harbor Light Station, West Gouldsboro Union Church, West Gouldsboro Village Library, and the Eric Soderholtz Cottage. It is believed there are many more qualified and they should be identified as

a part of the on-going plan to enhance Gouldsboro's historical image. A building's listing on the National Register generally will increase its value.

The Town's Shoreland and Subdivision Ordinances need to be reviewed and updated to reflect better protective measures against disturbing potential archeological sites. The Subdivision Ordinance currently requires protective measures for only the sites that are already listed by MHPC: A professional survey would probably find additional sites, and these could then be listed.

The best practice, by MHPC for protecting the ancient middens sites, is by not broadcasting the exact locations to persons who would not have a scientific interest in visiting a site. Most sites are on private property.

## 8. Goals & Objectives

**GOAL: Gouldsboro desires to protect its key historical and archaeological resources from incompatible development and undertake measures to assure the long-term enhancement of its historical sites and structures.**

Objective	Strategy	Responsible Party(ies)	Timeframe
Town ordinances should encourage preservation of key historical, scenic, and archaeological resources.	Select Board will appoint a committee to review ordinance models that could be applicable in furthering this objective.	Select Board or their Designee(s)	Continual assessment with biannual reporting to the selectboard to be included in the Town Report.
Create a consistent and documented inventory of historic and archaeological sites and structures.	Increase funding of the Historical Society to enable it to hire a consulting intern to undertake this specific task.	Budget committee, Historical Society, consultation Request help from the HCPC	2 years
Identify if there are any additional significant archaeological sites and historic properties for inclusion in National Register of Historic Places.	Working from the inventory and in consultation with owners and the State, develop applications for inclusion.	Historical Society, consultant	5-8 years
Create a program for labeling historic structures with honorary plaques.	Working from existing inventories and in consultation with owners, design and implement the program.	Historical Society	Immediate, ongoing
Protect historic and archaeological sites from climate change, including sea level rise, extreme heat, wind and rain.	Conduct a survey using MHPC template or similar.	Sea Level Rise and Climate Change committee: Historical Society	Ongoing with an action plan identified by 2025.