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November 2021

## Gray's Mill: Proposed for Inclusion in Preservation Restriction

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### Recommended Citation

"Gray's Mill: Proposed for Inclusion in Preservation Restriction" (2021). *Documentation*. 85.  
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## **Gray's Mill – Proposed for Inclusion in Preservation Restriction**

### **Description of historically significant features:**

This restriction includes the entire Gray's Mill complex located on 1.5 acres in Westport, Massachusetts including the mill building, water power features, machinery, attached carriage makers shop, bakery and remaining granite foundations. The mill complex is historically significant for its associations with the early settlement of Westport, then part of Dartmouth, Massachusetts until 1787, and the social and economic history of the town. An 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century mill village grew at the head of the west Branch of the Westport River in the vicinity of the mill. Gray's Mill possesses integrity of location, setting, workmanship and association. In addition the mill represents the influence of the industrial revolutions and development of water turbines in New England (1820) on villages in outlying communities. The mill complex is also significant for its surviving architectural and design characteristics associated with a continuously operated mid 19<sup>th</sup> century water-powered gristmill. The mill is the oldest continuously operated gristmill in Bristol County.

Gray's Grist Mill is a one story shed type building with a gable roof. The foundation is dressed granite. The walls and roof are finished with cedar wood shingles. The west side or front of the mill building sits at ground level with Adamsville Road and is set back thirty feet from the east edge of the road and sixty feet from the east edge of the millpond. The main entrance door, a sliding board and batten door, is on the west side and is located directly behind the cut granite stone-lined penstock (or water storage tank) that stores the water to run the mill. The front of the mill's granite foundation is flush with the top of the ground then the terrine slopes five feet eastward to the back of the mill.

Attached to the north gable end of the mill complex are the remains of the granite foundation for a 19<sup>th</sup> century sawmill that shared the turbine used for milling. Because the terrain drops five feet from the west front of the mill to the east back the exposed area of the east granite foundation is five feet high with a small opening for attaching a belt from the interior machinery's belt pulley for powering the mill through the foundation opening to a belt pulley on an exterior auxiliary engine. This five-foot high east foundation wall stops 10 feet 5 inches from the buildings north foundation to create a nine-foot high and a nine-foot deep opening over the wheel pit. The north end of this opening is supported by the north foundation wall. The first floor at the back of the opening is supported by the east wall of the granite penstock.

A single six light casement window is located in the center of the mill's east wall with a six over six double hung window on either side.

### **Gray's Grist Mill interior.**

The interior space is open from floor to ceiling. In general the mill is constructed of what appears to be odd bits and pieces of reused lumber. The roof ties are hewn with no saw marks. The remaining timbers have cut vertical or circular saw marks. The walls are studded with board wainscoting on the east and south wall with plaster above. The entire wall at the north end of the room is covered with random spaced horizontal boards. The original door that led from the gristmill into the sawmill is located at the northwest corner of the gable end.

The miller's platform, the area over the gear's husk frame and turbine, includes three quarters of the first floor area. Located on the miller's platform are two millstones, a granite stone for grinding johnnycake meal and a French burrstone for grinding other meals. The fifteen-inch thick stones weigh 1 and 1/2 tons. Directly behind the millstones is the wooden crane used for lifting the upper millstones for sharpening. In the north west corner of the millers platform is a large wooden wheel or sluice gate wheel used to open the iron gate in the penstock for providing water to the turbine In the north east corner is a trap door for access to the turbine's shaft. On the west side of the platform is a pit—seven foot six inch by fifteen foot six inches. The floor of the pit is three feet five inches below the miller's platform. This area is used to funnel the ground meal into a sifter. In the same area are the clutches and levers used to raise, lower or disengage the millstones. Next to the clutches is a small door for access to the gears below the miller's platform. A south doorway leads from this area to a room where the meal is hand bagged and readied for sale.

The east back of the mill meets a flat field bounded on two sides by stonewalls. Intersecting the field is a stream for draining water that seeps underground from the millpond. On the north side of the field is the stone lined tailrace boarded on its north side by a steep bank. The tailrace begins at the northeast end of the mill building and flows east ward about 300 feet to meet the headwaters of the West Branch of the Westport River.

By 1854 a carriage makers shop or wheelwrights shop (here on referred to as a carriage makers shop) had been attached at right angles to the south gable end of the mill. The walls and roof are finished with cedar shingles. The carriage makers shop is a one and one half story shed type structure. The foundation is dressed granite with two feet six inches (2'-6") exposed on the west gable end. The south granite foundation sits on the same sloping plain as the mill.

An access driveway, approximately thirty-five feet wide, separates the south side of the carriage makers shop from a circa 1890 building, know as the bakery. The bakery sits on the same five-foot slop as the mill and carriage shed. Bounded on its west front by a stonewall, the gable end of this one story bakery sits seven feet six inches from the east edge of Adamsville Road. The foundation is dressed granite. The walls and roof are finished with cedar shingles. The remains of the bake ovens are in the northeast corner of the cellar.

### **“Protected architectural features”**

**The intent of this restriction is to protect all historically and architecturally significant features of the Gray's Mill complex including exterior and interior features as listed.**

#### **Exterior Features:**

Grays Mill will protect the dressed granite foundation, gable roof, walls, board and batten entrance door, six over six windows flanking six over six casement window including all sashes and casings where appropriate

Carriage Makers shop will protect the dressed granite foundation, all windows on the north and west facades including all sashes and casings where appropriate

Bakery will protect the dressed granite foundation. Windows including all sashes and casings.

Sawmill Foundations attached to North wall of the mill will project all existing granite foundations, wheel pit and granite penstock.

All stonewalls

All structural stonework

The granite hitching post.

### Interior Features

**Gray's Mill** will protect all interior features as described and photographed in this restriction. This includes roof ties, and remaining timbers

- Board wainscoting on the east and south wall with plaster above.
- Entire wall at the north end of the room covered with random spaced horizontal boards.
- Original door that led from the gristmill into the sawmill located at the northwest corner of the gable end.
- The miller's platform, the area over the gear's husk frame and turbine, includes three quarters of the first floor area.
- Two millstones, a granite stone for grinding johnnycake meal and a French burrstone for grinding other meals.
- Wooden crane located on the miller's platform used for lifting the upper millstones for sharpening
- Sluice-gate **wheel hoist located at** the north west corner of the millers platform
- Trap door for access to the turbine shaft. **Located at** the north east corner of the millers platform
- **Stone lined granite sluice built under the Adamsville Road. Sluice and its stone lined entrance located on east shore of pond directly opposite penstock.**
- **This is important if town should ever decide to rebuild the road.**

**Carriage Makers Shop** - Original singles on the north wall. **Interior layout.**

**Bakery** - The remains of the bake oven **foundation** in the northeast corner of the cellar