

The Demolition Delay Bylaw

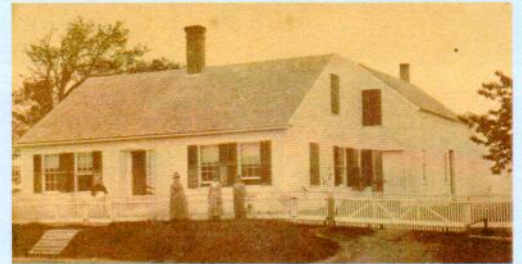
What is it and why is it important?

- ♦ **What is a Demolition Delay Bylaw?** It is a bylaw that allows a period of 12 months to try to figure out a way to save a building from demolition by finding alternatives to demolishing it. The entire bylaw can be viewed on the Town website.
- ♦ **Which houses in town will be affected by this new Bylaw?**
After much research on all the houses in Westminster, the Historical Commission determined that 227 houses are important to our Town's character and should not be demolished.
- ♦ **Why are these buildings important?**
 - * If they are historically significant, they may be associated with historic persons or events, or with the cultural, political, economic or social history of Westminster.
 - * If they are architecturally significant, they may be important in terms of a period, style, or construction or association with a recognized architect or builder.
 - * They may be a historic neighborhood asset, contributing to the overall appearance of a historic neighborhood or street.
- ♦ **Aren't the buildings in our Academy Hill / Westminster Village National Register Historic District protected?** Our National Register has 90 acres of land with 72 buildings which are architecturally or historically significant. BUT, this is only an honorary distinction, and these properties are NOT protected in any way. A Demolition Delay is the first step in trying to protect these buildings.
- ♦ **What happens during the 12 months of the Demolition Delay?**
Members of the Westminster Historical Commission and community members work to help building owners and purchasers seek preservation solutions other than demolition. They encourage owners and townspeople to seek persons who might be willing to purchase, preserve, rehabilitate, restore, or move buildings rather than demolish them.
- ♦ **What happens at the end of the 12 months?**
If a satisfactory solution to avoid demolition has not been found, the homeowner or purchaser will be allowed to demolish the building.
- ♦ **What is the ultimate goal of the Demolition Delay Bylaw?**
The goal is to limit the detrimental effect of demolition on the historical resources and the streetscapes of our Town and to help maintain as much as possible the rural and small town character of Westminster which is exemplified by the historic buildings

Significant homes that were demolished in the last 10 years (and there's more)



- ♦ **19 Academy Hill Road: ON THE COMMON**
Demolished in order to build a new house.



- ♦ **6 Spruce Road:** Demolished to protect Fitchburg's water supply.



- ♦ **1 Minott Road:** Demolished to provide land for a housing development.



- ♦ **5 Leominster Street:** Demolished to make room for Elementary School parking.

HOMES THAT HAVE AVOIDED DEMOLITION

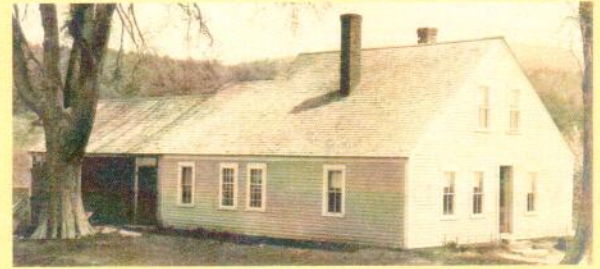


- ◆ **10 Roper Road:** Saved with a complete restoration.



- ◆ **67 Minott Road:** Saved by expanding with an addition.

HOMES THAT ARE THREATENED TO BE DESTROYED



- ◆ **32 Lanes Road:** Possible site for new development.



- ◆ **105 Dean Hill Road:** Neglected, with future uncertain.

HOMES ARE KEY ASSETS IN OUR TOWN AND TO NEIGHBORHOODS

- ◆ Houses are the key elements of our downtown, and even if you don't live there, everyone can be proud of the heritage they represent.
- ◆ Downtown buildings in the **Academy Hill/Westminster Village National Register Historic District** have no protection from demolition. We need to change this.
- ◆ These historic homes make our town unique—different from every other town in New England. To demolish a house in these streetscapes not only changes our history forever but leaves a gaping hole which cannot be appropriately filled by a cookie cutter new house.
- ◆ **Main St. & Leominster St.:** The iconic Westminster Cracker Factory is a famous landmark and anchors the eastern end of Main Street, with the traditional Colonial Wyman-Dawley house next door and the Greek Revival Niemi house across the street.



- ◆ **Bacon St.:** Streets like this—lined with Greek Revival homes are a rarity in New England towns and indicate the height of the chair making industry which brought great wealth to Westminster before the Civil War.



- ◆ **Main St.:** A classic view of our Main Street with the first country store on Main St., the Mayo house, the Miller home (now the Historical Society), the Deacon Hill home, and the Italian Villa style home of Daniel Miles.

