

AREA FORM

AREA NAME: PENACOOK STREET AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

1. Type of Area Form

Town-wide:

Historic District:

Project Area:

9. Inventory numbers in this area:

CON0186

2. Name of area: Penacock Street Agricultural Neighborhood

10. Setting: semi-rural

3. Location: Penacock St., Penacock

4. City or town: Concord

11. Acreage: approx. 200 acres

5. County: Merrimack

6. USGS quadrangle name(s): Penacock

12. Preparer(s): Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, Preservation Consultant

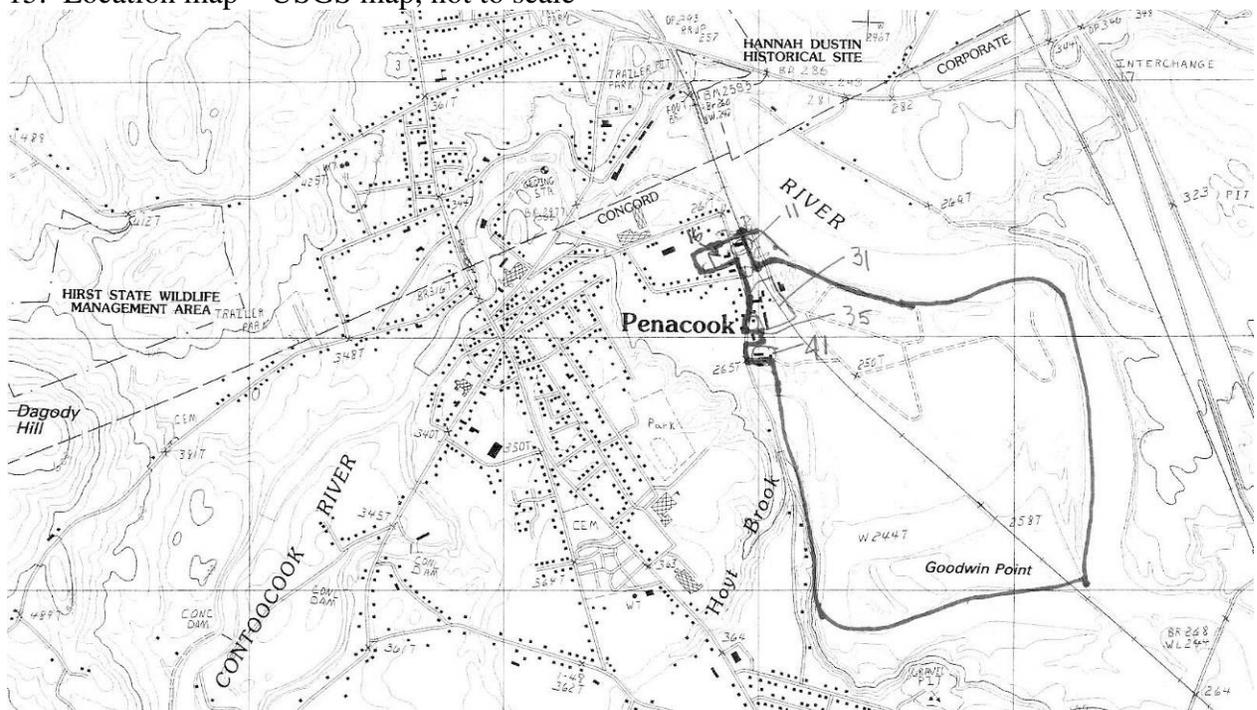
7. USGS scale: 1:24000

13. Organization: for Concord Heritage Commission

8. UTM reference: _____

14. Date(s) of field survey: Fall 2008

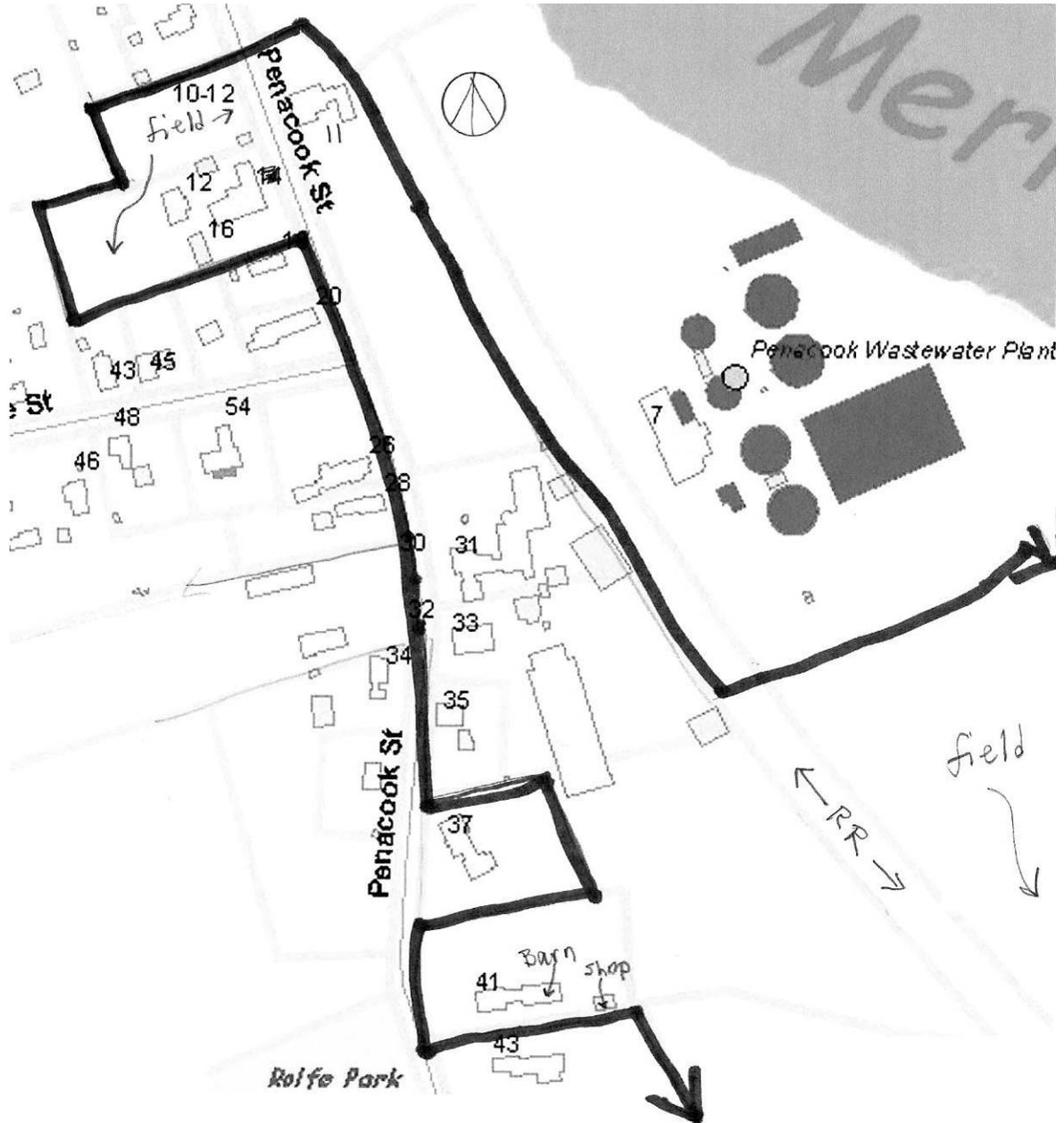
15. Location map – USGS map, not to scale



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16. Sketch map



AREA FORM**AREA NAME:** PENACOOK STREET AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD**Methods and Purpose**

This form was completed as part of a survey of rural agricultural properties within the City of Concord, a project sponsored by the Heritage Commission. The overall purpose of the project was to raise public awareness of the city's rich agricultural legacy through a combination of identification, education, public policy and preservation planning tools.

Due to limited resources, the survey focused on barns and outbuildings that met all of the following criteria: (1) were sited on at least 10 acres of land; (2) they were located in a fairly rural area and not within the city center or an outlying village; (3) the surrounding land retained historic landscape features, such as open fields, pasture, and stone walls; (4) the outbuildings retained a high level of integrity from their agricultural era. None of the barns on the St. Paul's School campus were included. In addition, a few landmark barns, even if on a small lot, were included. Approximately 45 properties were included in the survey. Whenever possible, an interior inspection of the buildings was undertaken.

The survey was conducted at the reconnaissance-level. Historic background information was acquired from questionnaires sent to each property owner, personal interviews, a review of historic maps, and limited research in local histories. Certainly, additional research data on farms is available from population and, in particular, agricultural census records, and owners are encouraged to pursue those to add to this data base.

When properties were part of a larger, agricultural district, an Area Form was completed that identifies all of the agricultural properties within that neighborhood and describes their shared landscape.

18. Geographical Context**19. Historical Background**

The development of this section of Penacook, which traces its early history to the Rolfe family, has been extensively documented in the Rolfe Family State Register Historic District form.¹

In the early 1770s, the grandsons of the original proprietor of this property, moved here, establishing the Rolfe Farm. For the next 150 years, the family erected houses in this area, typically with members of different generations moving between them and sharing them. Circa 1774, the brothers Nathaniel and Benjamin erected the north half of the Nathaniel Rolfe House (16 Penacook Street). Within a few years, the brothers enlarged the house by appending another freestanding structure to its south end. This may have occurred in 1778, the year of Nathaniel's marriage. Although Benjamin ultimately moved to Maine, Nathaniel acquired additional acreage—a minimum of 322 acres and an interest in at least another 246 acres—all within this agricultural neighborhood. Ca. 1790, he erected a magnificent barn—the Nathaniel Rolfe Barn at 16 Penacook Street—a structure of immense proportions that underscored his exceptionally prosperous agricultural enterprise and could house the overflowing harvests of Concord's intervals.

A decade before he died in 1829, Nathaniel sold a third of his homestead land to his two sons, Deacon Abiel Rolfe (1781-1840) and Capt. Henry Rolfe (1785-1859); the remaining third passed to them shortly

¹ This form is on file at the NH Division of Historical Resources.

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before his death.² Capt. Henry and his wife, Deborah Carter (1786-1849) built 41 Penacook Street just up the street, and Deacon Abiel, who never married, erected 11 Penacook Street across the street from the barn in 1834. Although a small barn accompanied 41 Penacook Street, it is highly likely that all families shared the far larger ca. 1790s barn already standing. The son of Nathaniel's other child, Judith, Nathan Chandler, purchased nearby 35 Penacook ca. 1835.

Over the years, the original Rolfe Farm was divided up. Land on the east side of Penacook Street remained in agricultural use, but much of the west side was slowly developed. Members of the Rolfe family started to turn away from farming, and many were engaged in their sash shop.

After John H. Morrill purchased 31 Penacook Street in 1925, agricultural activity gradually increased, as he and later his son acquired additional land—most of it part of the original Rolfe Farm—clearing it for fields and pasture. Today, their dairy farm has over 300 cows, and all of the backland between the road and the river, as far south as the lower oxbow, is part of the property.

20. Applicable NHDHR Historic Context(s)

Local-scale dairy farming, 1800-present.

Logging, lumbering and saw mills, 1620-present

Wood products mills and shops in New Hampshire.

Mixed agriculture and the family farm, 1630-present.

21. Architectural Description and Comparative Evaluation

The Penacook Street Agricultural Neighborhood is largely on the east side of Penacook Street, starting just north of Rolfe Street and continuing south to include all the fields associated with Morrill Farm (as far south as the Lower Oxbow). The neighborhood includes five farmhouses, many of which retain historic outbuildings and extensive fields and pasture.

Contributing resources to the agricultural area (*NB: all have been previously surveyed as part of the 1990 survey of Penacook. In addition, 11 & 16 were surveyed in more depth in 2008 as part of the Rolfe Family State Register Historic District (and since listed on the State Register. 31 Penacook Street was surveyed in more depth as part of this Agricultural Survey project):*

Deacon Abiel Rolfe House, (1834), 11 Penacook Street. Historic outbuildings include attached work shop and wagon shed.

Nathaniel Rolfe House (ca. 1770s) and Barn (ca. 1790), 16 Penacook Street. Historic outbuildings include ca. 1790 double English barn and late 19th c./early 20th c. wagon shed.

Morrill Farm (ca. 1880), 31 Penacook Street: Multiple historic outbuildings. See CON0186

Chandler-Davis House (ca. 1800), 35 Penacook Street. Historic outbuildings include ca. 1820-50 barn (now part of Morrill Farm.)

² Book 1/120 (1818), 3/551 (1818), 18/502 (1829). The first conveyances were for \$2,500 each, and the final for \$1,000. There is no record that Nathaniel's other child, Judith, wife of Nathan Chandler, received any of the family land, though coincidentally, her son, Nathan Chandler, purchased nearby 35 Penacook ca. 1835.

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Capt. Henry Rolfe House (1815), 41 Penacook Street: Two historic outbuildings accompany this property. An English barn constructed in two sections is attached to the east end of the ell-shed that extends from the gable end of the house. It is a five-bay, timber frame structure. The western three bays are the original section, and the eastern two bays a later addition. The roof, which has common rafters, was clearly reframed at some point, perhaps when the two sections were joined together. (The structure needs a more thorough inspection to determine whether the frame is scribe or square.) Exterior walls are clad with vertical sheathing boards. The roof is covered with corrugated metal. A multi-light transom is above each of the two wagon bays on the south side. The east wagon opening has been partially filled in.

East of the barn stands a 1 ½ story shop. The interior is divided into two spaces; the north space contains a chimney. Clapboards cover the walls and corrugated metal the roof. The south (front) elevation has two wagon openings; windows with 6/6 sash are located on other walls. Projecting from the west wall is a modest shed-roof lean-to.

24. Statement of Integrity

The Penacook Street Agricultural Neighborhood, with its late 18th and 19th c. farmhouses, multiple and diverse outbuildings and extensive surrounding fields and pasture, retain an exceptionally high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, setting, workmanship, feeling and association.

27. Bibliography and/or References

Hengen, Elizabeth Durfee, *Village of Penacook, An Architectural and Historical View*. 1990

Hengen, Elizabeth Durfee, "Rolfe Family State Register Historic District," 2008.

28. Surveyor's Evaluation

NR listed: district	<input type="checkbox"/>	NR eligible: district	<input type="checkbox"/>	NR Criteria: A	<input type="checkbox"/>
individuals		not eligible	<input type="checkbox"/>	B	<input type="checkbox"/>
within district	<input type="checkbox"/>	more info needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	C	<input type="checkbox"/>
Integrity: yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			D	<input type="checkbox"/>
no	<input type="checkbox"/>			E	<input type="checkbox"/>

If this Area Form is for a Historic District: # of contributing resources: 5
 # of noncontributing resources: 0

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AREA NAME: PENACOOK STREET AGRICULTURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Date of photograph: Fall 2008

Negative stored at: NHDR



Photo 1 description: 41 Penacook Street, showing south elevation of English barn
Roll: 8 Frame: 10 Direction: NW



Photo 2 description: 41 Penacook Street, showing front (south) & west elevations of shop
Roll: 8 Frame: 12 Direction: NE