

60 Newbury Village Historic District

Route 5, Newbury, Vermont



One hundred years ago a devastating fire, fueled by high winds, moved through the center of Newbury, Vermont. While few residents may personally remember the dramatic incident, the story and its historic district will stand as testimony to a moment in time that changed its structural landscape.

The outbreak of a massive fire in 1913 significantly changed the character of Newbury. Thought to have ignited in a blacksmith shop, the fire quickly moved south along a side street between Cross and Main Streets, and then fueled by high winds, it moved randomly and made its way as far as the southern half of Main Street. A number of buildings were lost in the fire and many more were torn down in an effort to stop the fire from spreading further. As a result, The Newbury Village Historic District represents two major eras of building construction – those before 1860 and those constructed after the 1913 fire.

Newbury Village is situated in a north-south running valley below the commanding Mt. Pulaski and is adjacent to productive agricultural lands along the banks of the Connecticut River, commonly known as “The Meadows.” The majority of the buildings within the District are aligned along Vermont Route 5 and follow the valley’s north-south orientation.

A number of architectural styles are represented throughout the Newbury Village Historic District, though most represent architecture based on local needs and readily available construction materials rather than high-style designs. As such, wooden framed, clapboard, 1 ½ to 2 ½ story buildings are among the most common types throughout the Historic District, though a few brick structures do exist. Distinct architectural styles are still easily discerned and include Greek Revival, Federal, Victorian (though seen mostly in Italianate motifs or as elaborate porch additions) and Colonial Revival. Greek Revival buildings dominate the villagescape because Newbury Village’s greatest period of growth, from about 1835 to 1860, occurred during the era when the Greek Revival style was popular. Despite the wide range of construction dates, from 1790 to 1930, the buildings located within the Newbury Village Historic District have a surprising consistency of scale and form, and help to create a unified appearance throughout the District. The District was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1983.

Sources:

National Register of Historic Places. Newbury Village Historic District. Town of Newbury. Orange County. Vermont. National Register # 83003214. < <http://www.crjc.org/heritage/V16-31.htm>>

“Newbury Historic District.” *Vermont Heritage Network: Historic Architecture*. The University of Vermont Historic Preservation Program. Web. Accessed 3 May 3, 2013. < <http://www.uvm.edu/~vhnet/histarch/hahd30.html>>