

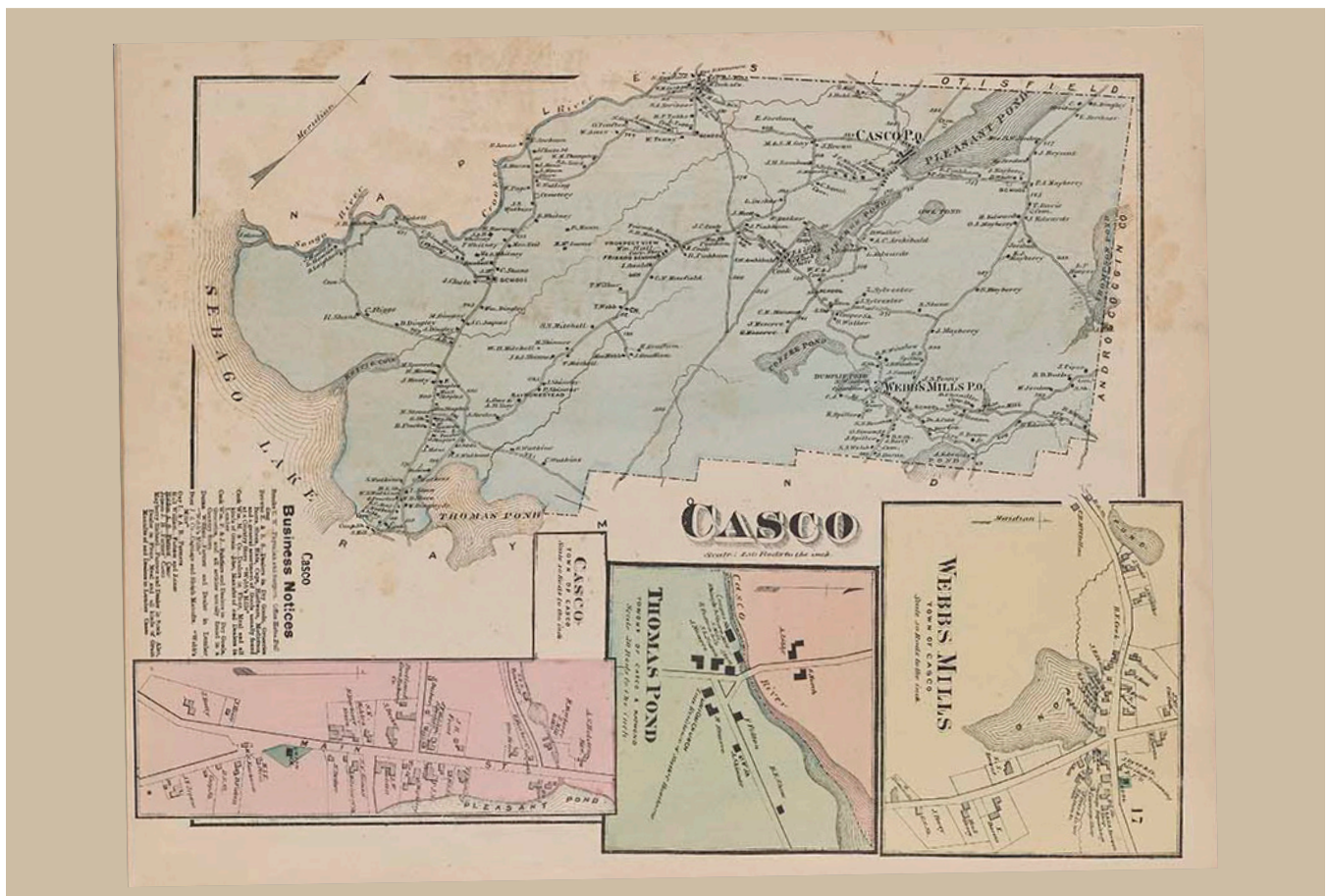
# CHAPTER 1

## **HISTORIC & ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES**

This chapter of the Casco Comprehensive Plan is a portion of the Inventory and Analysis section of the plan. The purpose of this section is to provide a current status of the historic and archaeological resources within Casco. To learn more about specific properties, residents may access the Cultural & Architectural Resource Management Archive (CARMA) map viewer at: [www.maine.gov/mhpc/quick-links/carma](http://www.maine.gov/mhpc/quick-links/carma)

This Chapter is organized into three sections:

1. History of Casco
2. Historic Resources
3. Threats to Historic Resources and Protective Measures



## History of Casco

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “An outline of the community’s history, including a brief description of historic settlement patterns and events contributing to the development and character of the community and its surroundings.”]**

Casco was formed in 1841 after a separation from then “Raymondtown”. Because there were geographically challenging areas in Raymondtown, there was a sense of disconnect and inefficiency with the way things were, and a committed group of people worked tirelessly to create two separate towns. Casco’s first town meeting was held at the Friends Meetinghouse on Quaker Ridge Rd., which was built in 1814 and still stands today.

Before European contact, the bountiful and widespread forests that grew here after the last glacier retreated were lightly managed by Native Americans and were still intact when early European settlers arrived in the 1700s. These settlers realized the economic potential of these forests and built an industry around them. Early sawmills were located next to waterways in South Casco Village, Cook’s Mills, Webb’s Mills, and Casco Village. These areas, with both water access and industry, proved to be magnets for both residential and commercial development. Farms became plentiful, having sprung up close to these village areas and in other areas where timber harvesting revealed excellent soils for agricultural use. Roads were built to connect these areas together as well as with surrounding towns.

Casco once consisted of a series of small village areas, each tending to have a church, a school, a general store, a blacksmith shop, mills, etc. in order to sustain the nearby residents. If you take a look at one of the old maps (1857, or 1871) you can see where homes and businesses were clustered. Webb's Mills and South Casco by Thomas Pond were two of the larger villages of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Casco has evolved through time just as it has in many surrounding Lake Region communities. Until after the Second World War, economic activity continued to be non-intensive and characterized by farming, timber harvesting, and pockets of small commercial and industrial activity, primarily in the early village settlements. Summer camps for boys and girls were established on some of the lakes. Seasonal homes were built around Casco's primary water bodies. Farming and commercial businesses started to dwindle.

Casco's population in 1960 was less than that in 1860, reflecting the westward expansion and the conversion from an agrarian economy. Cellar holes and stone walls mark many old farms. Casco's current population is more than three times what it was in the 1960's, but the Town has been able to keep much of its rural charm.

There are now five villages in the Town of Casco, nestled among thousands of acres of forest. The villages of today are well-kept and mostly residential in nature. Most villages do not have the same level of commercial activities happening in them as they did in historic times. Today, much of the commercial activity occurs along the Route 302 corridor, and residents travel outside Casco to obtain many goods, services and employment.

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: "Are historic patterns of settlement still evident in the community?"]***

Historic patterns of settlement are very much still evident in the community today. See section of the plan, "The Villages of Casco" for descriptions of the settlement patterns that are still evident today, and are desired for protection and enhancement tomorrow in Casco's five villages.

# Historic Resources

**[STATE REQUIREMENT: “An inventory of the location, condition, and use of any historical or archaeological resource that is of local importance.”]**

One of Casco’s biggest historical assets is the Raymond-Casco Historical Society. The Historical Society runs a history museum and holds a collection of historic and archaeological artifacts including many historic farming artifacts and a replica of the Friends School House. The Historical Society is currently hoping to expand programming at the museum and raise awareness of the historical significance of buildings in order to raise the level of historical stewardship in the two towns.

The following section includes the various historical properties and sites identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission (MHPC) as of March, 2021.

There are four properties in Casco listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

1. Friends Meetinghouse, Quaker Ridge (1814) in Casco Village.
2. Nathaniel Hawthorne’s Boyhood Home (1818)
3. The Watkins House and Cabins at the junction of Cape Road and U.S. 302 (1810-1920)
4. The Richard Manning House on Raymond Cape Road (1813) in South Casco.

There are two historic archaeological sites documented by the MHPC for Casco:

1. Cook’s Mills (CK)-1 which was significant in the early 19th century
2. Pike’s Corner (PI)-1 which was significant in the 19th century.

There are 10 prehistoric archaeological sites

identified by the MHPC in Casco. They lie on the shores of Thompson Lake, Thomas Pond, and Sebago Lake. Limited professional archaeological surveying has been conducted in the State Park and along the Sebago Lake shoreline east of the State Park.

There are many historic properties throughout Casco. Those identified by MHPC in the Cultural & Architectural Resource Management Archive include:

1. 15 historic properties in Casco Village along Route 121 between Mayberry Hill Road and Edes Falls Road. All that have been assessed are listed as in good condition.
2. 14 historic properties at the intersection of Route 121 and 11. All are in either good or fair condition with the exception of 598 Meadow Road, which is listed as in poor condition.
3. Four historic properties on Route 85 just South of Route 11 on Crescent Lake, three of which are listed as in good or fair condition.
4. Nine historic properties on Route 302 near the Naples border. Of the properties that have been assessed, all are in fair condition.
5. In Sebago Lake State Park, there is a Historic Bridge in good condition.

# Threats to Historic Resources and Protective Measures

***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “A brief description of threats to local historic resources and to those of state and national significance as identified by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. Have significant historic resources fallen into disrepair, and are there ways the community can provide incentives to preserve their value as an historical resource? Work with the local or county historical society and/or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission to assess the need for, and if necessary plan for, a comprehensive community survey of the community’s historic and archaeological resources.”]***

The Raymond-Casco Historical Society identifies a major threat to local historic resources in the lack of identification and knowledge of property and sites on private property. Sites that are not preserved under the national register of historic places are not protected by law, and thus are often changed and wiped of their historic qualities. Others have been left to deteriorate or even be demolished altogether. A recent significant loss was the Friends School House which was destroyed by a fire in 2018. The building and its contents were not saved, however, the Raymond-Casco Historical Society has created a replica on display at the museum.

To increase awareness of historical significance of sites in the towns, the Raymond-Casco Historical Society hopes to increase programming through their museum. One of their biggest projects currently underway is relocating the Watkins Historic Blacksmith Shop, which has fallen into disrepair, on Quaker Ridge to the Museum site. The Historical Society plans on moving the structure to Route 302 in Casco, restoring it to a

working blacksmith shop, and are hoping to offer introductory blacksmithing classes. Through the shop, the Historical Society is attempting to get the community interacting with, and see value in, the towns’ histories.

As recommended by the Maine Historic Preservation Commission in their inventory data packet, there is a need for further survey, inventory, and analysis of Casco’s prehistoric and historic archaeological sites and historic buildings, structures, and objects. Notably, there have been no professional surveys for historic archaeological sites in Casco. Prior to development within 50 yards of the shore, the shorelines of Thompson Lake, Thomas Pond, and unsurveyed portions of Sebago Lake need to be surveyed for prehistoric archaeological sites. Additionally, in future archaeological surveys, there should be a focus on potentially significant resources associated with Casco’s agricultural, residential, and industrial heritage, particularly those related to the earliest Euro-American settlement of the area in the 18th and 19th centuries. Finally, a comprehensive survey of above-ground historic resources should be conducted to identify other properties in Casco that may be nominated to the National Register for Historic Places.



***[STATE REQUIREMENT: “What protective measures currently exist for historic and archeological resources and are they effective? Do local site plan and/or subdivision regulations require applicants proposing development in areas that may contain historic or archaeological resources to conduct a survey for such resources?”]***

Protective measures exist in a number of locations within the zoning and subdivision ordinances. The effectiveness of the ordinances are subjective. One might argue no, evidenced by the exterior physical alterations that occurred after the Grange Hall in Casco Village was sold to be converted to a marijuana grow facility.

Casco has not completed a survey of historic properties or archaeological sites, while Maine Historic Preservation Commission has limited information. The ordinances and protections are only as effective as the data is accurate and available.

**The following regulations apply to development within the Shoreland Zone:**

§ 215-9.33 Archaeological site. Any proposed land use activity involving structural development or soil disturbance on or adjacent to sites listed on, or eligible to be listed on, the National Register of Historic Places, as determined by the permitting authority, shall be submitted by the applicant to the Maine Historic Preservation Commission for review and comment at least 20 days prior to action being taken by the permitting authority. The permitting authority shall consider comments received from the Commission prior to rendering a decision on the application.

§ 215-9.36 Administration and enforcement. (2) A permit is not required for an archaeological excavation as long as the excavation is conducted by an archaeologist listed on the State Historic

Preservation Commission’s level 1 or level 2 approved list, and unreasonable erosion and sedimentation is prevented by means of adequate and timely temporary and permanent stabilization measures.

**The following regulations apply if constructing Wireless Communications Facilities:**

§ 215-8.9 Requirements for tower. (11) An analysis of the visual impact of the proposed facility, including tower and supporting structures, which may include photo montage, field mock-up, or other techniques that identify the potential visual impacts, at design capacity, of the proposed facility. Consideration shall be given to views from roads, public areas, private residences, historic resources, including historic districts and structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places, and archaeological resources. The analysis of the impact on historical and archaeological resources shall meet the requirements of the Maine State Historic Preservation Commission in its review capacity for the FCC. The overall analysis shall assess the cumulative impacts of the proposed facility and other existing communication facilities in the area.

§ 215-8.10 Planning Board review. E. Planning Board review guidelines. The Planning Board may require that the applicant submit documentation, in writing, that the guidelines established below will be met and maintained. The Planning Board will be guided in its consideration of a WCF application by the following parameters: (10) The proposed WCF facility will not unreasonably interfere with the view from any public park, natural scenic vista, historical building, major view corridor or designated scenic resource. (12) Based on information submitted by the applicant, the Planning Board shall ensure that: (c) Other technically feasible sites have been investigated

and the proposed facility has been located in order to minimize the effect of the location on visually sensitive areas such as residential communities, historical areas, and open space areas.

**The following is required for properties that are being subdivided:**

§ 210-8.1 Criteria for evaluation of subdivision.

A. The subdivision: (9) Will not have an undue adverse effect on the scenic or natural beauty of the area, aesthetics, historic sites, rare and irreplaceable natural areas, or any public rights for physical or visual access to the shoreline.

§210-9.5. Retention of open spaces and natural features. F. If the proposed subdivision contains any identified historical or archaeological site or any areas identified in the Comprehensive Plan or by the Maine Critical Areas Program as rare and irreplaceable natural areas, the areas shall be included in the open space and suitably protected by appropriate covenants and management plans.

**The following is required for properties located within the Resource Protection District:**

§ 215-9.37 Establishment of districts. A. Resource Protection District (RP).(1) Description. The Resource Protection District includes areas in which development would adversely affect water quality, productive habitat, biological ecosystems, or scenic and natural values. This district shall include the following areas when they occur within the limits of the shoreland zone, exclusive of the Stream Protection and Watershed Districts, except that areas which are currently developed and areas which meet the criteria for the Limited Commercial/Residential District need not be included within the Resource Protection District:

(i) Other significant areas which should be included in this district to fulfill the purposes of this Subsection A, including but not limited to existing public access areas and certain significant archaeological and historic sites deserving of long-term protection as determined by the municipality after consultation with the Maine Historic Preservation Commission.

**The following is required if a property is being developed under a Contract Zone Agreement:**

§ 215-3.4 Contract zoning. (b) When negotiating the terms of a contract zoning agreement, the Planning Board may consider, among other factors, the following:[9] Preservation and protection of historic and archaeological sites.