

## MAINE STREET ARCHITECTURAL CONTEXT

The Maine Street Neighborhood includes the following streets:

- Maine Street (from Route 1 to Bath Street)
- Center Street
- Bank Street
- Dunlap Street
- Mason Street

This neighborhood is one of six neighborhoods that comprise the Village Review District in Brunswick. Maine Street links Route One to Bowdoin College as well as numerous residential areas. The Maine Street neighborhood encompasses Brunswick's historic commercial core. Today, this area remains the heart of downtown activity.

The tremendous width of Maine Street distinguishes it from other streets in the Village Review District. The street's ample width affords dramatic views of Fort Andross Mill to the north and First Parish Church to the south. The variation in building forms and materials defines the character of Brunswick's Maine Street. An examination of the current buildings offers clues to how this vibrant community center has evolved over the last 250 years.

Residential scale 1½ and 2-story buildings populate the west side of the street between Route One and Gilman Street. They are free-standing structures with either hipped or gable roofs. This adaptation of the residential building form for commercial downtown use was common during the early to mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and these buildings are some of the earlier structures in downtown. Several other free-standing residential scale commercial buildings exist elsewhere along Maine Street. These buildings are typically either brick or wood frame.

Maine Street also has several commercial blocks that represent the traditional downtown building form of the late 1800s and early 1900s. The Tondreau Building and the Lincoln Building are exceptional examples of this tradition. Both of these buildings are brick, the preferred building material for densely developed downtowns as it was more fire resistant.

Several 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings indicate where earlier structures were either lost to fire or demolition. Some of these "younger" buildings respond to Maine Street's traditional character by maintaining a setback

similar to neighboring structures while others are representative of the 20<sup>th</sup> century freestanding commercial building. Wide sidewalks, trees, crosswalks and streetlights establish a formal streetscape and contribute to the cohesiveness of Maine Street.

Maine Street's architecture represents over two centuries of change. The layers of history are evident in the various building forms and materials. Despite a wide variety of buildings, Maine Street maintains a sense of uniformity as a result of the generally consistent building setback and building height. While building forms and materials may have changed, the unifying thread of commercial activity continues to thrive on Maine Street.



Left: Maps, such as this one from 1889, provide excellent information about the configuration of Main Street.

Old Town Hall is clearly marked on this map.

