

State-Level Historical Documentation
Marshfield Municipal Airport/George D. Harlow Field
Marshfield, Massachusetts

The Town of Marshfield is undertaking extensive improvements to its municipal airport, George D. Harlow Field. The improvements required archaeological survey and historical documentation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act (MEPA). AHS completed MHC Form B documentation of buildings associated with a former farm that will be removed, and conducted archaeological investigations in multiple areas affected by the extension of the runway and creation of habitat enhancement areas for endangered animal species.

The Woodbine Farm barn has substantial heritage value in recalling not only Marshfield’s agricultural past in general, but also for its associations with the marsh-reclamation project. The 1898 report counted 32 buildings, mostly barns, that had been built upon the reclaimed land; since



hay was the major product, provision had to be made nearby to store the crop. As late as the 1950s, much of the land near the Woodbine Farm barn, still called the “Dyke Meadow,” was open, dry, and in use for hay production or pasture.

The eligibility of this building for listing on the National Register of Historic Places is somewhat problematical because of alterations to the building itself and its setting, which raise issues of integrity. While the barn did not meet the criteria for National Register eligibility, it’s local

heritage value was considered to be of interest to the Airport Commission in its planning for the property. We also recommended that the Marshfield Historical Commission consider whether the barn had local historical and architectural significance.