

HISTORIC PHOTO COLLECTION

Historic Photo A (Note: this first photo's date occurs mid sequence in the historic collection; other photos are chronological).

'Early Industrial' Downtown Lee:

In this wonderful precentury image, we see & feel downtown Lee as a *whole*, singularly captured with its essential "natural, manmade-physical, & cultural elements" engaged in a process of organic interaction (but with some tensions to resolve). Specifically conveyed is: Lee's **Natural Base of landform** (note left north Pinnacle and East Hills); of **plant coverage** (intown planted, & evolved forest/ clearings); and the **river** ('first genesis')— that gave original rise to, then determined the historic evolution of the **Built Physical Town (structures & grid)** upon it— for Lee's **Cultural Milieu**. (Volpe Model). Such a "unifying viewpoint"— revealing several 'scales of meaning'— (i.e. a robust sense of essential town parts & systems, then interrelating as one downtown, all the while engaged in a wider Berkshire context)— is important in this study for connecting Lees pasts, present, and any valid proposals for the future.

Special Observation: *"Landform.... especially... is strikingly everywhere dominant in Lee's sense of place— making distinct variations as well as continuous interconnections at all scales: i.e. the landform of the Greater Berkshire Region, then of this unique Downtown Whole, and then the locally varied detail in every Sub-Area street, walk, nook & cranny, window of building or mind". Evident too: is the "mill & industry, on the river"; a "New England Main Street" (at once a "through-route" for transportation) and a major mixed use local "place" (of churches, stores, and civic institutions, of Backside agricultural and residual mixed uses, of working residents on hills; infill residual plots). * ((See Ch 1 History Text for Lees sequence of: settlement, agriculture, mills/ paper, quarrying, and 'rural secondary center of commercial activity, & prospects for new (e.g. tourism) recreational / commercial roles)).*

*** We must respect & take clue from these essential historic determinants— these inherent good persistent forces ingraining Lees present character— while alternatives for the next century are sought.**

Historic Photo B:

Congregational Church ("On Oval Park") :

This fine original etching shows Lee's old and still most prominent structure (without its future 'entry enclave' addition, importantly evident today). "The Church" institution in general— and specifically in Lee within *this* building (along others evident in early photos as well today)— is a primary *cultural determinant* (along with mills, RR, civic institutions, quarries, & commercial support in next photos). Note too how the engraving reveals the "spirit of place and time" by the artist/ era's "interpretations": i.e. there is the image of a sacred 'singular structure', 'perched yet earthy rooted' upon slight summit landform', 'elm-embraced'; the prominent yet unpretentious Oval Park is in the foreground, (with people walking) merging with Main St, extending itself to the larger town— the openness conveys a 'central node' that celebrates the town center, invites the community in. There is a special normativity expressed in the overall sense of the "civic/ religious/ leisural pastoral" that conveys the integrated human values of a Romantic age reciprocal to the Industrial/ working side of town life.

"The religious/ civic/ romantic here combine in 'complement' to the pragmatic working character of larger town— while 'bright sunny sky, breeze, rich cloud formations'— captures the regional dynamics of an eternal Berkshire, late summer season". These Interpretations are today valid for a re emergence in this quad— for all downtown.

Historic Photo C

"Proposing An Additional Mill":

This original architectural engraving conveys the justifiably optimistic "New England utilitarian entrepreneurial spirit" and "vitality" of the town in this era. * Historically, mills are Lee's most economically significant *cultural economic deterrent*: prosperity, population, & other industry & commercial support followed. (See History text for different mills and their chronology). Mills in Lee history are some of the region's more famous— a determinant at once local, and New England/ historically 'generic' ; the oval arrival marks a positive space that hereon becomes historically ingrained until wiped out by auto age; here recreational /function combines; the horse too conveys the upbeat productive (working, yet civil/ leisural) tempo & strong posture of this age. The flag denotes patriotism (we also see many flags today). *Re-engaged & new forces are now needed for sustaining Lee revitalization.*

Historic Photo D

Lee Train Station:

This photo shows west facade (and the now gone canopy structure) with commuters & visitors— establishing Lee as an important regional stop. (Note signage). Today (SEE CURRENT PHOTO) this building (with "carriage car proportions") remains historically significant: externally preserved— while internally is now importantly transformed into the successful Sullivan Station Restaurant. ((See Ch 1 history text section & Ch 2 analysis regarding the significance of the RR as a cultural element: for industrial/ commercial connection & commuting in Lee & at various regional/ national scales, and periods)). Today the commuting rail does not stop or directly serve downtown Lee, but bus/ vehicles serve as connectors. (Note the dual tracks, via bridge, is used today effectively, as industry & com use continues). * Sullivan Station is a model for rehab elsewhere possible in Lee. ** There are future prospects for revived Lee rail 'commuting', or 'recreational' linkage/ museum, connecting with the existing industry/commerce/ recreational patterns of the whole region.*

Historic Photo E:

Lee's Grand "Old Inn":

... is now gone... but nostalgically remembered in fragile antique archive photos. This is the site's original great building, that stood beside the Congregational Church, integrating with & overlooking old Oval Park (see photo a). The Inn housed people for business & socials, as well for Berkshire recreation (as existed dominantly in neighboring towns), provided a true hometown orientation to the park, & a magnificent Lee gateway/ landmark. *"Here we observe: a wooden gem, with strong basic architectural parti, unified elements (e.g. porches, windows, churches) , and the inn uses— as 'whole' it served a working lodge function as well as had a spirit it shared with Oval Park— that carried into Lee's "Golden Afternoon" Era (analogous to other inns still evident in nearby tourist towns. The unpaved Oval Park carriage way allowed arrival & departure in a functional romantic tradition".* Today: the wooden inn is replaced by the also formidable Memorial Hall Courthouse— of brick, and civic uses of a later era— while the park's oval form in the quad space & some park elements remains— though is too fractured, lost in a sea of chaotic asphalt, & underused. (The courthouse siting is tasteful, although lacks the direct orientation of this inn. Today also, the adjacent Morgan House importantly retains some of the inn's old value/ spirit. ((Newer motels on rt. 2 strip exist peripheral to downtown Lee as well— supported by the regional traffic patterns re tumpike and the tourism— something that proposals need address)). Oval Park, though its perimeter boundaries are today intact, has a full spatial /social sense that's all but disappeared, but is recoverable. Nearby in-downtown as well as off-site is available for creating such an inn again, if desired.

Historic Photo F

"The Quarry Work":

Quarrying (eg with steam)— is another cultural element, & significant part of Lees social & economic history— it continues today in smaller degree. (See Ch 1 History text: Lee marble, granite, & other quarry types— which supplemented the economy e.g. at the time of Mill decline). Today, quite evident are Lee's many buildings that stand strong, built (in full or part) of various local and regional stone— (analogous and complementary to woods historical role)— as document to Lee's own vernacular participation in a wider New England activity.

** Any proposed structural restorations or new buildings in downtown should fully consider the nature & worth of Lees existing historic stone, brick, wood, rail/ iron— continuous with, OR interrelatedly with any new ideas).*

*** HISTORIC PHOTOS "G-M" ARE DATED CIRCA 1895 "TURN OF THE CENTURY"**

Historic Photo G:

Memorial Hall (at rt.) replaces the Old Inn at the prime corner of Main Street and Oval Park; Commercial Eastside South Main Street (at center photo) .

Memorial Hall here so clearly caps the south Main Street (eastside) commercial block, and links (as it can better again) to a symbolic and operative civic recreational Oval Park common. In these 'olden' days of horse & buggy, the strong architecture and active analogous vital uses declares the area (as still exists but so disrupted today) as central. Memorial Hall strongly & unambiguously reads and functions an important, architecturally massful civic landmark as well as anchor-definer of Main Street— beside the *faithful* church, and *recreational* park location— terminating the *commercial*, in the vicinity of *residential*. This hall and many of the connected buildings (some altered) today endure in their prominent stature and busy internal use— but are now lost traffic, threatened on a disrupted eroded site. ((See other photos for the commercial buildings).

((Note: The craftsmanship and local use of Memorial Hall and these connected Lee buildings (necessity stores)— while specifically unique— are also a regional pattern of civic "town halls and libraries" amidst the many churches & stores of yesterday— that today endure (while threatened) in many Old New England small towns. Especially, Memorial Hall and its immediate gatherings while is 'historically thematic with other prided town hall/ situations in the region is quite unique in its solid form & rich yet subtle integrated architecture, its compactness yet strong scale massful proportion to the scale of the downtown, and its exceptional location (near the park and gateway, and capping the commercial, beside adjacent resident hills— a bit from but facing the river). This building is built of "lasting dark brick and stone": it is a prominent blend of utility/subtle ornament for a *lasting* social foundation as well as being a town jewel. (In any current proposals of added down town buildings, the intention of "relating to" vs "remaining hierarchically distinct from" existing Lee structures is a crucial design issue))).

*Here, without today's vehicular domination, the sense of a living/ working / patronized town is striking. We also see the (now gone) 'everywhere elms', active pedestrian walk space / with awning and market uses... an open street that simultaneously a local scale **place** and **uncluttered route**— depicting the downtown sense of identity. Trees nestle the southend— in a perfect balance of the built commercial Vs residential, & Vs the natural. While many great trees are gone, many other 'contextual' old deciduous trees & conifer exist today. Today Main Street's Architectural infrastructure, its unique community/ & crossroads-locale remains ready to reclaim for valuable local or visitor pedestrian co-use, in any good proposed revitalization".*

Historic Photo H: (Southward view "through street-arch") :

South Main (commercial block & Memorial Hall), views to through arch 'summertime shade-enchanted' Oval Park).

"1895 Evening Lodge banner independence flag celebration": depicts a local community, with a national civic/patriotic spirit & commercial vitality— that tries to continue in Lee today, though traffic, spatial erosion, economic challenge today restricts space use. (If compare to later photo (N), the welcoming overhead arch becomes framers of history).

Here downtown's simultaneous commercial, civic, recreational, residential spirits make for a balanced local place. This same multifaceted local community *spirit* is "latently" still strong today, while the physical sense of local place is today diminished by modern stress and erosions of the vehicular-age and its regional economics. Note that today Oval Park (within its wonderful perimeter architectural quad wall boundaries still exist (much obscured)— has a full spatial /social sense that has all but disappeared— but recoverable. (See traffic, spatial & economic problems of the analysis). Proposals can allow this latent spirit to reemerge more freely year round with a better revitalization of place— and also has the option of diverting or engaging visitors that currently pass through disrupt but not patronize.

Historic Photo I :

South Main Street, East side.

"Early Main Street Life" in days of horse carriage— shows a vitality of mixed local goods and services,— an amenable place of everyday shopping and meeting, walking gathering— with closely clustered architecture tightly defining the southend: this is structurally and use-analogously much the same as today— except for today's problems of vehicle domination and spatial erosion, and the stresses of economic shifts.

Commercial retail/ market occurs first floor, spill to generous sidewalk use; residential & office is upstairs— single awnings bursts outwardly a sense of vitality. ((Special observations: the dirt street is defensibly separate from the raised sidewalk; the awning is open (functioning sun Vs shade/ rain; and a symbol of vitality.

"Useful sidewalk space "promotes" important town life/use — allows *integrating of market use, gathering of workers unloaders, vendors, shopping, mingling— local everyday spot integrates people & seasonal goods & activity. The unified yet Incredible articulate architectural wall— befits the unity of diverse uses— (enclosed by, a distinct zone yet affinitously linked to the neighborhood resident area by the surrounding trees). Here's a dominant sense of good "place" as opposed to being a crowded thoroughway that we indeed value". (Street trees historically are absent here, but prolific on remaining street). Note the grade difference between street & sidewalk— provides an essential physical character, and an identity-making "defensible space" detail, as well as good expression of larger typography. Signs are of a personal scale (as we wish to maintain today)).*

Historic Photo J:

South Main Street, west side.

Note again the original "generous sense and use" of pedestrian space (with secondary and primary pedestrian space— reciprocal to human activity & values. The two buildings (at far left) are now gone: (see the "demolishing day" *Historic Photo R*). The other buildings remain today, used for: (at center, with porch) is the Morgan House Inn ; and (the 2 smaller Greek rivals) McClelland Drug with porch and Lee bank (see historic photo 'Q') ; (At far right), is the block building (with the now gone upper section treatment & mansard).

Historic Photo K:

South Main Street, east side: "Saving from 'the fire'".

Townpeople gather to rescue their beloved buildings from tragedy. Except for the mansard roof (today is gone) the structures were happily spared demise— allowing their continued full use and architectural prominence to this day. (Today some facade changes especially lower story eg Rossi's Rest is brick faced).

*** HISTORIC PHOTOS "L- Q" : RANGE CIRCA LATE 1940-50's**

Historic Photo L:

Congregational Church, seen through the trees of Oval Park.

"Welcome Lee" sign double-signifies Lee: as a greeting to a place of strong local identity, as well as thematically "landmarking" another (generic yet unique) small town in partner along the travel route connecting though New England destinations. Here great trees embrace Oval Park, Congregational Church. *Strong sleek dark branches stark against white glowing facade and the tall slender steeple define space at the gateway/ center then as could again now.* Note too that the first evidence of parked cars— replacing horse carriages at the arrival loop... is in this photos day still in pleasant & functional balance— though we know what will become.

Historic Photo M:

View from Main/ Park Street Intersection: *the auto age has arrived.*

The once dirt street has become widened and paved, and pedestrian & automobile activity is simultaneous. Looking northward ("up to mid Main St"), Lee is evident as both a vital *place* and a major regional *rural route*. (The simultaneous *dual* roles exist today with the latter being defeated by the former). Modern automobile use already seems at the limits of acceptable capacity; unfortunately, from here on in, Main Street's role will become more dominant as a throughway than town space. ((Lee's *crossroads* location— evident in larger scale maps— is forever at once a potential asset (e.g. see tourism/ revitalization opportunity) while the disruptive traffic is increasingly problematic. To reap the benefits of this crossroads location while diverting or managing the traffic will be a challenge for today's revitalization proposals)). Note also the prolific trees at mid Main Street northward, that link to Oval Park's elms. South Main St is open (trees less), in an interesting contrast of sun/shade correlating with public/ private. Parking lines both sides of the street, and has begun take over Oval Park. Note: the Main / Park St intersection is continuous— replacing the previous loop and present right angle alignment. Note the strong sense of Main Street "spatial zones" due to the open southend Vs the trees from mid Main street & northward. (The good architecture, antique street light, & local scale signage remains today).

Historic Photo N:

Independence Parade on Main Street (south end): WW veterans, and a community of all ages line the walks and perch from stairs. Note the dynamics of sunshine, & shade under awnings and upon the alley wall: "angels and motions of physical and human life" captured in the moment. Both the local, and the national "civic community spirit" is evident on Main Street(s)— as part of balanced town life. Such *spirit* endures today, through repressed by spatial erosion, excess traffic and the stressful complexity of the new social/economic era. (if you compare this location with earlier era photo— as well as present day parades—we sense the "frames of history"). *Proposals can allow this spirit to more freely emerge, and actualize itself in ways year round.*

Historic Photo O:

Residential Hillside (Franklin Street):

This photo holds the image of a missed era: beautiful elm-canopied quiet "proxemic" residential streets ... "in days of horse & buggy-- with a romantic wash of sun & sprinkled shade... summertime dripping of tall tree canopy, a connected neighborhood of connected people, beloved homes with yards on the hill-- overall an idyllic neighborhood spatial lace (of childhood/ old era memory) as part of a pragmatic working town co-existing. It clearly depicts Lee as the appropriately balanced working hometown it throughout was-- and socially essentially still is (despite the physical territorial erosion and contemporary scales of vehicle & economic stresses and national transience. (Residential Streets-- topographically identifiable-- were laid out flanking Main Street spine, in organic complement to the working town. The sense of proximate neighborhood areas are synergistically valuable such to the town as a whole. -- that need to be protected today in a proposal). Archetypal lessons are evident in the beloved well kept homes, on raised lawns; intact street trees & secondary scale planting; quiet porches express in/outside hierarchy, topographic plateau area claim defensible neighborhood plateaus. (The moving horse soon is replaced by quiet driving & curb parking). Today several hill side streets & other town areas retain some or much of this original residential character-- elsewhere it is gone-- e.g. plants and other residential character qualities much lost on other streets. Poles remain. Traffic encroaches). Proposals should appreciate the *local living, proxemic* 'social & physical character' that exist today in the community-- as well as any inherent intimate scale local built, robust diverse natural characters-- so to protect & strengthen such residential attributes in Lee as part of an organic Milltown/ Proxemics to protect while accommodating & taking advantage of a distemic age. More such residential areas in town are needed (eg for elderly).

Historic Photo P:

Lee Library: the "original library" (without the future north side wing addition)--

...was recognized then, as now, as beautiful architecture, and a precious community place & public asset. Here we see-- in an earlier century evening, with neatly shoveled walkway cleared through the blanket of Berkshire snow, patrons enjoy the evening use of their warm library. Today the library itself is very well preserved, beloved, increasingly active... and it will be more *historically* valued and useful with each decade-- although its yard, connections, and overall sense of place has been spatially eroded and made anonymous-- disrupted by the presence and noise of through traffic-- lost through the shifts of time. (Note: The so called "small town Library" is a crucial *archetype*-- a civic institution with local community bond-- with an affinity with those of other small New England towns. Today's increasing significant regional forces-- e.g. computer, communication, career planning, & possible increased tourism forces may play an expanded library role while fortifying older local traditions-- providing there is proposed a return of good public space/ programming connecting through greater Lee). Structural/ program additions to library must respect this original structure-- the present wing seems easily expandable vertically or horizontally. Observe... the original sense of a true civic yard, a domain with domestic feel, and sense of pedestrian welcome-- how on a snowy night the light burns bright at gate-- and within the rotunda (as a community beacon along side the religious steeple & natural trees, and industry stacks, commercial signs in town). The stone is vernacular (see Memorial Hall foundation), and befits an institution that while holding the past, is meant to stand forever. Note the "Simple classical symmetrical part, with pediment aligned with rotunda dome": the good 'complexity of articulation' & craftsmanship brought to the pure big concept: the contrasting of surface texture Vs smooth face darkened stone (against the fine white and coarse foliage); and the protrusions & recessions; there is symbolic passage between two columns fore-staged by assertive sphericity of the bright globe-lights, framed by ice feathered conifer, among square stained and clear windows. See Lee's similar other Greek rev form and scale: e.g. Lee Bank, McClellands Pharmacy, and Morgan House; The old conifers have long departed-- while other nearby remain today.

Inventory Photo Q:

Original structure for today's Lee bank.

Here, (with paladin purity of forms in white/ black contrast) is important architecture of use. (Lee bank is today successfully brick renovated). Note the Greek revival gable kinship with Library, McClelland, and the wooden museum structure of our proposals. (See Ch 2 analysis, demographic/economic section. Also observe in historic photo j).

Historic Photo R:

South Main, Westside:

Demolition of two buildings (at rt.): this historic town event created an important opening of "lateral space" between Oval Park Main Street Area and the SW half of downtown: that is today used for price Chopper entry and parking— though with traffic clutter and poor pedestrian access or planting connection fracturing the east and west half of town; it today allows some visual contact to the river woodland area— which now can be made much better— and be pedestrian connected with Oval Park, plus opportune improved off-street parking access. ***The "Park Building"*** (at left) is historically significant, well kept & actively used today.

Inventory Photo S (not shown on downtown map. See peripheral)

Hubert Mill:

Is fully active today. ((See chapter 1 for text regarding the great mill history of Lee & the broader region-- which exists today, though in lesser degree; See chapter 2 analysis, demographic/ economic section)). In recent decades, while throughout New England while many mills have been abandoned or destroyed, some continue strongly, others have had successful conversions of industrial, commercial, or thematic recreational use.

Inventory Photo T:

"Historic Wooden Structure" (salvaged): *Is today ready to be relocated somewhere in Downtown Lee.*

Recently, the Lee community enthusiastically suggested ideas of using this salvaged original Lee structure— taken from the peripheral part of town— for a proximate "**Lee Museum**"... perhaps placed adjacent to the existing post-office near the river. It thus could be claimed as a domestic treasure supplementing the library program, as well as become part of the larger regional resources or tourism program. * With this structure, and others like it, there are exciting architectural issues regarding: placing it either 'singularly standing' (with authentic architectural preservation)— or as a juxtapositional 'attachment' to an expanded structure with similar or contrastive architectural and outdoor space, plus river linkage— as a planners "seed" for exciting structural/ programmatic historic-civic infill). (Note too the gable kinship with that of the Library, McClelland, & Lee Bank).
