



December 11, 2007

To the Editor,

We at the Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) have been following with great interest the current plan to merge North Shore Regional Vocational Technical School in Middleton, Essex Agricultural and Technical School in Danvers and the Peabody Vocational School into a new facility located on 166 acres adjacent to the Essex Agricultural School and the North Shore Community College campus (near the junction of Routes 1 and 62 in Danvers).

The Essex National Heritage Commission wholeheartedly and enthusiastically supports this new \$140 million dollar state-of-the-art facility that is scheduled to open in 2012. We urge all North Shore community leaders to actively support this measure since it will serve 17 North Shore and Cape Ann cities and towns and provide educational opportunities for well over 1400 students, hundreds of whom do not currently have access to this kind of training.

The benefits of this new school to the region are obvious. ENHC has been and will continue to be a strong advocate for the preservation and advancement of agricultural initiatives in this region, and the creation of a new and expanded educational facility of this kind will support those efforts. Additionally, the technical educational disciplines offered in this facility will provide more highly trained trades persons to support the many future historic construction and preservation efforts needed in this region. In light of those two potential outcomes, it is entirely appropriate for the Essex National Heritage Commission to offer its unqualified support to this initiative.

At its December meeting, Essex National Heritage Commission (ENHC) Trustees voted unanimously on a resolution of support for the planned North Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School in Danvers. The vote was recorded in the meeting note as follows: ***That the Essex National Heritage Commission supports the approval and subsequent construction of a new regionally based Vocational Technical High School to be located on a land near the junction of Routes 1 and 62 in the Town of Danvers. The purpose of the new facility would be to enhance training opportunities for young men and women in this region to***



support agricultural initiatives and to provide an ongoing supply of skilled workers in the future to assure that historic preservation construction projects can continue to be undertaken in the region served by ENHC. The ENHC urges that the planners recognize the continuing importance of land used by the Essex Agricultural and Technical High School for agricultural purposes, and to recognize the historic importance of certain buildings currently on the site.

This project will also have a significant, positive economic impact on this region. We certainly realize that raising the required funds will be a burden on all of the communities that must contribute to building the school, but we believe that the benefits gained by the region will be substantial. If we act together as a region, we can begin to train a pool of skilled workers for the future that will certainly be essential in attracting new business to the area, bolster our sagging economy and greatly enhance our quality of life. Job creation in this state and this region are lagging behind national averages and in the very near future, graduates of this new institution can help reverse that trend.

To the community leaders of this region . . . We urge you to join the initiative to bring this plan to the approval stage, and then to offer the resources necessary to take these plans to completion. The new Vocational Technical High School will be an asset to our entire region, and the Officers and Trustees of the Essex National Heritage Commission ask you to provide the necessary community support to turn this concept into a reality.

Thank you for your consideration,
Nancy Huntington Stager, President
Thomas M. Leonard, President Emeritus
Annie C. Harris, Executive Director
ESSEX NATIONAL HERITAGE COMMISSION