

The RISE of the Falls

FACILITATION GROUP

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Walking the Falls is published by the Rise of the Falls Facilitation Group to highlight the unique character, history and promise of the South Hadley Falls neighborhood. The group works with community boards, organizations, and others to promote implementation of recommendations for this historic neighborhood provided by the American Institute of Architects Sustainable Design Assessment Team (SDAT).

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Acknowledgments

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South Hadley Board of Health	southhadleyma.gov
South Hadley Falls Neighborhood Association	www.fallsneighbors.org
South Hadley Historical Society	southhadleyhistoricalsociety.blogspot.com
South Hadley Historic District Study Committee	
South Hadley Public Library	www.shadleylib.org
Village Cemetery of South Hadley Falls	

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United Methodist Church of Holyoke, South Hadley and Granby	thesteepelinthefalls.org

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South Hadley Cultural Council



Massachusetts Cultural Council

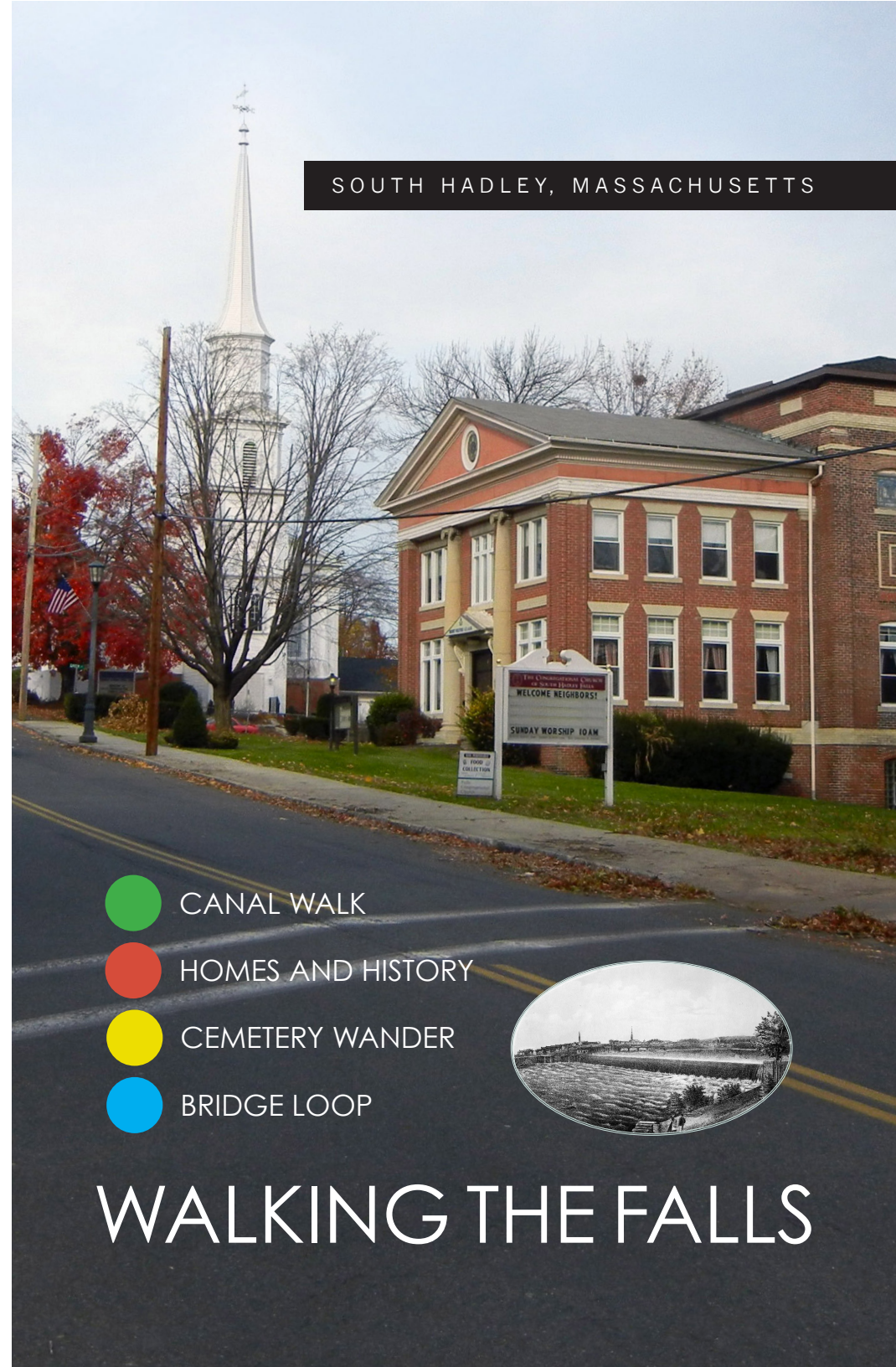
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www.mass-culture.org/south-hadley

PDFs and additional details: southhadleyma.gov/WalkingTheFalls

If you don't need this map when you're done with your walk, please consider returning it for someone else to use. Thanks for helping to reduce waste!

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SOUTH HADLEY, MASSACHUSETTS



-  CANAL WALK
-  HOMES AND HISTORY
-  CEMETERY WANDER
-  BRIDGE LOOP



WALKING THE FALLS



IMAGES (colored circles indicate routes):

Cover:

- Traveling up North Main Street from West Main Street, views of Mount Holyoke Masonic Lodge (built in 1914) and United Methodist Church (purchased from the Congregational Church in 1880)

Counter-clockwise from top:

- View across the Connecticut River of the falls, gatehouse, and library (from the Barrett Fishway)
- Business area, West Main Street (near the parking lot)
- Historic homes, upper North Main Street
- West Main at North Main Street, Firehouse Museum tower
- Historic homes, High Street
- South Hadley Public Library, 2 Canal Street
- Village Cemetery Arch, Spring Street
- South Hadley Town Hall, 116 Main Street

South Hadley Falls History (opposite):

Hampshire Paper Company, 1936 (National Archives)



South Hadley Falls History

South Hadley's first European settlement was founded by British settlers in 1661 as part of Hadley Plantation's common land, and was set off as the South Hadley district in 1753, and became the Town of South Hadley in 1775. Settlers arrived in South Hadley Falls and South Hadley Center simultaneously about 1727. The Center became the primary settlement when the first Meetinghouse was finished in 1737. South Hadley Falls came into its own as an industrial center about 1771 with three sawmills, two grist mills, and a fulling mill in operation. South Hadley Falls was also a fishing village and came to be a stop-off for lumberers who ran log drives down the Connecticut River and around the falls from the early 1700s.

After construction of the South Hadley Canal in 1795 brought South Hadley Falls business and major industry it became known as Canal Village. As passenger traffic increased up and down the Connecticut River, the small village grew and its available water power attracted investors in mills. Grist and sawmills prospered, but new large textile and paper mills precipitated growth and consequent road expansion in South Hadley Falls. The first two of the larger paper companies were the Howard and Lathrop and the D. & J. Ames mills that came in the 1820s. Both burned down in 1846, but the sites were too valuable to leave empty for long and the Carew Paper Manufacturing Company and the Glasgow Company were established in 1848.



At the Falls, the pace of development continued with the paper and textile mills from the 1820s until Holyoke began to attract more industries and immigrant settlement to work in them. South Hadley Falls' building leveled off with its main mills, mill workers' housing, boarding houses and stores. Canal Village grew more dense as lots were divided and new buildings went up as infill. During the 1870s, to attract and keep immigrants as factory

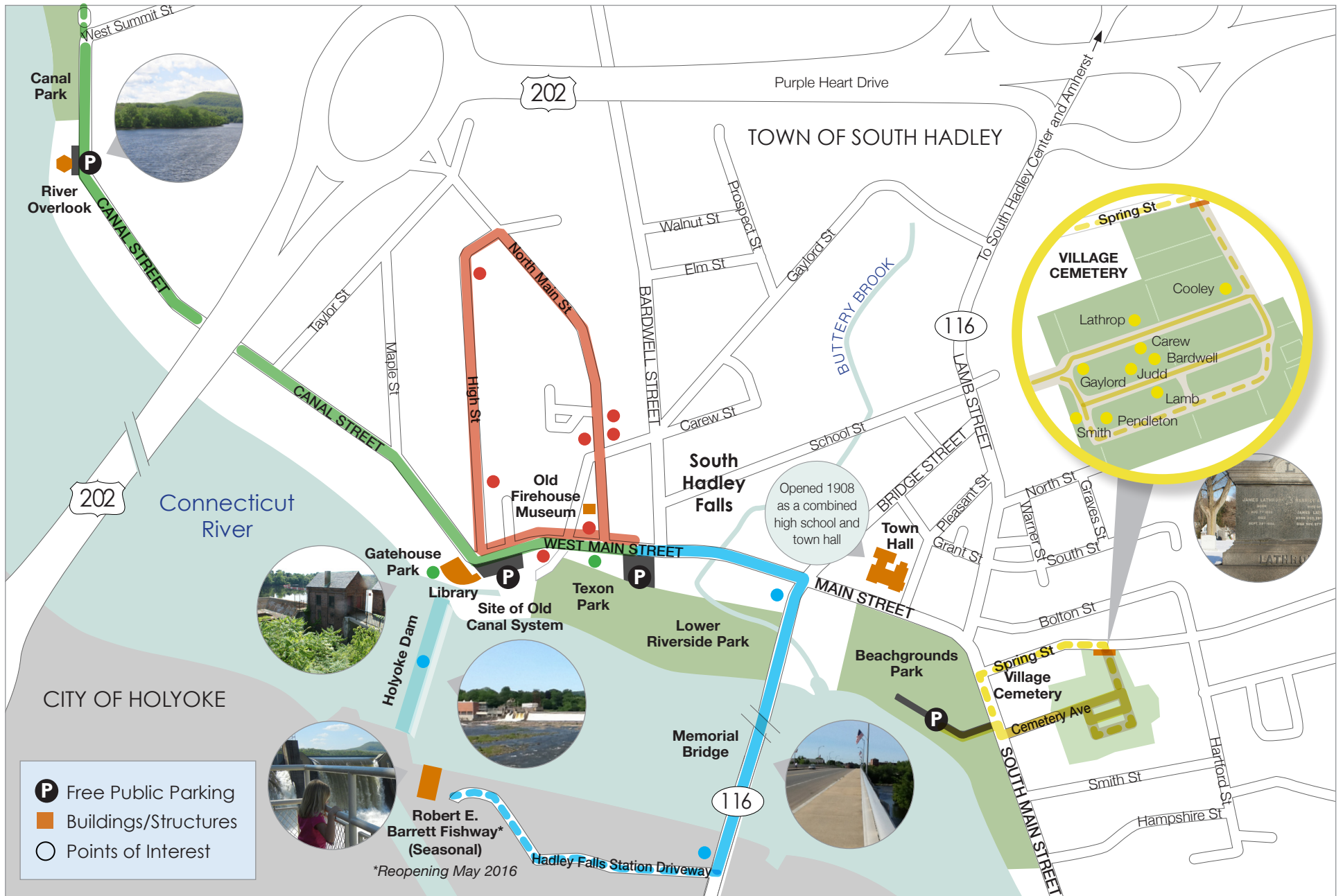
workers, the Glasgow Company built two-family housing with large lots for gardens. Workers from the Glasgow Company and the Carew Manufacturing Company were housed in multi-family houses built on speculation by entrepreneurs, or in existing single-family houses, where often several generations of a family shared the house. Construction of a connecting bridge between South Hadley Falls and Holyoke in 1872 precipitated an increase in the Falls' population. The new bridge allowed people to live in less dense South Hadley Falls and work in the mills of Holyoke. Previously they would have had to take the swing ferry to Holyoke, which was more difficult and time-consuming.

As competition from southern states increased in the 1950s and 60s, the paper mills continued to operate but employed fewer people until they eventually closed. During the 1950s and 60s, families who had worked in the mills for generations began to diversify their employment, rather than choosing to leave South Hadley.

—Adapted from *South Hadley Comprehensive Plan, 2010*

WALKING THE FALLS

The Great Falls of South Hadley were visible to onlookers until the 1849 construction of the Holyoke dam. Caused by a 53-foot drop in the river bed at this site, water cascaded through falls and rapids as the river made its 410-mile journey from the Canada-New Hampshire border to Long Island Sound. The Connecticut River is New England's longest river and is the first designated National Blueway.

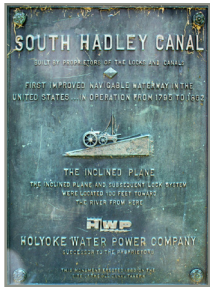


CANAL WALK

1.6 miles round trip

1.8 miles with riverside extension

Begin the Canal Walk at the parking area on Main Street. Turn left on Main Street. On the left is a small park with a bronze marker describing the “inclined plane” and canal system that allowed boats moving up and down the Connecticut River to bypass a 53-foot drop at Great Falls. This system opened in 1795 to commercial traffic (a scale model is on display at the Old Firehouse Museum on North Main Street). The South Hadley Canal District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1992.



Before the canal system was built, cargo needed to be unloaded for 2.5 miles of land transport around the falls. The canal, using the inclined plane pioneered in

England, began transporting 20-foot by 60-foot flatboats past the falls. In 1805 the inclined plane was replaced by a series of five locks when it was necessary to deepen the canal. By 1843 competing railroads had begun to erode income, and the canal closed as uneconomical in 1862.

Continue up a short hill along Main Street to Canal Street and the South Hadley Public Library, where the remnants of the canal system and location of the original gatehouses (rebuilt after a devastating flood in 1936), can be viewed from inside the library. The library stands directly above the hydroelectric dam on the river.

Continue on Canal Street past riverfront homes, and under the Route 202 overpass to the Canal Park overlook that offers beautiful views of the river and mountains (Mount Tom and the Holyoke Range). A path leads from Canal Park to the river's edge. Two bronze markers along the path describe the canal system and its importance to early commerce, and more remnants of the canal can be seen. Retrace your steps back to the Main Street parking area.

HOMES AND HISTORY

1 mile round trip

The Homes and History Tour begins at the heart of the bustling 18th century “Canal Village” at the intersection of Main and North Main streets, once the location of two taverns that served flatboat workers using the historic canal at South Hadley Falls.



From the parking lot, go left and cross West Main at the intersection of North Main

Street. The Fred M. Smith Memorial Park on the corner memorializes one of the town's most civic-minded citizens. Walk up the gradual hill on North Main Street to the Old Firehouse Museum, an 1888 structure that served as an active fire station until 1974, and now houses exhibits from the town's history. It is free and open to the public 1:30-4:00pm on Sundays, May through September.

The classic white clapboard Methodist Church on the corner of Carew Street was built as a Congregational Church in 1832. The Chapin home at 18 North Main Street was built by the family of the builders of the canal, while 21 North Main was the home of Quartus Judd, a canal toll collector.

Turn left at the intersection of High Street, where homes built by mill owners and businessmen in the 18th and 19th centuries occupy an area formerly known as the Chapin Estate. The Chapin family burial ground was located near 78 High Street. At the end of High Street is a row of duplex homes that were built to house the workers in the paper mills that lined the river.

Looking to the right at High and Main Streets is the Public Library. Turn left, and walk down the hill past exposed shale at the former site of a quarry that supplied foundations for homes and factories. Return to your starting point.

BRIDGE LOOP

1 mile round trip

Hadley Falls Station driveway adds .6 mile

The Bridge Walk begins at the parking lot near Main and North Main streets. Turn right down Main Street, past several businesses and turn right onto Bridge Street (Route 116). This leads to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Bridge, built in 1994 to replace an 1889 structure, which itself replaced an 1872 wooden bridge.

As you walk up the incline, Buttery Brook passes below and empties into the Connecticut River just downstream. The sandy, wooded area below the bridge is often submerged during high water.

The river is punctuated by islands of trees and shrubs—roost for eagles, cormorants, great blue herons, gulls, and turkey vultures during the spring fish migration. Upstream is the 1000-foot-wide, 30-foot-high granite dam built in 1900. A wooden version was built in 1848, but quickly washed away. A second wooden dam was built



in 1849 and still stands under water and upriver from the present dam.

Five rubber bladders atop the dam are raised to increase water for hydro power production. Raising and lowering the bladders creates spill patterns that range from trickles to torrents. After heavy rains or during spring snow melts, water pours over the entire dam. At the left end of the dam water is continually released, allowing fish to bypass the turbines and to pass downstream. At the far end of the bridge you stand above the tailrace canal that returns water that has passed through the power turbines to the river.

Continue onto the Hadley Falls Station driveway and walk under the bridge to a fishing platform. The drive also leads to the Robert Barrett Fishway, where you can witness the spring fish migration from early May to mid-June (reopening May 2016). Complete the loop by walking it in reverse.

CEMETERY WANDER

.45 mile round trip (without extension)

Dogs (except for service dogs) are not allowed

From the Beachgrounds parking area, cross Main Street. Turn right, then left onto Cemetery Avenue to the Civil War Veterans Memorial (pictured below) and go left. Gravestones in the cemetery bear the names of many of the town's



founders. On the right is the grave of John Gaylord, who owned a sawmill and whose family donated land for the now-closed 1906 library on Gaylord Street. Farther up on the left is the grave of James Lathrop,

who owned a paper mill on the Connecticut River. The grave of mill owner Joseph Carew is across the road, and to the right is Josiah Bardwell, a businessman who controlled freight on the river and owned a gristmill and tannery. Near the end of the road on the left is the tall stone of Ariel Cooley, who operated the historic South Hadley Canal and a sawmill.

Go right and around to the middle road. Halfway along on the left is the Lamb plot. The family owned an inn and extensive property in South Hadley Falls, including the land purchased for the cemetery. On the right is the Judd family plot; the Judds were a prominent family who owned a large farm on North Main Street. Turn left at the crossroad and look on the right side for the stone of Newton Smith, who owned property on both sides of Newton Street. On the left side is the grave of Rev. John Pendleton, a minister and land owner of the original Pine Tree Cemetery on James Street, who died before his planned church near this cemetery was built.

From here, return via Cemetery Avenue to the parking area. To view Village Cemetery's wrought iron arch and to exit at Spring Street, continue to the next road and turn left; continue along the far road to the arch. Go left on Spring Street and left on Main Street to return to parking.