

WILLIAMS- BOLTWOOD HOUSE GOSHEN



Built by John Williams in 1779, this house later served as the meeting place for the fledgling town of Goshen in 1781. Over time, it became a tavern, inn, general store, post office, and stagecoach stop. It was owned and inhabited by Williams descendants until 2001.

John Williams relocated his building in 1824 after the State of Massachusetts announced plans to alter the route of the Albany-Boston Post Road – moving the route away from Williams' various businesses.

The Williams family is significant in that they were known for their involvement in the Revolutionary War, establishing the town of Goshen and serving in myriad capacities as part of its government. They were instrumental in establishing Amherst College (1821) and had close connections with the families of Emily Dickinson and Ralph Waldo Emerson.

Resource at Risk

The house is at risk due to many years of neglect and vacancy and a lack of security on the site. There is concern regarding the loss of structural integrity from shifting groundwater patterns due to climate change, as well as a change in drainage patterns from alterations to the highway located less than 30' from the house and significant fundraising needs to be done to rehabilitate the house for community use.

What's Happening Now

The house is now in the care of the Williams Boltwood Project, a non-profit community organization whose mission is to preserve the house. They purchased it from the Town of Goshen in 2021. The Town of Goshen holds a restrictive deed on the property stating that ownership reverts to the town if the house is torn down or relocated. There is a significant amount of community support for the project with constant local media coverage, successful fundraising events and programs, and supportive local and national donors. The group faces significant funding challenges but has had recent small successes, including a grant from the 1772 Foundation via Preservation Massachusetts as well as funds from private donors and the DAR.