

TACKLING AGAINST POSTMODERNISM

Gloucester's Working Port Holds its Course

BY

LAURIE REYNA PESSAH

BA IN URBAN STUDIES
VASSAR COLLEGE
POUGHKEEPSIE, NEW YORK

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MASTER IN CITY PLANNING
AT THE
MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
JUNE 2002

©Laurie Reyna Pessah. All Rights Reserved

AUTHOR

_____ ✓

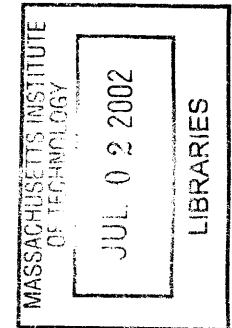
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
May 16, 2002

CERTIFIED BY

Professor Anne Whiston Spirn
Department of Urban Studies and Planning
Thesis Supervisor

ACCEPTED BY

Professor Dennis Frenchman
Chair, MCP Committee
Department of Urban Studies and Planning



TACKLING AGAINST POSTMODERNISM

Gloucester's Working Port Holds its Course

BY

LAURIE REYNA PESSAH

Submitted to the Department of Urban Studies and Planning
on May 16, 2002 in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
MASTER IN CITY PLANNING

ABSTRACT

Gloucester, Massachusetts has long been regarded as the quintessential working port in the Northeast and the home of commercial fishing in America for several hundred years. Today, Gloucester's working port is threatened by dwindling fish stocks, strict land-use regulations and development pressures. The expansion of the tourism sector is spurned because 1) it is not fishing 2) it is not to be trusted, that it could turn against Gloucester and degrade the unique, authentic character of the city.

I argue that managing Gloucester's waterfront as an attractive, appealing destination and protecting the working port are not antithetical concepts. In fact, combining both of these notions might be the best way to protect Gloucester's identity and preserve its living heritage. Planning

should endeavor to mitigate any potential conflict between the two, and wherever possible, bind their fates together to create a sustainable, authentic place.

This thesis is divided into analysis and recommendations. The analysis covers Gloucester's present situation through an exploration of the city's history and culture, and is paired with a review of the global waterfront revival movement and discussion of a number of postmodern trends as they relate to Gloucester. The combined findings of this local and cultural analysis form the basis for the urban design recommendations in the second part of the thesis. The recommendations are divided into three categories: policy issues, physical improvements and institutional reforms.

Thesis Supervisor: Anne Whiston Spirn
Title: Professor of Landscape Architecture

TABLE OF CONTENTS

7		<i>Introduction</i>
11		<i>History of Gloucester</i>
21		<i>Planning Gloucester</i>
31		<i>The Postmodern Condition</i>
43		<i>The Waterfront Revival</i>
51		<i>A Planning Agenda</i>
61		<i>Harbor Cove Urban Design Recommendations</i>
79		<i>Conclusion</i>
83		<i>Appendix One: Bibliography</i>
87		<i>Appendix Two: Figure Credits</i>
91		<i>Acknowledgements</i>

1 INTRODUCTION

Gloucester is the symbolic capital of commercial fishing in America. The sub-heading in Monday's City & Region section of the Boston Globe read: "More than a hundred boats from region jam Gloucester Harbor." Fishermen from Maine to New Jersey assembled in Gloucester to protest the latest restrictions on fishing on George's Bank, the once abundant fishing grounds 150 miles off the New England coast. Gloucester holds this distinction as the first city of fishing because of its history, because of its geography and because of its heritage. Gloucester actually was the first fishing port in America. It is where the schooner, the boat whose design revolutionized the fishing industry in the 19th century, was first developed. Its well-sheltered harbor is perfectly situated for fishing voyages to George's Bank and the Grand Bank. Remarkably, through nearly 400 years of commercial fishing, Gloucester has maintained a living tradition where people today are engaged in a livelihood not too far removed from that of the first generations of British settlers.



More than 100 vessels jammed Gloucester Harbor yesterday to protest the strict, court-ordered fishing rules.

New US fishing rules protested

More than 100 boats from region jam Gloucester Harbor

By Beth Daley
GLOBE STAFF

GLoucester — Flying black garbage bags in mourning, more than 100 New England fishing boats crowded into Gloucester Harbor yesterday to protest new fishing restrictions, the industry's biggest sign of unity in decades.

Hand-lettered signs tacked to lobster boats and spray-painted sheets draped across drizzlers, declaring "Fishermen: An endangered species," drew hearty cheers from hundreds of supporters, themselves hoisting placards bearing slogans of support on shore. As a static-filled rendition of "God Bless America" blared from speakers near the famed "Man at the Wheel" statue, fishermen from Maine to New Jersey turned out to support the local fleet. Horns blasted. Sirens flared shot into the water.

The protest comes as New England's commercial fishermen are experiencing the toughest restrictions in more than a decade, with a ruling 10 days ago by a US District Court judge who ordered sweeping new rules to prevent overfishing. The number of days fishermen are permitted to fish has been cut and the areas that are off-limits to fishing have been significantly expanded in the restrictions that took effect May 1.

"This is a life-and-death time," said



Darren Hart, 6, sitting on her father's shoulders during yesterday's protest. Darren Hart has been a fisherman for 25 years.

Senator Edward Kennedy, who made an unexpected stop in Gloucester to speak to the group. After speeches from local politicians, the brightly colored boats left to parade in front of a Rocky Neck restaurant where Democratic gubernatorial candidates and state legislators were having breakfast.

"This harbor has seen fishing for 400 years. . . . You are asking for fairness. We are not going to let up," Kennedy said. Later, he said he would pursue all avenues, including legislation to soften the blow.

Fishermen often protest regulations. But years ago, the outcries were muted by an irrefutable fact: There were few fish in the sea to catch. But in the last three years, New England's most fabled and valuable fish — cod — is making a comeback, so much so that lobstermen are flooding them in their traps. To place further restrictions on fishermen at a time when stocks are rebounding makes no sense, fishermen and politicians said yesterday.

Federal scientists and environmentalists, however, see it differently. Armed with new data that show fishing stocks could grow more than first thought, they want even greater protections so the populations can thrive and reproduce. Then, they say, there will be enough fish to ensure commercial fishing's future. They say the fledgling comeback is no guarantee that stocks have been restored for good.

"The increases are relative to a complete collapse," said Eric Blüsky, an attorney with Oceana who is representing three environmental groups who

FISHING, Page B4

Fig. 1.1 The Boston Globe, Monday May 6, 2002.

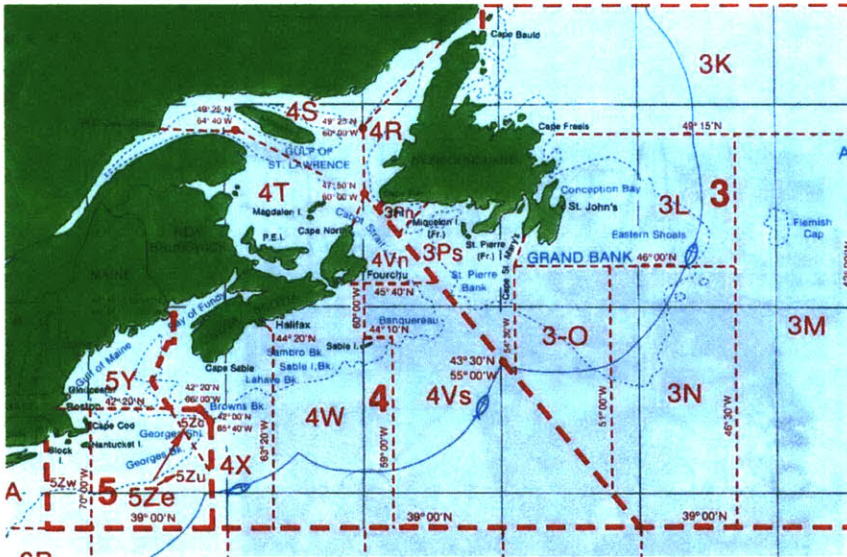


Fig. 1.2 Map of the fishing grounds off the coast of the Northeast Seaboard.



Fig. 1.3 Aerial view of Gloucester Harbor.

Today, this way of life, and consequently, Gloucester Harbor itself, is threatened by dwindling fish populations and ever stricter regulations limiting the number of legal fishing days. This latest regulation, which spurred the protest reported in the paper, was the result of a court case that reduced the number of fishing days further. Gloucester has more than a struggling fishing industry to contend with, though. It has become susceptible to a greater trend in our society—the commodification of the city. Gloucester’s beautiful setting, vibrant character, rich history and convenience to Boston make it a desirable location. America’s advanced capitalist marketplace and contemporary culture are highly attuned to these qualities of place. More business and personal choices are based on place and the experience being in a particular location offers—so much so that the city itself, in whole or in part, has become a product to be marketed and sold.

The fear in Gloucester is that either of these two forces, the contracting fishing opportunities or the rising value of Gloucester as a location, could independently lead to the devastation of Gloucester’s Harbor and the working port. Together, they are considered to be a lethal combination. As more fishing related businesses struggle and close, development pressure increases to convert the land to a more profitable use. If non-fishing industries were to come onto the waterfront, existing industrial uses will be pushed out either because their land becomes more valuable, or their presence would not be welcome in a redeveloped port. Tourism as an economic alternative has been derided because the perception is 1) it is not fishing and 2) it is not to be trusted, that tourism could easily turn against Gloucester and degrade it with T-shirt shops and other kinds of “non-place” development.

In response to this threat to the working port, the state and local government have enacted stringent land-use regulations preventing anything but marine-industrial uses for the waterfront on the Inner Harbor. But, while these measures have prevented unwanted types of development, such as condos and retail, many would argue that they are so restrictive that they have dampened desirable waterfront development as well.

Gloucester needs another way to respond, one that increases possibilities rather than restricting them. Is there some way to make these apparently negative forces counteract each other and actually improve the situation?

I argue in this thesis that managing Gloucester's waterfront as an attractive, appealing destination and protecting the working port are not antithetical concepts. The objective should be to mitigate any potential conflict between the two, and wherever possible, bind their fates together to create a sustainable, authentic place and way of life.

In order to achieve this ideal through planning and urban design, it is necessary to appreciate how this intertwined concept of an attractive and functioning working port relates to Gloucester. This in turn requires not just an appreciation for the built environment of Gloucester, the culture, and the history of the city, but also the nature of cultural trends which act on Gloucester, and of which it is a part. These cultural trends include: the global waterfront revival, post-industrialism, the commodification of the city and the ascendancy of image. I consider these trends to be interrelated and group them under the concept of postmodernism. Postmodernism, however, is a sweeping term and easily eludes definition. In the context of this paper, I single out the issues of post-industrialism, the commodification of the city, waterfront revivals and the ascendancy of image as facets of postmodernism particularly relevant to urbanism in general and Gloucester's situation in particular.

The structure of this thesis is broken into two parts: analysis and recommendations. The analysis section includes a careful examination of Gloucester's history, the planning context, an evaluation of several topics in postmodernism, and an overview of the phenomenon of waterfront revivals. The conclusion of this analysis is that Gloucester's most promising course is to link the goals of being both an attractive and functioning working port; also, that Harbor Cove, the historic part of the Inner Harbor, is the most critical and promising place to concentrate these efforts. The second part of the thesis, then, outlines a planning agenda for Harbor Cove based on this concept, as well as policy and design recommendations that could help realize it.



Fig 1.4-5 Remarkably, these two photographs were taken from the same spot on Harbor Loop.

2 HISTORY OF GLOUCESTER

Introduction

Gloucester is a place with a rich living tradition and a storied past. It has the distinction of being the first colonial fishing port in the United States. Gloucester is also home to the oldest art colony in America. The city's prominence and cultural heritage are an important consideration as it plans for the future. Equally important for planning is an appreciation for the history of the built environment—how Gloucester came to look the way it does.

Early History—A Great Harbor by Any Name

Gloucester's harbor, on the southern shore of Cape Ann, has been recognized as a safe and beautiful port since the earliest days of European exploring.¹ The first visitors to land in the harbor were Norsemen on a voyage down the Eastern seaboard in 1001. They called Gloucester "Kroasness" meaning the Cape of the Cross.² Sometime later, the

¹ None of my sources recount any Native American references to Cape Anne.

² *Gloucester General Plan and Report*, Gloucester Planning Board, (Caneub, Fleissig and Associates), 1963. Vol. I, p. 4.

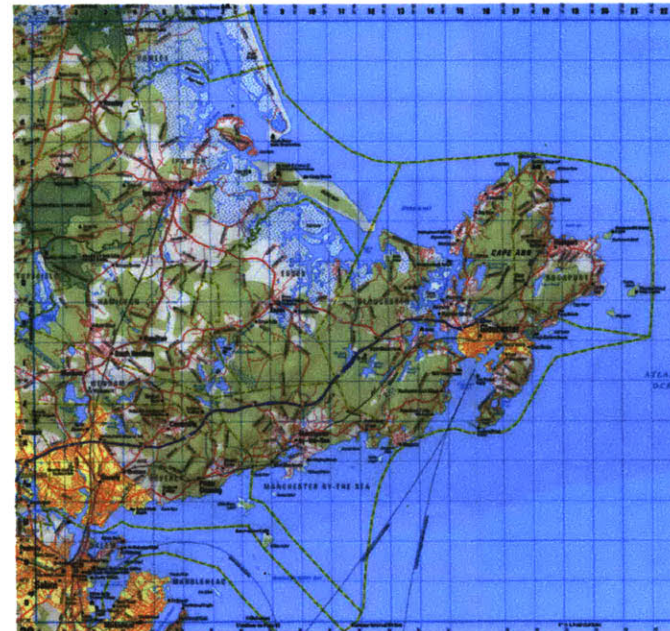


Fig. 2.1 Topographical map of Cape Ann.



Flake yards of Sayward Bros. at East Gloucester c.1903. Honce Sayward is identified as the gentleman in the derby hat. Now 65 E. Main Street. Courtesy of Lewis Wilkinson

Fig. 2.2 Fish Drying.



Fig. 2.3 A schooner launch in 1902.

Portuguese came to fish off the waters of what they called “Cabo de Santa Maria” or Cape of St. Mary.³ The French explorer, Samuel de Champlain sailed about the Cape he referred to as “Cape Aux Isles” in 1606, and anchored in the harbor calling it “Le Beau Port” or the Beautiful Harbor.⁴ In 1614, Captain John Smith, the English explorer, presented a map to Prince Charles depicting the Atlantic coast from Downes to North Virginia. On it, Smith gave the name “New England” to the Northeast region and dubbed the cape “Cape Tragabigzanda,” after a Turkish princess who had saved the captain.⁵ Prince Charles decided to rename the Cape in honor of his mother, Anne of Denmark, and this simpler name is the one that was passed down to the early colonists.

This first party from the Massachusetts Bay Colony arrived in 1623, only three years after the Pilgrims landed in Plymouth. These permanent settlers were of the Dorchester Company and named the city Gloucester after the Cathedral in England. They settled at Half Moon Bay, which is now Stage Fort Park, and survived on farming, fishing and collecting cordwood to trade with Boston. Neither the farming nor timber proved successful, but the Gulf of Maine just north of Cape Ann turned out to be tremendous fishing grounds. By the 1700s, fishing became the mainstay of Gloucester’s economy.⁶ The city was formally incorporated in 1642.⁷

Birth of Fishing

In 1713, the world’s first schooner was launched into Gloucester Harbor. These famous ships were developed specifically for fishing, with low-slung hulls that made it easier to haul in nets. Faster and sturdier than their predecessors, they allowed the fishermen to leave the waters near the shore and travel farther to richer fishing grounds on the Great Bank. The legend goes that at the launching of this new boat by Captain Andrew Robinson, the ship “slid so slickly into the water as to inspire an onlooker

³ *Gloucester Resource Study*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, National Sea Grant Program, 1973. p. 3.

⁴ *ibid.*

⁵ Gloucester Daily Times. “A Master Plan for the City of Gloucester.” May 27, 1937.

⁶ *ibid.*

⁷ Garland, Joseph E. *The Gloucester Guide*. Rockport, Massachusetts: Protean Press; 1998. p. 2.

⁸ *Gloucester Resource Study*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, National Sea Grant Program, 1973. p. 4.

to exclaim, ‘See how she scoons!’—upon which the builder declared, ‘A schooner let her be!’” (Garland, 84)

The era of the schooners was perhaps the most glorious in Gloucester’s history. A great seafaring tradition was borne of the special ship and the long, dangerous voyages to the Grand Bank which often lasted 10-12 weeks. The fish, almost exclusively cod, was salted and dried out on long tables everywhere along the shore before being shipped to Europe and other parts in the Colonies. Gloucester participated in both the Triangle Trade with the West Indies for rum and sugar, as well as the coastal trade with the other Colonies. By the start of the Revolutionary War, Gloucester had 70 or 80 large vessels and was second only to Marblehead in importance as a fishing port in the Colonies.⁹

After the French-American wars, Gloucester’s fleet gained better access to Canadian waters and began harvesting mackerel and halibut, in addition to cod.¹⁰ The fishing industry was incredibly prosperous. While surveying for a map in 1833, John Mason counted “443 vessels at anchor in the harbour besides what lay at Wharfs.” (Garland, 2) Imagine such a spectacle everyday—even grander than the Tall Ships celebrated here in Boston in 2000—in Gloucester’s snug harbor during this time.

People came from all over the world to take part in this booming industry. The first immigrants after the Revolutionary War came from Finland and from Ireland during the first Famine. Later, around 1845, the Italians and Portuguese came—first from the seafaring culture of the Azores, and later from Continental Europe.¹¹ By the end of the 19th century, “there were over 400 boats and 5,000 men sailing out of Gloucester, and the population had increased from a Revolutionary War figure of 5,000, to an 1860 figure of 25,000 despite the fact that thousands of men had drowned in the dangerous offshore fishing waters.” (Gloucester Resource Study, 5) “In 1895 the permanent population reached 28,211, a peak that has not since been attained.” (Gloucester Daily Times, May 27, 1937)

⁹ Gloucester Daily Times. “A Master Plan for the City of Gloucester.” May 27, 1937.

¹⁰ *Gloucester Resource Study*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, National Sea Grant Program, 1973. p. 4.

¹¹ Garland, Joseph E. *The Gloucester Guide*. Rockport, Massachusetts: Protean Press; 1998. p. 101.

¹² *ibid*, p. 123.



Fig. 2.4 Fishing Schooner.



Fig. 2.5 Dragger in Gloucester Harbor.



Fig. 2.6 A typical sail loft with workers.



Fig. 2.7 Good Harbor Fillet Co., Inc.

The End of an Era

The shift from sail to power [that] displaced almost without trace not only a fishing technology but a way of life, indeed a unique society.

(Garland, 121)

In 1900, the first diesel engines were introduced. They were soon followed by new advances in freezing technology. The new technology meant that boats could travel from even farther away to fish off the Great Bank and carry their catches elsewhere for processing. Gloucester's harbor and prime location near the fishing grounds became less important; its industry declined. The last schooner on a saltfishing trip under sail left in 1927.¹² Shipbuilding stopped, though the two marine railways, which hauled boats up to the shore for repair, remained in business repairing ships and retrofitting schooners to accommodate diesel engines and removing their masts. The last commercial schooner was launched in 1926 and retired from fishing in 1953.¹³ Named *Adventure*, she was returned to Gloucester in 1988, and is now a museum.

Countless skills and trades disappeared with the sail.

Sail was through. So were dory trawling, handlining, and jigging as pursuits of any major consequence, and the bait and salt industries, the acres of flake yards, the smokehouses, the blacksmith shops, the spar yards and the sail lofts. The diesel engine and the otter trawl, the draggers, had taken over.

(Garland, 123)

The Start of Another

The fishing industry may have begun to decline at the turn of the century, but the leisure industry was just taking off. Relatively close to Boston, the colorful, exciting port and pleasant beaches attracted Victorian vacationers. Numerous summer estates and hotels were built after the Civil War. Artists began taking up residence on Rocky Neck on the Eastern

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 124.

¹⁴ Gloucester Maritime Trail Brochure.

shore of the harbor in the late 1800s. Today, it is the oldest continuously active Art Colony in America and is still home to a thriving population of artists.¹⁴ Many famous artists lived and worked in Gloucester, among them Fitz Hugh Lane, Winslow Homer, and Edward Hopper. In 1923, the North Shore Arts Association, which houses paintings and sculpture of Gloucester artists, was founded in a converted warehouse.

Though the fishing economy had experienced a considerable decline from its heyday, it survived and adapted. Fish processing grew in importance, first canning and later freezing. It was a Gloucester resident, in fact, Clarence Birdseye, the founder of Birdseye Foods, who developed the method of quick freezing, which revolutionized the food industry.¹⁵ The State Pier at the end of the harbor was built in 1938 with a Public Freezer. But, unlike in the previous era, most of the growth in the industry occurred outside Gloucester.

In the 1930s, redfish temporarily fueled a recovery in the market. During World War II, Gloucester was the largest producer of ‘food fish’ in the country.¹⁶ But in the years that followed, the waterfront suffered from lack of investment and repair. *The 1963 General Plan* wasted no words before declaring the area blighted, “Physically, this contraction is reflected in the deterioration and abandonment of wharves and buildings and a generally rundown condition of the waterfront.” (*The 1963 General Plan*, 10)

Recent History—Hitting Bottom

In an effort to help Gloucester adapt to the new industry, urban renewal was organized in the late 1950s to clear the waterfront of the dilapidated built environment of the pre-modern era. New processing plants were built, including Gortons current plant. Rogers Street, the main road along the water, was widened to better accommodate 18-wheelers. In 1982, the State Pier was renovated and upgraded, but despite these

¹⁵ Gloucester Brochure, published by the Gloucester Tourism Commission.

¹⁶ *Gloucester Resource Study*, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, National Sea Grant Program, 1973. p. 6.



Fig. 2.8 "Prospect Street, Gloucester," Edward Hopper, 1928.

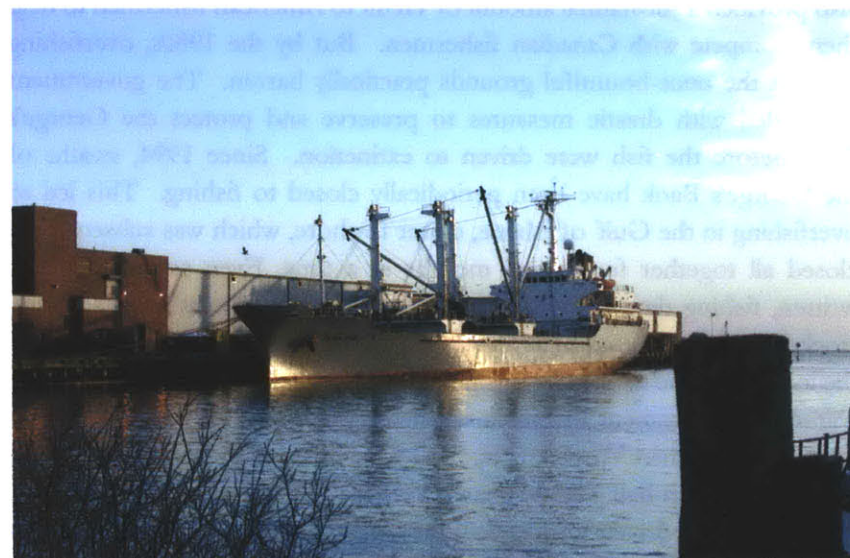


Fig. 2.9 Foreign trawler.

initiatives, both fishing and the fishing industry have steadily declined since the second half of the 20th century.

High technology fish-finding techniques, overfishing, the division of George's Bank by treaty, giving the richer portion to Canada in the mid-1980s, diminishing stocks, the inability of the fisherman to work collectively, environmental pollution, competition from Canadian imports, escalating waterfront land values, even insurance-scuttling, all took their toll. By 1989 Gloucester's dwindling fleet was a poor relation in its own front yard.

(Garland, 122)

The worst period for Gloucester was probably in the 1970s. During this time, huge foreign factory trawlers came from all over the world to fish off the George's Bank (150 miles off-shore and 20,000 square miles in area).¹⁷ In 1977, the federal government passed the Magnuson Act, extending the territorial waters to 200 miles offshore. The government also provided a substantial amount of credit to American fishermen to help them compete with Canadian fishermen. But by the 1980s, overfishing had left the once-bountiful grounds practically barren. The government responded with drastic measures to preserve and protect the George's Bank before the fish were driven to extinction. Since 1994, swaths of the George's Bank have been periodically closed to fishing. This led to overfishing in the Gulf of Maine, closer to shore, which was subsequently closed all together for several months at a time. Even as this thesis is written, fishing days are being further reduced to protect the dwindling stocks. While the measures seem necessary to preserve the fishing stock for the long term, the fishermen it affects today are understandably furious and blame the government for much of their hardship. Alvin Arnold, 83, was quoted in Gretchen Voss's article, "We used to fish 120 days a year. Now, that's been cut in half and you can barely make a living." The Gloucester fishermen were driven to desperation, unable to support the debt on the new boats the government had financed. According to this article, boat

owners resorted to running drugs, guns for the IRA or torching their boats for insurance money.

With such a devaluation of the fishing economy at a time when newer, tourist-oriented waterfront uses were becoming profitable, it is not surprising that developers showed interest in redeveloping the area for condos and retail. However, with the increased fishing regulations, the state and local governments also introduced more planning measures and funding to protect the working port. In 1993, the Waterways Commission developed the first Harbor Plan. A second one was just completed in 1999.

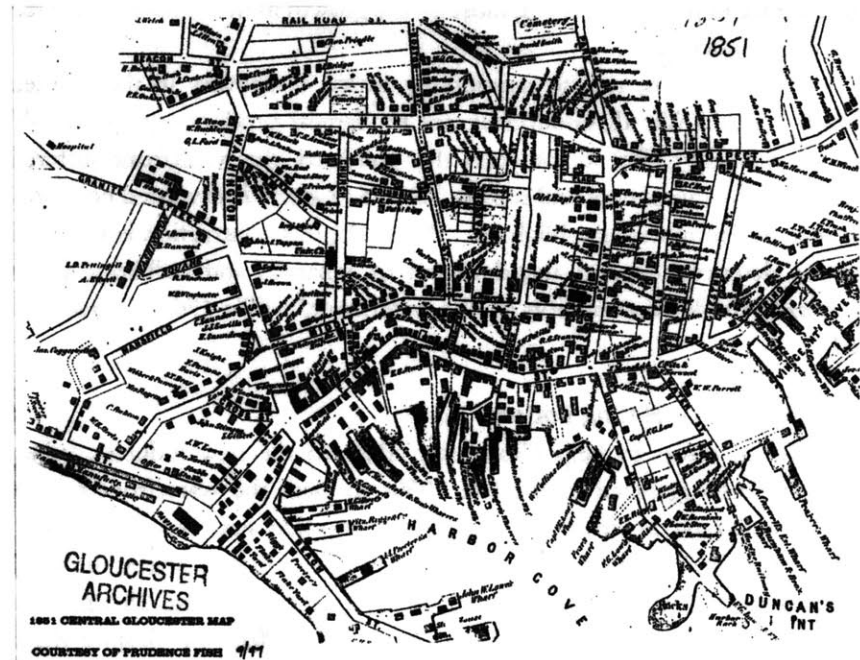


Fig. 2.10 1851 Central Gloucester map.

¹⁷ All of the data of this paragraph is taken from: Voss, Gretchen. "Welcome to Gloucester—Now Get the Hell Out." *Boston Magazine*, June 1999, vol 91, Issue 6. p. 68.

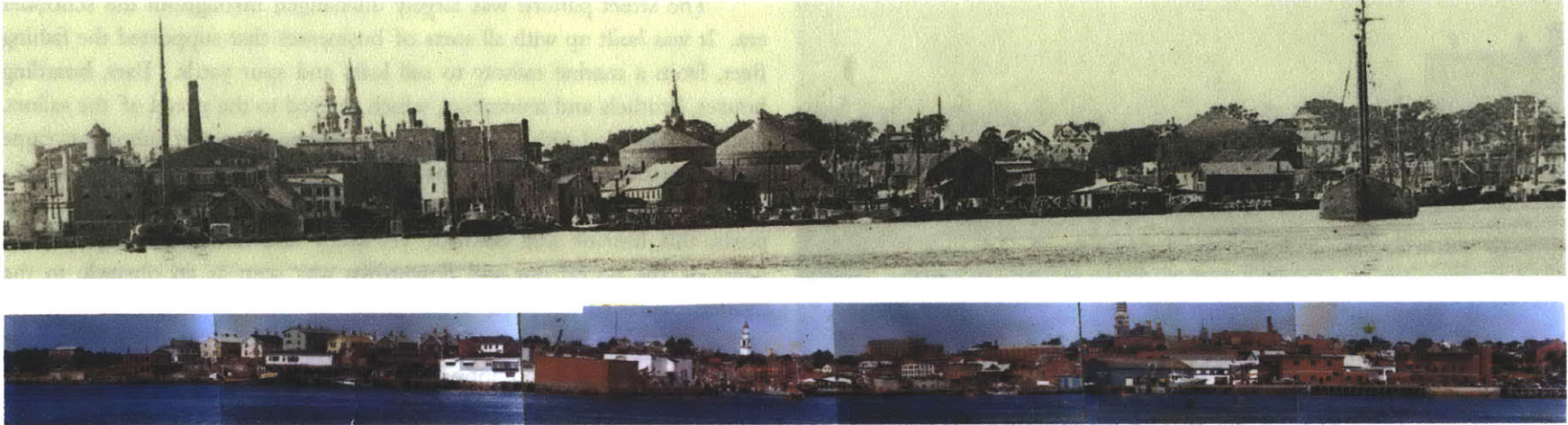


Fig 2.11-12 View of Gloucester's waterfront from the harbor, 1901 (top). Similar view, 1980 (bottom).

The Physical History of the Downtown Waterfront¹⁸

The historic waterfront of Gloucester has been shaped by several waves of destruction and reconstruction. Whole city blocks have been destroyed repeatedly, streets have been created, moved and removed, and the waterfront has been dredged and filled in—all of which is pretty typical for a nearly 400 year-old city that has borne witness to several technological revolutions.

The waterfront has always led the development of Gloucester. It was out of the original Harbor Village, in what is now Harbor Cove, that the city grew. “When in 1700 the forest extended to the waterfront, 50 years later there were many wharves along the shore.”¹⁹ In the earliest days of the port, there were three streets—Front Street, Middle Street and Back Street. Front Street ran along the waterfront and the wharves were built out from it. As the port grew, the land between the wharves filled in and more developable land was created as the shoreline advanced into the natural harbor. The banks and other non-fishing buildings on Front Street became

further from the shore and small, private roads were built to serve the back of the wharves as well as the back of Front Street.

As was the case in many early American cities, devastating fires were an opportunity for redesigning and improving the city. Two great fires one in 1830 and a second in 1864 leveled much of Gloucester's business district.²⁰ The first fire destroyed the west end of Main Street, including 43 stores. The second fire was even worse, leveling 15 acres of land, 103 buildings, and leaving 38 families homeless. As they rebuilt the city, they redesigned the circulation at and around the waterfront. Front Street was combined with several other streets to make Main Street. Rogers Street, named after the merchant promoter George H. Rogers, was created along the waterfront from Porter Street where the fire began, to Water Street where it was stopped.²¹

¹⁸ The entirety of this section is based on information from local historian Joseph E. Garland's book, *The Gloucester Guide*.

¹⁹ Gloucester Daily Times. “A Master Plan for the City of Gloucester.” May 27, 1937.

²⁰ Garland, Joseph E. *The Gloucester Guide*. Rockport, Massachusetts: Protean Press; 1998. p. 109.

²¹ *Ibid.*



Fig. 2.13 Effects of The Great Fire of February 18, 1864, looking East from the North side of Front (now Main) Street.

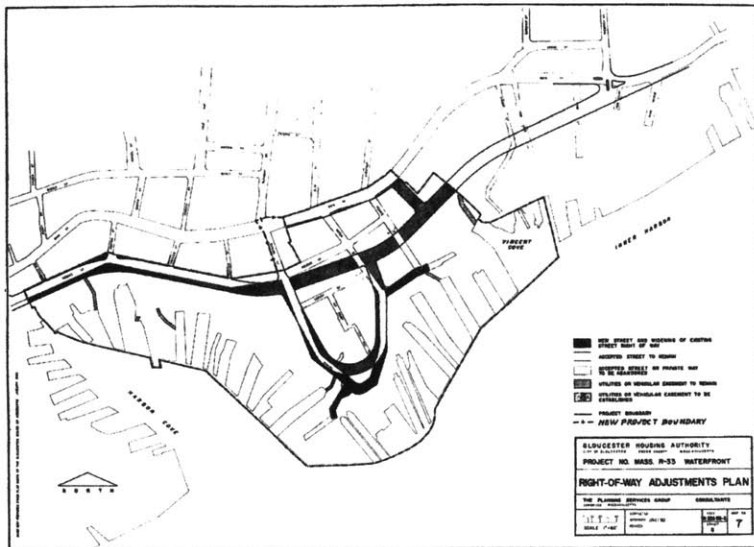


Fig. 2.14 Right-of-way Adjustments, from Urban Renewal Plan 1963.

The street pattern was largely unchanged throughout the schooner era. It was built up with all sorts of businesses that supported the fishing fleet, from a marine railway to sail lofts and spur yards. Bars, boarding houses, brothels and tenements, which catered to the needs of the sailors, were intermingled with these other uses. When the era of schooners came to a close, the crowded district of woodframe structures deteriorated.

At a time when Gloucester was struggling to compete with other ports, this historic and colorful, yet seedy and ramshackle, area in the heart of the waterfront and downtown was seen as an obstacle to the modernization of the port. When Urban Renewal funds became available in the 1950's to clear out and help revitalize older, "blighted" parts of American cities, it was not long before planners in Gloucester settled on the downtown waterfront as most needing of modern planning and funding.

The first Urban Renewal district stretched from Duncan's Point to Fort Point across the historic waterfront.²² "What now is Harbor Loop began [here] as the barroom end of "Drunken Street" (a.k.a. Duncan Street), swung around the docks as Wharf Street and returned to Rogers Street as Water Street." (Garland, 131) Rogers Street was widened and aligned to meet with proposed arterials. Rogers Street became the main route through town. An amusing relic of this change is a statue of Joan of Arc on a horse which is no longer facing the primary approach to the waterfront. As a result, most cars today are presented on arrival with the rear-end of a horse.

The moving of the street and selective demolition has left holes along the street wall of Rogers Street. Parking lots were added up and down Rogers Street and at the end in St. Peter's Cove. Many of the buildings on the waterfront side have no frontage on Rogers Street, but instead parking lots.

²² The second urban renewal area came later and is further down the harbor outside of my focus area.

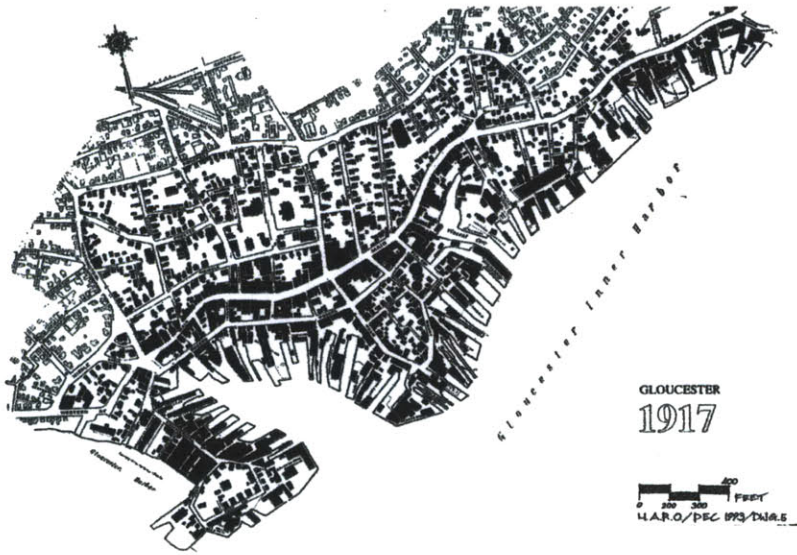


Fig. 2.15 Figure/Ground Map of Central Gloucester, 1917.

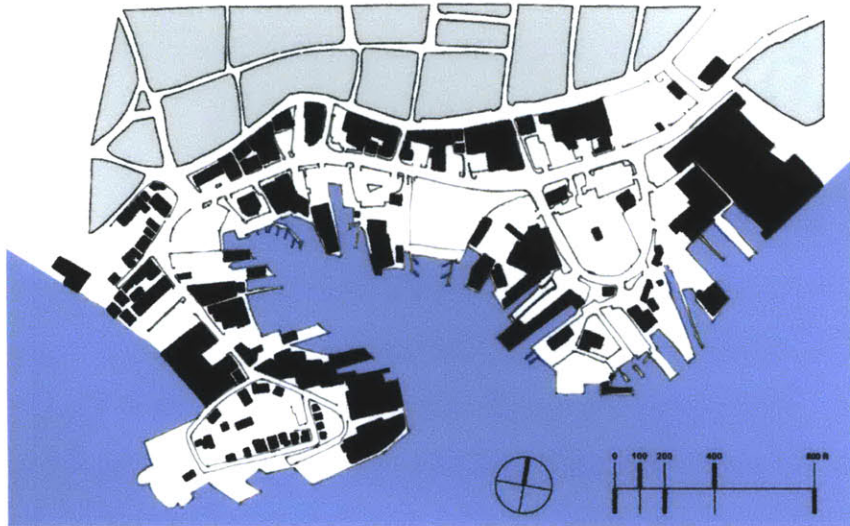


Fig. 2.16 Figure/Ground of Harbor Cove, 2002.

3 PLANNING GLOUCESTER

Every planning effort must make deliberate choices regarding its priorities and methods. Evaluating trends in the history of planning in Gloucester can provide insight into the impact of these choices. This chapter closely examines two plans, the first being Urban Renewal, and the second being the *1999 Harbor Plan*. Urban Renewal had a dramatic and lasting impact on the waterfront that must be understood before any future plans for the harbor can be made. The *1999 Harbor Plan* is the last official planning report for the harbor, but represents only part of the planning mechanism currently guiding development along the waterfront. Over the last 25 years, a complex regulatory framework, at both the state and local levels, has been developed to govern land-use in Gloucester. Accordingly, the second section of this chapter explores the definitions and details of the Designated Port Area status, State Regulation Chapter 91, and the local Marine-Industrial zoning district. Finally, this chapter concludes with an overview of planning in Gloucester since its inception, in order to gain a sense of how it has evolved and where it may be heading in the future.



Fig. 3.1 Regulatory Boundaries in Harbor Cove. Pink: Harbor Line; Blue: Chapter 91; Brown: Designated Port Area; Green: Marine-Industrial District; Purple: Historic District.



Fig. 3.2 Duncan's Point, now Harbor Loop, prior to Urban Renewal.

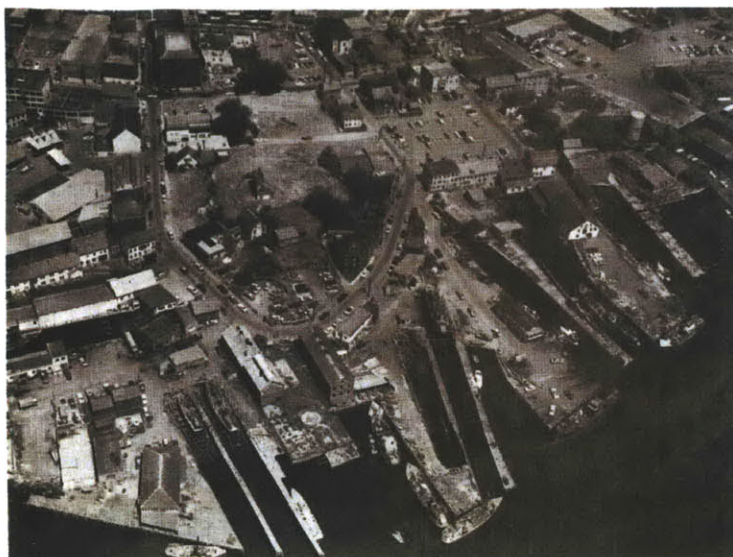


Fig 3.3 Duncan's Point during demolition.

Urban Renewal

More than 50% of the total buildings and structures are out of repair, physically deteriorated, unfit for human habitation, obsolete, or in need of major maintenance or repair. Within this area there is a large incidence of both overcrowding and improper location of dwelling structures on the land, as well as excessive dwelling density. Within this area are such detrimental conditions as incompatible land use, structures in mixed use and obsolete building types. There is great incidence of fires in the area as may be readily pointed out by referring to fire department records. Many of the buildings do not conform to present building ordinance requirements for the Fire Districts in which they are located.

(General Plan 1963)

The principles and rationalization for urban renewal in Gloucester are not much different than for any other American city. The fishing industry was in decline, the once vibrant streets had crowded, sub-standard dwelling units some of which were abandoned, and the people who lived there were working class. The fishing technology had changed and modernized and the old infrastructure was considered insufficient or out of date. People believed new land was needed to accommodate the modern fishing industry and to help Gloucester recover its former capacity and volume of business.

There were two urban renewal schemes executed in Gloucester between 1958 and 1972. The first was in the Harbor Cove and is the one addressed in this paper.

The greatest physical evidence of Urban Renewal on Rogers Street today, is the effect on the streetwall between St. Peter's Square parking lot and Harbor Loop. With the re-alignment of Rogers Street, facades were removed, and building lots altered. Half-lots were added to the northside of the street and are put towards haphazard parking. There are few windows. Sections of the sidewalk where Rogers Street was realigned were not replaced. One Urban Renewal parcel has remained vacant for 35 years, and is still referred to by its U.R. parcel number, I.C.42. One positive

benefit of Urban Renewal was that it opened up more visual corridors from the street to the water.

Urban Renewal actually changed the whole role of Rogers Street. Where once it had been the backside of both Main Street and the waterfront uses, it became the main arterial through town. Originally a service street, it lacks the substance of a principal street.

The 1999 Harbor Plan

The *1999 Harbor Plan* was designed to cover a lot of bases. It serves as the Designated Port Master Plan which makes Gloucester eligible for Seaport Bond money.¹ Whereas earlier plans dictated policy to some extent (the 1963 plan includes an entire proposed zoning bylaw), the 1999 plan must answer to the existing regulations described later in this chapter. In addition to the dictates from above, the plan attempts to respond to and reconcile the interests of local stakeholders. In order to accomplish this it was written by a committee, which included state officials, local officials, business owners and citizens, who met over two years and included significant citizen involvement. The plan is composed of four detailed appendices of analysis and documentation and a summarizing, glossy report of the recommendations. The principal recommendations are: 1) Improve port infrastructure, 2) Create a Gloucester Harbor partnership, and 3) Build a Maritime museum on the vacant urban renewal parcel.

The public infrastructure section of the *1999 Harbor Plan* proposes a strategy for much needed investment in the waterfront infrastructure, including the seawalls, streets and navigation channels. It recommends capitalizing on the cultural and natural assets of the Harbor by attracting private investment to downtown and building a museum. The overall strategy of the plan is to propose a sanctioned, practical approach to respond to current needs and position the Harbor to take advantage of new opportunities.² This strategy is more reactive in nature than the declaratory, proactive plans of the modern, Urban Renewal, era. Similarly, its methods

¹ *Gloucester Harbor Plan*, Gloucester, (ICON Architects Inc.), 1999. p. 2.

² *ibid.*



Fig 3.4 Aerial of Harbor Cove, with Harbor Loop in the foreground, ~1980.



Fig. 3.5 An example of post-Urban Renewal architecture on Rogers Street.

rely more on programming and strategic investment rather than large-scale physical intervention.

The most powerful suggestion the *1999 Harbor Plan* makes for improving the port is the Gloucester Partnership. This organization is described as a non-profit organization designed to “assist small-medium sized businesses on historic finger piers” and “receive and manage funds” (1999 Harbor Plan, 24) The Plan contends that coordination of public and private interests would help maintain the tradition and economic success of the working port.

Although some elements of the plan have proven initially difficult to follow through, the city has created a Harbor Plan Implementation office. Since implementation is often the most challenging aspect of any plan, the success of the Plan depends on the strength and effectiveness of this office. Unless a permanent organization is created to oversee the development of the entire harbor, this may be the only entity to act in the interest of the entire port. If the *1999 Harbor Plan* is indeed the will of the stakeholders of the port, then the city and state governments should do their best to commit to the plan and bring it to fruition.

Today's Regulatory Context

Over the last quarter of a century, waterfronts, especially working waterfronts, have been recognized as a precious, unique and public resource. As such, the public sector feels it must intervene to control market forces that may lead to non-industrial redevelopment and protect the interests of the general population. There are three primary regulations which govern development along the harbor in Gloucester, two state and one local.

Maritime-Industrial Zone

Following the recommendation of the *1980 General Plan*, a new zoning district was created for Maritime Industrial uses. This new zone differs from the General Industrial zone in that it allows certain heavy industries which are no longer permitted in General Industrial and further restricts those uses within it to reserve land within 20 feet of the shore for

waterborne vessels. The new zone also explicitly prohibits any type of new residential or hotel uses. Special permits are required for non-industrial commercial, uses including tourist uses, so that greater supervision can be exercised. This district covers only the water side of Rogers Street. The other side falls within the Central Business District, with the boundary of the Historic District intermittently including Rogers Street. The adjacent chart lists the schedule of uses permitted in the Marine-Industrial Zone.

Designated Port Area Status

Created in 1978, this legislation is designed to protect the limited number of sites in the Commonwealth well suited to maritime industry. The critical characteristics include maritime infrastructure, sufficiently deep navigation channels and access to rail and truck routes.³ This DPA regulation was designed to respond specifically to three problems identified with these port areas: 1) Conversion of port lands to non-port uses, 2) Cost, both economic and environmental of new port areas, and 3) Difficulty of predicting demand for port uses necessitating protection from the state for longterm goals. Under the state's Coastal Zone Management Plan, twelve ports have been designated within the state, all of which have been historically prominent in the state's maritime economy. It prioritizes these twelve locations for state funding. Designated Port Areas include shoreland and tidal land, whether existing or historic, in addition to the waterways themselves. A 25:75 ratio of water-dependent to non-dependent, but supporting, uses applies individually to each parcel as well as to the port area as a whole. This ratio rule is among several of the revisions since the regulation was enacted almost twenty-five years ago. There has been relatively little change apart from this.

Chapter 91 (The Public Waterfront Act)

The Chapter 91 statute was adopted in 1866, but dates back to colonial law. Originally, the public had full rights to the intertidal lands as well as all “submerged lands” for the purpose of “fishing, fowling and

³ *The Governor's Commission on Commonwealth Port Development*, 1994. p. 45.

Residential	
Boarding lodges or guest houses licensed appropriately	SPS
Community Service	
Public, religious or other non-profit schools, buildings	Y
Municipal use not elsewhere more specifically covered	Y
Public utility facility (excluding personal wireless facilities) serving immediate neighborhood	CCS
Public utility facility (excluding personal wireless facilities) serving broader area	Y
Public club or lodge, except one whose chief activity is customarily carried on as a business	CC
Nursery School	Y
Trade school, Industrial Training Center	Y
Philanthropic Institutions	CCS
Airport, Heliport	CCS
Open Space	
Boat launching, docking or docking structures limited in M-I districts to primarily commercial	SP
Outdoor Recreation	Y
Seasonal sale of Christmas wreaths	Y
Business	
Banks, atm's	CCS
Offices containing less than 6,000 sq. ft. floor area	Y
Offices other than above	Y
Restaurants	Y
Motor vehicle sales	Y
Marine related sales, rental	Y
Motor vehicle storage/repair	CC
Marine vehicle storage/repair	CC
Building tradesman or contractor without outdoor storage or heavy equipment	CC
Fuel and ice establishments	CC
Feed, building material establishments	Y
Stone mason's yard	CC
Retail, consumer service or other non-industrial business	Y
Manufacturing, processing or research conducted so that the performance criteria are met	Y
Trailer parking, freight or transportation terminal facilities	CCS
Processing and cooling facilities not conforming with the criteria of section 4.4	Y
Bulk storage, warehouse facilities	Y
Bulk storage, warehouse facilities containing toxic or hazardous materials	CCS
Commercial or radio transmission facilities	SP
Contractor's yard	Y
Parking of motor vehicles to service or use permitted in the same district	CC
Temporary structures and temporary non-conforming structures	SP
Arts and crafts and sale of such made on premises	Y
Radio transmission facilities, non-commercial	SP
Accessory Uses	
Parking general	Y
Parking equipment	Y
Signs	Y
Manufacturing	Y
Employee Dwelling	Y
Office for resident	Y
Home occupation	SP
Wind energy devices	SP

KEY	
Y -	By-right use.
SP -	Special Permit by the Board of appeals.
SPS -	Special Permit by the Board of Appeals. Application must be accompanied by plans.
CC -	Use which may be authorized under Special Permit by the City Council.
CCS -	Use which may be authorized under Special Permit by the City Council. Application must be accompanied by plans.

Fig. 3.6 Schedule of Permitted Uses in the Marine-Industrial Zoning District.

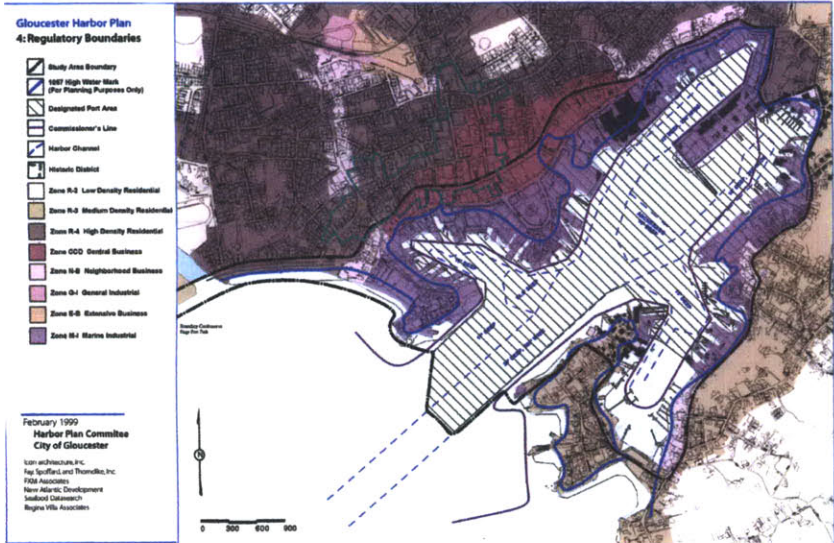


Fig. 3.7 Regulatory Boundaries of Gloucester's Inner Harbor, 1999.

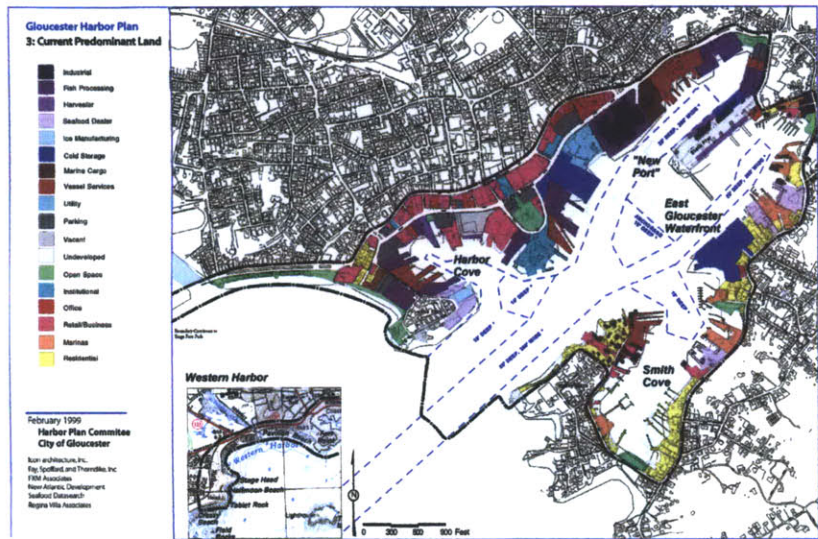


Fig. 3.8 Land Use, Gloucester's Inner Harbor, 1999.

navigation.” Although the government permitted property to be purchased and developed on the shore, it maintained that the land was subject to easements reserving the rights of the public to use the waterfront. The laws were most recently revised in 1990, and jurisdiction to enforce the regulations was given to Division of Wetlands and Waterways in the Department of Environmental Protection. The goal of the revised regulations is to protect and promote the tidelands for water dependent uses, promote public use and enjoyment of these tidelands to the greatest extent possible by promoting pedestrian activity along the water’s edge, public access to the waterfront and incorporating water-dependent uses and water-dependent components into nonwater-dependent projects.⁴

There are many non-conforming parcels and uses in Gloucester’s Harbor at each level of regulation. While all of the regulations are well intended and based on existing land-use patterns to some extent, they limit the future of the port in their exacting nature. Over and over again, people and plans remark on the specialness of the harbor because of the vibrant diversity of uses. Placing such strict demands uniformly on development threatens the authenticity and vibrancy of the area.

Planning History

Gloucester has produced many plans over the last 70 years. The Planning Board was established in 1922 and the city was amongst the first in the Commonwealth to adopt zoning.⁵ There is one thing the plans all have in common: every single one identifies tourism as an important development priority, close after fishing. While official planning did not take root until after the fishing economy had begun to decline, the constant acknowledgment of the value of tourism and the leisure industry is nevertheless quite significant.

The first plan, written in 1937, states: “The economic future of Gloucester lies in the hands of its two major activities—the fishing industry and the summer resort trade.” (Gloucester Daily Times, May 1937) Again, in 1963, the *General Plan* remarks: “The tourist industry is second only

⁴ Introduction to the Mass Public Waterfront Act and its Regulations, pp 5.

⁵ 1990 *Community Development Plan*, Gloucester Planning Commission.

to the fishing industry as a source of income for Gloucester residents.” (1963 General Plan) In the early days, tourism was less oriented to the historic waterfront and more to scenic Rocky Neck and Eastern Gloucester. Tourism is equally, if not more, important today in planning for the future of the city, but the focus is on the historic Harbor Cove as much as on the traditional resort areas. As a consequence, the emphasis of the *1999 Harbor Plan* is to attempt to integrate fishing and tourism to the greatest extent desirable.

The Plan proposes several projects and programs that will increase the number of visitors and related economic benefits to businesses and the City, with minimal effects on the Harbor environment and without displacing any fishing or maritime industries. These projects will build on the City’s long tradition of attracting visitors, writers, and artists who have come to admire and interpret the Harbor.

(The 1999 Harbor Plan)

Unfortunately, the two uses are not obviously complementary. First, the tourism season is short and it does not do much to remedy the seasonal unemployment associated with fishing. The high volume of visitors in the short summer season creates an incredible strain on the city, the strain of the attendant cars being far more of a strain than the people. Even in 1935, long before the ascendancy of the automobile, the traffic and parking problem brought on by visitors was a top priority. The 1937 Master Plan states that in that year there were just under 5,000 cars registered in Gloucester and that that number tripled in the summer. Citing that “lack of parking facilities hurts businesses as well as causing traffic congestion,” the plan recommended creating a one-acre parking lot to accommodate 250 cars at one end of the Harbor Cove. The proposed site was an entire block, bordered by Rogers, Duncan, and Locust Streets, half of what is today Harbor Loop.⁶ Although this particular lot was never built, in general, designing to accommodate a peak demand several times that of the norm

Important Plans and Milestones affecting Planning in the Waterfront Area

YEAR	PLAN OR EVENT
1922	Gloucester Planning Board established
1927	Zoning adopted
1937	Master Plan
1950s	Zoning amended
1955	Planning Department Created
1958	Urban Renewal Planning
1963	Gloucester General Plan Report
1969	Land-use supplement to 1963 General Plan
1969	Inner Harbor District Plan
1972	Zoning and Zoning Map Revised
1977	Downtown Gloucester Land-use and Visual Analysis
1980	General Plan updated (modification of 1963 Plan)
1990	Community Development Plan
1990	Maritime Industrial District introduced
1993	Harbor Plan
1994	Gloucester Waterfront Study, Land-use and Economics
1994	Special Resource Study
1995	Gloucester Downtown Streetscape and Building Façade Improvement Plan
1999	Harbor Plan
2000	Community Development Plan

⁶ Gloucester Daily Times. “A Master Plan for the City of Gloucester.” May 27, 1937.

can result in over-engineering and a devalued environment. Visiting the site as I have in the fall, winter and spring, much of the waterfront seems devoted to empty parking lots, and yet, everyone speaks of a parking crisis.

At the broadest level of analysis, there are some interesting trends over the years. While the actual recommendations are fundamentally similar, the underlying planning philosophies and methods reflect their respective eras. In general, the plans from the 1950s and 60s, favor broad brush strokes, focus on large infrastructure, place economic priorities above all others, and rely on rational, statistical analysis. In contrast, the more recent plans increasingly are more incremental, policy and program oriented, incorporate extensive public input, and make culture, character, and social equity top priorities alongside economic development.

An example from the tourism issue neatly illustrates the difference in philosophy.

Excerpt from 1963 plan:

Little has been done to capitalize on the attraction of the fishing activities for related tourist activities. There is apparently a need for a lot more imagination than heretofore has been applied in developing tourist waterfront activities in the compact central area. Major commercial projects such as marinas, commercial hotels, intercoastal passenger terminals are best handled through the urban renewal.

Note on the one hand the emphasis on “capitalizing.” Secondly, the 1963 recommendations are for “major commercial projects,” massive interventions which require Urban Renewal-scale demolition. The 1999 *Harbor Plan* also recommends a hotel, but off the immediate waterfront and as part of a greater infill scheme.⁷

In the evolution of research methods over the range of plans the ratio of statistical analysis to public input has reversed. The first plan, in 1937, describes a process which “solicited opinions from citizens and public officials” but was principally based on a “thorough study of existing conditions and trends.” By 1963, there is no specific mention of public

input past the introductory letter which make a blanket gesture of thanks to “the many citizens and municipal officials who have provided valuable time and assistance to us in the preparation and development of this plan.” (1963 *General Plan*, intro letter) Though it mentions no process, presumably these various people contributed to the “summaries, studies and analyses that were presented to the Planning Board during our monthly meetings.” Who knows if such studies and analyses, much less the final product was ever presented to the public. The method the Plan describes is an “analysis of land use, economic base, circulation, parking, school and recreation, and the forecasts based on these studies.” (1963 *General Plan*, 33) The 1977 *Downtown Land-Use and Visual Analysis Plan* introduced a number of resident workshops to the process and even included them as an appendix in the final plan. The 1999 *Harbor Plan* created a Harbor Plan Committee to actually create the plan, in addition to soliciting input from “hundreds of citizens who participated in the planning process.” (*Harbor Plan*, intro letter) The 2000 *Community Development Plan* states right at the beginning of the plan: “This is not a traditional plan of data collection and analysis followed by specific recommendations.” (2000 *Community Plan*, I-1) Instead, it offers a vision reached by a consensus process and a policy framework to guide decisions to achieve that vision. It describes a process they call “citizen-driven,” with two committees, the Plan 2000 Committee and the Coordinating Committee which advises the first, and three phases of meetings which set the agenda, investigated topics and hammered out disagreements to create a draft.⁸

Probably as a result of the increased public participation, the time frame necessary to complete plans increased as well. The 1937 Plan took just six months to create; the 1963 Plan took fifteen months; the 1999 and 2000 plans, two years. Interestingly, as the process period increased, the forecast period decreased. The projected time frame of the 1937 Plan was 20-25 years; the projected time frame of the 1999 *Harbor Plan* 5-7 years.

⁷ *Gloucester Harbor Plan*, Gloucester, (ICON Architects Inc.), 1999. p. 28-29.

⁸ *Community Development Plan, 2001* Gloucester, Planning Board. (Cecil Group, Inc.), 2001. I-3.

This reflects, I believe, the more incremental and modest approach of the recent planning philosophy.

Finally, there is a subtle distinction in how the two eras of planning approach the future. To say one is proactive and the other reactive does not quite capture the notion. It is more an impression that Modern-era plans are interested in using change to *create* a future and more recent plans manage change to *shape* a future.

“*The General Plan* for Gloucester is a studied attempt to define the form of physical development which would result in an efficient, desirable and economical city development.” (1963 *General Plan*, 32) It is implied that once this physical form is identified, actions should be taken to achieve it. The 2000 *Community Plan* takes a somewhat different stance. “Change and growth will occur, with or without a plan; the Plan seeks to control that change, reflecting the widespread community concern that diversity will diminish and that character will fade.” (2000 *Community Plan*, I-1)

To “control change” and sustain vibrant character, the community must seek to understand the forces of change at work and what possible impacts they may have on the character of Gloucester. I would characterize these forces as postmodern, or specific to our time. The next chapter attempts to interpret postmodernism as Gloucester confronts it today.

4 THE POSTMODERN CONDITION

Will it end up a wealthy resort town, a dying fishing community, or something in between? All I know is I don't want a precious little toy town, a precious little resort town like Rockport or Newburyport, like a museum.

*James Sultan, Gloucester resident and lawyer for
Gloucester Initiatives quoted in Boston Magazine*

Gloucester finds itself in a postmodern predicament. While some aspects of contemporary culture contribute to the demise of the “fishing community,” others promote the transformation of the waterfront into a “wealthy resort town” or a “precious little toy town” for people to visit like a museum. Sultan uses these evocative images to describe what are actually potential outcomes of the commodification of the city. This trend, which is exhibited in a desire to “consume” place, is a phenomenon which emerges out of the interplay of a number of postmodern, or contemporary, conditions.

If it seems that Gloucester is in the midst of an identity crisis, it is because it struggles to respond to the changing form and function of

cities in America. An understanding of: the reverberations of modernism, the issues surrounding post-industrialism, the ascendancy of image, and the heightened interest in the past throughout society provides a valuable framework in which to understand Gloucester's dilemma.

The three pessimistic options Sultan proffers, however, do not encompass all of the possible outcomes of this encounter with postmodernism. In fact, there is much conflict in the field of social criticism about the causes and potential effects of postmodernism. Yes, the greater trend towards the commodification of the city could result in the destruction of the fishing industry and the erosion of Gloucester's identity. But, Gloucester may also use the very same trend to its advantage—to preserve its identity, sustain its traditional industry and enhance its sense of place. In this chapter, I will consider a number of arguments about post-industrialism, image, and attitudes regarding the past, to gain a better grasp of Gloucester's situation, its possible causes, potential hazards, as well as promising solutions.

Postmodernism, More Than Just Anti-Modernism

In terms of planning, modernism generally meant an emphasis on “rational” and technical methods applied in broad-stroke, large-scale plans exemplified by the Urban Renewal Plans in Gloucester. Postmodernism is also technical, but strongly emphasizes cultural goals, and subscribes to incremental, sometimes fragmented methods.

Following the modernism of functionalist urban planning, this new way—in which concepts like cultural identity and the cultural value of the city take center stage: the reference was to the implicit cultural and mental significance of urban forms, structures and functions—could be called post-modern.

(Meyer, 19)

This simple dichotomy cannot, however, hold as a definition of postmodernism. On the one hand, there are potential similarities which resist the dichotomy. Though they might criticize modernism for its extreme break from the past, the postmodernists can be just as intolerant

of what preceded them. Planners today might use a term akin to ‘blight’ on different objects, but they seem just as willing to erase the history of the previous generation in their effort to fix the city. Similarly, planners in the first part of the century often described the city as a body, stricken by cancer or spreading blight. Christine Boyer insists that,

We still have this inheritance today: architects hoping to heal the image of the city brutalized by modern intrusions through contemporary incremental insertions, contextual additions, trying to retie ‘knots’ in the unraveling city fabric . . . Whether from a normal or pathological perspective, it seems today that we still are ruled by a latent desire for a perfectly ordered and rational city, excluding everything that does not fit into this utopian mold.

(Boyer, 18)

The blank façades, large parking lots and holes in the streetwall of Rogers Street are exactly the kinds of “unraveling city fabric” planners are instinctually drawn to. Efforts should be made to improve, some would say repair, the streetwall of Gloucester with “incremental insertions” and “contextual additions.” However, I agree with Boyer that we should be critical of how we intend to move beyond modernism and not fall prey to the same short-sightedness of universally condemning previous changes. The façade improvement program recommended several years ago could easily result in an arbitrary, historicized design and Sultan's “museum-town.” The 1995, *Gloucester Downtown Streetscape and Building Façade Improvements Plan* recommends choosing one historic period and reconstructing the façades of Rogers Street with standardized window and cornice treatments to match this period. On Main Street, which lies in the Historic District, this has been moderately successful. However, in the case of Rogers Street, a façade program has little historical grounds. As a result, it is susceptible to what David Harvey describes as the worst-case scenario of postmodern revisions where the blandness of modernism is simply supplanted by the blandness of decontextualized historicism. “The signs of rehabilitation and gentrification often assume almost the same monotony as the modernism

they were supposed to replace.” (Harvey, 66) Furthermore, the effects of Urban Renewal on the façades of Rogers Street should be acknowledged in some way as part of Gloucester’s history. Some of the façades could be left as relics of Urban Renewal while new buildings, with contemporary façades, are built in the vacant lots.

Finally, the original dichotomy between modernism and post-modernism cannot hold because postmodernism is more than a reaction to the values and ways of modernism. Postmodernism is an umbrella term for many trends which characterize contemporary culture. Some of the most prominent of these trends include advanced capitalism, post-industrialism, an emphasis on image, and a preference for multiple layers and meanings.

Post-Industrialism: Place Matters, or Does it?

Post-industrialism represents a fundamental change in production and a corresponding change in consumption. Together, these changes have had a profound impact on American urbanism, redefining the very purpose of the city. Ultimately, the question is whether the post-industrial revolution will raise the value of place or reduce it to an interchangeable variable.

Initially, deindustrialization had a grim effect on cities and urban places. Factories and mills, which were the center of many cities’ economy, were abandoned or became obsolete. This, and other factors, resulted in the old industrial cities gaining a reputation of crime and general decline. It could be argued that suburbanization was either a contributing cause of this decay or an effect. In any case, as cities declined people were increasingly lured by the suburban life-style. Eventually, the new industries, whose products were ideas and services, chose to follow their workers and locate in the suburbs and less industrial cities where the taxes were low and the land was undeveloped and inexpensive.

The resulting landscape of decentralized, disconnected pockets of office parks, malls, strips, condo clusters, corporate campuses and gated communities clipped onto suburban arterials reflects the values and policies of mobile capital, the service economy, post-Fordist disposable consumerism and banking deregulation.

(Dunham-Jones, Metropolis)

At least in the first stage then, deindustrialization resulted in deurbanization as well. Edge-cities, where people lived, worked and shopped in the outer-ring without ever visiting the historic center, blossomed. Qualities of place which emphasized predicability, such as steady property values, capacity to support globally linked office buildings, good access to a highway and reassuringly similar suburbs, temporarily supplanted the qualities of place cities could offer.

More recently, however the same post-industrial factors have had a curious counter-effect on development, consumption and the role of urban places. Mobility of capital, decentralization, and the freeing up of urban land from industry has transformed both the physical landscape and the psychological perception of the city. Firstly, people have come again to rely on cities as centers for consumption of culture the suburbs cannot support. Festival marketplaces and arts complexes have forged a renaissance in the city as a cultural and entertainment center. As society becomes more mobile and household types more varied, more Americans are seizing the opportunity technology offers to live and work anywhere they please. Large segments of the workforce are becoming more discerning about where they live and demanding a wider market of life-styles. Conservation and adaptive re-use, in part a response to this demand for new working and living spaces, has become popular. In small towns and big cities alike, factories, warehouses and other obsolete buildings are being converted into lofts, offices, and shopping centers. The result of the combination of these trends, and others, is that cities are trying to differentiate their product, their “place,” in a non-specialized location market, to compete in order to attract residents, tourists, and capital. Place matters, after all.

Cities and places now, it seems, take much more care to create a positive and high quality image of place, and have sought an architecture and forms of urban design that respond to such a need . . . Imaging the city through the organization of spectacular urban spaces became a means to attract capital and people (of the right sort) in a period (since 1973) of intensified inter-urban competition and urban entrepreneurialism.

(Harvey, 92)

An important sidebar to this transformation of production methods and consumption practices and its effects on the city, is the role of class. Today, instead of industrial areas, the city's most valuable districts are those of urban spectacle and consumption. The industrial economy, and to a large extent, the heart of the city as well, was blue collar. The service economy, on the other hand, is white collar and the city of consumption and entertainment caters to the ever-expanding middle class or, perhaps more accurately, to an entire leisure-oriented society.

This element of class distinction which we have uncovered in the characteristics of the post-industrial economy and landscape, permeate the conditions of postmodernism which follow. Being cognizant of this facet of the postmodern experience is significant to our understanding of Gloucester as well.

Though it also has a reputation as a resort destination, the dominant culture in Gloucester has always been traditional working class. This remains true despite the fact that fishing is somewhat different from other blue-collar industries in so far as fishermen generally work for small companies and sometimes own their own boats. The fish processing industry is certainly working class. However, unlike other cities with absolutely diminished old industries and demoralized blue-collar populations, the fishing way of life is still holding on and was even recently glorified in the blockbuster book and film, "The Perfect Storm." The community has always been suspicious of non-fishing outsiders, but gentrification elicits a strong response on class grounds too—they definitely do not want to see any *yuppies* moving onto the waterfront.

The fishing industry may be alive in Gloucester, but it is certainly less prominent than it once was. Over the last twenty-five years, Gloucester has seen a decline in the fishing industry and witnessed elements of the post-industrial transition. Foreign competition and the globalization of capital reduced Gloucester's share of the market. Changes in fishing technology and the increased competition led to overfishing, the impact of which is still felt today. Most of the remaining fishing jobs on the harbor are in fish processing. While the processing plants have a prominent place on the

water, like most other industries today they are less place sensitive than their predecessors. Since most of the fish now comes from other markets and is delivered by trucks, the processing plants could easily relocate to an inland industrial park.

The steady decline of the fishing industry is the most immediate challenge in Gloucester, but the waterfront is still reeling from the effects of urban renewal as well. In an effort to modernize the waterfront and foster the development of the larger fish processing plants, the entire inner-harbor was razed during the late sixties. At least one vacant lot remains thirty years later.

As it is now, the major plants, Gortons Fish and Americold, and much of the remaining activity is moving down the street from the historic Harbor Cove towards the recently upgraded, State Fish Pier. This, and urban renewal, have left land in the Inner Harbor, on the water, underutilized. Not surprisingly, there were efforts to introduce visitor oriented uses, resembling those discussed above. Among other things, there have been development proposals for a Maritime Festival Market Place and residential condos. None were built.

From the very beginning, the harbor community in Gloucester fought fiercely to keep such uses out and to protect the vulnerable fishing industry. The fear was that once non-maritime uses got a foot in the door, it would lead to a total transformation of the waterfront and the ruin of the working port. Indeed, in his critique of postmodernism Harvey observes, "In the short run, a transition from planned to market mechanisms may temporarily mix-up uses into interesting configurations, but the speed of gentrification and the monotony of the result suggests that in many instances the short run is very short indeed." (Harvey, 77) If redevelopment along the waterfront were unregulated, it may initially be signaled by interesting mixed-use, but could easily push out the original uses.

Given these actions to preserve the working character of the port and the enduring fishing culture, some in Gloucester would object to being categorized as post-industrial at all. The remaining presence of industry may make Gloucester a somewhat unique case, but the city

nevertheless functions in a post-industrial society. The change in the nature of the industry and the demand for new uses along the waterfront are representative of post-industrial trends.

Post-industrialism and Planning

While the effects of post-industrialization on city planning have become visible somewhat more slowly than in other sectors, it has nonetheless resulted in profound changes. For one thing, when traditional industry was the main economic driver and manufacturing was noxious, efforts were made to isolate industrial uses in the city. Waterfronts became impenetrable, private realms; factories were clustered at the railroad tracks; and ground, water, air and noise pollution kept other uses away. Today, many industries can operate almost anywhere. Mixed-use is becoming more common, although it still has its complications. Incrementally, the post-industrial landscape is suggesting multiple layers of use, like postmodernism's multiple layers of meaning.

These changing patterns of land-use have notable psychological effects as well. In one sense, the flexibility of adaptive re-use which can house any number of activities, sometimes within one building, creates ambiguity in the environment. A building might preserve an old sign written on the wall having nothing to do with its present use. The familiar, formerly self-explanatory forms may now contain uses indiscernible to the person on the street.

Similarly, the diminishment of the physical presence of industry compels towns to find new ways of expressing their identity. Places were once "mill towns" or "factory towns," defined by an industry—paper, textiles, steel, coal, aerospace, cars, etc.. Without dominant industries taking up prominent land and employing large numbers of people, the identity of places have become even more ambiguous. What would Gloucester be if not a fishing town? Or better yet, whatever postmodernism might bring, how can Gloucester hold on to its identity as a "fishing town"?

Place Matters. The Nature and Impact of the Commodification of the City

The new nature of production, namely of ideas and services, values place as an input less than its industrial predecessor. Place, however, is a critical factor in consumption. Choices of leisure, life-style and private investment are made on the basis of place. In postmodernism, the city itself has become a commodity—we "consume" place.

Deindustrialization and restructuring left most major cities in the advanced capitalist world with few options except to compete with each other, mainly as financial, consumption, and entertainment centers.

(Harvey, 92)

Image, the Postmodern Currency

Image is the currency of place. Imageability is an index of value. In other words, value is positively correlated with legibility and imageability. In his book *Image of the City*, Kevin Lynch asserted that places which were legible were more meaningful to people. At the time, Lynch was principally concerned with form. Dennis Frenchman, in his work on "Narrative Places," adds content and narrative as elements which bring meaning to the experience of a person in the city.

It can be argued that the city is experienced by its users as a system of meanings and narratives as well as of physical forms, and these narratives are as significant in determining the legibility of a city to its inhabitants and visitors. After all, the Old North Church in Boston would have been demolished by now, were it not for the story of Paul Revere and Longfellow's Poem.

(Frenchman, 263)

If the more a place resonates with a person the more valuable it is, then imageability is largely related to culture and the ability of the environment to communicate that culture. As the above quote suggests, history is a major element of culture. Of course, culture is made up of myriad elements not all of which are linked to a common past, such as shared values and practices. But continuity, traditions and connections to the past in general are vital components of culture and also represent a

side of culture that the built environment plays a particularly powerful role in. The link between history, culture, legibility and imageability can explain the emphasis in the postmodern city on historic places and preservation. We are choosing places based on image. Given a choice, we prefer to be surrounded by meaningful places, which largely means places with an accessible history.

Historically, cities have always been containers for culture and memory. “The demands and pressures of social reality constantly affect the material order of the city, yet it remains the theater of our memory.” (Boyer, 31) Now that we are “consuming” the city more actively, we are even more sensitive to this role of the built environment. Thus, the commodification of the city has prompted a re-evaluation of the city based on historic value. Existing historic neighborhoods, such as Beacon Hill have become even more valuable. Main Streets across America, where history has been obscured by renovation or neglect, are getting back in touch with their historic aspects. Previously undervalued places, like the Leather District in Boston, which were considered obsolete by other economic standards, have uncovered a lot of value in their historic cache. In the process, their image was transformed from that of abandoned industrial space into one of the trendiest areas of the city.

Gloucester has a lot of history, many stories to tell, and a long tradition of imaging the city through art. A promotional brochure proclaims: “Gloucester Where the Past is Present.” Artists like Winslow Homer and Fitz Hugh Lane, among many others, familiarized the public with harbor life and made Gloucester an icon of the American fishing town. Not only is it America’s oldest fishing port, it is home to a living tradition. In a time when image and story matter, Gloucester stands out as a place with a particularly rich heritage. Gloucester offers an opportunity to connect with a great maritime history, but also a chance to observe the dirty, smelly, colorful, exciting business of fishing up close. Undoubtedly, Gloucester has a high potential for imageability and a lot of culture to share. How will Gloucester protect and or enhance these resources as the commodification

of the city progresses and consumers seek out places with culture and history?

What Does the Past have to do with the Future?

This might be a good place to set aside image for a moment and consider the more general topic of our fascination with the past. There is a good amount of speculation as to the root of this interest in all things historical. People who are attracted to the past and its specific brand of culture would say that it has to do with identity. “The past is integral to our sense of identity; ‘the sureness of ‘I was’ is a necessary component of the sureness of ‘I am’.” (Lowenthal quoting Wyatt, ‘Reconstruction of the Individual and of the Collective Past, 319)

Others have said that we have an unhealthy interest in the past. One explanation is that people latch onto the past in an effort to escape from an undesirable, scary present.

“Disenchantment with the present drives us back into the past, or such elements of the past as survive into the present day, and their protection becomes the sole object of our energies. Nostalgia filters out unpleasant aspects of the past and our former selves, creating a self-esteem that helps us to rise above the anxieties of the present.”

(Hewison, 46)

Hewison draws his example from post-war Britain which he depicts as economically and socially depressed. He traces interest in the past in Britain and the proliferation of museums and the heritage economy as a crutch when there was no new economic driver or creative culture. America and the Continent’s surge in interest in the past at a time of great prosperity and cultural pride runs counter to this theory.

Another theory is that nostalgia seems to be heightened in periods of rapid change that result in a break from the past. This was particularly true during early industrialization when people began to live in cities so vastly different from the landscapes they grew up in. Modernism and urban renewal which, unlike incidental change, seemed to deliberately invalidate

the past¹, exacerbated feelings of insecurity and loss driving people to seek solace in nostalgia.

At least during the period of modernism, the sense of loss was countered by an incredible faith in the future. Nostalgia really seems to have set in after the optimism of industrialization, and later, modernism was lost and people began to actually fear the future.

Until the 1970s nostalgia trips were ‘fairly surreptitious and ambivalent’, thinks Michael Wood, ‘because we didn’t want to relinquish our hold on the present, on whatever it meant to be modern’. Modernity has since lost its charm. ‘Now that the present seems so full of woe, . . . the profusion and frankness of our nostalgia . . . suggest not merely a sense of loss and a time in trouble, but a general abdication, an actual desertion from the present.’²

There exists some disappointment in the way some things have turned out, a common sentiment that we used to make and do things better in the ‘good ole days.’ The incredible speed of technological innovation is renewing some excitement about the future, but we are a more skeptical, jaded, some would argue more knowledgeable and worldly, society than in earlier eras. Though incredibly exciting, the many facets and complicatedness of something like genetic engineering can understandably make us long for simpler times. “We may not love the past as excessively as many did in the nineteenth century, but our misgivings about what may come are more grave.” (Lowenthal, 11)

A third explanation for the interest in the past and culture is that we have always felt this way but that with advanced western capitalism we are more able to enjoy and consume it. More leisure time and easier travel allows us to feed this curiosity, to learn more about foreign cultures whether these are cultures of the past or around the world.

¹ Hewison, Robert. *The Heritage Industry*. London: Methuen London, 1987. p. 45.

² Lowenthal, 12. Quoting Michael Wood “Nostalgia or Never: you can’t go home again,” *New Society*, no. 7 Nov. 1974, pp. 343-346.

Charting a Course

Broadly speaking, two points of view have evolved on how to develop image or themed landscapes. These approaches can be characterized as Narrative Places and the Heritage Industry. Both rely on the value of culture, story and image in the built environment. The first emphasizes the social value and potential for economic revitalization of building on imageability. The other is perceived to exploit imageability for private gain with less regard for social value.

Consider the different ways of interpreting this average example of development built around image:

The image of a designated area of the city, usually a historic area, is refined to enhance its cultural value. An era or theme of history is chosen above others, historic architecture belonging to this period is renovated or recreated, a theme is adopted for street furniture and signage, and an event such as a festival or a permanent attraction such as a museum is established.

Those in favor of this sort of development would emphasize the positive potential of such a transformation. This process can be a great tool for revitalizing and reinventing portions of the city which lost their former economic drivers. While tourism revenue may contribute to this revitalization, proponents assert, “The real value and impact are in the improved image of the place and its ability to attract people, investment, and jobs, many not related to heritage at all.” (Frenchman, 262) Accordingly, such narrative places may include visitor attractions, but also offices, housing, schools—any type of use. This relates back to the idea of value being in historical places simply because they are more imageable, meaningful places.

Besides this sort of general quality of life benefit, creating places with enhanced images can be enriching, educational landscapes. The narrative place would provide a means for people who visit to learn. This could include traditional uses like a museum, a local restaurant, festival, or building types. At a time when more and more information is available in the landscape, even expected, every level of preservation, from living museums

where time periods or places are reproduced, to plaques on modern buildings that state what once stood at that site, can provide information or tell a story to the observer. Frenchman observes that the growth in information technology “is leading to shifts in the way physical places are formed and experienced and in what we expect of them. There are increasing demands that public spaces be not only convivial but also communicative—of history and other narratives.” (Frenchman, 261)

The internet and hand held devices could allow a visitor to learn more about a place before, after and during a visit. These advances in communication technology run parallel to the ever-expanding breadth and depth of our cultural and historical knowledge. “Our world may become more like those of many prehistoric cultures, where all physical objects were imbued with spirits and stories and where the ancestors who had departed continued to live in the space.” (Frenchman, 281) There are more stories than ever to tell, and more ways to communicate them.

Finally, preserving these spaces provides continuity in the landscape that is vital to our sense of identity and our relationship with the past. Though he is highly critical of the heritage industry that stems, in part, from the desire to feel a connection with the past, Hewison eloquently captures the human need for continuity.

The impulse to preserve the past is part of the impulse to preserve the self. Without knowing where we have been, it is difficult to know where we are going. The past is the foundation of individual and collective identity, objects from the past are the source of significance as cultural symbols. Continuity between past and present creates a sense of sequence out of aleatory chaos, and, since change is inevitable, a stable system of ordered meaning enables us to cope with both innovation and decay.

(Hewison, 47)

One could imagine the same “enhanced image” landscape described above as a place where the image is transformed into an “industry” and in the service of the private sector. Critics of historic places point out how recreated historic landscapes can be “carefully orchestrated to channel

nostalgic desires” in order to increase sales. (Boyer, 201) In “Cities for Sale: Merchandising History at South Street Seaport,” Christine Boyer describes how retail developments raise the value and appeal of a product by associating it with a historic time or foreign way of life.

When the commodity is placed within a system of signs symbolizing entire life-styles and supporting environments, the system itself seeks to increase consumption by suggesting that a particular life-style requires the acquisition of not one but an entire series of goods. Consequently, simulated landscapes of exotic and imaginary terrains, cleverly combining the fantastic with the real, become the ideal background props for our contemporary acts of consumption, set-ups that intensify the commodity’s power of seduction.

(Boyer, 200)

Critics claim that, at best the Heritage Industry merely co-opts a place’s history for private profit, at worst it inserts stock symbols of history that evoke similar responses. “Busy creating simulated traditions, urban developers seem intent on stockpiling the city’s past with all the available artifacts and relics, thereby obscuring the city’s actual history.” (Boyer, 190) Certainly, Gloucester fears becoming a generic tourist development. Or worse, because this has happened to many other places, the actual authenticity of Gloucester could be devalued.

Vintage villages, regardless of their lack of authenticity, are designed to resurrect local economies. City after city discovers that its abandoned industrial waterfront or outmoded city center contains enormous tourist potential and refurbishes it as leisure-time spectacles and sightseeing promenades. All of these sites become culinary and ornamental landscapes through which the tourists—the new public of the late twentieth century—graze, celebrating the consumption of place and architecture, and the taste of history and food.

(Boyer, 190)

This notion of people “grazing” is perhaps the opposite of Frenchman’s concept of people being engaged by an object or space that

can offer information as well amusement. Instead of offering a substantive experience, Heritage Industry landscapes are depicted as exploiting people and places without offering quality in return.

Given what is at stake, Gloucester is understandably nervous about the outcome of the commodification of the city. It is unlikely, however, that Gloucester would be choosing between the two extremes of “Heritage Industry” and “Narrative Place.” They are theoretical models, and, in reality, there is rarely a black and white choice to commit to one exclusively. In charting Gloucester’s course it might therefore be more useful to break heritage-based development into its components. In so doing, it will be possible to pinpoint the critical aspects of manipulating and managing image and approach Gloucester’s situation with more savvy.

Image is, after all, a very tricky item. It is superficial by its very nature. Plausibly, image should reflect an existing identity. However, it can just as easily represent a manufactured identity as an authentic, genuine one.

Even when great care is taken to maintain authenticity, some would argue that it is impossible to genuinely represent the past in the landscape and to attempt to do so is detrimental to both viewer and past. We routinely alter the past when resurrecting it in the present for any number of reasons. Truly, it is practically impossible to preserve or replicate the past just as it was, more often we modify the past in order to sharpen the image, make it more manageable or marketable, or because we may find certain aspects of the past distasteful or upsetting.

Critics of historical places argue that this process of alteration can result in degradation, and ultimately, may leave us feeling more distant than ever before. “The past, being over and done with, now falls prey to our invention. It is resuscitated or resurrected in partial or ironic refigurings, subsequently reinforcing our sense of loss and detachment.” (Boyer, 6) A second take suggests that we might deliberately alter the past, inevitably damaging it, merely to satisfy our own impulses. “When the recognizable past falls short of our historical ideals, we remold it to our desires. Old landscapes buildings, and artifacts are decorated, purified, homogenized, emulated and copied.” (Lowenthal, 116)

One strategy is to accept that it is not possible, and perhaps not even desirable, to accurately recreate the past and instead focus on what can be learned from the necessarily mixed-up version of history we experience in the landscape. Frenchman makes a distinction between literary history in books and material culture, where history is offered within the built environment. There is a difference in what is presented and what is gained between the history described in written word and history absorbed by the senses in the physical landscape of today. “An encounter with the material environment of the past is ‘in your face,’ encountered all at once, involving multiple dimensions and senses, where the current world is ever present and intruding.” (Frenchman, 264) When dealing with living landscape we should take advantage of the messy, sensuous experience that allows people to choose their own path of discovery and make their own, perhaps more personal, connections.

There is a lot to learn about ourselves in how we treat the past. Instead of criticizing our inability to create an “authentic” past, we should be more concerned with what we can learn about ourselves by how we view and represent the past. “Every trace of the past is a testament not only to its initiators, but to its inheritors, not only to the spirit of the past but to the perspectives of the present.” (Lowenthal, 125)

People should visit Gloucester not to experience the recreation of a time or place, but to draw connections between now and what came before. There is arguably more to learn from the evolution of a place than from its most glorious era alone. Lowenthal asserts that “it is an erroneous view that knowledge of origins reveals more than other kinds of history.” (Lowenthal, 116) Urban renewal in Gloucester may be just as important to document as schooners, though somewhat less romantic. Lynch concurs, “A sense of the stream of time is more valuable and more poignant and engaging than a formal knowledge of remote periods.” (Lynch, 237)

Yes, it is essential that Gloucester preserve authenticity, in the sense that its image should represent its own character and history. It should be reluctant, though, to narrow the scope of what is “authentic” to one time period, or type of development. For instance, visitors are more impressed

by the continuity of the tradition than merely with Gloucester's fame as a historically important port. They come to witness the day-to-day functions of the working port and the living connection to a great maritime history.

A second concern in treating development that relies on image is to guard against development that promotes superficial experiences. An interest in the past folded into the realm of entertainment and consumption can serve some educative purpose, but can also require less of the participant, making history a shallow experience. "A past nostalgically enjoyed does not have to be taken seriously." (Lowenthal, 7) Festival marketplaces and historicized Main Streets are "spectator art, meant to be quickly scanned, not analyzed in detail." (Boyer, 187) Such places may have inspired Sultan's remark at avoiding being "a precious little toy town" as opposed to a town with complexity such as Gloucester inherently has.

Furthermore, "A desire for profit or for pedagogy makes remnants from the past more clustered, uniform, homogenous than if untouched . . . spatial and temporal purity render historic areas static and lifeless." (Lowenthal, 116) The loss of a significant portion of Gloucester's historical landscape makes it even easier to reconstruct a sterile, at least partially fictitious landscape. While there are merits to trying to reproduce some of what Urban Renewal destroyed, it must be carefully executed, and as noted earlier in this chapter, should take care not to entirely edit out the more recent modern history.

I would argue that because of the repetition of the successful business model of the generic heritage landscape ad nauseum, people have tired of the more crudely historicized places and are expecting more out of their environment and experiences. Indeed, the fact that Gloucester has a living tradition means that it has many more resources to draw on. The diversity and richness of its cultural heritage offers many avenues for learning and interpretation. The experience of a resident or visitor to Gloucester should not be relegated to a "past nostalgically enjoyed" but broadened to make accessible the many sectors of society in Gloucester and its ever-evolving relationship with the ocean.

Not only should the image of Gloucester not be limited to one group of people or time period in the past, the city's image should be allowed to grow and change in the future. When image is directly in the service of economics or if one particular image is found to be especially profitable, an area might get locked into it. Natural change, potential progress could be blocked. "The more perfect the recreation of the past, the more inflexible it becomes for dealing with the future, with diversity and with less perfect neighboring conditions." (Lowenthal, 9)

By the same token, Gloucester should eschew any type of development that would push out other valued uses. As the community feared new residential development along the waterfront would supplant the traditional fishing industry, so it fears development which caters too much to visitors or some aspects of the fishing industry could lead to its very demise. Such has been the experience of other communities who became overwhelmed by the commodification of the city.

This re-vitalization may threaten to go too far, by over-capitalizing on a single image, bidding out all other occupants and uses and becoming a purely visitor and entertainment attraction. By their efforts to turn around a failed area—a classic problem for which planners have thought out many solutions—they may arouse forces of money, popularity and bowdlerization which then overwhelm them.

(Slater, 201)

This does not mean that revitalization should not be pursued at all, merely that it must be undertaken with due care, a clear goal in mind and concern for the risks involved.

Evaluation of the Prospects of Commodification of the City for Gloucester

Gloucester can extract several lessons from this brief overview of some of the characteristics of commodification of the city. First of all, commodification is not necessarily a bad thing. The history and image of the working port is something Gloucester possesses more than practically

any other community. Gloucester should use this to its advantage however it can.

Gloucester must remember, however, that image is not an end in and of itself, but something to be identified, cultivated and manipulated in service of something else. In addition to being a marketing device, image can be a valuable planning tool for visioning, creating a sense of place and enriching the community's self-image. It can make both residents' and visitors' experiences more meaningful, educational and inspiring.

The issue then is not so much whether the commodification of Gloucester is good or bad, but what it is in the service of. People take issue with what and who the commodification benefits—is it developers or residents and visitors? In general, commodification is good if it increases value of a place and enriches people's lives, but bad if it becomes a crude marketing tool.

In order to ensure that Gloucester's image is used in a manner that will not degrade the valuable resource that it is, sustainability and authenticity must be a priority wherever image is involved. As far as authenticity goes, Gloucester should aspire to continue being itself, as it has been for the last 400 years. As the situation in Gloucester stands now, continuing to be a working port will likely involve cultivating the image of the working port and reinvesting it to sustain the working port. Thus, both authenticity and sustainability are linked to the notion of the working port.

To make this balance between image and function work, requires a willingness to adapt and a commitment to protect the diversity of the heritage from as many angles as possible. Being authentic in the landscape of a living tradition is about more than historic accuracy. A genuine environment may be one that addresses many time periods and acknowledges how they interact with each other. Lowenthal describes the appeal of overlapping, messy landscapes:

'Layering' is used as a deliberate device of esthetic expression—the visible accumulation of overlapping traces from successive periods, each trace modifying and being modified by the new additions, to produce something like a collage of time. It is the sense of depth in an old city that is so intriguing.

(Lowenthal, 171)

Good development, then, should promote a healthy relationship with the past, yet one that is based on an eye towards the future. "A desirable image is one that celebrates and enlarges the present while making connections with the past and future." (Lynch, 1)

5 THE WATERFRONT REVIVAL

Gloucester's situation vis-à-vis post-industrialism and the commodification of the city is more charged than that of other communities simply because it is a waterfront community. Waterfronts, most notably with the current trend to reinvent and reinhabit them, are a major arena of postmodernism. This chapter will explore why that is, what the significance of waterfronts has been historically, and what their urban potential is. Once again, Gloucester's distinction as a working port sets it apart. The last section of this chapter will address the case of the working port within the greater phenomenon of waterfront revivals.

Introduction

In a 1974 Master of City Planning thesis, I came across this observation of John Kouwenhoven's:

Engravings and sketches from the 18th and 19th century typically show the city from the water.

I realized I have often come across these sorts of pictures in a class, during research or in an old bookstore and been somewhat disappointed



Fig. 5.1 "Gloucester Harbor from Rocky Neck," F.H. Lane, 1844.

and put off. You are looking for a historical depiction of a city and all you see is a lot of water, boats and an indecipherable shore in the distance at such a perspective that very little of the form of the city can be made out. I had disregarded it as a bit frustrating, but inexplicable quirk of historic pictures. In his thesis, Slater suggests that the focus on ships and harbor activity “befitted settlements which were really outposts of Europe . . . and that were tied to it by their ships.” (Slater, 31) This may well be true, but I now realized that the deliberate composition of these views represents the profound economic and psychological significance of the waterfront that goes beyond a colonial attachment to Europe. This simple observation of Kouwenhoven’s at once explained to me the mysterious fixation of these artists and their audience, and, at the same time, expressed a notion about the timeless allure of urban waterfronts. Indeed, there is something special about waterfronts, the presence of the water itself in the city as well as the history they evoke, that underlies the incredible renaissance of the urban waterfront in recent years.

Open Water and the City

The lure of the water and its importance to mankind is endlessly documented in literature and philosophy. Some might speculate that we are drawn to water because it is the source of life and the environment from which we emerged as a species, and as individuals. In Joseph Conrad’s “The Heart of Darkness” the narrator describes this sensation: “The sea-reach of the Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway.”

Not only does the ocean suggest the possibility of infinite places, in its constant ebb and flow it suggests access to infinite time. He goes on to say:

We looked at the venerable stream not in the vivid flush of a short day that comes and departs forever, but in the august light of abiding memories. And indeed nothing is easier for a man who has, as the phrase goes, “followed the sea” with reverence and affection, than to evoke the great spirit of the past upon

the lower reaches of the Thames. The tidal current runs to and fro in its unceasing service, crowded with memories of men and ships it had borne to the rest of home or to the battles of the sea.

The vastness of the ocean is calming and, at the same time, inspires the imagination in its boundless possibilities. The continuously changing surface of the water is entertaining to watch, the sparkle mesmerizing. “Its hidden sources and destinations, its immensity and continuity, its mysterious depths impenetrable to light, and its surface reflection of that which surrounds it, inspires us to stare and transform our staring into daydream and meditation.” (Slater, 38)

One could speculate endlessly on the significance of water, but the important point here is that people like to be around it. They like to look at water, listen to waves, smell sea air, and dip their feet in it. People want their kitchen windows to face it, to eat lunch next to it, to photograph and draw it, to walk alongside it, and to play in it. All these things seem even more important in an urban environment. “City waterfronts are not only accessible to urban dwellers. They are also enhanced by the juxtaposition of nature to man, openness to density, eternity to the urban pace, dreams to reality.” (Slater, 39)

Significance of History

These various qualities and attributes of water may suggest idyllic potentials for the relationship between a city and its waterfront. In actuality, the relationship and attitudes of a community towards the waterfront are deeply affected by the type and history of development that has occurred there. Even in the relatively brief history of America, there have been several eras of development. Moreover, each waterfront’s experience through the eras and the degree to which it was affected by any given one vary by local economy and geography. Ultimately, the course, characteristics, image and nature of waterfront revivals today, which could be considered the most recent of many eras of development, can be directly attributed to their unique legacy of development.

In his thesis, “Reviving the Downtown Waterfront,” Slater uses two general courses of development to describe most American waterfronts today: those which retained the characteristics of the pre-industrial port and those which were entirely transformed by the industrial era. In terms of urban design, the essential differences between the pre-industrial port and the industrial port have to do with land-use and accessibility. “In the pre-industrial era, the waterfront was the front door of the city . . . it was both a working area and a public space.” (Slater, 28) Pre-industrial waterfronts were small scale with a large number of landowners. Since most goods and passengers at that time arrived by sea, generally on an unpredictable schedule, people came down to the water regularly to watch the activity and see what or who was new. “The piers and dock areas of the pre-industrial waterfront allowed public access, were on a small scale, were highly visible and exposed strange cargoes and freight operations to the public eye.” (Slater, 28) Non-water exclusive uses from coffee houses and taverns, to ship suppliers and merchants, congregated around the port to be close to this activity.¹ The city fabric was woven with that of the port, people and goods flowing constantly between the two.

As innovations in transportation increased and industry diversified and became more noxious, waterfronts grew to be increasingly large scale and less personal. In the industrial waterfront, iron and steel replaced wood and granite for building infrastructure and ships. Coal and steam engines replaced wind and sail for power. New shipping techniques and increased capacity required larger areas for staging and unloading. And of course, the railroad dramatically changed shipping techniques and land-use.

All of these trends grew in intensity over the first part of the 20th century. Over time, people’s relationship with the waterfront was transformed as well. The decline in the popularity of ocean travel and the expansion of containerization meant that fewer and fewer people had daily connections to the waterfront. Cities grew in the opposite direction, away from the city center and the water; barriers rose up between the cities and their shore.

¹ Slater, Eugene Arthur. *Re-using downtown waterfronts*. M.C.P. Thesis: Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1974. 48.

When geography permitted, industrial waterfronts relocated away from the historic downtown where it was easier to lay down new infrastructure. Sometimes the historic waterfront remained in service, but its value inevitably declined. Underused, in many cases the waterfront became a good place to build elevated highways to access the downtown. When the waterfront was modernized in its original location, rail spurs came to the waterfront, creating a barrier between the downtown and the water. Either way, cities and their waterfronts were separated, people lost access to waterfront activities.

The waterfront [had] changed from a colorful, public, mixed-use area to a relative drab, large-scale, private single-use section replete with smoke and noise. The port areas were usually closed off to the public, were hidden by fences and large sheds, and were often quite distant from the center of the city.

(Slater, 34)

Not surprisingly, waterfronts fell out of the public image. Maybe the waterfront did not make it onto postcards because people had less personal associations with it, or because it had become a dilapidated, under-invested part of the city, or because it had become a location for “back-door,” functional operations—transport, storage, shipping, refineries and power plants. In any case, if views of the city in the 18th and 19th century focused on the waterfront, in the mid-to-late 20th they focused on the skyline, the new image of the city.

The ‘re-awakening’ of interest in waterfronts in the 1970s and 80s was only made possible then by this preceding fall from favor. Anti-social behavior, which had always existed in these areas, flourished in the physical and social isolation. Sewage and industrial pollution made waterways unattractive and kept people away. Before they were rediscovered, waterfronts had become seedy, neglected, un-public places. At least, this was the prevailing image of waterfronts in the United States in the 1960s and 70s.

There was, of course, significant variation in the condition of waterfronts according to the location, predominant historic stage of

development, and the trends in the rest of the city. Some waterfronts were neglected or altogether abandoned after the pre-industrial period when more modern ports were created on the urban fringe. Here the built form of an era could remain preserved under an elevated highway as at the South Street Seaport. At the regional scale, pre-industrial pockets remained as industrial uses concentrated on the larger ports. Other waterfronts, that experienced industrial glory, were subsequently abandoned in the post-industrial decline and became vast industrial wastelands. And still others, continue as working ports today, some as consolidated regional container ports, some as small-scale fishing or recreational operations.

The Postmodern Climate and the Malleable Urban Waterfront

Regardless of their present condition, practically all waterfronts are affected by postmodernism and the attendant trends discussed in the last chapter, including post-industrialism, the emphasis on image and experience, commodification of the city, and the evolving image of urbanism. In fact, there are certain qualities about waterfronts today that make them highly appealing to the postmodern condition. Industry has receded from most urban waterfronts, leaving post-industrial voids. Sometimes the withdrawal of industry leaves behind a highly adaptable and attractive built environment that less space-specific uses can re-inhabit as in the Wharf district of South Boston, or the Warehouse District in Glasgow. Certainly the location alone and views of the water have always sold real estate. Liberated now from noxious uses and improved by environmental mitigation measures and urban design, much of the inherent value of the waterfront location has been recovered. A robust physical or cultural heritage only serves to augment such value, especially in a society with such interest in the past. Varied histories, and the mere suggestion of distant times and cultures these places evoke, gives the postmodern penchant for pastiche a vast palette to draw from. Finally, waterfronts in their proximity to downtown, can respond to the postmodern desire to return to the city. Undervalued, urban locations are typically among the first places to experience gentrification.

Such current conditions explain the postmodern affinity for waterfronts; other enduring qualities of waterfronts suggest that as highly adaptable and valuable spaces they are inevitably the scenes of revolutions in development. Whether it is Urban Renewal, gentrification or the original industrial revolution, waterfronts are the perennial locus for change in the city. Slater asserts, “Redevelopment is nothing new to the downtown waterfront.”(Slater, 67) For one thing, waterfronts are soft areas in the city. It is possible to run up against an edge, but shores can be created through land reclamation and filling in the shore. Waterfronts do not have as many neighbors as other parts of the city. Industrial waterfronts do not have as many residents, making them easier to reinvent without local obstruction. On the other hand, being a neighbor to downtown puts a district in the spotlight. Although backyards are often neglected for years, investment there is always easily justified.

The Crossroads of Postmodernism, Anywhere from Here?

The opportunity and desire the last two sections establish, predict that postmodernism will transform the waterfront. However, the distinction between postmodernism and other eras of development is that it does not prescribe a specific urban form or program. Incredibly just about anything can, and does, emerge from the postmodern makeover. Across the globe, waterfronts are being redesigned for: mixed-use offices, housing, shopping and recreation; expansion of the Central Business District, recreational and tourist environments; festival marketplaces; new industrial uses such as research and development “technopoles”; cultural facilities, museums, performing arts centers, aquaria; sports arenas and stadia; and parks.² On the shores of Massachusetts alone, there are vastly different redevelopment plans underway in Gloucester, Salem, Fall River, and New Bedford, even more if you include Portland and Rockland in Maine. The seemingly myriad possibilities make it difficult to make any across-the-board generalizations or to compare one port to another.

² Beinart, “The Boston Harbor Urban Design Studio,” MIT School of Architecture and Planning, Fall 1997. p. 13.

Instead of looking for a characteristic built form or program for postmodernism, it might be more valuable to approach post-modernism as a series of questions that are posed to a locale.

Creative ferment is common today along urban waterfronts all over the world, and cities where waterfront reuse is pending generally combine grand expectations with considerable self-reflection about the nature of urbanism today. Should planning for reuse support traditional maritime industries, or promote new economies? Should cities seek new markets and elevated world status through refurbished waterfronts, or maintain long-standing identities? Should public investment favor residents' needs? Attract new residents, or cater to tourists? Shore up nearby blue-collar neighborhoods, or encourage their gentrification? Increase public access, or promote private development at water's edge? Should commercial expansion be favored, or should multiple civic needs be addressed, especially those that private initiative does not readily achieve? Should, for example, cities seek to profit from the scale of modern development attracted to reconnected waterfronts, or should they restrict density while enlarging recreational space? Wise waterfront planning seeks to unravel such unnecessary polarizations.

(Alex Krieger, "The Ideal City: On the Waterfront")

As Krieger suggests, these issues are not as black and white as they might seem in the throes of redevelopment. But, a city or locale's legacy of development can help to set a course for negotiating through these questions. Differences in ownership, image and structure make the two kinds of waterfront districts suitable for different kinds of re-use. Generally speaking, it is the romantic, pre-industrial waterfront areas which are often preserved and/or rehabilitated.

It is primarily pre-industrial waterfronts and ships which have a great attraction today. They are small-scale survivals from times long past. And the pre-industrial waterfront district may suggest the time when the waterfront was the great public space of the city, when it symbolized both cosmopolitanism and community.

(Slater, 40)

More often than not, cold, monolithic, private, industrial waterfronts are swept clear and treated as blank slates. The landscape of oil tanks, manufacturing hangers and container lots offer little material for renovation. Each landscape, then, necessitates a different development strategy—large, industrial areas are often redeveloped under one governing body or ownership and master plan. Pre-industrial ports are often less intrusive, multiple-actor infill and adaptive re-use projects.

The course, image and nature of waterfront redevelopment are influenced by the condition and heritage of a particular port. Different environments offer opportunities to capitalize on different aspects of waterfronts: water as amenity, waterfront history, downtown location, or some combination of the three. Early conversions of waterfronts fit into fairly neat categories. Slater asserts,

There are various images that redevelopers can draw on: the attraction of the water itself and the historic associations of the waterfront district. The high-rise extensions of downtown draw exclusively on the image and view of water per se, while the maritime special mixed-use developments draw on both sets of images.

(Slater, 34)

Faneuil Hall and Harbor Towers, both in Boston, fit this dichotomy. But, as the phenomenon has evolved and applied to a variety of settings, the difference between the two types of conversion is not as clear. People are disappointed by the homogeneity such categories promote. As cities want to compete and differentiate between each other, waterfronts once again provide the opportunity to carry an image for a city.

More than ever before, it is all about image. An inventive image. We cannot rely on the past. One of the things that is important to understand about waterfront design today is that it's not a specialization like airports or hospitals. It's not a building type. It's really city building and it requires an understanding of urbanism. It is something that many architects can contribute to. But if you miss that piece and are looking in the catalogues for nautical-style exterior lights, you've really missed the boat.

(Cecil, "Port Authorities")

Stale, shallow, generic waterfront uses work against image building. Furthermore, less imaginative redevelopment can fall short of community expectations for amenities or revitalization of more than the immediate waterfront. Cities are demanding more sensitive and sophisticated models for redevelopment that address their unique needs. In a roundtable discussion on Massachusetts port cities, Dennis Frenchman put it this way: “I think they need to be more creative and help people to envision what the future waterfront could be. It’s not going to be like the 70s. And it’s not going to be like the 1890s either. We need new images.” (Frenchman, “Port Authorities”) Such images and plans might blend bits and pieces from all of the topics discussed here (the appeal of water, downtowns, historic associations etc.) in a truly postmodern, eclectic profile in order to address the needs of a variety of stakeholders.

The Working Port

The working port is one such specific profile. As far as some of the characteristics discussed above are concerned, Gloucester is part pre-industrial and part industrial. It is a small, protected harbor near once-plentiful fishing grounds. The Harbor Cove is the most historic part of the harbor and has retained much of the pre-industrial wharf infrastructure. It is also immediately adjacent to the central business district. The area around the State Pier has more characteristics of the industrial area. Urban Renewal created large parcels for processing plants and there is practically no public access to the water around the State Pier. Smaller commercial boats are docked around the Harbor Cove; the larger boats and container ships use the State Pier.

Perhaps the biggest distinction between Gloucester and the majority of other types of waterfronts addressed in this chapter is that Gloucester’s port remains a working port today. While post-industrialism has led to a decline in activity in most ports, Gloucester has vehemently protected the fishing economy. There has been some abandonment of uses as technology and the market change, but the tone and character of the port is undoubtedly that of a working port. Addressing this function and identity

is the highest planning priority in Gloucester. It is also quite a challenging one.

As the potential for redevelopment increases the value of waterfronts everywhere, existing uses, even vital ones, must compete or be exchanged for the prevailing “highest and best use.” Certainly, if the market had its way, residential and retail, which provide better returns on the land than marine-industrial uses, would be the principal uses on the waterfront. Market forces would convert working ports, made up of a community of small businesses as well as vast, abandoned ports belonging to a municipality. In her book on the working waterfront, Anne Breen asks, “Whether such change should be seen as any different from replacement of ‘mom and pop’ stores or small bookstores.” (Breen, 3)

If the waterfront is a commodity, then it should be left to the market. However, many would say that it differs by virtue of being adjacent to a public resource.³ Working waterfronts can be cultural resources as well—unique landscapes and ways of life that should be preserved for future generations to appreciate. Massachusetts considers working ports to be a “resource” because there are a limited number of communities that possess the right geography and land-use to continue to be a port. Accordingly, it has chosen twelve communities as Designated Port Areas with special regulations. “Massachusetts policy is that these are nonrenewable resources. We should not be driven in our decisions about their use by short-term economic cycles or development opportunities.” (Duscik, “Port Authorities”) The reasoning follows that if working ports are more than simply a commodity but also a resource, other values besides economics must be considered. Such values might include blue-collar jobs, maritime as tourism, preservation of community’s individuality, etc..⁴

No doubt, there is an economic opportunity in marketing the image and culture of the working port. The entire thesis of *Small Seaports: Revitalization Through Conserving Heritage Resources* is that small ports have heritage and heritage is capital.⁵ “There still exists a romanticism about waterfronts and waterfront work, the hard, honest labor. People visit these

³ Clark, John and Wilson, Claudia and Binder, Gordon L. *Small Seaports*, Washington, D.C.: The Conservation Foundation; 1979, p 13.

ports to be around, eat watching it, and photograph it.” (Breen, 5) The trick is getting these activities to become symbiotic. The fear in Gloucester is that tourism is more often parasitic, that it feeds off of the charm and character of the working port, and, if unchecked, could kill it off. The challenge then in the postmodern development environment is to 1) create mechanisms that at once sustain and market the working port 2) take advantage of the waterfront’s ability to create an image 3) protect and provide this valuable resource for everyone.

³ Breen, Ann and Rigby, Dick. *Caution: Working Waterfront*, Washington, D.C.: The Waterfront Press; 1985.p 7.

⁴ Ibid.

6 A PLANNING AGENDA

To be an attractive and functioning working port is the key to Gloucester meeting the challenge of the commodification of the city on its own terms. In order to realize this ideal, the city and state must make being attractive and functioning the centerpiece of every planning endeavor and design intervention. The history and theory set forth in the first chapters of this thesis suggest several issues which the coming planning and design interventions must address: including the decline and transformation of the fishing industry, the complex regulatory environment, and the need to preserve authenticity, amongst others. In this chapter, I evaluate the challenges and opportunities these issues collectively present in order to form the basis of a planning agenda for an attractive and vital working port. In the next chapter, I explore some of the specific policy and design interventions this agenda could lead to.



Fig. 6.1 *Lobster traps.*

1) Respond to the Changing Function and Purpose of the Entire Harbor

At present, the fishing industry is both specializing and contracting overall. Even while writing this thesis, another announcement was made that an additional portion of George's Bank would be off-limits for ground fishing until further notice. A boutique market for special catches has proved very profitable for a number of fishermen, but is not a large enough market to support the entire fleet. Small fish-processing enterprises have been shut down because they cannot meet heightened sewage regulations for the new wastewater plant. As mentioned earlier, Good Harbor Fillet is leaving its waterfront property for a new site in the industrial park. Only one of the two marine-railway sites is in operation, the other has been bought for the Marine Heritage Center. Even Gortons has considered moving, but management would rather be along the waterfront than in an industrial park.

Investments and planning should take these industry trends into account and plan accordingly. Some areas of the port might continue to be geared to the smaller, specialty businesses. Other areas might concentrate on the large, consolidated fish-processing centers. At the policy level, DPA treats the entire port the same, implying that all areas of the port are equally conducive to industrial uses. In the last couple of years, planning and spending along the harbor has been working at cross-purposes to this policy. While the Harbor Cove area has deteriorating ports, the State Pier was rebuilt a number of years ago. This is partially due to the fact that the state owns the pier and other areas are privately owned, but also because the state pier is the most modern area of the port and can accommodate current market needs well. If areas have been targeted for strategic investment, then such priorities should also be reflected in a strategic revision of the regulations. The state and city cannot favor some areas of the port for repair and investment and expect less funded areas of the port to compete in the same market. The 1999 *Harbor Plan* begins to address this inequality with a harbor-wide seawall improvement program and derelict removal. Other programs are in the pipeline, the most promising of which is the possibility of creating sub-areas within the

Designated Port Areas. Presently, DPA regulations require a 3:1 ratio of industrial port uses to supporting commercial uses, by district and by parcel. The Harbor Plan Implementation Committee is investigating the use of Transfer of Development Rights in other ports to steer less industrial development to one area, and reinforce industrial development in others.

Another important consideration is that leaner, post-industrial fishing uses might need a smaller amount of land to remain in business and could benefit from sharing property and infrastructure with other compatible uses. Like other post-modern landscapes, Gloucester might become a place where several different industries are super-imposed on one landscape. Tourism, education, scientific research, and industries of the post-modern city can share the same waterfront landscape. And with care, these compatible uses might be able to preserve this waterfront in a working state with the existing uses should the fishing industry ever need to expand again. Or, should the fishing industry never require the same amount of waterfront land as it once did, this new mix of uses would sustain a demand for a working port in the spirit of the Designated Port Area.

2) Bring planning methods and strategies in line with the ideal of the attractive and functioning working port.

The first obstacle is that the waterfront falls within the jurisdiction of several government bodies, each charged with its own mission. The state Department of Coastal Zone Management dictates the DPA policy; the state Department of Environmental Protection is charged with enforcing the DPA regulations, as well as implementing its own Chapter 91 program through permitting. Locally, the water and public docks are controlled by the Harbor Master. Landside, the Department of Community Development plans for the waterfront. And, the Gloucester Redevelopment Authority still owns waterfront property following Urban Renewal. These various jurisdictions tend to overlook the connection between these areas, namely the waterfront itself. Although they all cover the Harbor Cove, not one of them differentiates between it and other areas of the port with different characteristics. Within the one block of Rogers Street along the Harbor Cove there are five regulatory boundary lines—the DPA boundary, the

Chapter 91 1857 high-water mark, the local Marine-Industrial district, the Central Business District Zone and the historic district boundary which zigzags along the northern side of Rogers Street to include buildings which pre-date urban renewal. Furthermore, these jurisdictions are only minimally coordinated, which works against the creation of a coherent, integrated waterfront form and makes any development difficult. What's worse, however well intentioned each of them are, the regulations are currently rough, disjointed, and, occasionally, even at odds with each other.

According to one person I spoke to, the Marine-Industrial zoning district was created to prevent condo development along the waterfront which was beginning to take-off in the 1970s. A large percentage of the Marine-Industrial zone is non-conforming uses. The zoning was an effective tool for preventing unwanted residential development, but I doubt if the community wants the area to actually be built out according to the permitted schedule of uses. They probably want it to stay about the same as it was before pressures to develop condos came in, a very diverse mixed-use area which includes old neighborhoods, markets, bars and nail salons, in addition to marinas and fish processing businesses.

The regulations accompanying Designated Port Area status, which was also voluntarily adopted by the city, are similarly over-engineered and non-discriminating, but even more restrictive. The regulations, which apply equally to all of the DPA's (there are twelve in the state) were designed to fit a number of different situations. The state is, however, more than willing to work with communities to fine-tune the DPA to achieve local goals. The required Master Plans are intended to encourage such local initiative. In a meeting on the DPA status, a state representative said, "Look at the regs and wrap it around you, *your* concept." So far, the city has successfully petitioned to remove the northern side of Rogers Street from the DPA boundary.

There is a fundamental question as to whether the development the DPA's require is economically viable. A property owner's land is potentially valueless if there is no demand for the permitted uses. One of the goals of the DPA is to protect harbors, even while port industries are in decline,

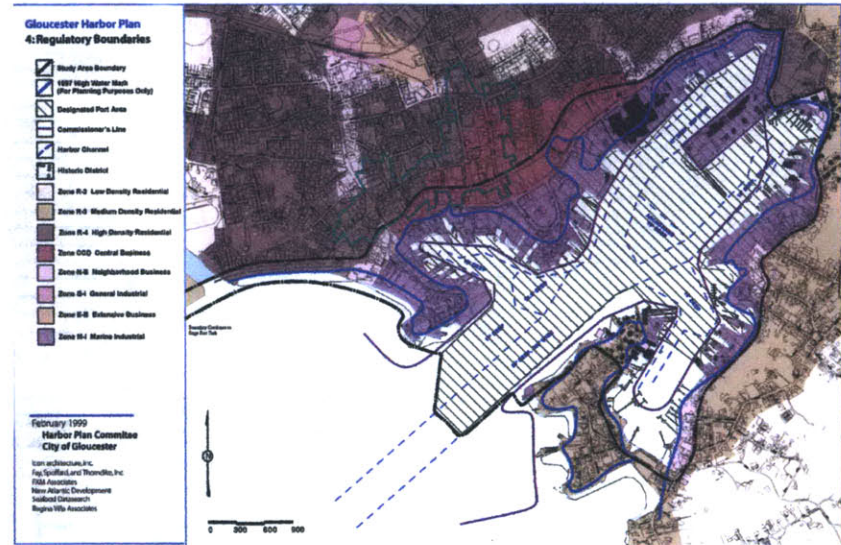


Fig. 6.2 Regulatory Boundaries of Gloucester's Inner Harbor, 1999.



Fig 6.3 Land-Use Patterns, Harbor Cove 2002. Red-commercial/ industrial; Pink-retail; Blue-Government; Light Blue-museum; Yellow-residential; Green-park.

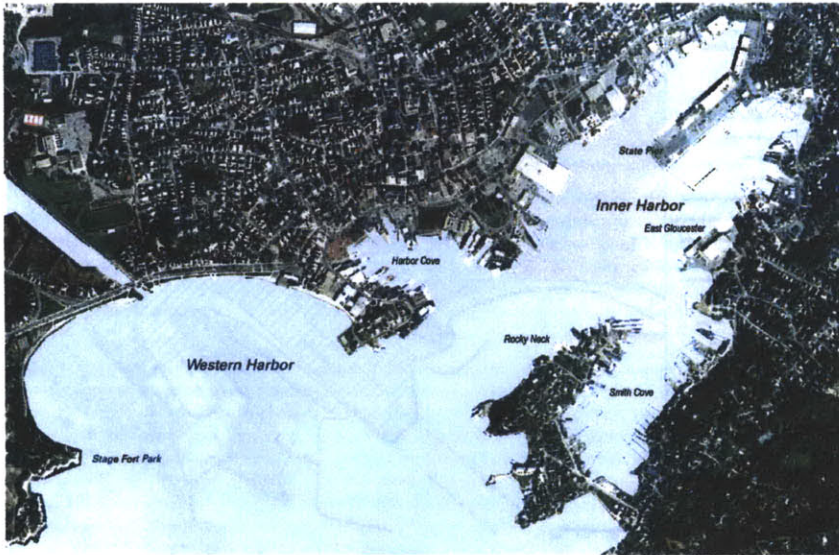


Fig. 6.4 *Inner Harbor Districts.*

because working harbors are very difficult to create on demand. Industrial districts are relatively easy to convert to residential uses, but it is practically impossible to go back in the other direction. If houses were built along the commercial areas of the port, it could take generations to change those back to industrial. Having said this, if the state wants to limit the uses to such an extent that they may become worthless in some economic environments, they should take action to preserve the value for the owner in some way, or face takings allegations.¹ The trick will be to devise a strategy out of these regulations for an economically vibrant and sustainable port.

In order to do this, the well-intentioned but rigid Chapter 91, DPA, and Marine-Industrial land-use regulations will need to be refined. First of all, there is the question as to whether DPA uses and Chapter 91 are basically compatible. Chapter 91 requires public access to the water, which might be very difficult to provide at industrial sites. As the licensing body and therefore enforcer of DPA, Chapter 91 is sometimes put in the awkward position of trying to implement a regulation antithetical to its own, leading one DEP representative to say half-jokingly “DPA drives me nuts!”

Secondly, regulations should be responsive to the variations in the historic use patterns, as well as the emerging industrial patterns identified above, and plan differently for each area of the harbor. Harbor Cove is the principal tourist destination; it has many restaurants and bars in addition to small boat docking and fish processing. The State Pier area is more industrial with large processing plants. The East side of the harbor has industrial and commercial uses but is also largely residential. Furthermore, harbors are innately mixed-use; it is desirable and it should be encouraged. Before urban renewal, there were all sorts of different uses from general stores and banks to residences and flophouses. Bars and cafes are not permitted along the waterfront, but are historic and essential uses in the working port. As depicted in “The Perfect Storm,” people in the fishing industry regularly go from the pier to the bar, which is an important

¹ Taking is a legal term describing the seizure of a property by the government without just compensation. When it is done indirectly through restrictions in use, it is called a regulatory taking.

community space. Some people need temporary housing in between fishing trips. Cafés serving breakfast at 4AM need to be close by the ships that are filling with ice and bait, preparing to leave port.

This historic type of mixed-use, in addition to the possibility of new compatible uses, may be desirable, but it is difficult to make work smoothly. Many plans claim to want “24-hour activity,” but when it comes down to it, they probably mean something more like 18. When I stayed in Gloucester, I heard trucks go by the entire night. Others have commented that people might think having a boat docked beside or below a condo is picturesque but will be petitioning to have moved when it is idling its diesel engine at 3AM coming in or out of port.

Parking and automobile circulation is another challenge for mixed-use areas. Commercial uses and residents must have dedicated parking. Businesses want parking in front of their establishments. Parking demand rises in the summer when visitors come to Gloucester. Since all of these uses demand dedicated parking, cars take up a lot of valuable waterfront land. There are conflicts about providing 18-wheeler parking. Furthermore, roads designed to regularly take 18-wheeler traffic are difficult to cross. All of these users are liable to complain about the extra traffic the others make. Such apparent incompatibility of uses led planners to attempt to separate uses. However, historical unregulated development in Gloucester and many communities around the country have proved that mixed-use is desirable and feasible. In order for it to work well though, takes a lot of effort. People who live there must have reasonable expectations, careful planning and conflict resolution steps must be taken and creative solutions must be developed for parking.

Finally, DPA, Marine-Industrial and Chapter 91 all refer to water-dependent land-use in their regulations. What uses are genuinely water-dependent in the postmodern environment? Many historically water-dependent uses, such as fish-processing plants are no longer tied to the water, except perhaps by tradition. Fish arrives mainly by truck these days which is why the Good Harbor Fillet is able to leave its waterfront site and move to the industrial park. In contrast, maritime museums or educational

facilities, which would not traditionally be considered water-dependent uses, are absolutely tied to their location on the water. DPA and Chapter 91 are constantly grappling with the fine distinctions between water and non-water dependent uses. Future regulation might consider non-land-use based mechanisms to decide what is and is not appropriate for the waterfront.

The disjointed nature of the regulatory mass can be explained, at least in part, by the fact that while there is agreement on being a working port, people chose this position for a variety of different reasons and with different goals. There are at least three general stakeholders that have been involved in the planning process, each with their own reasons for pursuing planning. The state considers working ports to be valuable non-renewable resources for Massachusetts, as explained in the background on Designated Port Areas. The city wants to improve and maintain the waterfront, but they are motivated by the state money as well. Having a Master Plan for their Designated Port Area qualifies the city for Seaport Bond money and other types of financial assistance. The motives of individual property owners are harder to generalize about. They can be ambivalent about planning because they want the freedom to develop as they wish, but they also want protection against whatever they deem to be undesirable development. In the 1970s, the enemy was condo developers. Today, without a clear enemy but lots of regulations in place, some property owners want out of their investment all together. In general, the private property owners want a say in the regulatory process since it controls their land, but when they come to the table, they are primarily concerned with individual issues relating to their own property that they want remedied.

Aspects of the of the planning problem can be traced back to the nature of the planning process itself and the coexistence of these multiple agendas. For one thing, planning is led by funding and state mandate. The impetus behind urban renewal plans, in Gloucester as elsewhere, was the existence of federal funding. Newspaper articles from 1959 recount how the leaders of Gloucester debated which sites in Gloucester would be most eligible for this money. Today, the planning requirements that accompany state money are more ambitious than the boilerplate plans

of the 1960s. Their intention appears to be to impose a semblance of bottom-up planning, to prod cities to consider what they want for their own future. Associated as it is with funding, though, the planning process suggests a particular form and comes with requirements and stipulations. Moreover, the participants still regard it as a procedural means to an end, so if it becomes more ambitious an endeavor than making a qualifying list and mission statement, it is by chance and not design.

The committee which wrote the 1999 *Harbor Plan* included a range of stakeholders and assiduously courted the opinions of all interested citizens through open meetings and workshops. However universal and inclusive the process aspired to be, the character and tone remained individualistic. Ultimately, the distillation of all of the interests within the stipulations of the process resulted in the vague but inclusive goal of “benefiting all users of the harbor,” and proposals which are impressionistic and lofty at one moment and incredibly specific at another.

Of course, it is essential to have the input of those who will be affected by the plan, but ideally out of the joint-planning experience some greater vision that meaningfully transcends personal agendas would be created. Sometimes, the act of bringing together divergent groups can jump start planning and build momentum for local initiative. One successful plan can inspire people to take on more projects. Perhaps, if the planning impetus had come from within the group rather than from the state, or had been inspired by a common goal it may have been more bold. As it was, participants seemed unmotivated beyond getting as much as they could out of the system. While the state seems receptive to more ambitious plans, the local impetus is yet lacking. The community has not broken out of the mindset of “what’s in it for me” in order to imagine how they want the waterfront to look and function.

Future planning efforts must be savvy about the existing regulations and strategize about ways to refine them. Moreover, in doing so, they should be bold in their ideas for the waterfront, especially in regard to the potential of the Harbor Cove district, where the water’s edge, the business district and the working port are all concentrated together.



Fig. 6.5 Aerial view of Harbor Cove.

3) Recognize that Rogers Street and the Harbor Cove is the hub of current and potential visitor activity.

Many of the reasons people come to Gloucester have something to do with Harbor Cove or something close by. By understanding what draws visitors to Gloucester, the city can strategize how to integrate tourism and the working port in a beneficial manner.

Gloucester’s history and heritage is a large part of the city’s appeal. There is the romance of the schooner and the distinction of being the oldest port in America. Importantly, not much remains of the physical environment from Gloucester’s heyday after the Urban Renewal. How then, can people interact and get in touch with this past? One way is through the museums, both existing and planned. There is the Cape Ann Historical Society and the Maritime Heritage Center. The former houses artwork by famous local artists and displays of artifacts of the fishing industry with accompanying history. The latter, is planned for land on the Harbor Loop, and already has in its collection the *Adventure*, the last built and last working schooner.

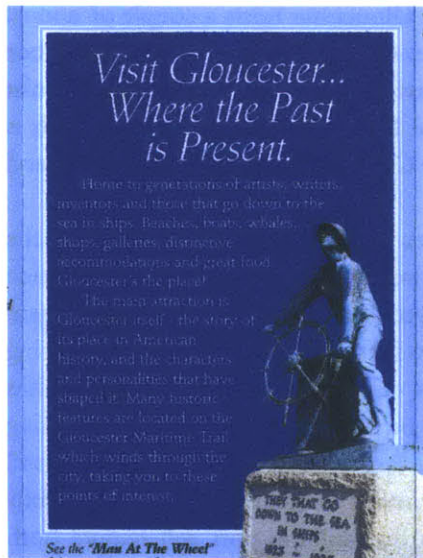


Fig. 6.6 Promotional brochure.

Many visitors come to Gloucester to trace family history. The City Archives caters to such people and is diligently constructing a database, which will be available to the public, of everyone who was born or arrived in Gloucester, and those who died at sea or were buried in town. As one of the first colonial settlements, and later as a major entry point for immigrants, Gloucester's records are an incredibly valuable resource for those tracing family history and genealogy.

People do not solely come to Gloucester's waterfront to try to get in touch with the ephemeral past, some people come to witness a living history. The fishing industry represents a 300 year-old continuity in America and offers one of the few opportunities to see a genuine, age-old, working class trade that is still alive today. The fishing industry has changed a lot over the years, but is still closer to the old ways of living and working than many jobs we have today. To some, it is a novel anachronism. For many, the appeal of the working port is to observe "good, honest, hard labor," considered rare in today's society.



Fig. 6.7 View from a waterfront restaurant.

Of course, working ports have been favorite places since time immemorial because they excite all of the senses. There's the smell of the sea and fish and the sound of gulls and boats rocking together. People have always enjoyed watching the excitement of fishing and the comings and goings of boats. The Harbor Cove in Gloucester has a special relationship with the water. It is small, accessible in scale and layout—a human-scale, manageable place. So it's particularly easy to get right up to the action and take it all in.

A visit to Gloucester is not just about fishing or the urban waterfront. The natural beauty of Cape Ann stands out amongst the many picturesque settings along Massachusetts' Coast. Artists say there is a special light in Gloucester. "The Perfect Storm" production team went out of their way to film on location because the natural beauty of the setting and the atmosphere. For those who travel to Gloucester to visit Good Harbor Beach, go whale watching and biking along Cape Ann, Harbor Cove and the center of town often serve as a base. There are also standard attractions



Fig. 6.8 View of the Annisquam.

like museums and boutique shopping. Gloucester hosts a couple of annual festivals. There are two historic houses open to the public right in Harbor Cove, the Judith Sargent Murray House, home to the famous abolitionist and the Fitz Hugh Lane House. The Rocky Neck Art Colony, which is served by a water shuttle from Harbor Cove, has many galleries to visit and small restaurants.

At present, these visitor activities do not directly interfere with the function of the working port, with the possible exception of parking, which will be taken up later. In the post-industrial and postmodern world, tourism and educational visits will likely play an increasingly greater role in shaping Gloucester's landscape. However, as of yet, the regulatory system has not formally addressed tourism's role or its relationship with the working port. The 1999 *Harbor Plan* makes the largest effort yet, but there are still many unresolved issues and much unconsidered potential. To successfully manage tourism and use it to sustain the working port will require both defensive and offensive maneuvers by the city.

4) Formalize the notion of the Harbor Cove as a district for planning and policy purposes.

A Harbor Cove planning district could provide a framework to respond to the changing nature of the port, the muddled regulatory context, and coordinate the necessary maneuvers to manage the image of this critical part of the city.

Harbor Cove is the focal point of Gloucester and the most imageable locale. Throughout Gloucester's history, the area has always been coherent and easily identifiable. It is adjacent to the civic center of town and is a comfortable walking distance, end to end. Rogers Street, the spine of this area, is a gateway to the city, the main drag through town and a major destination in and of itself for locals and visitors alike. Harbor Cove is also one of the most dynamic parts of the city. It has a lot of developable land and the potential to accommodate a variety of uses.

Harbor Cove's prominence, location, resources and potential demand a bold approach. I entreat the city to take a step back for a moment and "think big." Think of the Harbor Cove as a single concept—one which includes the water, Rogers Street and the water's edge. This concept would be an organizing principle for policy and urban design. Simply the idea of Harbor Cove as a distinct area of the city is an abstract notion. But, with this framework in place, practical ideas, which address the unique challenge and potential of the Harbor Cove area in terms of the attractive and functioning port, can begin to take shape. In the next chapter, I delineate some policy and design interventions which could develop within the concept of the Harbor Cove District.

7 HARBOR COVE URBAN DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

The creation of the Harbor Cove District would promote innovations and improvements to the attractiveness and function of this portion of the working port through both policy and urban design interventions. In this chapter, I offer three sets of recommendations: policy, physical, and organizational. The policy recommendations consider changes to the rules governing land-use in order to foster development which increases the attractiveness and function of the Harbor Cove area. The physical recommendations suggest ways in which the built environment of Rogers Street, and the pedestrian experience throughout the Cove, may be improved. In many cases, model examples of good urban design exist throughout Gloucester. This section identifies the model examples and suggests how they could be applied to all development. The final set of recommendations are built around the concept of a non-governmental, non-profit organization to manage and coordinate the various planning activities in the Harbor Cove District. A formal organization would have the presence and strength to guard and promote the city's image for the port and to negotiate some of the trickiness of image uncovered in the chapter on postmodernism.

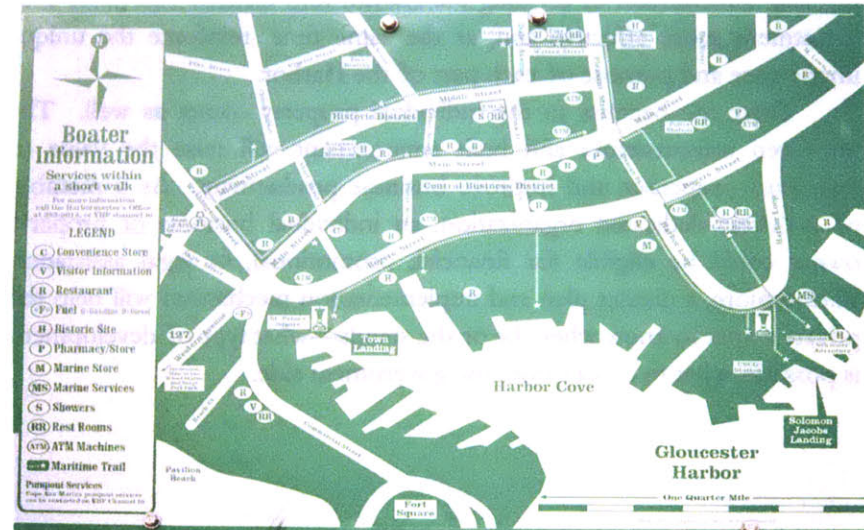


Fig. 7.1 Tourist wayfinding map.

The policy and physical recommendations do not hinge on the existence of an organization, but it would be greatly facilitated by one. Creating a special district within the Harbor will advance the interests of the city, the state, the residents and visitors alike. At the most basic level, a collective effort, backed up by the city could improve the communal built environment, the wharves, sidewalks, buildings and parking lots. More importantly, this would be an economic development zone of sorts, with an explicit economic goal having to do with marine-industrial use. A unified vision, with a dedicated mechanism will facilitate more successful cooperation with the state and, perhaps, gain added financial and regulatory support. A clear, pointed focus makes it easier for the state, and private foundations for that matter, to fund and organize projects. This in turn can give the city more maneuverability and open up more possibilities. Improving the function and appearance of the area through collective action will increase profitability and tax revenue. Finally, focusing and tailoring intervention by dividing the Harbor into districts can make each investment more effective and, at the same time, reinforce the unique importance and purpose of each part of the Harbor.

There are benefits to the individual property owner as well. The improved infrastructure and built environment will raise the value of individual properties and improve business productivity. As a member of a district-dedicated organization, an individual business or property owner could be eligible for financial, promotional, or legal assistance. Furthermore, a district plan and implementation mechanism will help the private owner to know where he or she stands—what type of development is possible, what to expect from the government side.

Policy Recommendations

The purpose of the following policy-based strategies is to bind together the aim of being an attractive and also functioning working port.

New Criteria for use in the DPA

There has been a shift in zoning over the past decade away from land-use criteria and towards performance based criteria, where it is not the use that is regulated but its impact on surrounding uses. The DPA 25:75 ratio could be modified in such a manner. Instead of the current land-use criteria, it could use economic criteria. Under this plan, water-related uses would still be required. However, qualifying non-water related uses could subsidize, either on-site or off, essential working port uses much like market rate units are used to subsidize affordable housing or cultural uses in office developments. Such a system could preserve vital marine uses while promoting a valuable diversity of uses within the whole port. This offers one way to promote tourism but in a controlled, benevolent manner so that its revenue could be harnessed to support the DPA.

Transfer of Development Rights

A Transfer of Development Rights strategy could be adopted in combination with this DPA criteria change or implemented independently. There is currently discussion about balancing uses in the harbor by concentrating non-marine industrial uses in one area and pooling the 25% to create whole lots for other types of development, while maintaining the overall ratio of water-dependent to water-related uses. The Cove District would be an ideal receiving area for the 25% portions of non-water dependent uses. Sites with 100% water-dependent uses such as Gortons could then sell their credits to other parcels to promote supporting development. These pooled credits could be used to develop the visitor activities capable of supporting other uses. Or, they could be used to redevelop obsolete buildings in the Harbor Cove area.

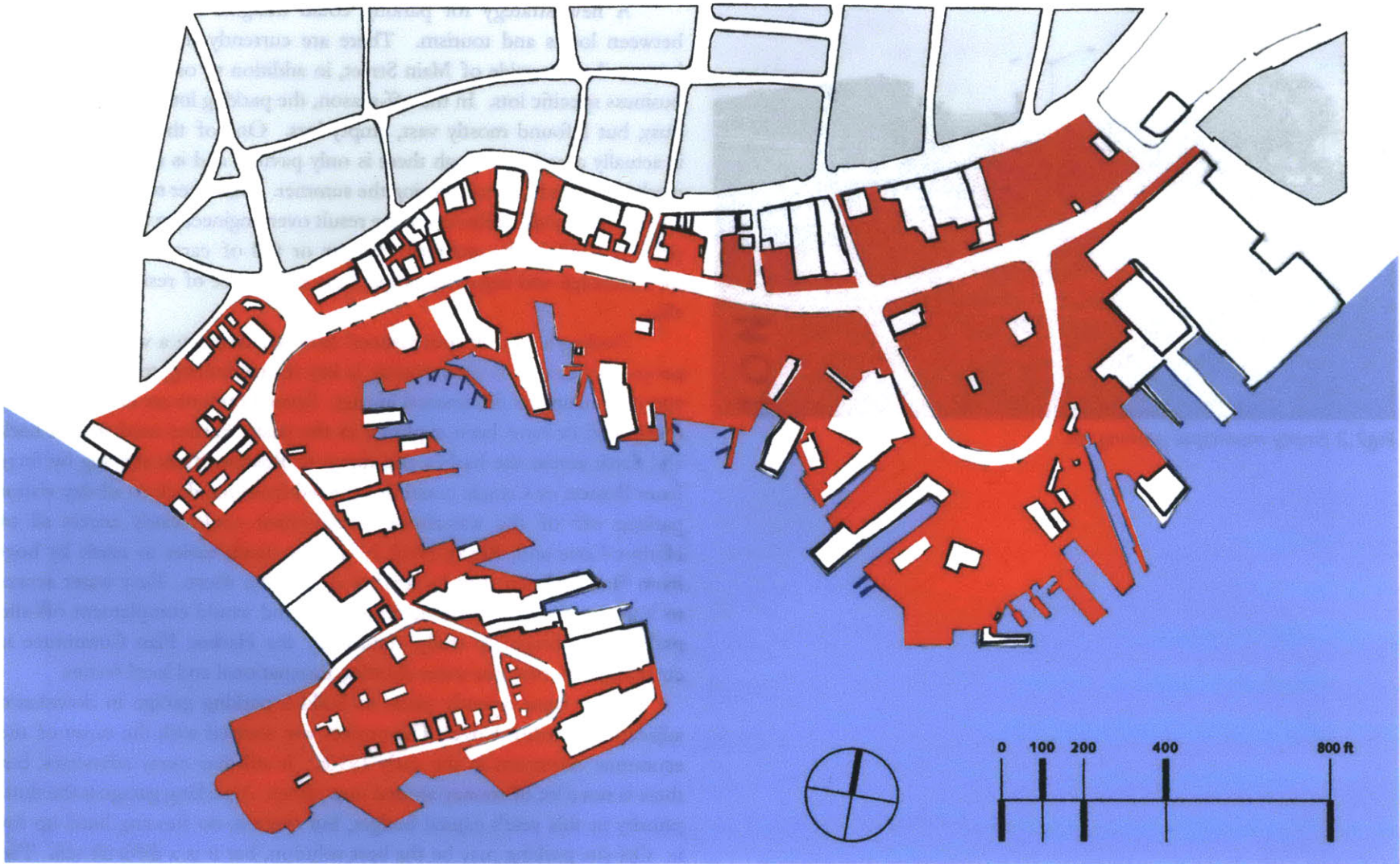


Fig. 7.2 *Open-space diagram. Much of Harbor Cove is taken up by parking, both public and private. (This diagram also includes parks and general open space.)*



Fig7.2 Empty municipal parking lot.

Solve Parking Conflicts, Release Developable Land

A new strategy for parking could mitigate some of the conflict between locals and tourism. There are currently three large municipal lots on the waterside of Main Street, in addition to on-street parking and business specific lots. In the off-season, the parking lots were occasionally busy, but I found mostly vast, empty lots. One of these municipal lots is actually a park (although there is only paving) and is used as a farmer's market and festival space during the summer. The other two municipal lots are less used and, I believe, are the result over-engineering to accommodate peak demand in the summer. Empty or full of cars they detract from the landscape and negatively impact the experience of resident and visitor alike.

Finding a place to put visitors' cars and devising a way to transport people around town conveniently is key to maximizing tourism potential and minimizing its detrimental impact. Several options are currently being researched or have been explored in the past. Ferries used to run back and forth across the harbor and down to Boston. Cars arriving by ferry from Boston or Canada could be directed from the dock to all-day visitor parking off of the waterfront. Pedestrians could easily access all of Harbor Cove and, Rocky Neck is actually much easier to reach by boat from Harbor Loop than by driving around the shore. Easy water access to important sights would increase visits and would complement off-site parking. A feasibility study, funded by the Harbor Plan Committee is currently underway for water shuttles, international and local ferries.

There were recently plans to build a parking garage in downtown adjacent to Harbor Cove. The project was shelved with the onset of the economic downturn in the early 1990s. It still has many advocates, but there is not a lot of money around now either. A parking garage is the third priority in this year's capital budget, but there is no funding lined up for it. Off-site parking may be the best solution, but it is a difficult sell. The Chamber of Commerce reports that people are reluctant to leave their cars in unmanned lots. For off-site parking to work, it would have to be easier to find than Rogers Street, safer, and more convenient. Providing

public bathrooms, an attendant, a frequent shuttle and offering the parking solution immediately upon arrival in Gloucester would go a long way towards offering a more attractive option. Metered parking would continue to be provided on-street and in small lots for local business, but would be short-term. Private parking would be set-aside for workers.

Since within the DPA parking is calculated by what use it is associated with, parking is taking up a lot of the 25% of land permitted for non-water dependent uses. Off-site parking could save visitors the trouble of navigating around downtown, reduce the conflict with residents and, perhaps most importantly, release a lot of valuable waterfront land for development.

Physical Design Recommendations

Every approach to Gloucester arrives at Harbor Cove and Rogers Street, which runs through it, is a main thoroughfare in the town. Main Street is actually a little hard to find in a car because of a one-directional street system, but Rogers Street, which is four-lanes wide, is practically unavoidable. It provides access to all of the Harbor Cove uses, and Main Street, the museums, City Hall, the library and the Chamber of Commerce Visitor's Center are all nearby. Unlike elsewhere in the Harbor there are few large, private buildings which block access to the water. This area has the highest concentration of bars, restaurants and banks, all of which serve both locals and visitors. For residents and tourists alike Rogers Street is one of the key images and experiences which define Gloucester.

Unfortunately, Rogers Street in its present condition is not up to the role it has been given. It is a poor urban environment due as much to the effects of urban renewal as a general lack of attention and investment in the built environment of the street. Any urban design interventions aimed at strengthening Harbor Cove must also address the physical appearance and basic function of Rogers Street. I have divided my recommendations into these categories, although they are all interrelated: the pedestrian environment; the streetwall; connections between Main Street and Rogers Street, Rogers Street and the water; and architecture.

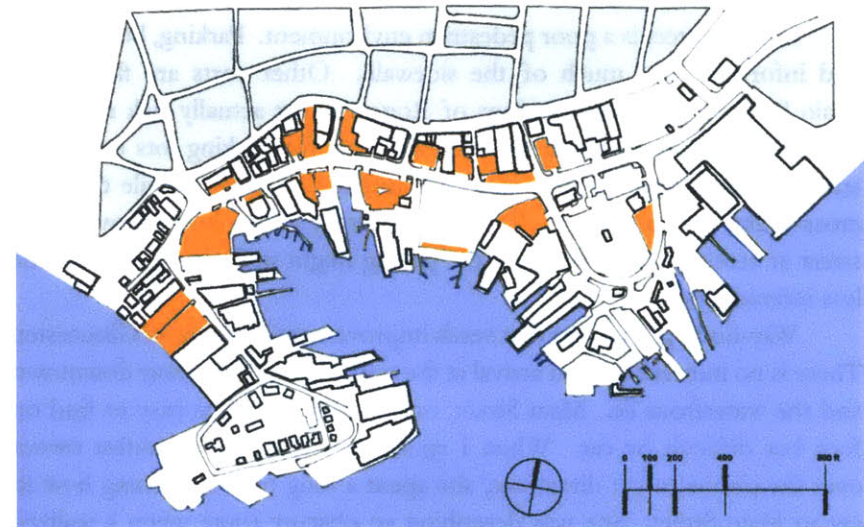


Fig. 7.3 Developable parking lots.

Pedestrian Environment

Rogers Street is a poor pedestrian environment. Parking, both formal and informal, lines much of the sidewalk. Other parts are flanked by chain link fences. Some sections of Rogers Street actually lack sidewalks all together. Instead, there are vast curb cuts for parking lots or former streets. Rogers Street is wide making it difficult to cross. While there are cross-walks, they are faded. Traffic is generally polite, but narrowing the street at crossings and changing the paving might make crossing it a little less intimidating.

Way-finding, is an area that needs improvement throughout Gloucester. There is no indication upon arrival at the train station which way downtown and the waterfront lie. Main Street, on the other hand, is easy to find on foot but difficult by car. When I spoke to a Bed and Breakfast owner over the phone to get directions, she spent a long time explaining how to get to Main Street. She was describing an obscure route when I realized that she expected me to arrive by car. I explained that I was familiar with Gloucester, and in any case, that I would be on foot and she replied, “Oh, a lot of people have a hard time finding Main Street what with all the one-



Fig. 7.4-7 *Informal parking and poor way-finding devices.*





Fig. 7.8 "The Red Line," Gloucester's Maritime History Trail.

ways." If you need a sign to find Main Street from Rogers Street one block away maybe something is wrong.

Way-finding and circulation could be enhanced through the coordination of existing signs and maps. There are relics from several generations of "improvements" including signs from the 1960s and the more recent green buoys. The lamp-banners are decorative but do not provide any clear indication that you are in "downtown" or the "historic district." Somehow, the message is lost in the cacophony of signs. If you are visiting Gloucester for the first time it is hard to know when you have "arrived." There is a new visitor center just outside of town which I came upon on my first visit to Gloucester. I was directed to it by a sign from Route 128, but there is no such sign for the visitor center in downtown.

For the pedestrian, the "red-line," or Maritime Heritage Trail, is designed to lead people through town to all of the important sites. It is a good idea poorly executed. With a minimal amount of work, perhaps a summer camp or after school's worth, this painted line could become an attractive, unique piece. Informational installments could be made at important points. A branch could be added to connect the downtown visitor center to the path.

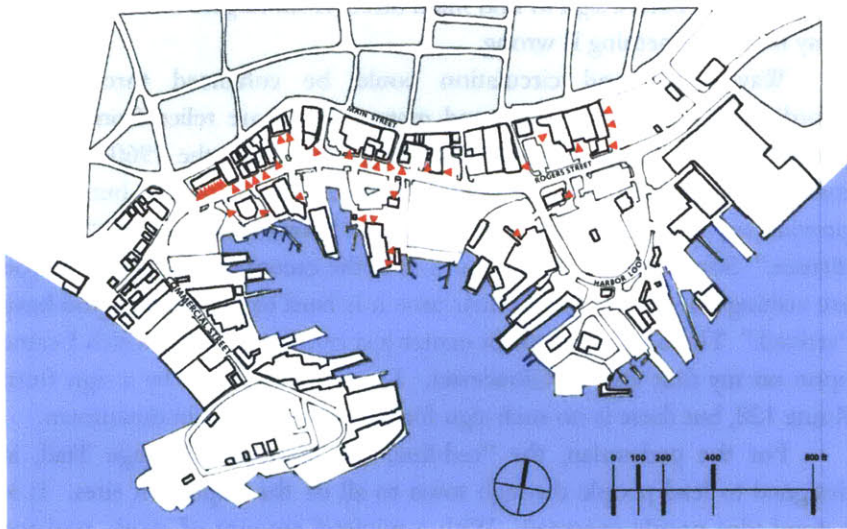


Fig. 7.9 Doorknob study of Rogers Street.

Streetwall

The poor pedestrian environment is exacerbated by the fact that the majority of building entrances are not off of the sidewalk but on the sides of buildings, through parking lots, or non-existent on Rogers Street. Likewise, there are few windows facing Rogers Street. This is partly due to Urban Renewal, partly due to the fact that even prior to Urban Renewal Rogers Street was not much to front on. Doors and buildings should be oriented to Rogers Street, and, if appropriate, the water. Dumpsters should not.

A build-to line would work in conjunction with orienting entrances to Rogers Street. At present, parking, and sometimes suburban-type planters, separate the street from buildings. Parking should be placed in the middle of the block between Rogers Street and Main Street, instead of in front of the buildings. Where parking lots must front the street, they should have a defined edge. This means an appropriately scaled curbcut and some type of border like small fences, shrubs or trees.



Fig. 7.10-11 The Pilot House and Mitch's. Notice the entrances are not facing Rogers Street.



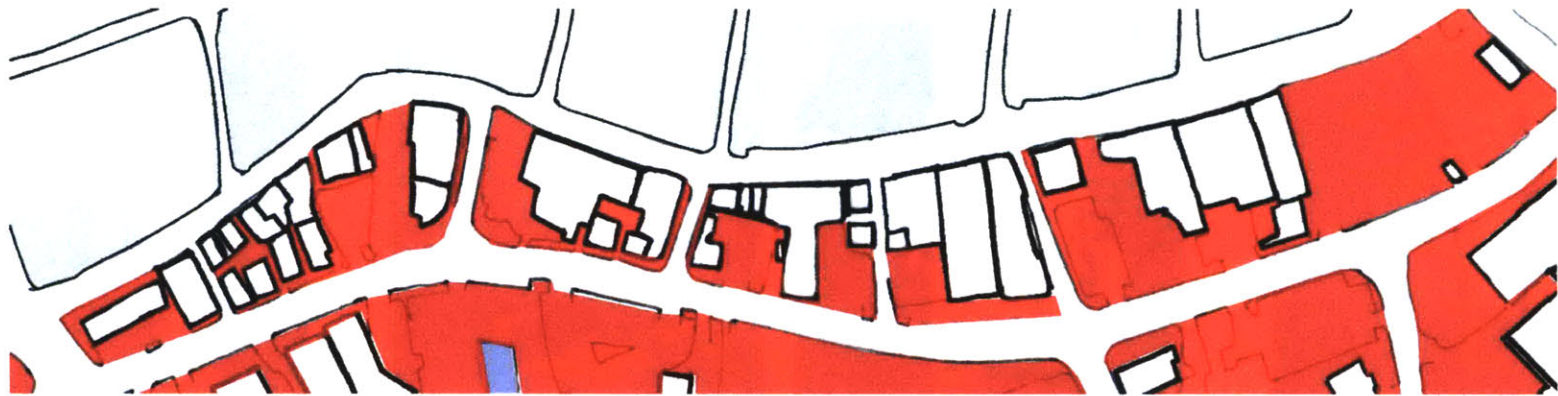


Fig. 7.12-16 (clockwise from top) Portions of Rogers Street devoted to parking; Parking lot fronting Rogers Street with poor edge; Parking lot with well-defined edge; No entrances on Rogers Street for these three buildings.





Fig. 7.17-20 Alleyways between Rogers and Main Streets.

Connections

Special attention should be given to the connections between Main Street, Rogers Street and the water. The presence of numerous small streets and alleys is a basic characteristic of Gloucester’s city form at the waterfront. Historically, these connections provided many access points between the wharves and the businesses of Main Street. Today, the connections survive in a number of different forms and various conditions.

The first type is alleys. This new development (pictured on the far right) ignored this traditional form all together. Some alleys are parked in. Others have been renovated, but remain unused. These alleys are a key component of visual permeability and allow for more pedestrian flow between the two streets.

A second category, I call “park-throughs,” describes where parking lots form a connection between two streets or a street and the water. They can serve well as pedestrian links between streets, but to do so they need dedicated paths. Murals are nice too—they can be used for story space. These pathways could be incorporated into and emphasized through a

break in the well-defined edges of parking lots suggested earlier. Using different materials, such as brick, would help to off-set the path from the asphalt. Pedestrian paths should be required for any lot that connects points of interest, as here (pictured next page) where the parking lot ends at the Sargent-Murray house. Pedestrian paths should be incorporated into parking lots which connect to the water as well, such as the parking lot of the restored Mighty-Mac building on Commercial Street.

The third category is pedestrian connections to the waterfront. Chapter 91 requires access on properties which fall below the historic high-water mark. A boardwalk has been suggested to form a continuous line of pedestrian access, but would be difficult to execute. These paths do not necessarily have to be inter-connected, though. A design standard with similar materials and signs could help pedestrians find them. These paths could also be linked with the connections to Main Street. The use of a design standard would have the added benefit of subtly informing pedestrians where they belong along the waterfront and where they do not, namely busy industrial areas.

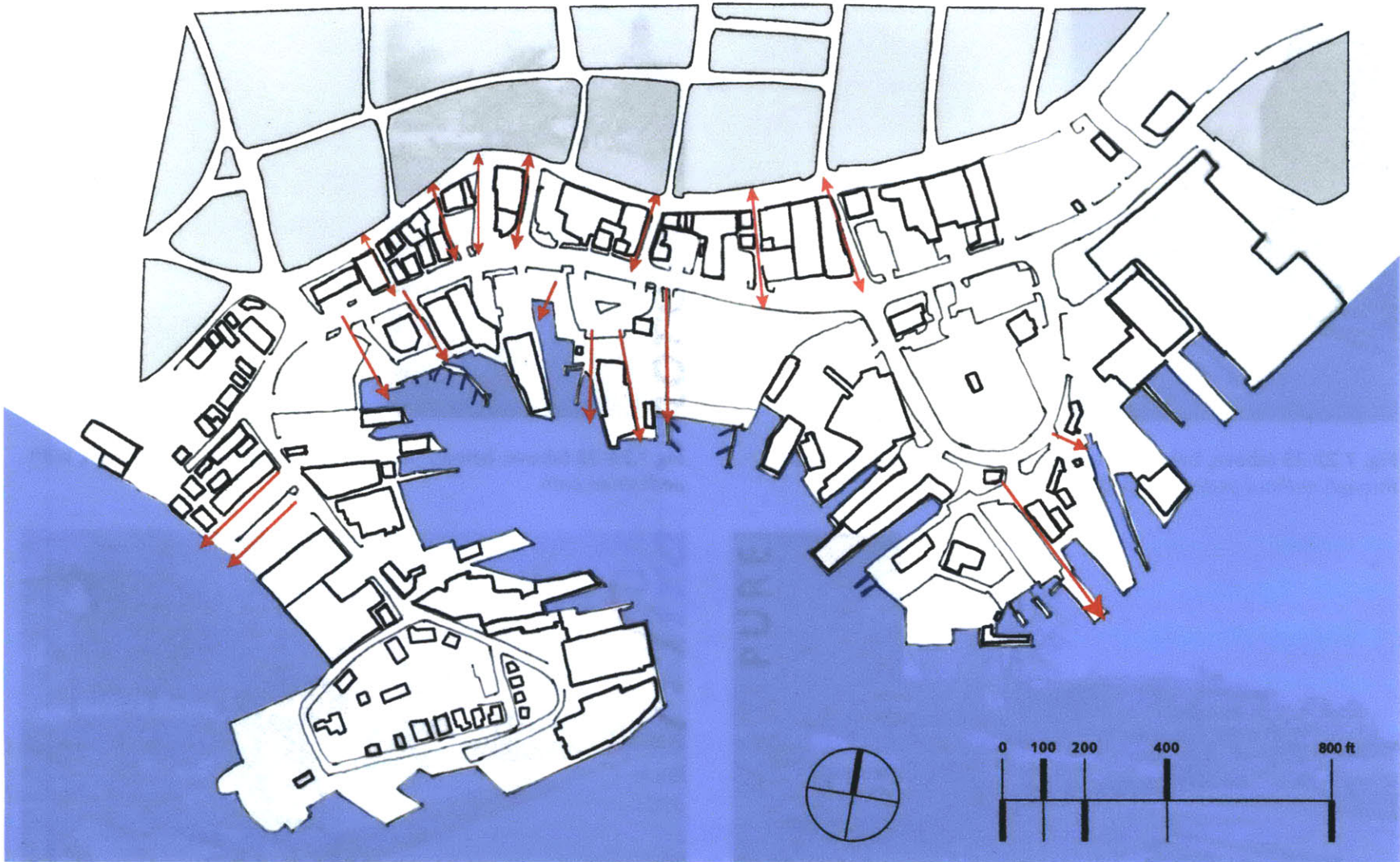


Fig 7.21 Connections between Main Street and Rogers Street, and between Rogers Street and the water.



Fig. 7.22-23 (above, below) *An example of a poorly planned park-through without pedestrian path.*



Fig 7.24-25 (above, below) *An example of a good park-through, with pedestrian path.*





Fig 7.26-28 (clockwise from top left) Mural in parking lot; View to water from Main Street; Signs for stores on Main Street facing Rogers Street.

Fig. 7.29 Buildings on Rogers Street offer little material for Façade Program.

Fig. 7.30 Gaping holes surround several buildings on Rogers Street.

Fig. 7.31-32 Successes of the Façade Program on Main Street.

Fig. 7.33 More blank walls on Rogers Street.



Architecture

Architecture should be sensitive to the waterfront environment and Rogers Street, alike.

The best way to accomplish this is not through the façade improvement program proposed in the *Gloucester Downtown Streetscape and Building Façade Improvement Plan* in the early 1990s. Unlike Main Street, which has a stock of historic buildings, Rogers Street does not have much material for façade renovation. Moreover, it would not be in keeping with Gloucester’s desire to be authentic if an arbitrary architectural period were chosen and existing buildings historicized. Instead of focusing on the façades of the existing buildings, I would advocate leaving most of the buildings as they are and concentrating on the gaps between buildings. Remnants of the Urban Renewal landscape would remain until they were redeveloped thus showing the progression of time. “The signs of past and future would be material for esthetic contrast and coherence.” (Lowenthal, 171) This in-fill could be of contemporary design but would need to address the urban design recommendations introduced earlier regarding the streetwall, parking and connections. Care should be taken to maintain sightlines of the Harbor Cove as well. This structure (pictured right) blocks the view of the rest of Harbor Cove from practically every vantage point. Its scale is more inkeeping with the modern end of the harbor at State Pier, not Harbor Cove.





Fig. 7.34-35 Fisherman's Wharf Co-op under construction and completed.

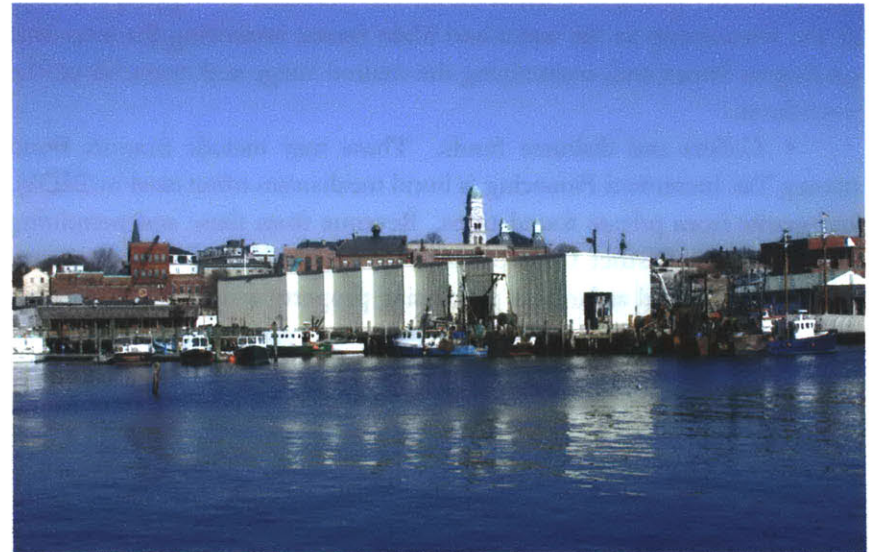


Fig. 7.36-37 New Mac Bell warehouse has an appropriate scale and does not block a view. Wharf building is out of scale and blocking views.

Harbor Cove District Organization

An organization devoted to managing the Harbor Cove would greatly facilitate all of the recommendations described above, both policy and physical, and make them more effective. I envision a non-governmental organization that would be a cross between a Business Improvement District, a Community Development Corporation and a public authority. This body's primary duty would be to safeguard the collective interest of the district. While its policies and actions would be coordinated with those of state and local government for the Harbor, the Cove District organization would be largely independent. The range of activities of this organization would generally include coordinating regulations, guiding development, managing the image of the district and advocating for its members. Below are some of the activities I think would be appropriate for the organization. However, the organization should have a small agenda to begin with and grow into the areas the community feels are most helpful.

- Unify permitting process. This will include existing Chapter 91, DPA, local zoning, building permits and new design guidelines. A design overlay district should be created for the Cove District with special attention to the relationship to the water and Main Street; improving the streetwall on Rogers Street; and, maintaining the desired image and character of the waterfront.

- Collect and disburse funds. These may include Seaport Bond money, Tax Increment Financing (a bond mechanism often used by BID's), and grants from private foundations. Revenue from these and permitting would support District Cove projects, as small as wharf improvements, street furniture and as large as purchasing property within the District for development.

- Buy property from land owners who want to opt out of the system to create a landbank. These properties could then be leased for interim uses while maintaining control of the land in the longterm to preserve the capacity of the working port should it need land in the future.

- The District Organization could manage the Transfer of Development Rights program. It could even purchase TDR credits from

other landowners and put them toward appropriate development within the Cove.

- Administer the design guidelines and improvement programs set out in the first part of this chapter. Like a more traditional BID, the Cove organization could create district wide events, organize street cleaning, security and tourist help.

- The organization might be the appropriate managers for the parking and water shuttles recommended in the previous chapter.

- The organization might be granted for a number of years, but should achieve self-sufficiency within 5-7 years.

This District Cove organization which I propose, is not unlike the collective organizations and management groups proposed by previous plans. The 1969 waterfront plan reported that there are many boards and agencies concerned with Gloucester's harbor, but no one agency charged with coordinating the harbor's future development.¹ It recommended the creation of a port authority to "administer, plan and promote the use of the port." (1969 *Harbor District Plan*, 3) One of the key recommendations of the 1999 *Harbor Plan* was to create the Gloucester Partnership, a non-profit organization designed to "assist small-medium sized businesses on historic finger piers" and "receive and manage funds" (1999 *Harbor Plan*, 24)

There is also support in the critical theory for a group such as this. Lynch suggests, that:

A new profession may be developing: the manager of an ongoing environment (the spatial and temporal pattern of things and human actions), whose profession it is to help users to change it in ways that fit their purposes. Such a person needs skill in design and in community organization, as well as in the traditional areas of administration and physical maintenance.

(Lynch, 239)

¹ *Inner Harbor District Plan Gloucester, MA*. Gloucester Housing Authority (Caneub, Fleissig and Associates.), 1969. p. 2.

Slater, in his thesis on waterfront redevelopment asserts that collective bodies are essential in managing the redevelopment of important areas of the city.

In this process, one must deal with the prisoner's dilemma—the interdependence of investments within a single area. This does not mean that one must wipe the slate clean and start fresh but that there must be a way for actors and investors in an area to agree on a common future for the entire district and to take collective action, without drop-outs and free riders, to achieve that future. Some controlling mechanism is usually necessary, such as single ownership, urban renewal controls or a non-profit corporation, in order to minimize the risk and help make the first efforts in an area successful.

(Slater, 203)

When Slater and Lynch wrote, BIDs had not been invented. Now, creating non-profit organizations is a common way of directing and managing a district in a non-governmental way.

Collective action is a difficult ideal to achieve, especially in a community such as Gloucester where the people take pride in their independence. The 1999 *Harbor Plan* struggled for a long time to reach the point where various interests agreed they were on the same side. Now that this understanding has been reached and the foundation of a coalition has been laid, it may be possible to take the next big step towards collective action. Above all, I would stress that this organization would not represent an added level of bureaucracy but serve as a community oriented, facilitating organization.

8 CONCLUSION

If Gloucester is to “control change” as the *2000 Community Development Plan* asserts, the city must actively plan for the future of Harbor Cove. Only with a clear and coherent goal for this area of the Harbor will Gloucester be able to control its fate as the commodification of the city takes root. I feel that the most promising strategy is to conceive of the area as a district and to found a guiding organization to manage the image and function of the Harbor Cove area. The mission of this district should be to reinforce the relationship between its function as a working port and the city’s appeal to visitors as a center for history, culture and the living tradition of the fishing industry.

However, I firmly believe that any type of vision can only succeed if it emerges from the community itself. The community must have a goal that not only responds to its desires and aspirations, but also a goal in which they are truly invested. As of yet, no vivid, compelling goal has jelled within the community.

The ultimate purpose of my thesis then is not simply to make design recommendations which should be immediately adopted. More importantly, I hope that it will reframe and refocus the question of the harbor in



Fig. 8.1 *The Sea Trek leaving at dawn for its next fishing voyage.*

Gloucester. First, the future of the harbor should be developed with a firm grounding in the historical, theoretical and philosophical context. The historical background is necessary to understand how Gloucester came to where it is, and what aspects of the past can be helpful in the future. More importantly, a discussion about Gloucester must take into account larger cultural trends of which the city is a part. Local facts should be combined with theory to, on the one hand, make the theory more relevant and, on the other, make the terms of the problem less provincial. Gloucester must have an appreciation for its place in the greater phenomenon of waterfront revivals which are sweeping the world. Essentially, in order to understand the struggle of a particular community, one must first take a bigger approach.

Secondly, the role of the Harbor Cove should be realized in shaping the future of the entire community. There has always existed the sense in Gloucester that as goes the Cove, so goes the city. This area is the historic cradle of the city, its front door, and one of its greatest resources. Any future plans for Gloucester must plan for this prominence and potential and protect its cultural value. The identity of Gloucester largely rests on this portion of the waterfront.

This methodology is the best way for the city to approach the problem of the future of the waterfront. I have reached these recommendations following my own path through this material. It is my hope that as they adopt this approach and move through the process themselves that the community would come up with its own answers. If anything, I hope that my final suggestions inspire Gloucester as to what could be possible.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Planning Documents

1990 Community Development Plan, Gloucester Planning Commission.

The City Plan 1994: An Action Plan for the Future, Gloucester.

Community Development Plan, 2001 Gloucester, Planning Board. (Cecil Group, Inc.), 2001.

The Governor's Commission on Commonwealth Port Development 1994.

City and Town Centers: A Program for Growth, Office of State Planning, 1997.

Gloucester Downtown Streetscape and Building Façade Improvements, Planning Board. (Gillham & Gander Associates, Inc.), 1995.

Gloucester General Plan and Report, Gloucester Planning Board, (Cancub, Fleissig and Associates), Two Volumes, 1963.

Gloucester Harbor Plan, Gloucester, (ICON Architects Inc.), 1999.

Gloucester Resource Study Massachusetts Institute of Technology, National Sea Grant Program, 1973.

Inner Harbor District Plan Gloucester, MA. Gloucester Housing Authority (Caneub, Fleissig and Associates.), 1969.

Introduction to the Mass Public Waterfront Act and its Regulations.

Urban Renewal Plan. Gloucester Housing Authority, 1963.

Literature

Barlocci, Marisa. "Reinventing Place." *Metropolis*: vol. 17, no. 2; September 1997.

Benham, J. B., Horgan M. J., and Lafata, G. J.. *Photographic History of Gloucester.* Gloucester, MA: Gloucester Historical Reproductions; 1976. Vols I-IV.

Beinart, Julian. "Boston and Other Harbors," *Boston Harbor Urban Design Report.* Massachusetts Institute of Technology; 1997.

Boyer, Christine M.. *The City of Collective Memory,* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; 1998.

Boyer, Christine M.. "Cities for Sale: Merchandising History at South Street Seaport," *Variations on a Theme Park.* Ed. Sorkin, Michael. New York, NY: Hill and Wang; 1992. 181-204.

Brand, Stewart. *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built,* New York: Penguin Books; 1994.

Breen, Ann and Rigby, Dick. *Caution: Working Waterfront,* Washington, D.C.: The Waterfront Press; 1985.

Breen, Ann and Rigby, Dick. *Waterfronts: Cities Reclaim Their Edge,* New York: McGraw-Hill, Inc.; 1994

Breen, Ann and Rigby, Dick, eds. *Urban Waterfronts.* Washington, D.C.: The Waterfront Press; 1985.

Clark, John and Wilson, Claudia and Binder, Gordon L.. *Small Seaports,* Washington, D.C.: The Conservation Foundation; 1979.

Cook, Jeffery. "Postindustrial Regionalist Architecture." *Journal of Architectural Education*: vol. 41, no. 1; Fall 1987.

Dunham-Jones, Ellen. "New Urbanism as a Counter-Project to Post-Industrialism." *Places*: vol. 13, no. 2; Spring 2000.

Fowler, Peter. "Heritage: A Post-Modernist Perspective." *Heritage Interpretation Volume 1 The Natural and Built Environment.* Ed. David L. Uzzell New York: Belhaven Press; 1989. 57-63.

Frenchman, Dennis. "Narrative Places (?)," *Imaging the City : Continuing Struggles and New Directions.* Eds.Vale, Lawrence, and Warner, Sam Bass. New Brunswick, N.J. : Center for Urban Policy Research; 2001. 262-285

Garland, Joseph E. *The Gloucester Guide.* Rockport, Massachusetts: Protean Press; 1998.

Gloucester Brochure, published by the Gloucester Tourism Commission.

Gloucester Daily Times Editorial Page. "Don't Break the Faith." January 29, 1959.

Gloucester Daily Times. "A Master Plan for the City of Gloucester." May 27, 1937.

Hall, Michael C. and Selwood, John H.. "Event Tourism and the Creation of a Postindustrial Portscape: The Case of Fremantle and the 1987 America's Cup" *Recreation and Tourism as a Catalyst for Urban Waterfront Redevelopment.* Ed. Craig-Smith, Stephen J. and Fagence, Michael. Westport, CT: Praeger; 1995. 105-114.

Harvey, David. *The Condition of Postmodernity.* Malden, MA: Blackwell; 1990.

Hewison, Robert. *The Heritage Industry.* London: Methuen London; 1987.

- Hickok, Ralph. "What About Need for Renewal Here?" Gloucester Daily Times; May 13, 1959.
- Higgins, Richard. "Developer Sues Gloucester, MA Agency over Failed Shopping Center Project." The Boston Globe; June 30, 2000.
- Kreiger, Alex. "Ideal City: On the Waterfront." Preservation, March/April 2000; 36-40, 93.
- Laenen, Marc. "Looking for the Future Through the Past" *Heritage Interpretation Volume 1 The Natural and Built Environment* ed. David L. Uzzell New York: Belhaven Press; 1989. 88-95.
- Lynch, Kevin. *What Time is This Place*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press; 1972.
- Lowenthal, David. *The Past is a Foreign Country*. New York: Cambridge University Press; 1985.
- Lowenthal, David. "Age and Artifact" *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*. Syracuse University Lecture Series. New York: Oxford University Press; 1979.
- McManamon, Francis P. and Hatton, Alf. "Introduction: Considering Cultural Resource Management in Modern Society" *Cultural Resource Management in Contemporary Society*. Ed. McManamon, Francis P. and Hatton, Alf . New York: Routledge; 2000. 1-19.
- Meyer, Han. *City and Port*. Utrecht, the Netherlands: International Books; 1999.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Getting Started: How to Succeed in Heritage Tourism*. Washington, D.C.: 1993.
- Orbasli, Ayin. *Tourists in Historic Towns*. New York: E & FN Spon; 2000.
- "Port Authorities: The Future of Massachusetts' Other Port Cities." Roundtable discussion. Architecture Boston, Spring 1999; 12-18.
- Slater, Eugene Arthur. *Re-using downtown waterfronts*. M.C.P. Thesis: Massachusetts Institute of Technology; 1974.
- Reifeiss, Robert. *On the Edge Rethinking the Life of the City*. MArch Thesis: Massachusetts Institute of Technology; 1995.
- Riley, David. "On the Waterfront." Preservation, September/October 1999; vol. 51, no. 5. [94]-101.
- Rocky Neck Art Colony, East Gloucester ,MA.
- Throsby, David. *Economics and Culture*. New York: Cambridge University Press; 2001.
- Torre, L. Azeo. *Waterfront Development*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold; 1989.
- U.S. Department of Commerce National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. *Improving Your Waterfront: A Practical Guide*. Washington, D.C.: The Administration, U.S. G.P.O.; 1980.
- Voss, Gretchen. "Welcome to Gloucester—Now Get the Hell Out." Boston Magazine, June 1999, vol 91, Issue 6. 68-75.
- Warpole, Ken. "On the Waterfront." Landscape Design, March 2001, No. 298; 60-61.
- Whalen, Stephen. *Inaugural Address of the Mayor*. Gloucester, MA: Cape Ann Ticket and Label Co.; 1939.
- Wrenn, Douglas. *Urban Waterfront Development*. Washington, D.C.: Urban Land Institute; 1983.
- Wright, John Hardy. *Gloucester and Rockport*. Images of America Series. Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2000.

FIGURE CREDITS

Chapter One: Introduction

Fig. 1.1 The Boston Globe, May 6, 2002.

Fig. 1.2 www.downtothesea.com

Fig. 1.3 Harvard Graduate School of Design. Frances Loeb Library
Visual Collection.

Fig. 1.4-5 Author.

Chapter Two: History of Gloucester

Fig. 2.1 *Massachusetts Topographical Atlas*.

Fig. 2.2 Benham, J. B., Horgan M. J., and Lafata, G.
J.. *Photographic History of Gloucester*. Gloucester, MA:
Gloucester Historical Reproductions; 1976. Vol.III.

Fig. 2.3 Garland, Joseph E. *The Gloucester Guide*. Rockport,
Massachusetts: Protean Press; 1998.

Fig. 2.4 www.downtothesea.com

Fig. 2.5 Greg Ketchen.

Fig. 2.6 Garland, Joseph E. *The Gloucester Guide*.

Fig. 2.7 Author.

Fig. 2.8 www.artchive.com

- Fig. 2.9 Greg Ketchen.
Fig. 2.10 Gloucester City Archives, courtesy of Prudence Fish
Fig. 2.11 Benham, J. B., Horgan M. J., and Lafata, G. J..
Photographic History of Gloucester. vol. III.
Fig. 2.12 Gloucester City Archives.
Fig. 2.13 *The Gloucester Guide*, Joseph Garland.
Fig. 2.14 *Urban Renewal Plan for Waterfront Urban Renewal Area*, Gloucester Housing Authority, 1963.
Fig. 2.15 *Special Resource Study*, Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Office, 1992.
Fig. 2.16 Author.

Chapter 3: Planning Gloucester

- Fig. 3.1 Author
Fig. 3.2 *Gloucester General Plan and Report*, Gloucester Planning Board, (Caneub, Fleissig and Associates), 1963.
Fig. 3.3 The Gloucester Daily Times, June 23, 1971.
Fig. 3.4 Harvard Graduate School of Design, Loeb Design Library, Visual Collection.
Fig. 3.5 Author.
Fig. 3.6 Gloucester Zoning Bylaw. www.ci.gloucester.ma.us
Fig. 3.7-8 *Gloucester Harbor Plan*, Gloucester, (ICON Architects Inc.), 1999.

Chapter 5: The Waterfront Revival

- Fig. 5.1 Cape Ann Historical Association.

Chapter 6: A Planning Agenda

- Fig. 6.1 Author.
Fig. 6.2 *Gloucester Harbor Plan*, Gloucester, (ICON Architects Inc.), 1999.
Fig. 6.3 Author.
Fig. 6.4 *Gloucester Harbor Plan*, Gloucester, (ICON Architects Inc.), 1999.
Fig. 6.5 Greg Ketchen.

- Fig. 6.6 Gloucester Brochure.
Fig. 6.7-8 Author.

Chapter 7: Harbor Cove Urban Design Recommendations

- All Figures, 7.1-37, Author.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

- Fig. 8.1 Author.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Each person I spoke to in Gloucester on the street, in their offices, shouting from boats, on park benches, over the phone, over lunch, and on their way to other meetings. Every conversation vastly increased my understanding of Gloucester. Thank you for opening up to a stranger about your city.

Sarah and Jeanie at the Gloucester Archives for their great hospitality, thoughtfulness and willingness to help. The historical perspective I gained during my time with you in the basement of City Hall revealed Gloucester to me in new light.

Greg Ketchen who made every effort to provide me with any information I asked for, and more importantly, information I didn't know to ask for. Your attentiveness and interest in my project was inspirational. You also deserve recognition as the coiner of the phrase "the attractive and functioning working port."

Matt, for willingly embarking on a second thesis project before he had fully recovered from his own. You are as steadfast as a Master Page—occasionally overloaded but kept through saves.

My parents who listened to me gripe about the process, helped me past the occasional blocks, and sedulously plowed through draft after draft after draft. Good thing you retired in time to make this full-time commitment to my thesis. Needless to say, many thanks for helping me get to *and through* graduate school.

Toscanini's who kept things upbeat with caffeine, familiar smiles and good tunes. And, of course, for providing me with a reason to leave the library several times a day.