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A PLAN FOR THE NEWPORT WATERFRONT

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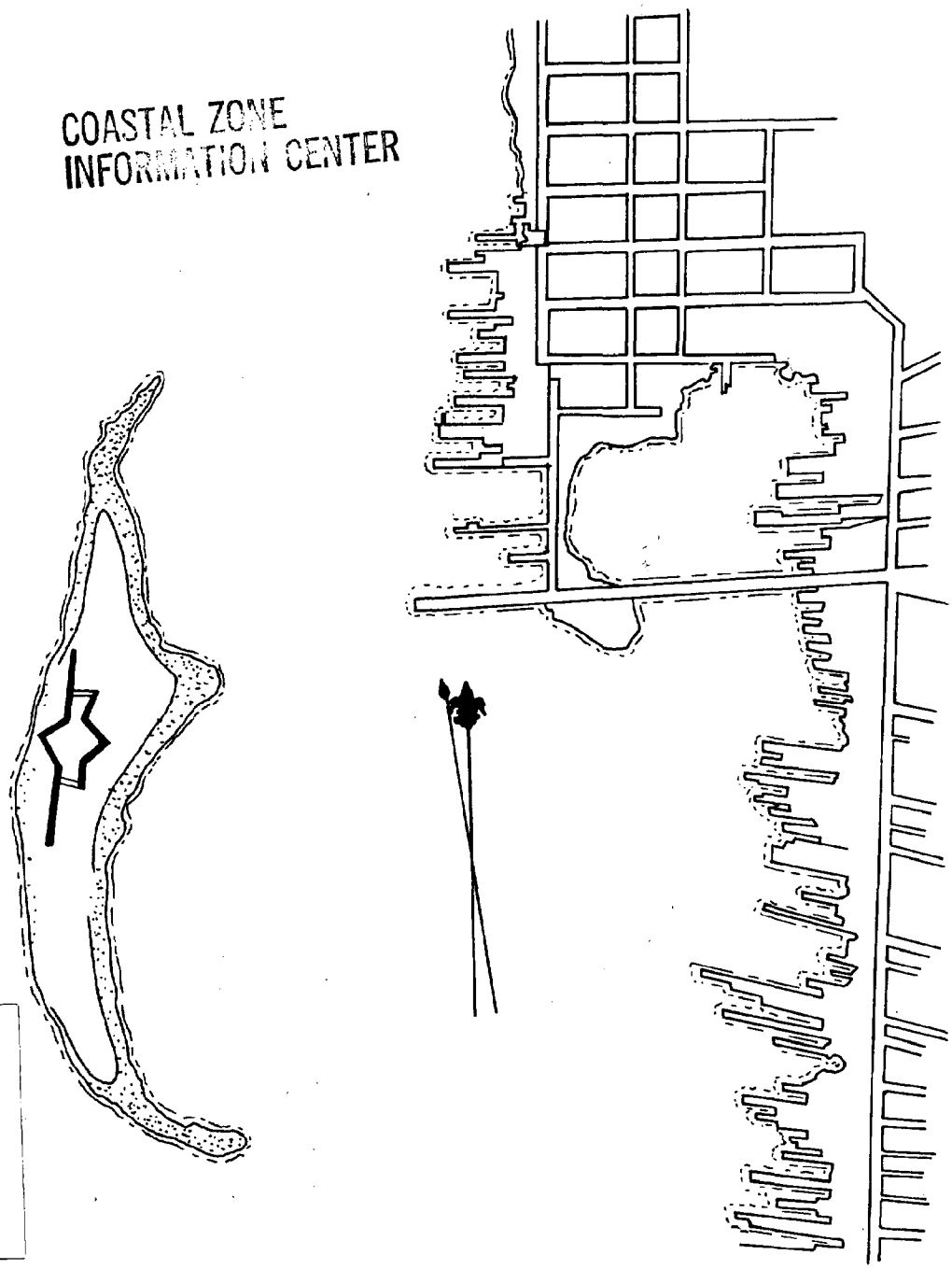

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A PLAN FOR THE NEWPORT WATERFRONT

Studio III

Graduate Curriculum in

Community Planning and Area Development

University of Rhode Island

December 21, 1978

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A PLAN FOR THE NEWPORT WATERFRONT

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This report summarizes the results of a three-month study by a team of University of Rhode Island graduate students in Community Planning. The purpose of the study was to provide a fresh perspective to development of the Newport waterfront. The assignment was to analyze present use of the waterfront, and suggest ideas for future development that would be appropriate, feasible, and would lead to orderly and productive growth of this historic resource.

The study was conducted in three parts. First, information was collected on land use, traffic and pedestrian circulation, ownership patterns, economic activities and trends, and fourteen other subjects. Then the information was sorted and analyzed, and goals for future development were formulated. Finally, sketch plans were prepared and analyzed, redrawn, then assembled into an overall plan for the waterfront.

Because of the limited time and resources available to the study team, the final plan is not all-inclusive. Instead it concentrates on a dozen major proposals that form a framework for overall development patterns. This is not a master plan. It suggests specific projects to be undertaken by the city and by private development to stimulate and guide the direction of growth in tourism, fisheries, and other commercial, residential, civic and private activities. For the same reasons, this report and the presentation that it accompanies are admittedly sketchy. A final report will be prepared and published by a smaller team of students during the coming semester.

We want to gratefully acknowledge the patient assistance afforded us by the many civic leaders and other persons who provided background information and support for our efforts. We hope the results of this study are as valuable to them as their time and advice was to us.

We especially want to thank Neils Rohrholm, Coordinator of the URI Sea Grant Program, for the financial assistance that allowed us to carry this project beyond the level of a student project. We also thank Gerry Cook, Chairman of the Newport Waterfront Commission, Sam Jernigan, Newport Planning Director, Ron Wood, architect and visiting critic, and Brian Barber, Adjunct Professor, for giving their time to review our ideas and offer constructive suggestions.

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In less than a decade Newport has made a remarkably smooth transition from a major naval center to a major tourist center. While this transition has brought healthy economic benefits, it has also created severe problems of traffic circulation in the downtown and waterfront areas.

This section offers specific recommendations to provide more efficient and appealing circulation of vehicles and pedestrians in both downtown and waterfront areas, as well as Newport generally.

Vehicular Flow: Newport's waterfront has only one major thoroughfare, the corridor that includes Memorial Boulevard, Memorial Boulevard Extension, Americas Cup Avenue, and Frank Coridon Road. This pattern results in a severe deficiency of suitable routes for traffic to cross the city, and in intolerable congestion at the height of the summer tourist season.

The present circulation plan has been constrained by the densely developed and historically valuable cityscape of the waterfront area. This constraint has led to use of local streets, intended only to provide access to abutting property, as major traffic collectors and arterials. The result is seasonal traffic loads far in excess of design capacity. Recognizing the importance of this constraint, we offer several suggestions to improve circulation. Our goal is to provide efficient and convenient transport of persons and goods throughout the Newport harbor area. The following objectives serve this goal:

a. Create a system of major thoroughfares that connect the arterial roads focused on the waterfront.
b. Provide detailed refinements on which successful operation of the general system depends.
c. Remove obstructions to efficient traffic flow on waterfront streets, where possible.
d. Reserve areas for exclusive pedestrian use.
e. Minimize obstructions to pedestrian traffic.

In our plan the corridor from Memorial Boulevard to Frank Coridon Road is preserved as a high-capacity thoroughfare; the intersection on Americas Cup at Market Square and Thames Street is eliminated; and slight changes are made at other intersections to connect parking areas. The major change from the present system we recommend is creation of a high-capacity arterial road connecting the waterfront with Broadway and the Aquidneck Island routes to Providence and Boston. West Broadway would be two lanes inbound to West Marlborough, which would be two lanes inbound to Americas Cup Avenue. Two lanes of outbound traffic would be provided by the following links: One lane up West Marlborough to Thames Street; two lanes south on Thames to Washington Street; and two lanes north on Washington, continuing up Broadway to the intersection with West Broadway near Newport Hospital.

Mass Transit: A local bus transit system should be easy to use by first-time riders, provide convenient and efficient service, and follow a simple route pattern that can be easily understood by riders. Newport's present transit system could be improved in several areas to better meet these goals. Designated bus stops, additional passenger shelters, and better dissemination of route maps would help. Route maps are now

available from drivers on request, but there are no maps displayed in buses or at stops. Color-coded maps, showing transfer points and all routes should be posted in all buses and at regular stops along all routes. The time-table should also be revised to make it easier to read and understand.

Specific bus stops should be designated throughout the city in lieu of the present system of stopping on demand, a system that tends to impede vehicular traffic flow. Shelters should be provided at major bus stops to protect waiting passengers from rain and wind.

Only minor changes are needed in the existing route system. The red line should be extended, during the tourist season, beyond Washington Square to Bailey's Beach. This change would provide better access to the beach, mansions and the cliff walk. The green line bus, instead of turning onto Narragansett Avenue, should continue straight and turn around at Roger's High School. The blue east line should be extended to Goat Island.

During special events that draw exceptionally heavy tourist traffic to the Newport waterfront, perimeter parking lots in locations such as the Jai Alai fronton should be used as they were during the tall ships festival. Stricter enforcement of downtown parking and travel bans is needed, however, for this system to work.

Pedestrian Network: An integrated pedestrian network along the Newport waterfront would provide visual and functional links between areas of historic and tourist interest. Several strategies are offered here to maintain a high level of pedestrian access to important retail areas while avoiding direct conflict with service access. This is vital to retaining the viability of mixed retail and industrial activity.

One problem is the number of physical barriers to pedestrian access that presently exist. These barriers should be removed. Examples include the fence at the northern property line of the Treadway Inn and the bulkhead line behind the Black Pearl restaurant. Relocation of this bulkhead would provide an alternate access to the moorings parking lot and continuous access along the water's edge.

The pedestrian network should integrate public facilities such as visitor information centers with private retail and service facilities along the waterfront.

The hostile winter climate in Newport undoubtedly contributes to shortening the retail season. This effect could be mitigated by constructing covered walkways in the Bannister's Wharf area. Covered walkways extending outward from the wharf areas to Americas Cup Avenue would serve as a visual and psychological link to the waterfront from bus stops and parking lots.

A shift of emphasis from pedestrians to vehicles has detracted from the human scale of the waterfront. Vehicular access to the wharf areas should be limited to light service on a scheduled basis, and emergency use. The architectural diversity of the waterfront should be maintained. The vast variety of architectural styles and types that now exists is beneficial to a comfortable human environment. Paving, building materials and street furniture such as lamps and benches should be consistent and compatible with the human scale objective.

Auto-Restricted Zone (ARZ): One means of alleviating conflicts between pedestrians and vehicles, and stimulating trade along upper Thames Street would be construction of an auto-restricted pedestrian mall. The proposed ARZ would extend approximately ten blocks (1040 feet) along upper Thames Street and Long Wharf. Width would vary from 40 to 60 feet. The zone would provide a functional linkage between points of retail and tourist interest, as well as a positive transition from vehicle-oriented shopping activity to pedestrian-oriented areas.

Features and facilities that could be part of the ARZ include fountains, landscaping and sitting areas; sidewalk sales, art and cultural exhibits, display boards and informational signs; telephones, rest rooms, and other public service items. Paving materials and street furniture should follow the consistent pattern recommended for the proposed pedestrian network.

In the future, when traffic density on Americas Cup Avenue precludes safe pedestrian crossing between the ARZ and the waterfront, a pedestrian underpass should be considered between the intersection of Thames and Mill Streets and Market Square. This passageway under Americas Cup Avenue could include displays and visitor information and service facilities. Small shops could also be housed here.

Parking Garage: Short-term parking for stores along Thames Street, the newly-developed Queen Ann's Park, and the proposed auto-restricted zone would be provided, under our plan, by a multi-level garage located between Mary Street and Church Street. The present municipal parking lot on Mary Street contains about 150 spaces and occupies most of the block; the proposed garage would provide 292 spaces and occupy only the center of the block, leaving ample room for commercial development or historic house relocation on Mary and Church Streets.

While the proposed ARZ will eliminate 45 parking spaces, the proposed garage will provide a net gain of 147 spaces. This additional parking near Thames Street, with the improved pedestrian activity supplied by the ARZ, will enhance sales volume for Thames Street stores and Brick Market Place businesses.

Access to the proposed garage would be via a circular route from Americas Cup Avenue, down West Marlborough Street, right on Thames Street, Left on Touro, right on Clarke, right on Mary, and down the hill to a new street that would provide access to the parking garage and rear entrances to Thames Street stores.

The garage would have four levels, the first open to the proposed service road, the third open to Church Street. The service road would be one way toward Church Street, and Church Street one way toward Spring Street. If kept to four levels, built into the side of the hill, the garage would not intrude visually into the neighborhood. From Thames Street the store fronts would block the front of the garage. With historic buildings and shops along Church and Mary Streets, the garage would be less obtrusive than an open parking lot.

The number of tourists visiting the Chamber of Commerce visitor information center has increased dramatically in the past five years. From a total of 35,346 persons in 1973, visitor inquiries jumped 2284 percent to 842,552 in 1977. Tourist services and facilities, however, have not increased proportionately. This section of the Newport Waterfront plan proposes to remedy the deficit by recommending a series of visitor centers, an historic trail system, and redevelopment of Long Wharf and Wellington Landing.

Visitors Center: The present information center is severely hampered by its physical location and by the enormous growth in demand for its services. It is visible only from Americas Cup Avenue, but accessible only from Thames Street. It shares an overcrowded parking lot with the Brick Market Place, and it cannot provide a full range of tourist services.

We offer a reasonable solution to these problems: a new center, in a visible, accessible and central location, providing a full range of services, and supplemented by a network of satellite centers in strategic locations. The center should serve not only the popular waterfront area, but also the historic districts, mansions, hotels and restaurants.

Careful study of aerial photographs shows graphically how the various areas of tourist attraction relate to each other and to traffic circulation. Analysis of these relationships leads to an obvious location for a central visitors center: the Perry Mill building. Our plan is to use the western end of the building, all three floors and the loading dock, comprising about 15 percent of the structure's floor area.

The first floor would house a reception lobby, rest area, play area for children, and information. The second floor would have rest rooms and a small auditorium with an audio-visual presentation of Newport's history and special events. The top level would be an observation deck overlooking the waterfront and city. The three levels would be connected by the existing stair well and elevator.

The Perry Mill building has many advantages as a site for a visitors center. It is highly visible, central to the waterfront and located on major transit routes at an intersection that carries nearly all tourist traffic through the city. The building is structurally sound, in excellent condition, has historic significance, and is available. It abuts a commercial fishing operation which adds character and interest for tourists. Location of a visitors center in the Perry Mill will serve as a catalyst for rehabilitation of the rest of the building and for the southern half of the waterfront.

Traffic circulation is excellent. Cars could easily be directed in a one-way pattern around the building without removing any barriers or requiring new curb cuts or traffic lights. Ample space for parking is available around the building.

In addition to the proposed central facility, several satellite centers should be located at key points throughout the city. These centers could take several forms. Small information booths would be appropriate in hotel lobbies, in the wharf area and ARZ, and at major entrances to the city. These could be staffed during busy tourist times.

Unmanned kiosks and automated information tellers could be placed in strategic points that would not justify the cost of staffing. Tape-recorded messages could give directions and information in a choice of languages at the push of a button. Maps and brochures could be automatically dispensed from vending machines.

None of the visitors centers should include concessions for the sale of food or souvenirs. Such services complicate management problems, and are adequately provided by private incentive.

Historic Trail System: Presently in Newport there is no comprehensive historic information system. The Historical Society offers visitors several guided tours, but arrangements must be made in advance. This results in a slow process for large numbers of visitors. The Historical Society and other museums in Newport have much to offer. These museums have not seen as many visitors as they could, however, during both the summer and off-season months. We believe that appreciation of Newport's history could be improved by increased visibility and coordination of its historical resources.

The proposed visitors center would serve as a means to promote an historic appreciation of Newport. Within the center would be located a rotating display of historic artifacts on loan from the various museums. These displays would signify a specific period in Newport's history. Such artifacts might include early costumes, tools, nautical equipment, and literature of the different periods in the city's history. The rotating display would offer the museums a central location for showing their artifacts, and would offer the visitors a different display each time they came to Newport.

An audio-visual presentation in the visitors center would give a general account of Newport's history from its founding to the present. This presentation would be a prelude to the Newport historic walking trail system we propose.

The trail system would be composed of a Red Trail and a Blue Trail. The Red Trail would begin at the proposed visitors center and would encompass the area known as The Hill and a section of the waterfront from Bowens Wharf to the Perry Mill. The Blue Trail would begin at a satellite visitors center in the Brick Market Place and would encompass the area commonly referred to as The Point.

The historic trail system would be designated by arrows (red or blue depending on the trail) spaced appropriately with special directional emphasis. These arrows would be painted on the sidewalks or streets. The tours are designed to be self-guided. A pamphlet would contain a detailed map with a numbered sequence of historic sites to direct the visitor while walking on the trails. As an option, visitors could rent a tape-recorded guide to the tours.

The Newport Restoration Foundation could add to the trail system when they schedule periodic open house tours of colonial and victorian homes they have restored. Houses located on the trail system could be open to the public on given dates. Brochures announcing open house dates, as well as other historic information, would be placed at the visitors center and the various satellite centers.

Harbor Square: Newport's tourist-based economy is highly seasonal. Many of the visitors attractions and facilities relate directly to the waterfront or involve outdoor activities. The harsh winds and low temperatures of winter discourage use of this area during half of the year, leading to underutilization of services and facilities, unemployment, and vandalism. It would be advantageous to the city to lengthen the tourist season by offering indoor facilities during the winter.

One way to do this is to provide facilities for trade shows, banquets, conventions, and exhibitions. Needed are an exhibition hall and more hotel rooms. Ancillary facilities such as a parking garage, bus terminal, restaurants, and meeting halls would also be needed. We call this proposal "Harbor Square."

The block of property to the north of Long Wharf appears to be the area on the waterfront most suitable for the proposed development. This site is approximately halfway between the two existing waterfront hotels, and is the proposed location of a third hotel. A parking garage could be developed in conjunction with the proposed hotel, and would also benefit nearby Cardine Field. A garage in this location could intercept automobile traffic in summer months, thereby reducing congestion along the waterfront.

Much of the land in this block is either blighted or in a use not related to the waterfront. We recommend a three-phase development program for this area: The first step is the acquisition of land by the Newport Redevelopment Commission, and the allotment of sites for the recommended uses. This should be done with consideration of plans for a new sewage treatment plant on a portion of the site, the necessity of retaining the existing sewage pumping station, and the importance of preserving the historic character of the residential area immediately north of the site.

Phase two of the development process includes four steps:

(A) The construction of the front portion of a 300-room hotel on the designated site of approximately 2.6 acres, fronting Long Wharf. The first level of this structure would consist of a parking garage for use by hotel patrons, which would be partially below grade. The design of this facility should allow for future expansion of a public parking garage and hotel wing in the rear, and to elevate the main portion of the hotel above the flood line.

(B) Construction of the proposed sewage treatment plant in the northern portion of the site, adjacent to the Goat Island connector.

(C) Closing of the eastern portion of Long Wharf to vehicles, and its conversion to a pedestrian promenade to be integrated with the proposed waterfront pedestrian network.

(D) Development of the area just south of Long Wharf. This would include an open-air restaurant, landscaped plaza, and boating tie-up for hotel and convention patrons. Consideration should also be given to the potential of this area as a landing for the Bay Islands Ferry system.

Phase three also includes three steps:

(A) Construction of a convention center fronting Long Wharf west of the proposed hotel. This would be a two-level structure. The first floor would contain a 10,000 square foot exhibition area, lobby, offices, storage and loading area. The upper level would contain a large meeting/dining room, kitchen, and lounge, to serve groups of at least 800 persons.

(B) Construction of a three-tier public parking garage to the rear of the hotel garage. This combined facility could store approximately 1400 vehicles. An additional hotel wing would later be built over the garage.

(C) The construction of a bus terminal fronting Americas Cup Avenue, which would serve as the primary node for mass transit in the city.

(D) The closing of the remaining western portion of Long Wharf and completion of the pedestrian promenade.

Wellington Landing Townhouses: Housing is an essential element in the mixture of land uses that gives the Newport waterfront its attractive character. New multi-family units have recently been added at Brick Market Place and Goat Island, linking residential use to the waterfront. We propose an additional 100 units of one and two-bedroom townhouse dwellings be built at the southern end of the waterfront. This development, to be called Wellington Landing, would occupy a now vacant site at the intersection of Thames Street and Wellington Avenue.

The proposed townhouses will serve as a node and terminus of waterfront development; a key element in the overall development plan. It would provide an effective and aesthetically pleasing buffer between the existing residential area south of Wellington Avenue and the mixed uses along the waterfront. The development will require a minimum of municipal services, and produce substantial property tax revenue for the city.

The nature of the lower waterfront is quickly changing. The adjacent property to this site, now a metal fabrication shop, has been sold and will be changed to housing. An old warehouse two blocks north is being converted into townhouses, and many residential structures in the neighborhood are undergoing extensive renovation. These changes have been initiated by private investment, fostered by the large amount of public and private ventures in the rest of the waterfront. We propose to continue this trend. Parking and service needs will be provided on the ground floor of each unit. This will minimize the need for open parking lots, and raise the living areas above the 100-year flood level.

An integral component of the development would be a private yacht club or marina. This direct link to the water would provide added stimulus for potential tenants and would be an important feature that should not be overlooked. A small commercial convenience center should be built on the opposite side of Thames Street. The pedestrian network recommended for the northern waterfront should be extended through this development linking to Kings Park.

This project should be privately developed. The locale suggests that the housing would be expensive, although a portion of the units, possibly 20 percent might be set aside for Section 8 rent subsidies, if agreed to by the Rhode Island Housing Mortgage and Finance Corporation, the agency that allocates such subsidies in the state.

The proposed design is merely an illustration of what could be done with this site. The density and mix of units could be adjusted as needed. The important point is that this parcel could most effectively be used for housing to serve as a buffer to stop the spread of mixed land uses down Thames Street and to preserve the residential character of the neighborhood.

Water-related activities, both commercial and recreational, have long been an intrinsic part of the Newport community. In the past decade, however, the attractiveness of Newport's waterfront has brought intense pressure for development. A drastic increase in tourism, coupled with a sharp rise in recreational boating, has been the root of this growth. Commercial fishing has needs of its own, and has had to struggle to remain afloat with tourist and recreational boating industries.

This study has sought to address the complex problem of providing all water-related activities with the proper space they require to remain healthy and productive. Continued mixed use of Newport's waterfront has remained a key goal. A realistic assessment of what each specific activity requires for a viable existence must be included, however. Our proposals seek to retain the Newport "flavor" while creating an atmosphere conducive to continued controlled growth and development of the city's waterfront activities.

Commercial Fishing

The economic benefits from commercial fishing in Newport are minimal. Most of the catch is immediately shipped elsewhere for processing and sale; a lack of vital support services, such as bait supply and engine repair forces boats to fill these needs--and spend their money--in other ports. As recreational boating becomes more popular, and the 200-mile fishing limit leads to expansion in the fishing industry, guaranteed dock space becomes more necessary.

With improved conditions for commercial fishing, Newport could realize a higher economic return from this primary industry. The gain would result from (1) the inclusion of secondary industry into the local economy in the form of support services, and (2) expansion of the number of boats in the harbor.

The proposal offered here grows from circular needs. In order to make profitable businesses of services such as engine parts and repair, there must be a "critical mass" of 60 to 100 vessels available. Conversely, in order to attract boats to the harbor, services must be readily available.

We propose a new facility, located at the south bulkhead of the State Pier. This is the largest underutilized parcel on the waterfront, and contains enough space for docking facilities. Under terms of a five year lease from the Newport Shipyard, the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management must develop a proposal for further use of the south bulkhead by the fishing industry.

The proposed structure, based on a European model, would consist of two L-shaped steel bulkheads extending approximately 650 feet from an existing pier, and forming a protected "container" in the shape of a square. Within this area boats can tie up side by side with only the bows secured, without damage. Because this system saves space, the structure can accommodate over 70 boats. The two bulkheads would be 20 and 30 feet wide to allow trucks to load fuel, ice and gear. The 30-foot width allows room for a pedestrian walkway, giving tourists and residents a close view of the fishing activity without hampering it.

Services that should be provided on the site include an engine parts and repair shop, ice and refrigeration, bait and gear, fuel and oil, and electronic repair. A wholesale market should be considered to avoid the practice of trucking fish to other areas for processing and thereby keeping more direct revenue in Newport.

The proposed facility is designed to attract commercial fishermen to a protected area where a large number of fishing boats can be easily unloaded, serviced, and docked. The separate facility would mean that commercial vessels would no longer have to compete with pleasure boats for access to docks.

Recreational Boating: Newport harbor is a busy place for a sailor to get into and out of safely during the summer months. To ease congestion and improve safety, we recommend additional transient dock space in the upper harbor, relocation of the Harbor Master's station, and installation of additional moorings for residents in the King Park area.

Additional mooring space should be provided by extension of the city-owned Ann Street pier, and addition of new slips along Long Wharf and Perotti Park. The Harbor Master's station should be moved from its present location by the Newport Yacht Club to the second level of a new building at the end of the Ann Street pier extension. The first level of this structure should house a satellite visitors center to serve tourists who arrive by boat.

Boating facilities for Newport residents are also inadequate, a condition that has worsened in recent years as increased demand by transient boats has raised slip rentals to among the highest in the northeast. The Newport Yacht Club, which prides itself on serving local residents at reasonable costs, is being pressured to move from its leased space on Long Wharf. The Ida Lewis Yacht Club is small and comparatively expensive. There are no other boating facilities in the Newport waterfront that cater predominantly to residents.

Newport needs more dock space and moorings exclusively for use of city residents. The area immediately west of KingPark would provide an ideal location for a recreational boating marina. We propose new beam piers and floating docks with boat cradles at the end. The cradles could hold dinghys and small sailboats. Possibly a hoist could be used to lift small boats onto the dry storage cradles.

A new launching ramp should also be provided in this area, and more mooring made available in the open water area west of the beach. There are no ramps available now with adequate parking space for trailers. The existing ramp in King Park might be improved. Installation of recreational boating facilities in this area will relieve some of the pressure from more congested facilities in the upper waterfront.

A plan is of no value if it is not used. Changes in land use and physical development take time, cooperation, and money. This final section of the summary report briefly outlines an administrative mechanism for getting the plan in the ground, lists potential sources of federal funding and technical assistance, and suggests a program for phasing development over a period of several years.

Administrative Mechanisms: In researching the problems and opportunities presented by the Newport waterfront, we have identified many areas of concern. Our first impression is that existing municipal agencies, organizations, and quasi-public commissions are addressing these problems and opportunities in a fragmented fashion, often acting more in a spirit of competition than a spirit of cooperation. It is essential that everyone with an interest in the waterfront coordinate their efforts toward a unified plan for rational growth and development.

We propose bringing existing efforts into focus on the Newport waterfront through creation of a task force comprised of public officials, property owners, users, merchants, designers, and others. This task force would serve a leadership role to review and finalize our proposals and others for recommendation to the planning board.

At the present time, there is no public body specifically responsible for the use and development of the waterfront. The planning board is responsible for developing a comprehensive plan and conducting studies in land use, housing, transportation, and other issues of physical and social development. The Board of Review serves to hear and decide on appeals for zoning changes, variances and special exceptions.

The Historic District Commission has the responsibility for preserving districts and buildings in Newport that reflect the city's cultural and architectural history. The jurisdiction of this commission, however, is restricted to areas designated on an historic map. The Waterfront Commission deals largely with harbor-related matters such as docking facilities, moorings, and water safety. These boards and commissions, as well as countless others, have varying interests and responsibilities in the future of the waterfront. The importance of this area to the city, however, demands that a more comprehensive approach be taken to develop a consensus on its future use.

Responsibility for developing a more comprehensive approach might be given to one of the existing public bodies. Expanding the jurisdiction of an existing commission or board will undoubtedly meet with opposition from other bodies having interests in the waterfront area. A second alternative might be the creation of a new commission to plan for future waterfront development. This would require cumbersome legislative action, and would expand a government structure that some people consider to be already too pervasive. A third alternative is to bring existing boards and commissions into focus on the waterfront through the creation of a cooperative task force.

Members should represent the following groups and have interests and expertise in the following substantive areas:

Substantive Areas	Representatives
Government	City Council
Planning	Planning Board
	Redevelopment Agency
Zoning	Board of Review
Historic Preservation & Architecture	Historic Distric Commission
	Newport Historical Society
	Newport Preservation Society
Fishing	Newport Fishermen
Social Concerns	Neighborhood Groups
	Taxpayers Association
Business	Chamber of Commerce
Water-Related Activities	Waterfront Commission
Boating	Recreational Boaters Association
Law	City Solicitor
Real Estate	Waterfront Landowners
Public Relations	Chamber of Commerce
Development/Construction	Aquidneck Island Development Corporation

Through the efforts of the mayor and other leaders in the community, representatives from these groups and others would be invited to serve on a task force to oversee development of a comprehensive plan for the waterfront. The task force will appoint technical committees to review our proposals, drawing on such resources as the planning department and other municipal departments, the University of Rhode Island, and outside consultants. Their work would serve to finalize our proposals, develop alternatives, and assist the task force in formulating a plan for waterfront development.

This plan would contain recommendations for capital improvements, land use and zoning policies, public facilities, a transportation network, economic development, ecological considerations, and social concerns. If adopted by the City Council, the plan would not only act as a guide for waterfront growth and development, but more importantly represent a statement of what Newporters want to do with their most valuable resource.

Funding Sources: Government assistance will be needed if the proposals presented here are to be implemented. Although federal funding programs may be of help, it is important to recognize that most assistance programs require complementary funding from local sources.

Through the aid of the Federal Assistance Programs Retrieval System (FAPRS), a United States Department of Agriculture service provided by the University of Rhode Island Cooperative Extension Service, several funding categories have been defined, and potential sources of assistance identified. The reader should understand that detailed discussion with each federal agency would be necessary to further ascertain eligibility for assistance and availability of funds for any given project.

Preliminary research in the 1978 Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance has disclosed many potential sources of money and technical assistance. The following categories are relevant to our waterfront project proposals:

- Public Roads and Bridges
- Land Acquisition
- Construction and Equipment Assistance
- Public Building Programs
- Site Preparation for Housing
- Historic Preservation
- Research and Development

Titles and related catalog numbers of possible sources of funding for the above categories can be found in the Appendix. Further investigation in the current Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance is recommended.

Phasing of Proposals: The following general development strategy is recommended to put this plan into effect. This ten-year, three-phase, program takes into account the need for relatively long, bad times for expensive or complex proposals. It also recognizes the need for immediate action if Newport is to continue its growth as a major tourist center and world yachting capital.

Phase I (0 to 3 years)

- Mary Street Parking Garage
- Auto-Restricted Zone
- Pedestrian Circulation System
- Historic Trail Network
- Perry Mill Visitors Center
- Fishing Pier, Phase I
- Thames Street Bus Stops

Phase II (3 to 5 years)

- Harbor Square: Hotel & Parking
- Fishing Pier, Phase II
- Wellington Landing Townhouses
- Recreational Boating Facilities

Phase III (5 to 10 years)

- Harbor Square: Third Level Parking and Convention Center
- Long Wharf ARZ
- Sattelite Visitors Centers
- Fishing Pier Completion
- Pedestrian Underpass

APPENDIX-FUNDING SOURCES

PUBLIC ROADS AND BRIDGES PROGRAMS

Catalog Number	Title
10-903	Soil Survey
11-300	Economic Development Grants and Loans for Public Works and Development Facilities
11-304	Economic Development Public Works Impact Projects
11-307	Economic Development - Special Economic Development and Adjustment Assistance Program
12-105	Protection of Essential Highways - Highway Bridge Approaches-and Public Works *Applicant is Responsible for all Project Costs Exceeding $250,000.
20-205	Highway Research-Planning- and Construction *State Highway Departments Only
20-214	Highway Beautification - Control of Outdoor Advertising
20-507	Urban Mass Transportation Capital & Operating Assistance Formula Grants
48-002	New England Technical and Planning Assistance
10-422	Business and Industrial Loans
11-307	Economic Development - Special Economic & Adjustment Assistance Program
14-211	Surplus Land for Community Development
14-218	Community Development Block Grants/Entitlement Grants
15-400	Outdoor Recreation - Acquisition - Development - Planning
15-402	Outdoor Recreation - Technical Assistance
39-002	Disposal of Federal Surplus Real Property
48-001	New England Regional Economic Development
10-422	Business and Industrial Loans
10-424	Industrial Development Grants
11-300	Economic Development Grants & Loans for Public Works and Development Facilities
11-301	Economic Development - Business Development Assistance
11-307	Economic Development - Special Economic Development & Adjustment Assistance Program
11-309	Trade Adjustment Assistance
11-407	Commercial Fisheries Research and Development
11-509	Development & Promotion of Domestic Waterborne Transport Systems
20-500	Urban Mass Transportation Capital Improvement Grants

Catalog Number	Title
20-501	Urban Mass Transportation Capital Improvement Loans
20-506	Urban Mass Transportation Demonstration Grants
20-507	Urban Mass Transportation Capital and Operating Assistance Formula Grants
48-002	New England Technical and Planning Assistance
11-300	Economic Development Grants & Loans for Public Works and Development Facilities
11-307	Economic Development - Special Economic Development & Adjustment Assistance Program
14-218	Community Development Block Grants/Entitlement Grants
60-007	Museums - Assistance and Advice
14-218	Community Development Block Grants/Entitlement Grants
48-002	New England Technical and Planning Assistance
11-300	Economic Development Grants & Loans for Public Works and Development Facilities
13-923	Institute of Museum Services
	*Private Nonprofit Entity must have Tax Exempt Status
14-218	Community Development Block Grants/Entitlement Grants
15-403	Disposal of Federal Surplus Real Property for Parks, Recreation, and Historic Monuments
15-405	National Registry of Natural Landmarks
15-411	Historic Preservation Grants-In-Aid
15-414	National Historic Landmark
15-415	Technical Preservation Services
15-416	National Register of Historic Places
15-906	Park and Recreational Technical Assistance
45-130	Promotion of the Humanities - Challenge Grant Program
45-201	Arts and Artifacts Indemnity
60-007	Museums Assistance and Advice
11-307	Economic Development - Special Economic Development and Adjustment Assistance Program
14-506	General Research and Technology Activity

APPENDIX II - COSTS

Estimating costs of construction projects is difficult because of the local nature of the construction industry and rapid cyclical changes in material and labor costs. In addition, where federal subsidies are involved it is sometimes difficult to equate local costs with benefits to be derived from a project. To give a rough idea of the cost of our proposals, however, we list here most of the key projects recommended, with estimated costs and sources of funding. Note that these costs do not include the price of the land.

Project	Cost	Funding
Visitors Center	$ 300,000.	federal CDBG
Walking Trail	15,000.	city
Auto-Restricted Zone	3,500.000.	50% fed., 50% local
Mary Street Garage	1,800,000.	authority bonding
Transit Shelters	100,000.	federal UMTA
Fishing Facility	1,500,000.	70% fed EDA
Townhouse Complex	8,000,000.	private
Long Wharf Mall	800,000.	50% fed., 50% local
Harbor Square Hotel	7,000,000.	private
Harbor Square Garage	8,400,000.	authority bonding
Convention Center	5,000,000.	authority bonding
Transit Terminal	500,000.	federal UMTA
Restaurant	400,000.	private
Total Cost	$37,315,000.	
federal	4,100,000.	
state	450,000.	
city	2,165,000.	
authority	15,200,000.	
private	15,400,000.	

APPENDIX III - WATERFRONT SURVEY

As part of the data-collection phase of this study a questionnaire was drafted and used to determine attitudes and opinions Newport residents have toward the waterfront area. The survey proved useful in confirming what we thought some of the problems were, as well as uncovering issues we had overlooked.

Questions asked about traffic and parking, tourism, pleasure boating and commercial fishing. For example, residents were asked if they agreed there was a need to promote tourism in the off-season. Response was 67.9% yes, 12.7% somewhat agreed, and 13.4% disagreed. A majority of the respondants felt that parking, traffic and congestion around the waterfront area was a serious problem.

One open-ended question was also included, providing an open forum for Newporters to voice their opinions about the waterfront area. Among their comments and suggestions: more public facilities such as restrooms and information booths are needed; an architectural review board should be created; the historic nature of the waterfront area is its greatest asset; and too many automobiles are allowed to park in the waterfront area.

A more detailed analysis of survey results will be included in a final report intended for publication in the spring of 1979.

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