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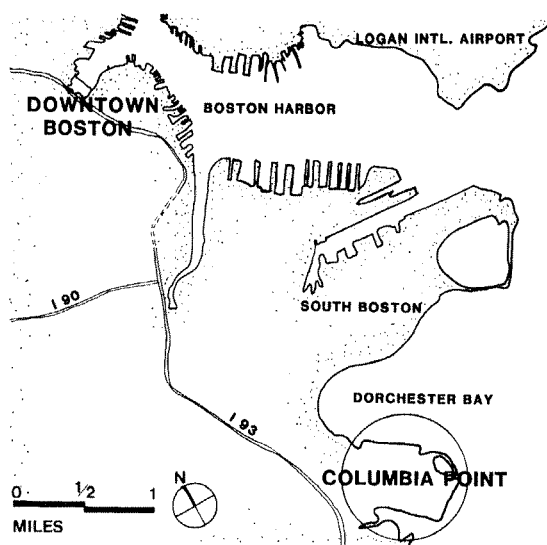
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From Project to Community: The Redesign of Columbia Point

Joan E. Goody



Above: Harbor Point's location in relation to downtown Boston.

Opposite page, top: The Columbia Point housing project.

Opposite page, bottom: Harbor Point.

Aerial photos © Alex MacLean Landslides.

Inset photos © Peter Vanderwarker.

Photos and plans courtesy Goody, Clancy & Associates, unless otherwise noted.

Columbia Point peninsula, only 10 minutes south of downtown Boston, has a history of being used for activities the city would rather forget. This former mud flat on the harbor was a garbage dump, then a World War II prisoner of war camp, and, finally, the Columbia Point public housing project — the largest such complex in New England and a notorious failure. But in the past decade the housing project has undergone a dramatic transformation. Now it is Harbor Point, a 44-acre, 1,283-unit mixed-income residential community¹ with all new or radically renovated housing and public amenities that would rival those found in a new suburban development. The low-income tenants in residence at the start of this changeover still live there, and they have been joined by many other residents from a variety of different backgrounds.

It took enormous effort (and much time, money, and political persuasion) to accomplish this. Looking back from the perspective of the lead architect and planner of Harbor Point, I believe there are lessons to be learned here: about how to bring people together in a re-formed community, about what architectural forms can accommodate the varied lifestyles of people with very different incomes and backgrounds, about a way

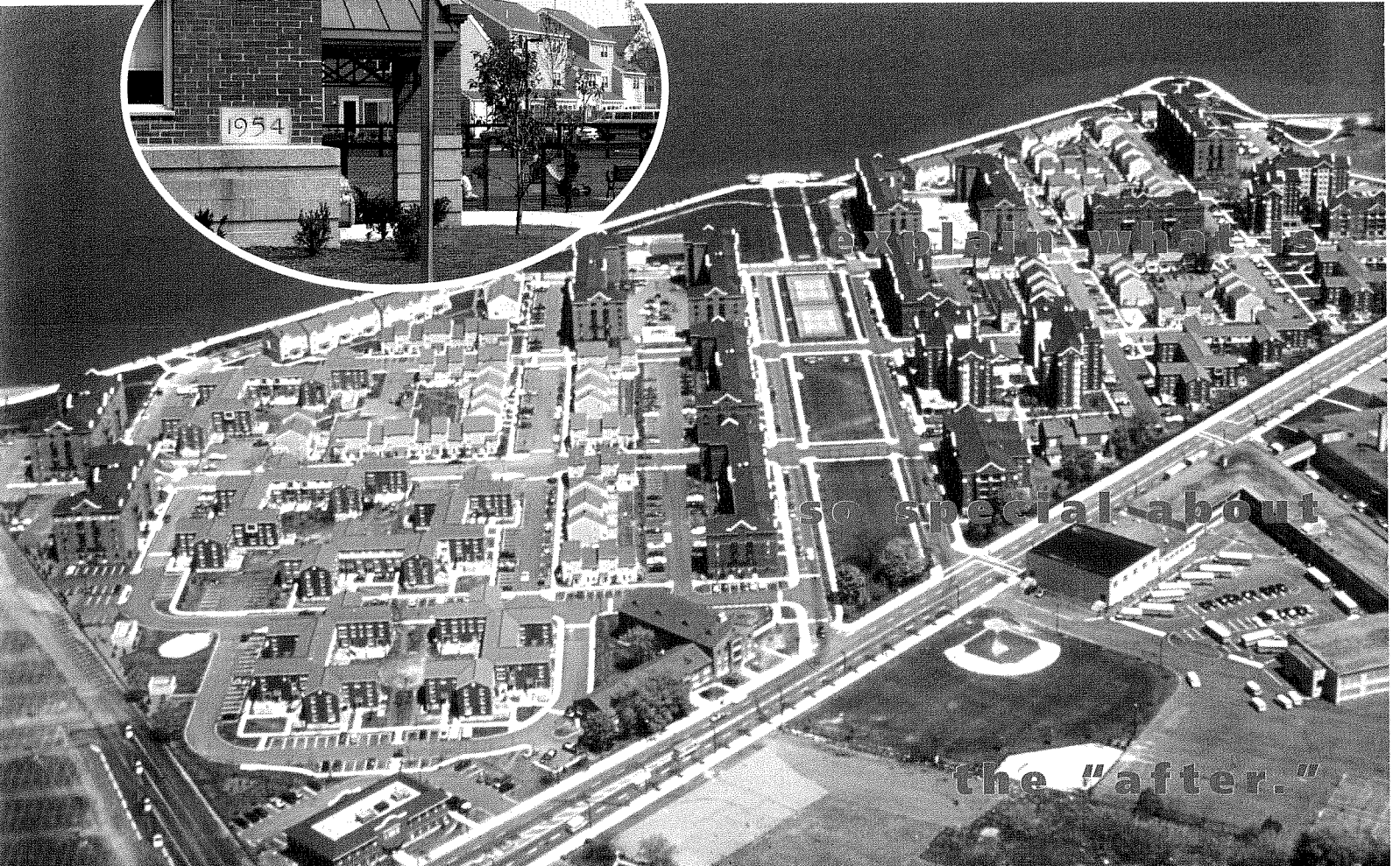


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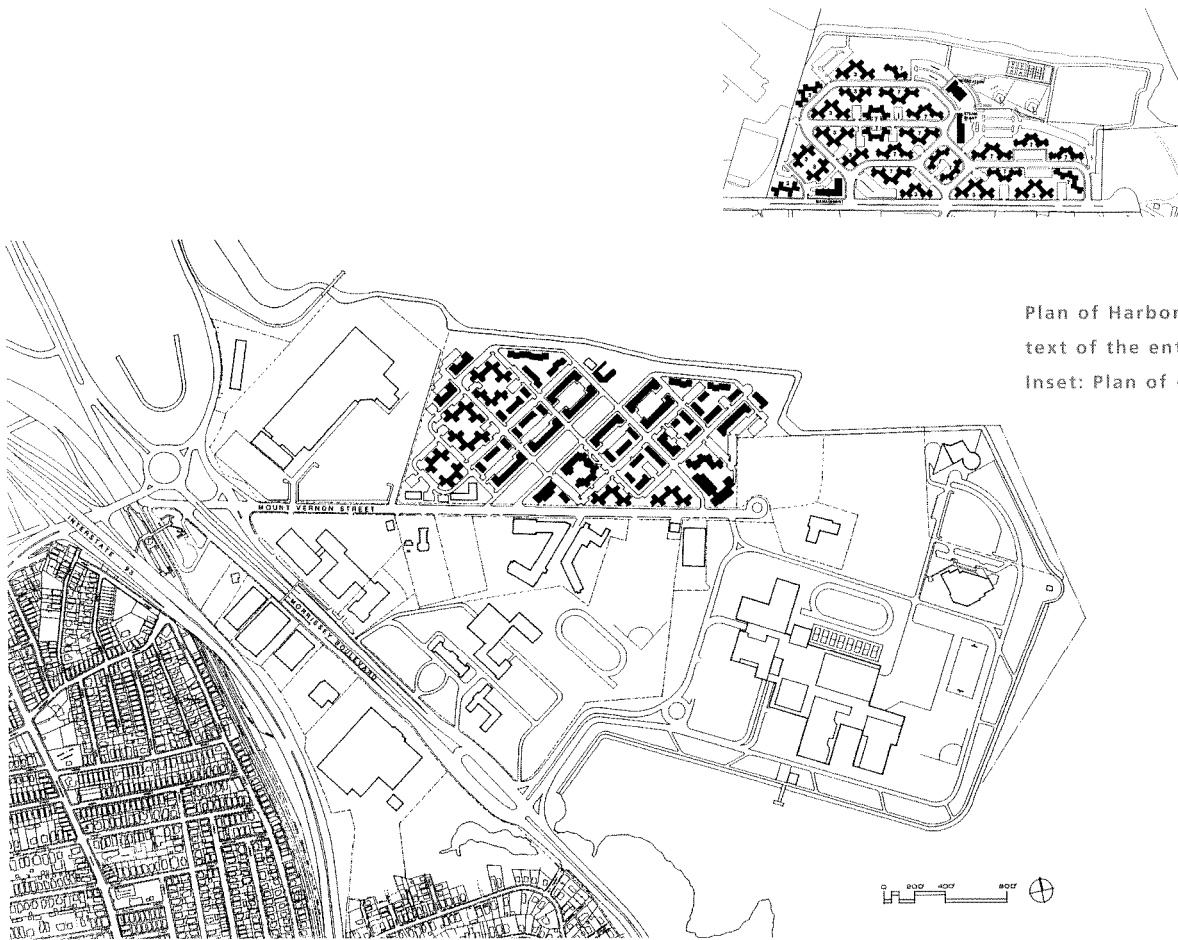
project to



explain what is

so special about

the "after."



Plan of Harbor Point in the context of the entire peninsula.
Inset: Plan of Columbia Point.

to save some of our devastated public housing projects, and about the role of designers and architects in helping achieve this.

I have been involved with the project since 1978 when Joe Corcoran, the lead developer, asked me to meet with some tenants and talk about ways to improve the desolate (and almost three-quarters abandoned) 1,504-unit Columbia Point housing project.² Isolated from other neighborhoods, the residents felt cast-off. The project, composed of 30 almost identical yellow brick buildings organized in a maze-like street pattern, was an alienating and disorienting place, and it began to deteriorate quickly after construction, becoming housing of last resort. By the 1960s people were already talking about how to rehabilitate it, and there followed over the years a number of studies (with tenant involvement) and small-scale attempts to make physical changes. But the magnitude of the project and its problems thwarted everything short of this massive infusion of money, political support, and developer-tenant tenacity.

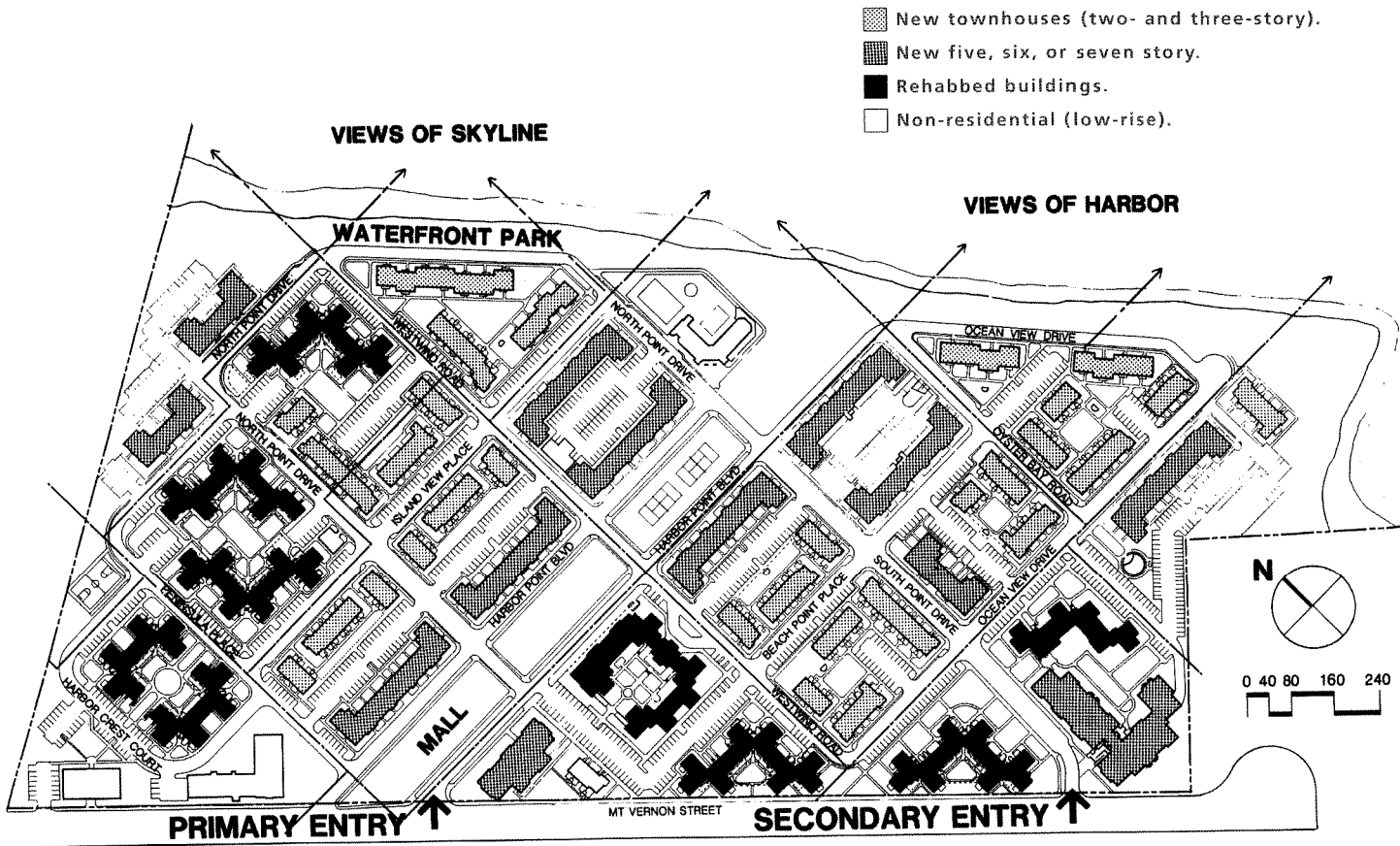
Clearly, the well intended “tower-in-the-park” model for multifamily housing (after which this and many other housing projects were modeled) had failed in ways its proponents had never imagined. The intent was to improve the lives of “slum-dwellers” with fireproof, tuberculosis-proof structures — buildings made of noncombustible concrete frames and brick cladding, shaped to provide cross-ventilation for every apartment, and set apart from each other to allow light in every

window. The buildings accomplished their goals: Boston has never had a death by fire in a public housing project, nor does one hear complaints about dark and dank rooms in them.

What was not foreseen was that cross-ventilation was achieved at the cost of community. To reach even the same densities as on the old, narrow streets, buildings set farther apart had to be higher and bigger. More families shared a common entry and an elevator; fewer families were near enough to ground level to oversee their children playing outside or any other street-level activities. And, because of the large parking lots and other open areas separating the buildings, there were no real streets or focus for the kind of activities that create a sense of community — meeting, chatting, and recognizing neighbors (and strangers).

Corcoran knew the area from his boyhood and was convinced that the only way to improve such a place permanently was to change the tenancy from all low-income households to mixed-income (with both integrated throughout the site) and by doing so with the current tenants as his partners. He and his business associate, Joe Mullins (also from the area), brought their idea directly to the tenants, who agreed. I recall one, Terry Maier, saying at an early meeting, “If we need rich folks [living here] to bring the services out, then let’s get the rich folks.” There may be many reasons to advocate mixed-income housing, but certainly the clout of wealthier people in

Plan of Harbor Point.



getting better police, transportation and other services is a strong one. Neither developer nor tenants had a clear vision about what a renewed Columbia Point would look like. They just knew it should be radically different from what it was.

Designing the Transformation

It took four years for the Boston Housing Authority, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to agree that it would be a mistake merely to renovate so large an all low-income project on this isolated site. A 1979 tenant-sponsored study by Carr, Lynch Associates helped convince them and formed the basis for a request for proposal to developer/architect teams in 1982.

The message from the tenants (both from the study and our earlier meetings) was clear: They wanted to live in a “normal” neighborhood, one that didn’t look or work like a project, one that felt safe for walking around and letting their children out to play. They wanted conveniently arranged, reasonably sized apartments (ideally with some private space at ground level) and nearby parking places, not the existing unsafe and remote large lots. They knew that shared entries for families with children could never be made secure: kids forgot their keys; doors were kept ajar. Elevators were a further impediment to parents keeping track of children playing outside. (In buildings exclusively

for the elderly, however, elevators were regarded as a convenience.) The images in the Carr, Lynch study were of a predominantly low-rise community with new townhouses interspersed among renovated three-story structures on curved roads and culs-de-sac (reminiscent of suburban development).

Our first sketches (in 1978) predated the Carr, Lynch study, and although they grew from similar planning principles, our image was one of houses facing each other across narrow streets, a pedestrian-oriented neighborhood that we felt could better achieve the tenants’ goals for a new community. Corcoran had no fixed ideas about the site design, and we began to explore the forms of successful neighborhoods in Boston (Dorchester, the South End, the Back Bay). We believed they could provide clues to the design elements that brought people together in the public (or semi-public) realm and supported opportunities for social interaction and a sense of community and safety. We saw common features in all these neighborhoods: orthogonal, connective street patterns as opposed to dead-end culs-de-sac; curbside parking; individual front doors and small porches, stoops, or porticos facing the street that bring neighbors into contact as they come and go; and private rear yards and/or shared spaces that provide opportunities for “over-the-fence” socializing.

In these urban areas, neighbors saw and talked to each other as they walked from their parked cars to their front doors, sometimes stopping on adjacent stoops to chat. Or they



Left: Central mall and water's edge park, Harbor Point.

© Alex MacLean Landslides.

Below: Interior street, showing mix of rehabbed high-rise and new townhouse construction and view of downtown Boston to the north.

Photo by Anton Grassl.



sat on porches close enough to the sidewalk to permit conversation with passersby. This activity populated the streets and made them feel safer and more inviting to pedestrians, and the network of streets and sidewalks encouraged people to walk, rather than drive, on short errands and even to walk around the neighborhood (choosing alternate routes) for the pleasure and sociability. Small lots or party-wall townhouses meant more entries per block, more people likely to be coming and going, and more of a sense of safety.

In reconfiguring the Columbia Point site plan, we believed a grid street system would connect the residents to each other, support the life of the community and make the neighborhood more attractive, safer and understandable in form than would a plan based on curved roads and separate pedestrian ways. We designed an orthogonal street pattern but oriented it at a 45-degree angle to the water's edge, making the harbor view a means of orientation and an amenity shared by residents of every street, no matter what their apartment location. This street pattern and angle allowed us to save almost a third of the existing buildings and almost all of the underground utilities, a formidable amount of investment that we could not afford to waste. Also, the new street pattern corresponded to the geometry of several other major structures on the peninsula, making it possible to extend some of the streets in the future and make better connections to the greater neighborhood.

The old buildings, which were ugly but sturdy, were renovated to minimize differences with the new construction but add variety to the housing types. Their locations led to minor deviations in street alignment and block sizes, warping the ideal grid to fit this specific site. Having a past, even a dubious past, can be enriching.

Ten buildings were kept and radically rehabilitated, three of them seven stories tall and the rest three stories. As with the new buildings, all apartments were available to households of all incomes. In the three-story buildings, duplex units for larger households were created by cutting private entry doors into the first floor and were given direct access to small front and rear yards. The central entry serves only the third-floor flats (for smaller households), lessening the number of people using it. New pitched roofs, entrance canopies, bay windows, brick stains, and stucco completely changed the buildings' appearance while giving the complex a visual variety that would have been lacking had we razed all the old buildings.

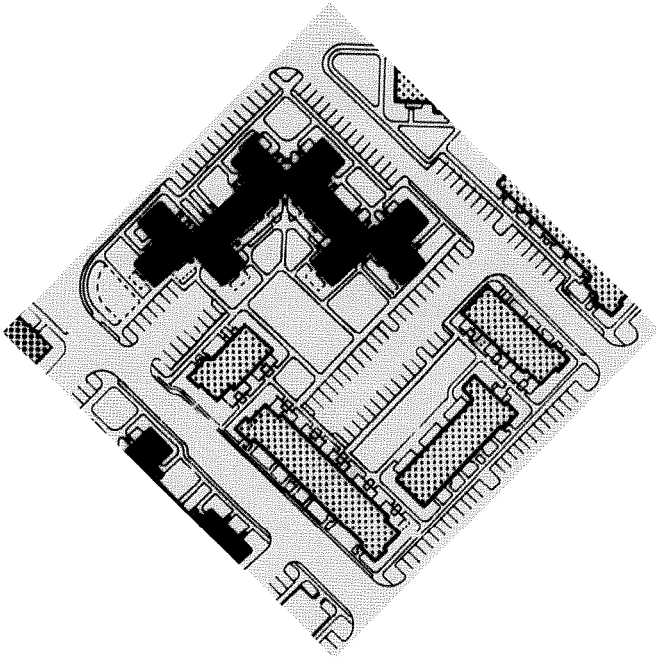
New, clapboard sheathed, two- and three-story townhouses are interspersed among the renovated three-story buildings. The new structures vary subtly in design and in color, within a limited palette of traditional seaside blues and grays and other muted tones. The goal was to create the variety and consistency

The street system is the most important feature, the armature which connects the various buildings and the residents to each other and, angled to give views of the Harbor at the end of each street, makes this great attraction available to all. Every design decision was made to reinforce the strength of the streets — to make them attractive and thus safe, to encourage people to use them and meet their neighbors.

— Joan E. Goody

Mid-rise buildings frame Harbor Point's central mall. The first-floor units have direct private entries to the street.





Above: Detail block plan, showing interior parking and green.
Below: Boston's Commonwealth Avenue, model for the Harbor Point mall. Photo by Todd W. Bressi.

cy that characterizes older places that have developed over the years and to avoid both the rows of identical buildings and the harsh primary colors that proclaim a project.

After providing each townhouse and ground-level apartment with its own private rear patio, we made the rest of the open area within the blocks into common greens that encourage group activities among those whose homes surround them. But we did not want to create a secondary path system or locate parking in the rear, which might divert pedestrian traffic from the streets and front entries. In a residential community of this density there is often not enough foot traffic to populate both front and back, and we wanted to concentrate activity in the front to make the streets feel safe.

Boston's nineteenth-century neighborhoods have many positive features, but they do not provide adequate parking for twentieth-century residents. Below-grade and other structured parking can help provide the desired "sociable" density but subsoil conditions and budget limitations allowed very little of this at Harbor Point. Comparing the coarser grain of the Harbor Point street pattern to the nearby nineteenth-century Dorchester neighborhood (which is perennially short of parking spaces) gives a sense of how the older street pattern must be adapted to accommodate contemporary automobile demands.

Most parking for both the new townhouses and the renovated three-story buildings is directly in front, along the curb. To accommodate our goal of 1.2 cars per unit (Boston mandates only 0.75), we needed to provide 90-degree (rather than parallel) parking in many locations and to create some small parking



Living in a mixed community is good for everyone. I feel good about bringing up my children here. The races have changed, the family sizes have changed. I want my kids to learn more about how other people live, how the different cultures here live together.

— Queenie Santos, former Columbia Point resident and current Harbor Point resident.

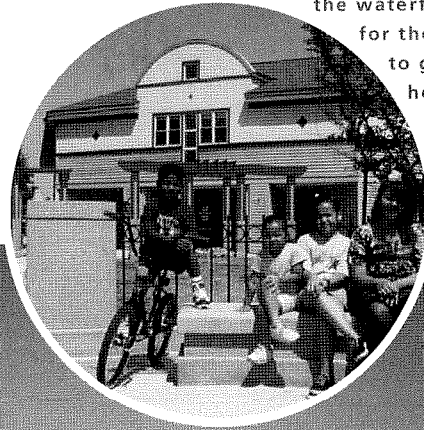
lots between groups of houses. We tried to arrange the lots so the shortest route to one's apartment is still via the sidewalk.

The new five- to seven-story buildings (described later) contained too many units for this solution to work. Although there are typically small private yards behind their two- and three-bedroom ground level units, the rest of the rear space is dedicated to parking those cars that cannot be accommodated at curbside (only one of the elevator buildings, on a very tight site, has some basement parking). Parking behind these buildings leads directly to the same central lobby used by those who find spaces on the street, increasing the chances of neighbors meeting en route to their apartments. No spaces are assigned, and the parking ratio seems to be working well.

The central focus of and major entry to the new Harbor Point is a landscaped mall that leads from Mt. Vernon Street, the public access street, to a public water's edge park. Along this greensward, we located most of the communal facilities (including a large meeting hall, a day care center, management offices, an elderly center, tennis courts, and a clubhouse with a health club) and some of the higher-density housing, as well as the few shops a community of this size can support.

The mall is everyone's introduction to the neighborhood and the place to which they return for community and recreational facilities. It is meant to function as a town green/main street/common meeting ground for the residents, as well as the link between the public access street and the public water's-edge park, both of which connect Harbor Point to the larger community and the city.

The central mall, which runs from Harbor Point's main entrance to the waterfront, provides space for the entire community to gather. The clubhouse (inset) is at one end of the mall.



We proportioned the mall after the Back Bay's Commonwealth Avenue, a handsome tree-lined boulevard with tall townhouses (many of which are now subdivided into one or two apartments per floor). Our goal was to evoke the architectural spirit and positive associations of this lovely nineteenth-century avenue, but there are differences between the two that reflect changes in the last century. Commonwealth Avenue was designed for formal promenading; Harbor Point's mall includes active recreation, such as tennis courts. Commonwealth Avenue's four- and five-story townhouses have high stoops that add to its architectural character but are inaccessible to people in wheelchairs; entries at Harbor Point are at grade, and an elevator serves all upper-floor units on each block. And, while non-residential uses were zoned out of exclusive Commonwealth Avenue, our goal was for a street with diverse activities and types of people.

To create structures that would accommodate very different household types and living patterns but replicate the feeling of an "outdoor room" that makes Commonwealth Avenue so attractive, we designed a single-loaded-corridor building that

extends the full length of each block and defines the street edge. The front facade is divided into a series of projecting bays and dormers that suggest vertical elements whose scale and proportion resembles that of the old townhouses. All first floor apartments have direct private entries from the street to generate more activity and evoke the many entries along Commonwealth Avenue. This also adds to the stock of at-grade units for families with children who live in the larger (three-bedroom) ground floor apartments.

A pair of existing seven-story buildings adjacent to the mall were linked by a new pavilion and totally renovated to accommodate apartments and services for the elderly. The exteriors were transformed by new pitched roofs, bay windows, areas of stucco finish (which contrasts with the red stained brick) and a layer of ground face concrete block over the cracked concrete foundation walls. Interiors were gutted and units enlarged by making corridors single loaded. An arcade was added at grade along the mall side of one of these buildings to provide 5,000 square feet of retail space that accommodates a convenience store, luncheonette, and dry cleaner.

Much of the socializing at Harbor Point takes place on back patios and in neighborhood greens, as opposed to stoops and streets, as is common in traditional Boston neighborhoods like Back Bay and the South End.



At Harbor Point Day, last September, an annual event with music, food and festivities, the mall was lively and crowded. At other times it's a quieter place: the tennis courts are heavily used on weekends but the mood is residential. What is the real character of this new community? What should it be?

The Neighborhood

About 100 years ago the late George Apley (of the Marquand novel of the same name) saw a Boston neighbor standing on his front steps in his shirt sleeves, took that as a sign the South End was deteriorating and decided it was time to move. At the same time, in other more working class neighborhoods, sitting on the front steps or stoop in shirt sleeves or a coat was a much enjoyed activity that both overlooked and enhanced a lively street life.

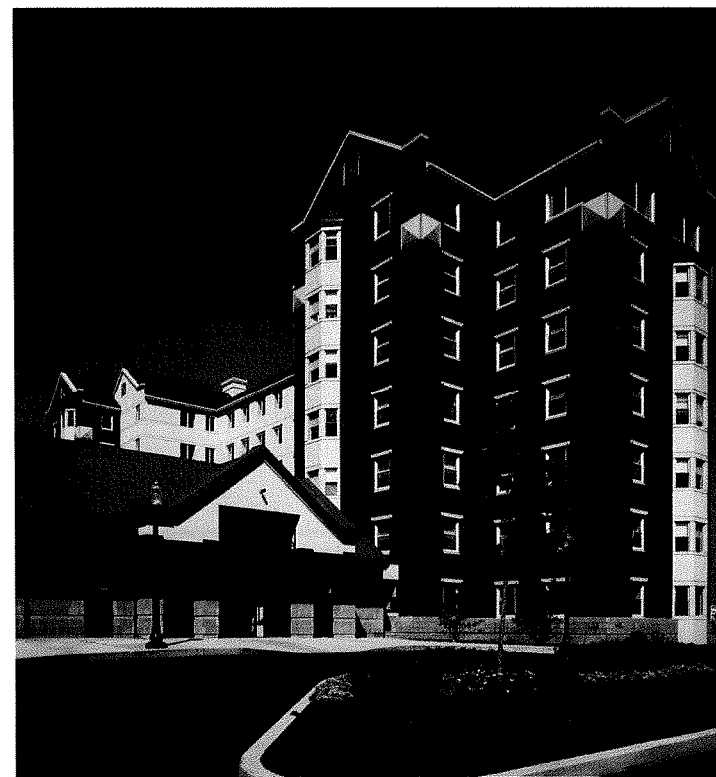
It is the latter image (one that now predominates in Boston's South End) that inspires much of my work as an architect and urban designer: a semi-private zone that links the home to the public realm (and the individual to the community). When I revealed my image to the experienced housing developer of Harbor Point, he was sure it would not appeal to the suburbanites he was hoping to attract to this new, mixed-income community. He thought they would want neat, somewhat formal entries, and would expect outdoor socializing to be done in the rear patios.

This did not affect the site design significantly: it was agreed by all that front doors and porticos facing the street were desirable for convenience and safety. But the porticos are formal and small, not commodious porches that invite sitting out. Eliminating the raised stoops that provide opportunities for sitting was a loss of architectural richness, but this was necessary to provide wheelchair access. Moreover, the partially below-grade kitchen and other servant spaces that were originally housed below the stoop are not part of today's program. (Indeed it is ironic that this very democratic and appealing exterior feature is the consequence of an interior built for a more hierarchical society.)

Many neighborhoods have been built for the wealthy and adapted over the years as home for the less well-to-do. Harbor Point is the reverse. The question has been how to include some of the city's lowest income families who have never known anything but life in a "project" while attracting people who have enough money to have other options. The harbor views, new construction, swimming pools, and other recreational facilities were envisaged by the developer as lures for people who might otherwise have had to travel much further (to the suburbs) for such amenities. They have been, and are, equally prized by the low-income tenants.



The townhouses attempt to replicate the balance between variety and consistency that characterizes older Boston neighborhoods.

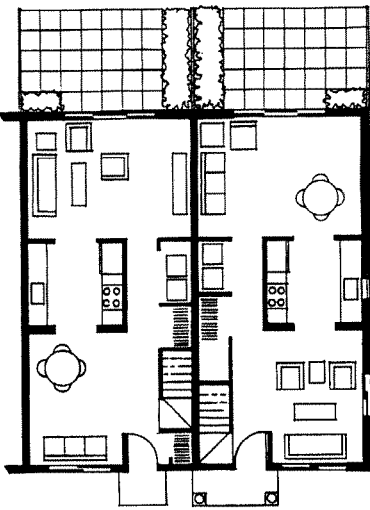


A pair of seven-story buildings were rehabbed and linked with a new entrance pavillion; the building includes space for housing and services for the elderly.

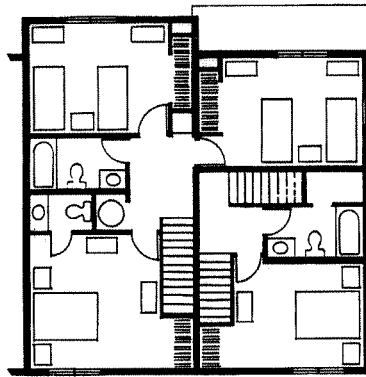


FRONT ELEVATION

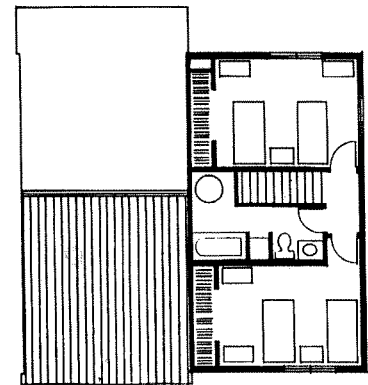
Units are designed to accommodate a range of households. The 400 subsidized and the market-rate units are identical and integrated throughout the site.



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

Harbor Point's townhouse and first-floor flat entries are separated from the narrow sidewalks by a shallow lawn and shrubs. This zone is mowed and maintained by the maintenance personnel. Private plantings and fences are discouraged, although I have seen some infiltrations (the Easter azalea, for example) in front of the townhouses and the private entries along the mall. But in an attempt to maintain a neat (middle-class) image for the market-rate tenants, the plastic flowers and pink flamingos that are the vernacular in successful public housing projects and working-class neighborhoods have been suppressed.

Inside, the units are designed to give each household flexibility and control over the way it lives. Specifically, the first floor of the family townhouses was designed with a kitchen in the middle that opens to front and back rooms, either of which could function as family room or parlor. Each household can choose to orient its daily meals and living towards front or back, and it can reserve more or less (or no) space for a formal parlor. Parents can oversee smaller children who might be confined to playing in the rear patio and communal green or older ones who might be riding tricycles on the front sidewalks.

A different kind of flexibility was built into the two bedroom/two bathroom units in the buildings along the mall. Each has two equal-sized bedroom-bathroom suites that are

separated by a living room and kitchen. This configuration offers more autonomy to the occupants and supports a greater variety of household types than traditional residential layouts. For example, two unrelated adults can come and go with greater privacy. These units seem to have attracted young, single adults, who constitute a large percentage of the market-rate tenants.

Some Conclusions and Questions

Recalling my own experience growing up in a mixed-income urban neighborhood, I believed that all Harbor Point residents, once there, would live together happily ever after. But I grew up in a different time, when we all lived by the same set of middle-class rules. Today there is less ready acceptance of a single standard; one family's agreeable decibel-level of music is another's noise and neither feels compelled to bow to the other. There have been some conflicts, relatively minor, and quick steps to try and resolve them by meetings and discussions led by a strong tenant task force. My knowledge is mostly anecdotal, since there hasn't been (and probably hasn't been time for) an in-depth post-occupancy evaluation. But I read whatever is available, visit the site every few months and check in occasionally with the people with whom I worked.

When bid prices (at the height of Boston's building boom) were too high, we had to change the more expensive 15-story stepped high rise buildings into pairs of seven-story mid-rises.

I regretted this because the two 15-story "towers" contributed to the variety of roof heights and to a dramatic profile against the sky that would have signalled the drama of the change from afar. It was important for the entire city and the passersby (on a nearby highway) to be reminded of this change and its implications for other housing projects.

I consoled myself with the thought that many great cities have "table-top" profiles and the attractive streetscape for those living at Harbor Point would be little diminished even if they missed those strong vertical landmarks.

— Joan E. Goody

What is most visible and successful to me when visiting Harbor Point is that it looks so normal, even ordinary. Children ride bikes in the streets and can be seen coming and going, as can their parents. Young adults are exercising in the health club or playing tennis. The trees have not reached full growth, and the corners and edges of lawns are worn where foot traffic is heaviest, but the overall appearance is neat and cared for. The ambiance on a typical weekday is quiet and residential. I feel I must flash copies of the "before" project to explain what is so special about the "after."

The central mall is not the lively main street that a major retail component³ might have created. The few struggling shops are the most a community of this size can support; larger shopping centers are a short drive away. One conclusion: A commercial main street flourishes only in very dense, urban neighborhoods like Boston's Beacon Hill or Manhattan's Upper West Side or when there is no nearby competition from supermarkets and shopping centers. To have provided sufficient parking to attract nonresident shoppers to Harbor Point and support a supermarket would have meant including large parking lots, which would have destroyed the carefully crafted texture of the neighborhood. This problem is not peculiar to Harbor Point; it accounts for the death of many small commercial streets across the country. In fact, our mall may suggest a new type of a main street, reinforcing the moderate activity generated by the few shops a neighborhood of this size can support with the added draw of community and recreational activities of the type that occupy residents' leisure time.

What about the stoop-sitters (or today, aluminum-chair-on-the-front-walk sitters)? Few are to be seen. Is it due to management policy or a general change in the culture? Many suburban-bred, market-rate (middle- and upper-income) tenants consider the space behind their house the appropriate locale for outdoor socializing. Raised in places that often have no sidewalks, curbs, or curbside parking, where front doors and lawns are formal, neat and little used, neighbors were unlikely to sit out front because there was no street life to observe or participate in. Also, with less crowding and with air-conditioning in every apartment, people are not driven outside by the summer heat as they might once have been. With more action on television than in a quiet residential neighborhood, the street may lose its allure. Perhaps my image is hopelessly romantic and out-of-date. Perhaps I should settle for neighbors getting to

know each other over-the-back-fence and when coming and going from curbside parking to front door or keeping an eye on the street from front windows. So far Harbor Point has been quite safe with that level of street activity.

Harbor Point is safe: There is a private security force, strong social services are available to those who need them, the management is good, and the tenant task force is active and insists on strict rules enforcement. No residents have championed this more than the former public housing tenants, who suffered through years of anarchy. About 20 families have been evicted (mostly for drug-related problems) and entry to Harbor Point is past a gate house (to discourage their return) — a feature that I hope will be temporary.

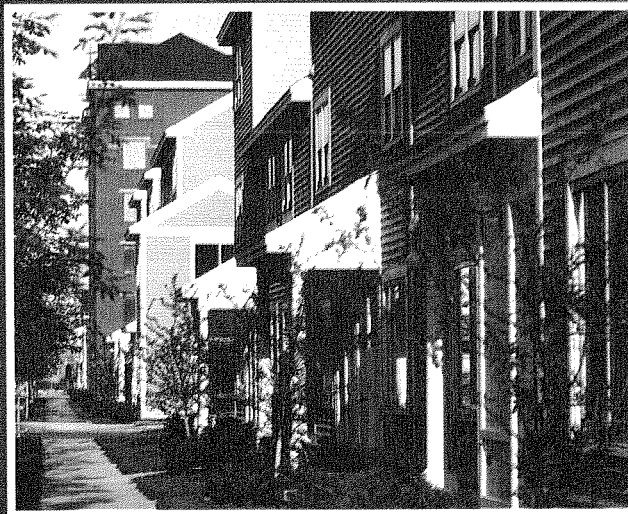
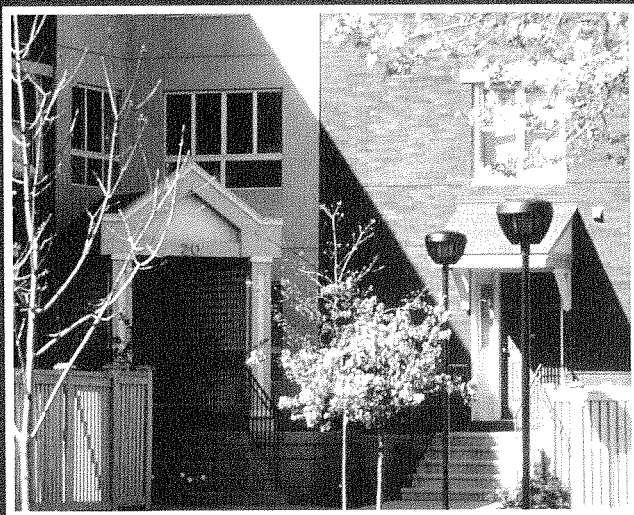
One of the major design features of our site plan was that most streets led to the water's edge at one end and to the existing, major city street at the other, a gesture towards the integration of this new neighborhood into a future, developed Columbia Point peninsula. The client's decision to fence the borders and control access was part of the program to overcome the long-time, negative image of the area and make Harbor Point clearly and obviously safe. It seems to have worked, but I look forward to a day when those streets might be opened.⁴

The developer, architect, or urban designer who works on large, long-range projects often finds surprises. The real-estate bust in Boston was one. Just as Harbor Point was finished, the market segment to which it had been targeted (young, would-be suburban working couples) began to shrink. Unsold condominiums in established neighborhoods were available for low rents and Harbor Point had trouble competing.

Instead, Harbor Point attracted young people who might otherwise have rented in neighborhoods like the South End — a group that was not afraid of urban life but was interested in the recreational facilities and parking (unavailable in the re-gentrified nineteenth-century neighborhoods) that could be found at Harbor Point. Of course, Harbor Point still lacks the variety of shops that can be found in denser, closer-in neigh-



Top: The Columbia Point project.
Center left: Private entrances to ground-floor flats in elevator buildings.
Center right: Residents gathering at the water's edge park.
Bottom left and right: Typical townhouse streetscapes.
Center left and bottom right photos by Anton Grassl.



borhoods like the South End. Harbor Point's ability to offer retail as well as recreational amenities within walking distance will depend on the successful future development of the rest of the Columbia Point peninsula.

Another unexpected source of renters has turned out to be students from the nearby University of Massachusetts campus. This is a robust group whose age may make it more in tune with the decibel level of some of the original residents, possibly forming a cultural bridge in a time of transition. Also important are people drawn to Harbor Point because of their desire to forge a new kind of community.

The character of the community is still developing; it will become clearer over the years, even as it continues to evolve. Management policies may allow more outward expression of individuality on building fronts, or the tenants may focus on the rear patios and their barbecues, or both. The strong role established for the tenant task force assures that this group will have a say in the changes. The apartments, the buildings, and streets allow for change and will be enriched by them.

A designer can build the framework, suggest how it may be used by providing opportunities to personalize (a small front lawn, an entry portico, a patio) and invite social interaction by providing a series of semi-private and semi-public spaces (such as the tot-lots, communal greens shared by groups of townhouses, and central mall). She can even try to imply some of the variety of traditional neighborhoods (by varying the colors of bricks, paint, and roofing shingles). But room and time must be left for the residents to make their mark.

Notes

1. All units are rentals; the 400 subsidized and the market-rate units are identical and integrated throughout the site. Subsidized families were given their choice of any unit of appropriate size for their family. The site abuts a nine-acre water's-edge park.
2. Goody Clancy & Associates' involvement and first designs (working directly with the tenants) began in 1978 and continued after a formal competition for architect/developer teams in 1983. Construction began in January of 1987 and was completed in 1990.
3. A major retail component on Mt. Vernon Street was in one of the competing proposals, but rejected for lack of sustainability. No plans have been made for expansion of the current shops, but ground floor apartments on the mall could be converted into offices (or even shops) with minor renovations.
4. In an attempt to hasten the arrival of that day, I have been working with a focus team of the Boston Society of Architects and the surrounding land owners to develop new visions (and plans) for the whole peninsula.

Comments by Joan E. Goody and Queenie Santos are from statements submitted to the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence.

Credits

Owners: Harbor Point Apartments Co. (a partnership between the Columbia Point Community Task Force and Peninsula Partners).

Developer: The Harbor Point Community Task Force and Peninsula Partners (a limited partnership composed of Corcoran, Mullin, Jennison, Inc., managing general partner; Cruz Construction Co., general partner; Keen Development Corp., general partner).

Contractor: Vernon Construction Co. (a joint venture of CMJ Construction Co. and Peabody Construction Co.).

Managing Agent: CMJ Management Co.

Site Design and Design Guidelines: Goody, Clancy & Associates.

Architects: Goody, Clancy & Associates (all new construction except two of the mid-rises).

Mintz Associates (all renovations and two new high-rises).

Russell & Scott Architects (inspecting architect).

Subsidy Funding: Section 8 Substantial Rehabilitation Rent Subsidy, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD); Chapter 707 Rent Subsidy, Commonwealth of Massachusetts; State Housing Assistance for Rental Production; Commonwealth of Massachusetts (loan).

Construction and Permanent Financing: Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency; tax-exempt bond financing; Federal Housing Administration co-insurance program; HUD Urban Initiatives Loan (modernization); HUD Urban Development Action Grant; Chapter 884, Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Project Description

Area: 44 acres next to a nine-acre water's edge park.

Density: 30 units per acre.

Types of buildings: Townhouses (198 units); three-story garden apartments (258 units); five- to seven-story elevator buildings (827 units).

Types of units: One bedroom (371), two bedroom (653), three bedroom (183), four bedroom (60), five bedroom (12), six bedroom (4). Total: 1,283.

Economic mix: 69 percent market rate, 31 percent subsidized for low income.

Resident amenities: Adult and family swimming pools, tennis courts, exercise facility, jogging and bicycle path, neighborhood play areas, basketball court, shuttle service to public transportation, waterfront park, clubhouse.

Resident services: Health care center, day care. Housing Opportunities Unlimited staff, on site, provide outreach, referral, and advocacy, and coordinates day care, health services, senior citizen, and community service programs, which are provided on site by other agencies.

Retail: Convenience store, dry cleaner, cafe. Total: 5,000 s.f.

Parking: 1,482 spaces.