



The Ropewalk Building: A Case Study in Historic Preservation

Citation

Cosgriff, Eileen. 2018. The Ropewalk Building: A Case Study in Historic Preservation. Master's thesis, Harvard Extension School.

Permanent link

<https://nrs.harvard.edu/URN-3:HUL.INSTREPOS:37365419>

Terms of Use

This article was downloaded from Harvard University's DASH repository, and is made available under the terms and conditions applicable to Other Posted Material, as set forth at <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:dash.current.terms-of-use#LAA>

Share Your Story

The Harvard community has made this article openly available.
Please share how this access benefits you. [Submit a story](#).

[Accessibility](#)

The Ropewalk Building: A Case Study in Historic Preservation.

Eileen Cosgriff

A Thesis in the Field of History of Art and Architecture
for the Degree of Master of Liberal Arts in Extension Studies

Harvard University

November 2018

Copyright 2018 Eileen Cosgriff

Abstract

Although located within the revitalized Boston Naval Shipyard, the Ropewalk building has remained vacant and undeveloped since the base closed in 1974. The building is a significant historic structure, as demonstrated through various National Park Service, state and local recognitions. Yet, renovations for reuse are only in the planning stages. Why is this building still vacant in an affluent, redeveloped neighborhood and what caused its renovation delays now that 24 years have passed since the base closed? Several causes can be attributed to the building's current state: power struggles within the federal and local governments; inadvertent destructive action taken by the Department of Defense and, separately, by the Boston Redevelopment Authority after base closure; deferred drafting of the preservation requirements specific to materials management; and conflicting mandates for the custodian to preserve yet find profitability in the building's reuse. Still, there were other challenges more specific for redevelopers; some of these included: creating a reuse design for a uniquely shaped structure; preparing a design to the required preservation specifications; managing the preservation application process; and acquiring sufficient capital for financing. With these collective challenges, the history of the Ropewalk operations has yet to be preserved. A redevelopment project to create residential units is in process but the design will isolate key historic features by containing them in each unit, preventing the general public from appreciating them in context of the original rope making operations. Perhaps a more comprehensive history of the building could be conveyed through other reuse options. Another alternative, history could be simulated using virtual reality, recreating the an image of putting into context the ropemaking operations depicting

tools and equipment placement on site as originally designed. This case study sheds light on the difficulties associated with balancing the preservation of American history with the need for community revitalization through redevelopment.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	vii
List of Figures	viii
Introduction.....	9
Chapter I. Rope production and the U.S Navy’s Ropewalk building	13
Chapter II. The Boston Naval Shipyard decommissioned and repurposed	25
Decommissioning	25
Boston Naval Shipyard property reuse plans	32
Boston Naval Shipyard divided after base closure	35
Chapter III. Treatment of the Ropewalk building: common real estate or valued historic property?	40
Treatment like common real estate	40
Department of Defense destroys or sells historic artifacts.....	41
Property transition executed with little information regarding condition..	43
Traces of Boston Naval Shipyard’s evolution removed	45
Valued historic site	49
Establishing preservation standards takes 24 years	49
Oversight team consists of five authoritative bodies	52
Chapter IV. Ropewalk building proposals and ongoing development challenges	55
Development in progress	57
Compliance with <i>Restoration Guidelines</i>	58
Compliance with Article 80 of City of Boston Zoning Regulations	65

Financing challenges.....	68
Chapter V. Development impact.....	72
Influence on local economy	72
Continuing historic legacy	74
Preservation movement process changes	74
Stronger voice from the community	74
Policing preservation mandates	75
Application process streamlined	76
Preserving the Ropewalk building’s historic legacy.....	76
Reconstructing the past.....	77
Contemporary views on aging mandates	78
NPS as custodian.....	78
Works Cited	81
Appendix 1: Key dates discussed in each chapter	85
Appendix 2: Charlestown Ropewalk LLC preservation application history	88

List of Tables

Table 1.	Key dates discussed in Chapter 1.....	15
Table 2.	Key dates discussed in Chapter 2.....	26
Table 3.	Key dates discussed in Chapter 3.....	41
Table 4.	Key dates discussed in Chapter 4.....	56

List of Figures

Figure 1.	Boston Naval Shipyard Map (also known as Charlestown Navy Yard).....	14
Figure 2:	Front view of the Ropewalk building	17
Figure 3:	The profile of the Ropewalk building	18
Figure 4:	Additions made to the Ropewalk building during World War II	21
Figure 5:	Boston Naval Shipyard segmented after base closing	36

Introduction

The United States Navy's (Navy) Ropewalk facility in the Boston Naval Shipyard, (Shipyard)¹ in Charlestown, Massachusetts, was the principal manufacturer of cord for the Naval fleet from the time production started in 1837, continuing through the mid 1900's (Carlson 43). During this time, warships built or repaired by the Naval operations were rigged with the cords manufactured in this building: hundreds of vessels were rigged by this cord. It is a diverse collection of vessels, built or repaired, that utilizing these cords. Ships rebuilt in Boston's Shipyard include: the oldest commissioned ship still in use today, the USS *Constitution* (launched 1797) (Carlson 1077, 175); one of the first ships destroyed by a Confederate submarine in 1864, the USS *Housatonic*; (Carlson 1163, 1161); and, a ship that destroyed several German submarines during World War II while being commissioned by the English Royal Navy, the HMS *Bazely* (launched in 1942) (Carlson 1168; Uboat). The U.S. Navy had tremendous pride in its cordage produced in Boston that it showcased it in two world fair expositions: one in

¹ The subject of this case study, the Ropewalk building and its operations, is located within the Boston Naval Shipyard (Shipyard). The Shipyard was comprised of two ports in the City of Boston, one in Charlestown and one in South Boston. This building is located on the northern boundary of the Charlestown branch and is situated parallel to Chelsea Street (as seen in Figure 1). Reference made to the Boston Naval Shipyard in this research only refers to the Charlestown branch.

1876 at the International Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and the other in 1892, Chicago's' Columbian Exposition.

The Navy's Ropewalk operation in Boston is considered historically significant for reasons other than being the principal supplier of rope to the Navy² (Carlson 3). First, the building is in Boston's Naval Shipyard in what became the first commissioned base for the United States maritime fleet (Carlson 1084, 1077). Second, the building has been recognized for its architectural design suited for its purpose. Ropemaking equipment was integrated into the original building design, an unusual design concept. Third, the technology directing the equipment was developed on site to enhance the quality of rope, and the process of creating rope was applauded as first in its class. Fourth, the management and the female employees working the Ropewalk operations have also been recognized, as this was the first facility in the Shipyard to employ women on the military base. With such a dominant role in supplying United States maritime operations with cord, as well as, the Ropewalk operations' contributions to architecture, technology, and social history, the building's current vacant, dilapidated condition does not pay tribute to its contributions to American history.

Architectural preservation captures a property's story for future benefit. The Ropewalk's current condition does not reflect a story suited to its historic significance. Through historic preservation, a legacy can be created for structures that successive generations can appreciate and hopefully learn from. Deciding incorrectly what aspects of structures to maintain can

² A ropewalk operation was established by the Navy in Memphis, TN around 1840 to 1850 but, given its short period of operation, the Navy does not considered it a significant contributor to the overall production of cord for the Naval fleet (Carlson 43).

eliminate the historic significance and destroy a building's historic legacy. Attention by various authorities, and now a private developer, to preserve the Ropewalk building has been on-going for the last four decades, since the base closed in 1974. Currently development plans are to partition the building into apartment units. Although this reuse design intends to preserve the building's story, it may actually eliminate one's ability to recreate the visual setting as key historic features will be masked from public view. These features that will be masked include the 1300-foot long corridor- like open space, as well as the rails embedded in the floor, running the length of this same space. Perhaps, other reuse alternatives may have been considered that would keep such features as originally designed and available for public viewing. As an alternative, to allow these features to be appreciated by the general public, simulation through virtual reality can be used to capture the history that will be lost or hidden once the renovations are complete.

Several themes help describe why there have been delays in the Ropewalk building's availability for development. First, the political struggles at the federal and local levels have impacted the availability. At the federal level, the United States Department of Defense (DoD) objectives to close certain military bases conflicted with the United States Congress' (Congress) objectives to assist its constituents – including military base communities- thus, keeping their employment and places of residence in this case. Separately, at the local level, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Boston's agent, the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) competed to oversee marketing decisions for property reuse. Realignment of marketing responsibilities eventually came to the BRA. In its ordinary course of business, the BRA is charged with the power to approve development plans for the City of Boston. With the

added responsibility of creating reuse and marketing plans for the former military base, there was little oversight of the BRAs actions executed on the shipyard's development.

A second theme emerged regarding the Ropewalk property's management; specifically, the property was either managed like ordinary real estate—with little regard for historic materials, or conversely, its historic oversight was overly burdensome—with many restrictions for the management of materials. Several authorities, including the DoD and BRA, treated the Ropewalk building as an ordinary real estate, eliminating the historic features, without considering the appropriateness of their actions and impact on the structure's legacy. In reaction to this, the authorities countered further destructive actions by mandating the preservation of the remaining building fabric. Balancing the appropriate level of preservation, with an eye towards an alternative use, without causing destruction to the building's legacy has been a challenge.

Researching why this building was pending renovations for over forty-five years after the base closure revealed unexpected information about these two themes – conflicts between local and federal level politics, struggles between managing the property as common real estate and separately as a valued historic site – as well as challenges required of developers participating in projects with historic preservation requirements. In addition to offering context as to the Ropewalk's continued vacancy, this study identifies alternatives to the current property oversight model and explains how to capture the facility's history that otherwise will be shielded when the building is remodeled for contemporary use.

Chapter I.

Rope production and the U.S Navy's Ropewalk building

Built in 1837, the U.S. Navy's Ropewalk building is a dominant structure in the former Boston Naval Shipyard (Shipyard) that parallels the northern perimeter (see Figure 1). Although, vacant for over forty-five years and yet to be preserved or developed, the Ropewalk building in Boston, Massachusetts abstractly conveys the story of how the United States Navy produced rope from 1830's to 1960's. Through an analysis of the building's customized features and equipment, a visitor standing in the vast open space with sparse but sizeable industrial equipment can visualize the complex ropemaking process. Most evident is the demand for long spans of open space where production teams intertwined fabric, creating long lengths of rope. Other features include the cart rail tracks running the length of the 1300 foot long building wing and the conveyer belts that spun raw materials for rope making, which are suspended from the ceiling in the main building. Preservation of these key features is critical to convey the building's history. Removing or shielding these features from the public view will lessen the site's history and as a result reduce its apparent contributions to the ropemaking industry.

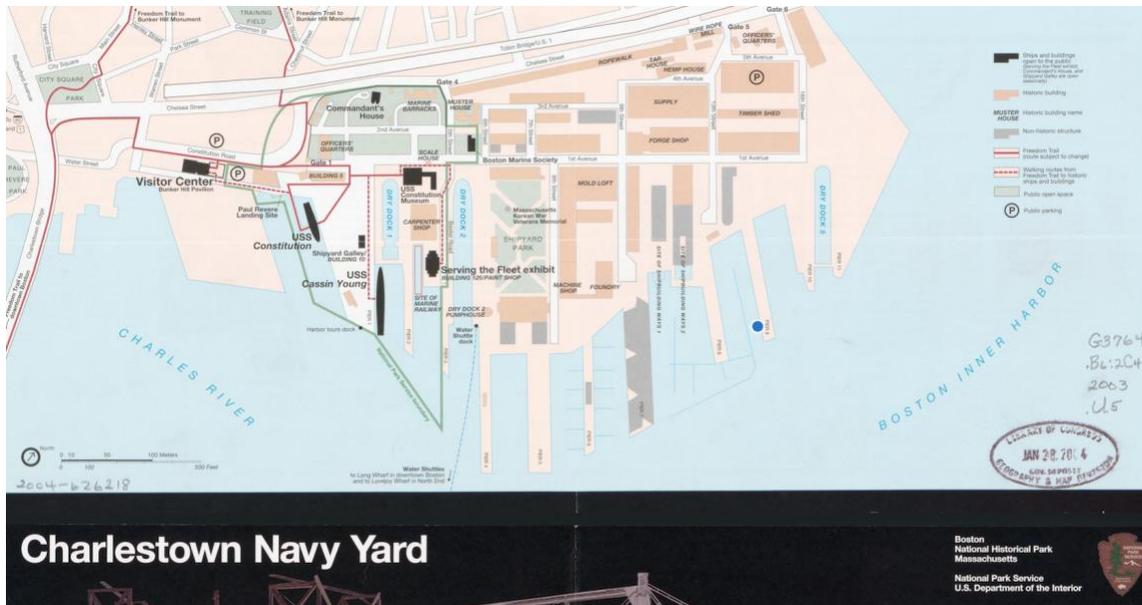


Figure 1. Boston Naval Shipyard Map (also known as Charlestown Navy Yard)

Boston Naval Shipyard, Charlestown Branch, now known as Charlestown Navy Yard. The Ropewalk building, labeled above, runs parallel to Chelsea Street at the northern boundary of the base (National Park Service).

The Ropewalk building and the former Boston Naval Shipyard have evolved over time due to the progressive growth of its military operations. Commissioned in 1800, and closed in 1974 (Carlson 1077, 9) the Shipyard’s growth is evident when studying the structures that support shipbuilding, manufacturing related goods (anchors, rope, and sails), and facilitating the community of naval residents. Buildings are of various styles due to being built in different time periods to support contemporary demand. Expansion is also evident analyzing the Shipyard’s infrastructure, the crane tracks and cart tracks carve strategic pathways along the waterfront facilitating the transportation of maritime supplies, produced goods and repaired

ships. The progressive changes to the facilities and infrastructure made overtime collectively convey a part of the history of the Shipyard.

Establishing a ropewalk factory managed by the U.S. Navy in Boston was not arbitrary. It was debated by the Navy for over 20 years before coming to fruition in the 1830's (Carlson 1084).

Three contributing factors supported the creation of rope

Table 1. Key dates discussed in Chapter 1

manufacturing facility: first, Boston had been a central trading port of hemp, the principal component of rope, and access to this raw material was critical for any rope operation; second, there were many private ropewalks in operation in the City, and it was anticipated that skilled laborers could be recruited from other factories enabling a steady supply of employees; and, third, the region was known as a leader in new textile technology, an industry from which

1794	Fourteen area ropewalks comprise an informal ropewalk district in downtown Boston.	(USS Constitution Museum)
1796	After fires destroyed part of the downtown ropewalks district, companies relocated to the west side of Boston Common.	(USS Constitution Museum)
1800	Naval site approved in Charlestown, Massachusetts by President Adams	(Carlson 1077)
1837	Boston Naval Shipyard Ropewalk Building completed and operations begin	(Carlson 1084)
1966	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation approved by Congress with Section 106 requiring federal agencies execute an impact report on historic materials before beginning projects	(Advisory Council on Historic Preservation)
1971	Ropewalk ceased operations onsite	(Carlson 522)
1974	Boston Naval Shipyard closed	(Carlson 9)
1978	Secretary of Interior's treatment of historic materials guidelines are first released.	(Weeks and Grimmer 2)
See Appendix A for complete list of dates and required reference credits.		

craftsman could be recruited to help enhance the cord manufacturing process (Carlson 43).

Crafting rope was a common industrial process in seafaring communities, such as Boston. The cord was critical for use on sailing ships to rig sails, to anchor ships and to tie off those docked in port. By 1794, there were a series of competitors in the rope-making business with established facilities in Boston; fourteen sites were identified in the city with many along Boston

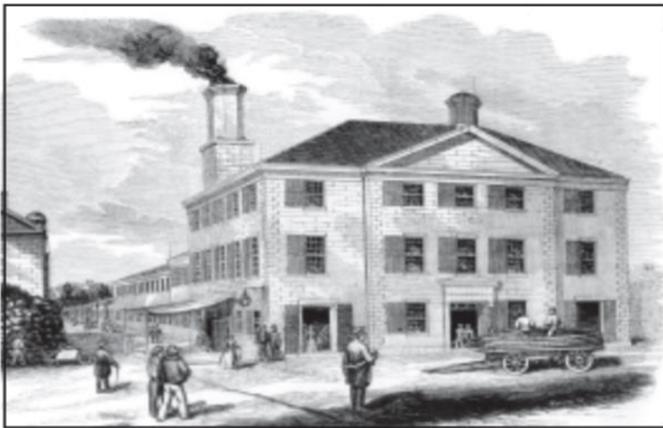
(USS Constitution Museum). By 1796, the City of Boston maps indicated that the Ropewalk district was relocated to a remote corner of the Boston Common, away from residential and other commercial enterprises (USS Constitution Museum).

At the end of the 19th century, the U.S. Navy proposed the transfer of rope operations from Boston to other naval facilities and private manufacturers. This move did not happen, and Boston maintained its rope operation. As it was the principal supplier of rope for the Navy, the ropemaking operations significantly contributed to the success of the Boston Naval Shipyard. Had the rope operations been terminated in Boston, the Shipyard would have as well.

The Navy altered the primary focus of Boston's Ropewalk operations team in the 1950's. In attempts to down size its operations in Boston, the U.S. Navy restricted rope production to a subsistence level only for the Boston area. The focus for the Ropewalk operations was not on the production of rope itself, instead operations teams pursued technological advances related to the production of cord. Engineers developed important advances that helped facilitate the change from hemp-based rope to nylon-based rope (Carlson 522). Despite its continued successful contributions made to the U. S. Navy and cordage industry, this Ropewalk ceased all operations in December 1971, as rope production and the corresponding technology research for the Navy shifted to the private industry (Carlson 522).

As the Boston Naval Shipyard architect in the 1830's, Alexander Parris designed the Navy's ropemaking complex. Unlike his American predecessors and contemporaries in the field of architecture, Parris was trained by other American architects, including Charles Bulfinch. In addition to designing buildings in the Naval Shipyard, Parris is more commonly known for designing Quincy Market in downtown Boston. Sharing similar characteristics, both the Ropewalk complex and Quincy Market are of grand scale, designed in a Greek

Revival style – low pitched roofs, wide trim along the roof cornice lines, and triangular pediments of the front of both buildings reminiscent of those found on Greek temples – and made of local granite blocks. They were both specifically designed for purpose: one, for ropemaking and the other for retail merchant space (McAlester and McAlester 158, 179) (see Figure 2).



The earliest known view of the Ropewalk is this drawing that appeared in *Gleason's Pictorial Drawing Room Companion* in 1852. Note the large chimneys for the boilers located in the basement of the headhouse. BOSTS-9510

Figure 2: Front view of the Ropewalk building

The Ropewalk building's façade displayed elements of the Greek revival style (Carlson 517).

In 1837 when the Ropewalk operations started, constructing buildings suited for a specific industrial operation was not common (Carlson 516). The Shipyard's architect Alexander Parris worked with rope making engineers to strategically place machinery as needed throughout the facility, enabling a more efficient exchange of raw and manufactured materials, from station to station, through manual to mechanical processes in its operations (Carlson 517).

The Ropewalk building was intentionally designed to create long lengths of rope. The structure resembled a square box kite with a long tail (See Figure 3). The box, a three-

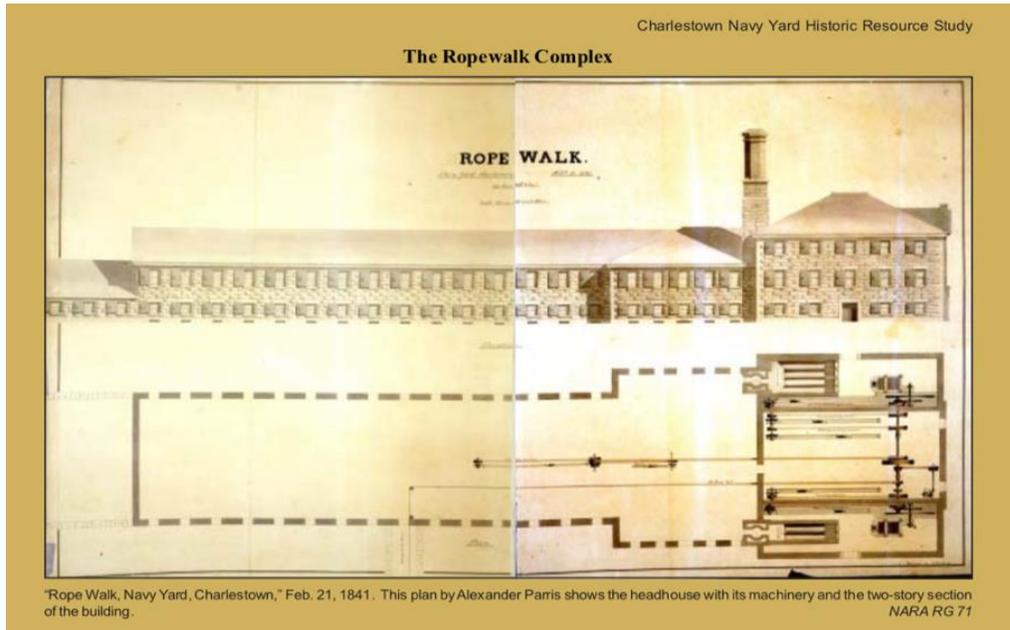


Figure 3: The profile of the Ropewalk building

This image shows the Ropewalk building as it appeared in 1841, soon after its construction. This image shows the long extension (on the left) off the main building (seen on the right). Note that the extreme western side of the building is not in view. (Carlson 46)

story building made of large granite blocks, was grand in scale and appearance; its main entrance was framed by a three story, shallow portico, that welcomed workers inside. This main box-shaped building housed much of the mechanical equipment for the operations. The kite tail, at 1300 feet long, housed the area where rope was woven. Operations could support production of ¼ mile long rope in a straight line with the aid of cart tracks (similar to rail road tracks) that ran

the length of the building (Carlson 43). As a manufacturing facility in a Greek revival style, this was a uniquely shaped, and fashionable, structure.

The Navy's Boston ropemaking operations consisted of a three-building complex designed by Parris that facilitated the process of taking raw materials, weaving it into cord, and then preserving it with tar. Hemp, the raw material fastened into rope, was stored in the base's Hemp House. This material would be transported into the Ropewalk facility and then spun into threads and ultimately cord. The last building in this complex, the Tarring House, stored tar used to preserve the final rope product. As these operations worked in conjunction with each other, these buildings were situated in close proximity.

Over time, the Ropewalk building was modified from Parris' original design to accommodate operational need. Five separate additions were made to the original structure. The first addition in 1919 was an expansion to accommodate a women's restroom (replacing a privy) on the main building's northern wing. With the active recruitment of men into the armed services during World War II reducing ropemaking staff, women were introduced into the workforce (Carlson 518). The Ropewalk operations were the first to recruit women on the Boston military base. For these reasons, women's participation in these ropemaking operations and the management's progressive insights into recruiting them contributed to the history of social and worker movements in the United States³ (Carlson 516).

³ Expanding the workforce to include women was historically important for purposes of the History of Social and Worker Movements (Carlson 516).

The subsequent four additions were added in 1942 and 1943. In 1942 a second staircase was added between the floors in the main building (Carlson 518). In 1943, the third addition accomplished two changes: it raised the height of the 1300 foot long extension to the back of the building, creating an additional level on top of the building's western section (creating space for the Industrial Relations Office), and a bridge was constructed to allow access from Chelsea Street, outside the base walls, directly into the Industrial Relations Office (see Figure 4). Candidates seeking employment on the base were interviewed in this office space. With this new access, it eliminated the need for civilian candidate's general access onto the military base. Later that year, a fifth addition in the form of an ambulance garage was added to this western section (Carlson 520). The additions of the women's bathroom, staircase, second story extension accommodating the Industrial Relations Office, the bridge, and the ambulance garage were tacked onto the original 1837 structure like barnacles on a long 1300 foot boat; there was little consideration for the aesthetics when constructing these additions (see Figure 4).

Despite their appearance, these additions to the Ropewalk became historically significant representing the growth of the Boston Naval Shipyard during World War II. The National Park Service stated that regardless of the unremarkable character of these additions, the addition of the Industrial Relations Office to the "...Ropewalk building in 1943 was what best characterized as the tremendous expansion of the yard's workforce in World War II" (Carlson 520). Unfortunately, these additions were all removed by the BRA after base closure. Without the existence of these additions, there is no reminder of the role that the Shipyard had in supporting the U.S military during that time period.



Although architecturally undistinguished, the 1943 addition to the Ropewalk was perhaps the structure which best characterized the tremendous expansion of the yard's workforce in World War II since it was built to house the personnel and training offices. These HAER views were taken in Mar. 1977 as mitigation for its demolition, an action that was governed by aesthetic concerns and done without proper evaluation of its significance as required by the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Preservation. Above, Gate 4 and the shelter along Chelsea St. for workers waiting for streetcars until July 2, 1949, and then for buses can be seen in front of the building. The west end is shown at right above, while the south side, which included a projecting stair/elevator tower is at right. Also seen in that view are the garages for the yard's ambulances built in two stages in 1943 and 1944.

William A. Owens, HAER



Figure 4: Additions made to the Ropewalk building during World War II

Image on the left is of the Industrial Relations Office built as a second story to the Ropewalk building, as seen from Chelsea Street. The western end of the same Industrial Relations Office is seen in the top right picture. The bottom right picture is the side view of the Office, with the staircase and garage additions in view. (Carlson 520)

The historic significance of the Boston Naval Shipyard and the Ropewalk building has been independently rated by different authorities; recognition has been made by the City of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and the United States National Park Service. These designations acknowledge the contributions to American history and imply that preservation efforts should be made to retain the Ropewalk's historical nature, as certain development of the building could diminish the building's historic legacy. With its extensive historic significance, why the Ropewalk building has been vacant and not been repurposed

becomes clearer after considering how it has been effected by the federal political environment in the early 1970's.

In 1966 the Boston Naval Shipyard was first recognized as historically significant by the National Park Service. At that time, the Shipyard received two of its awards: first as a National Historic Landmark and second with placement on the National Register of Historic Places (National Park Service). With both recognitions, the National Park Service confirmed that this area held historical significance not only to the region but also to the entire country (National Park Service, Historic Landmarks Program). As a National Historic Landmark, specific conditions existed indicating "... a high, not simply good, level of historic integrity" existed in 1966 and prior to support its designation (National Park Service, Historic Landmarks Program). The degree of the historical integrity was determined by measuring the seven attributes of a proposed place. These include a site's "...location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association" (National Park Service, Historic Landmarks Program Glossary). The Ropewalk building qualified based on its location in the first U.S. Navy base (Donelan 23)—in a suited-for-purpose design managed by uniquely skilled engineers—developing new ropemaking technology as well as rope.

Separate from these National Park Service designations, historical significance of the Ropewalk building has been recorded in a report titled, *The Charlestown Navy Yard Historic Resource Study*. This study presents the historic value of the structures and operations within the Boston Naval Shipyard during and after its use as a naval base. As part of the study, a structure's significance was graded in four historical areas of interest relevant to the Shipyard: history of the U.S. Navy, technology, social and worker movements, and architectural and engineering design (Carlson 396). This resource study highlights the significance of the

Ropewalk building's evolution from the early 1830's. On a four-point scale, the highest marks were received for the Ropewalk operations' contributions to the history of technology, American architecture/engineering design, and U.S. Navy. In regard to its impact on the history of technology, the onsite technicians and engineers enhanced the hemp-based rope-making process and also developed a synthetic-based rope-making process. Both processes changed the approach in the manufacturing of cord by the rope industry. Significant contributions made to the history of American architectural/engineering design included the structure's design reflecting thoughtful contemporary architectural planning by incorporating features specific to rope making; this contributed to the beginning of an industrial design movement. For its relevance to the history of the American Navy, the Ropewalk building operations was the primary supplier of rope for the United States Navy from 1837 to 1950's. The fourth area of history, in the social and worker movements, recorded a slightly lower recognition of importance based on the Ropewalk operations being the first facility in the Shipyard to employ women in the workforce.

Local agencies have assessed the building as well. Some of these determinations mirror the valuations made on the national level. For instance, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Register of Historic Places lists the Ropewalk building amongst its historical places for similar reasons, as is required for its registry as a NPS National Historic Place (Carlson 3). Other determinations were made regarding the building's significance, which prompted the City of Boston and the National Park Service in 1980 to jointly agree to add the Ropewalk building to the Boston National Historical Park (Carlson 1145). As a part of the park, the Ropewalk building is now designated with other "...certain historic structures and properties of outstanding national significance" (National Park Service, Long Range Interpretive Plan). With federal and local

designations of historic importance, the Ropewalk building, its operations and its location within the Boston Naval Shipyard, all have a rich history which substantiates why the Ropewalk building's story should in some manner be capture and readily available to the public.

Chapter II.

The Boston Naval Shipyard decommissioned and repurposed

Decommissioning

The history of military base closings reveal why the Boston Naval Shipyard came to close. This history and how the specific closure was managed in Boston contribute to the Ropewalk building's extended vacancy. For Boston, the U.S. Department of Defense' Shipyard operation was one of several bases caught in a power struggle between the executive and legislative branches of the federal government. These struggles started in the 1960's and extended for two decades. The issues started when the executive branch determined a need to better manage its budget. This goal conflicted with the legislative branch's objective of guarding its constituents' best interests. Specifically, Congress took issue with not being consulted regarding potentially significant budgetary cutbacks impacting its constituents. Both branches of government over time would win small victories in its objectives and as such, power would shift from one branch to the other. As bases were closed, it satisfied the executive branch; conversely, delays impacting the closure processes, as well as enhancements made to the displacement assistance programs for the community, satisfied the legislative branch.

For the executive branch, military base restructuring has been an objective for many decades. In 1961, due to perceived inefficiencies in military operations, the newly inaugurated President Kennedy instructed his Secretary of Defense to devise a transformation plan. This plan anticipated closing approximately 250 bases between 1961 and 1964 (Twight 75). While plans made by the Office of the Secretary of Defense were publicized, they were executed without

consultation with Congress. Given the separation of the federal branch powers, specifically the Department of Defense and Congress, information was not required to be shared by the military with the politicians. With the legislative branch concerned for its constituents and the significant impact to local communities, Congress would not sit idle.

Congress proceeded on a multi-year journey, attempting to mandate transparency into the Department of Defense's proposed changes to military facilities. Congress requested that the monetary savings resulting from base closings be calculated. Determining these savings per base closure was a challenge, as the pertinent data was not available or measured. Eventually, estimations were made by

Table 2. Key dates discussed in Chapter 2

1961	Economic Adjustment Committee established providing assistance to military base communities	(United States Department of Defense)
1961	U.S. Military base closure plans start	(Twight 75)
1965	First legislation passed regarding Dept. of Defense requirement to	(Twight 75-76)
1971	Boston Redevelopment Authority issues Boston Naval Shipyard reuse report	(Carlson 1134)
1973	Boston Naval Shipyard closure announcement	(Carlson 1137)
1973-1975	Massachusetts Land Bank marketed Boston Naval Shipyard as industrial site	(Boston Economic Development and Industrial Corporation; Boston Redevelopment Authority)
1974	Boston Naval Shipyard closed	(Carlson 9)
1975	Boston Redevelopment Authority issued intentions of marketing Boston Naval Shipyard as mixed use site.	(Carlson 1138)
1976	First section of Boston Naval Shipyard transferred to National Park Service	(Carlson 204)
1977	Second section of Boston Naval Shipyard, for public parks, transferred to City of Boston	(Carlson 205)
1978	Third section of Boston Naval Shipyard, Historic Monuments Areas, transferred to City of Boston	(Carlson 205)
1979	Second section of Boston Naval Shipyard transferred to National Park Service	(Carlson 205)
2007	Boston Redevelopment Authority issued Waterfront Activation Network Plan	(Carlson 1138)
See Appendix A for complete list of dates and required reference credits.		

the Department of Defense, indicating an approximate benefit over time. In 1965, Congress raised concerns that the monetary savings calculated were only limited to those benefitting the

Department of Defense; little consideration for the monetary impact to the local government and community was apparent. Furthermore, Congress noted that the calculations regarding savings did not consider the costs related to unemployment or retirement benefits for the displaced work force (Twight 89). With the local government's costs potentially increasing, Congress found these calculations biased.

In 1965, Congress passed one of the first pieces of legislation attempting to control how bases were closed. It required the Department of Defense to provide justification to Congressional Armed Services Committees for certain types of base closures (Twight 76). With little regard for this new requirement, the Department of Defense continued with its closure program. Between December 1965 and April 1973, approximately 1,125 military sites had been closed or scaled back (Twight 75-76).

The Department of Defense announced the closure of the Boston Naval Shipyard in April 1973. At that time, a press release stated “the disestablishment of the shipyard is in alignment with the reduction of Navy ships and requirements for supporting the fleet...” (Cullen and Richwine 1). Decisions made regarding the closures from 1973–1976 corresponded with the end of the United States' participation in the Vietnam War. Practically managing its operations, a reduction in activity overseas meant the possibility for a reduction in the domestic naval operations (Twight 75). This rationale was consistent with political pressures for the executive branch to cut its costs.

Still frustrated that it had little control over the DoD's objectives to shutting down bases, Congress attempted to slow the Department of Defense's momentum, closing or realigning military operations. In the mid-1970's, a change occurred in the political environment that

shifted the influence over base closures from the executive branch to the legislative branch⁴ (United States Defense Secretary's Commission 8). This was critical and, contrary to previously closed bases, put the favor in the hands of those who could establish community assistance programs, Congress. Taking advantage of this shift, Congress passed legislation in its favor, requiring the Department of Defense to inform and present a series of impact reports and then allow Congress time to respond, before implementing any restrictions. With such demanding requirements, the base closures stopped from mid-1970's through late 1980's. Given the contrasting interests between the two branches, the Defense Secretary's Office noted that "legislative and the executive branches have made it virtually impossible to close any military installation and realize the resultant savings in the defense budget" (United States Defense Secretary's Commission 8-9). During this time period, the Department of Defense made little progress towards its operations transformation goals. Conversely, Congress was able to slow the momentum of base closings by the Department of Defense. This shift in power was significant, as the legislative branch was keen on assisting its constituents affected by these base

⁴ In 1965, Congress attempted to pass legislation, requiring the Department of Defense to seek consultation with Congress, before determining base closures; this was vetoed by President Johnson. Separately, in 1976, the Military Construction Authorization Bill was proposed by Congress, prohibiting any base closure or reduction of more than 250 civilian employees without Congress being notified, and prescribed assessments were conducted to determine impact to the economy. A required nine-month waiting period was also proposed; President Ford vetoed this legislation. (United States Defense Secretary's Commission 8)

closings. As such, new programs were established and existing programs were enhanced to help those in need.

Transforming the Boston Naval Shipyard from a military facility to a civilian neighborhood would be challenging and certain governmental programs assisted communities with this. The City of Boston sought assistance from a program established in 1961 offered by the federal Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA). The OEA was the Department of Defense's answer to providing strategic planning assistance to local and state communities affected by reductions in military operations⁵ (United States Department of Defense, Defense Base Closure). The Committee was comprised of a diverse group of governmental experts who offered community specific and general base closing guidance to affected communities on a broad range of subjects pertaining to managing the departure of the military (United States Department of Defense). Guidance aided community planners by realigning the community's initial response to the pending military base closure from one of concern—due to untold changes—to that of opportunity. Insights were offered pertaining to how the community might benefit from the pending change. More comprehensive guidance was issued in 1978, too late for the City of Boston's use. (See United States Office of Economic Adjustment).

The federal government had other programs in existence that intended to help assist base workers. In particular, two pertained to base employee housing and employment. First, the

⁵ Note, there is conflicting information regarding when the Economic Adjustment Committee and corresponding Economic Adjustment Office was first created. The information from EDAW (EDAW, Inc. 1) notes March 1970 while the website of the United States Department of Defense notes “since 1961” (United States Department of Defense, Defense Base Closure).

Homeowners Assistance Program (HAP)⁶ required the federal government to purchase a base employee's home if the employee needed to relocate because of the base closure. Alternatively, if a home was independently sold for less than the pre-base closure value, the federal government would reimburse the employee for the difference⁷ (United States Defense Secretary's Commission 25). The intention of this program was to reduce any financial strain related to the employee's inability to sell their home when looking for employment opportunities elsewhere. A second program, the Priority Placement Program, established by the Secretary of Defense McNamara's initiatives in the 1960's, was intended to provide the impacted workforce opportunities for other employment. At base closure, the base employees would be offered comparable positions at military operations in other locations. This Program, like HAP, assisted with the successful reemployment and relocation of the base employees (United States Defense Secretary's Commission 25). While these federal programs provided limited assistance to the Boston base employees, state programs provided other types of assistance.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts had two programs that supported military families during base closures; the first of these, the Massachusetts Joint Commission on Federal Base Conversions (Hill 209), was established in 1973 to research and propose alternative uses of several to military operations in the Commonwealth. This program's establishment coincided with the Boston Naval Shipyard's closing announcement also in 1973. As this Commission's report was completed in 1976, the report's influence on the City of Boston's management of the

⁶ HAP was a program that resulted from the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Act of 1966.

⁷ (United States Defense Secretary's Commission 25) The amount of federal reimbursement corresponded to a home's value stated at pre-base closing.

base conversion is not apparent. The second program was the Massachusetts Land Bank program. This program was staffed by those previously aligned to the previously mentioned Joint Commission. This Land Bank assisted in providing financing to developers of federally disposed properties located in impoverished and undeveloped areas (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Abstract). While the Shipyard would have qualified in this program, it is not clear how many developers took advantage of it. However, the City of Boston through the BRA did utilize its expertise by recruiting them to propose reuse plans and market the Shipyard property to the future potential tenants.

In comparison with the federal and state authorities, the City of Boston had no programs to specifically aid transitions that resulted from base closures. However, the City, through the BRA, did lead and direct teams tasked with developing the property reuse plans. For its efforts in doing so, both architects working on other military base conversions and the Urban Land Institute have hailed the management and transformation of the Shipyard by the BRA a success (Donelan 23). Specifically, architects noted that the BRA integrated key principals of U.S. Navy history into the site plan. The BRA revitalized the harbor front by selectively removing dilapidated buildings and renovating others, enabling the public greater visual and physical access to the water. For similar reasons the 1993 Urban Land Institute Excellence Award recognized the military base' transition of the old buildings into a desirable place in which to live and work (Donelan 23). Although the program to convert Boston's Naval base was commended for its organizational governance, certain historic structures still stand unrenovated since the base closed in 1974.

Boston Naval Shipyard property reuse plans

The overall strategy of how the Boston Naval Shipyard would be redeveloped had a direct impact on the Ropewalk building's availability for reuse. There were three entities that managed proposals: the first, the BRA; the second, a team comprised of state and local representatives representing the Massachusetts Land Bank (Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Abstract); and, the third, a group comprised of individuals who were supportive of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (Hill 218). Any of these teams' proposals could lead to a future development in the Shipyard.

Although the Boston Naval Shipyard closed in 1974, base reuse had been contemplated prior to the closure announcement. In 1971, the Boston Redevelopment Authority anticipated changes to the use of the base and in 1972, the BRA issued a Shipyard reuse report recommending that the federal military bases in Charlestown and South Boston merge their operations and relocate all their services to South Boston. In the vacated property in Charlestown, the BRA suggested the creation of a national maritime park and corresponding naval history museum (Carlson 1134). Nothing apparently transpired from these recommendations but these reuse ideas would be proposed in later plans.

In 1973, after the base closure announcement but before actual closure, the BRA issued a separate proposal, reiterating sentiments from the 1971 reuse study (Carlson 1134). It proposed a national historical park and naval museum. The proposal suggested changes to the base that would showcase some of the base's original structures dating from 18th and 19th century and remove buildings not from that period. Noting similar architectural styles were present nearby in downtown Charlestown, the BRA justified its intentions (Boston Redevelopment Authority, Proposal). Overall, the proposal had five main objectives: (1) to increase public access to

waterfront; (2) to preserve the historic nature of the shipyard; and to provide an economic benefit to the City for (3) residential opportunities, (4) pleasure, or (5) employment. According to this proposal, the BRA would be removing years of the Shipyard's historic evolution by executing these objectives. While this proposal was not approved, the BRA does carry this objective forward to a future proposal.

In 1973, the Massachusetts Land Bank committee met with the goal of marketing the soon-to-be vacant space. This team's directive was to help facilitate the transition of the formerly occupied federal land, in this case, to the City of Boston. This team recommended the industrial equipment be kept on the base as a foundation from which new business could be built. Maintaining the current industry would also attempt to ease the fears that maritime laborers had about losing employment and assist incoming tenants with providing available talent in the region (Hill 213). With that in mind, the Massachusetts Land Bank marketed the Boston Naval Shipyard from 1973 to 1975 as site suitable for shipbuilding (Boston Economic Development and Industrial Corporation; Boston Redevelopment Authority). As there was limited progress accomplished to obtain a shipbuilding tenant for the Boston Naval Shipyard, and for political reasons, the Massachusetts Land Bank team was removed as directors of the marketing efforts (Hill 214). Furthermore, the base's continued use as a shipbuilding complex was discontinued. With a new advisory team (aligned with the BRA) engaged, reuse proposals were drafted and in place of an industrial shipbuilding site, the team proposed the Shipyard be transformed into a mixed-use space of both commercial operations and residences (Hill 214). This change in proposed reuse was consistent with the BRA's proposed reuse plans proposed at base closure.

In 1975, after the Massachusetts Land Bank was removed from marketing reuse of the base, the BRA issued a new reuse plan for the Shipyard, identifying the space available for

“mixed use and light industry” (Carlson 1138). In conjunction with that reuse plan, the City of Boston proposed the site in Charlestown as the location of the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum (Carlson 1138). This predominately Irish neighborhood welcomed the opportunity to continue the legacy of the Irish Kennedy family. However, the library and museum proposal was cancelled because the Kennedy family sought another location south of downtown Boston. In the mid-1980’s, the aquarium’s relocation into the Shipyard was a consideration. Incorporating these plans into the released *1990 Master Plan for the Yard’s End*, the aquarium would fulfill both the BRA’s intentions of making the Shipyard a destination with diverse cultural experiences and the aquarium’s need for additional space (Donofrio 79). Unfortunately, this proposal also was cancelled as the aquarium was able to increase its existing footprint without relocating. This was the last of the Boston Naval Shipyard’s proposals, intending to make a cultural institution the main tenant.

Later in 2007, the BRA issued the Waterfront Activation Network Plan for the Charlestown Navy Yard, a 100-page report discussing lessons learned since the property transferred to the City and it proposed the reuse of the property nearest the piers along the waterfront. (Wallace, Floyd, Ellenzweig Inc.) The execution of these plans would revitalize the area but the plans did not specifically address the reuse of the Ropewalk building.

The general history of why the military bases closed offers perspective on how the federal property was subjected to political power struggles. It also provides a view into how much federal state and local assistance was in place for communities managing significant change—repurposing a military facility for civilian use. With little guidance to rely on in 1973, the City of Boston forged new ground and, while it influenced other military base closings occurring in later years, it struggled with identifying viable and appropriate reuse of this Boston property. As

the subject of much debate, the Shipyard and its structures within continued to be subjected to varying priorities and objectives.

Boston Naval Shipyard divided after base closure

Transferring property from the Department of Defense to the City of Boston took time and required a strategic plan. One of the first objectives of property transfer was to subdivide the Boston Naval Shipyard. This was accomplished by a collective group of authorities consisting of the United States General Service Administration (on behalf of the DoD), the National Park Service, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Boston Landmarks Committee, and the BRA (on behalf of the City of Boston). In addition to determining how to divide the property, and what entity would be best to maintain or enhance a given parcel, this group of overseers assigned guidance pertaining to how each parcel should be preserved or developed. Additionally, in some instances, they established materials management requirements for specific structures. In general, these requirements were focused on keeping or altering very little, original fabric in order to maintain the sense of the Shipyard's origins, as a former military facility. However, identifying the criteria required to properly manage materials for each parcel was challenging, and getting consensus from the numerous parties took time. These delays also prolonged the vacancy of the Ropewalk building and postponed its potential for development.

The Boston Naval Shipyard's 135-acres of land was subdivided into four parcels: a national park, a public greenspace, a separate historic district, and a new development

area.⁸ Although the base closed in 1974, at least five years passed before all four parcels legally transferred to other owners. In 1976, the first section of land transferred became a part of the Boston National Historical Park (National Historic Site as labeled in the Figure 5). The property

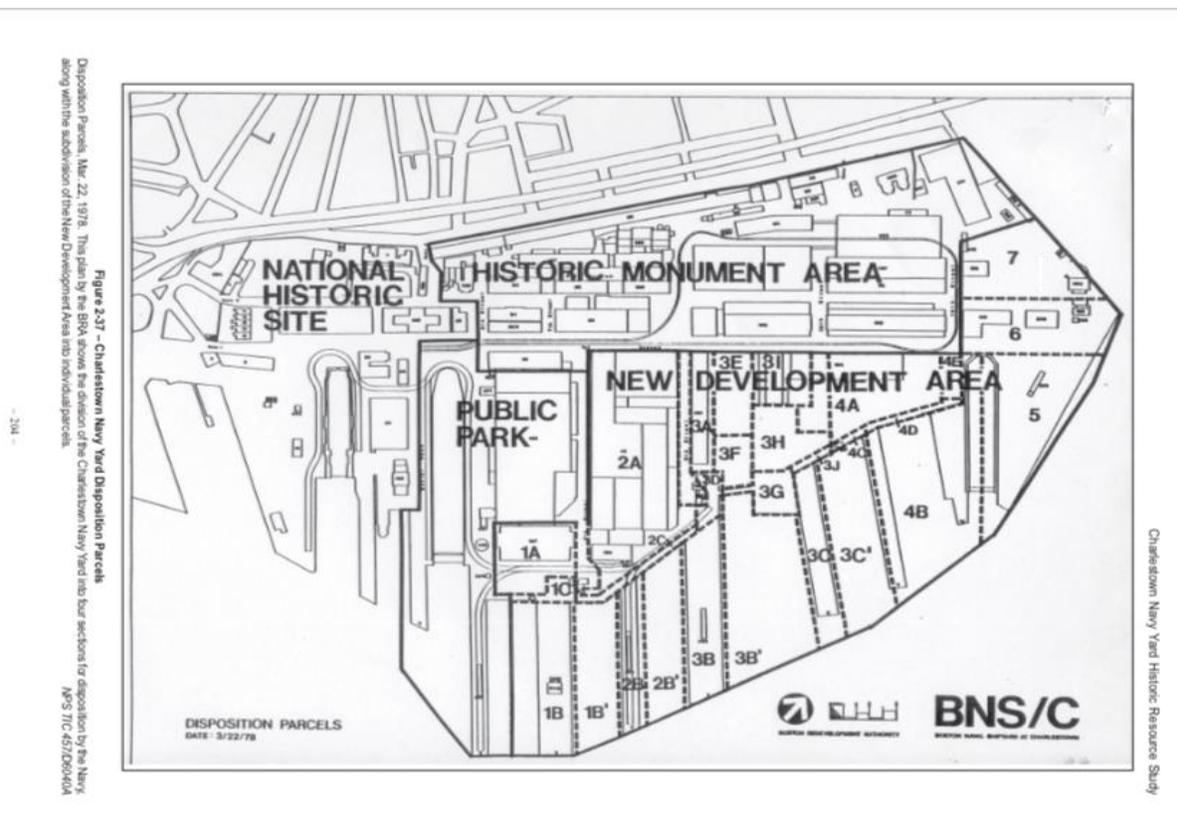


Figure 5: Boston Naval Shipyard segmented after base closing

The Shipyard was divided into four sections: The Boston National Historic Park, The Historic Monument Area, the Public Park and the New Development Area. The Ropewalk building was situated in the Historic Monument Area. (Carlson 204).

⁸ The Massachusetts Port Authority (MPA) also transferred any of its claims on the Naval Yard to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (Carlson 205).

included the Commandant's House, Dry Dock 1, the USS Constitution, and other military facilities in the immediate area. Totaling 24.72 acres, the National Park Service would own and operate the property (Carlson 204). This part of the Shipyard was transferred to the NPS as the property was understood to have historic value and required the care and oversight of the National Park Service.

In 1977, the second portion of land from the Boston Naval Shipyard to be allocated was transferred, at no cost, to the BRA, on behalf of the City of Boston. Designated as green space, the land transfer documents provided for the destruction of certain buildings in this area. Removing buildings was permitted and necessary, as it cleared the path for public access to the waterfront. This 16.37-acre area was located to the south and east of the parcel transferred earlier in 1976 (Carlson 205).

The third area, the Historic Monuments Area,⁹ included a series of buildings that held some historic significance but at the time not determined significant enough to be managed within the Boston National Historic Park. At property transfer in 1978, all but three structures in this area had additional building specific preservation mandates drafted. For the remaining three structures,¹⁰ one of which was the Ropewalk building, it was agreed that the preservation

⁹ The Historic Monuments Area is also known as the Historic Monument Transfer Area, as recorded in the *Restoration Guidelines*. (Boston Redevelopment Authority 2, and *Restoration Guidelines: The Ropewalk (Building 58)*). The naming convention more commonly used in documents is the Historic Monuments Area, which is used within this paper.

¹⁰ The three structures include the Ropewalk building, the Tar House, and the Chain Forge buildings.

guidelines would be developed at a later date. This postponement enabled the property transfer from the DoD to the City of Boston to be completed without further delay. This portion of the Boston Naval Shipyard, at 30.85 acres, was assigned, at no cost, to the BRA, on behalf of the City of Boston (Carlson 205).

In 1979, the New Development Area was the last parcel to be transferred. Unlike the other parcels, the federal authorities recognized this area's potential for development and sold the property for \$1,740,000 (Carlson 205). This 58.4-acre area acquired its name, as it held structures that were less important to the historical nature of the Boston Naval Shipyard and "new development" was encouraged. In line with this intent, the property transfer documents held fewer building restrictions, providing for potentially more creative use of this land. In order to obtain space for development, buildings had to be razed. The BRA noted that "the structures designated for demolition ... do not add significantly to the historic district and their demolition is essential to the successful development of the entire Shipyard" (Carlson 205). Through an arrangement facilitated by the BRA to acquire primary development rights, a private developer purchased this property (Hill 222). With this purchase, the four parcels that comprised the whole of the Boston Naval Shipyard were no longer in the care of the DoD.

With the decommissioning of the Boston Naval Shipyard, the Shipyard became the subject of many reuse proposals which brought the potential for significant enhancements to the Charlestown neighborhood through redevelopment. However, local political struggles bounced the control of the intended reuse objectives between two entities- the BRA and the Massachusetts Land Bank committee. Ultimately, the BRA set a course for reuse as a mixed use zoned area, and with the direction by the oversight authorities regarding how the property would be divided, the potential to redevelop the Shipyard, including the Ropewalk became more apparent. These

struggles extended the Ropewalk building's availability for reuse by four more years after base closure.

Chapter III.

Treatment of the Ropewalk building: common real estate or valued historic property?

For historic properties requiring enhancements, there is an inherent challenge regarding which building materials should be preserved and how they should be altered. Without proper advice, the historic materials may be eliminated, destroying visual representation of history. This was the case for the Ropewalk building. Decisions regarding how the structure was managed teetered between treatment as common place property for sale and as historic property with dedicated overseers. The Department of Defense, as property occupants prior to property transfer to the BRA, treated the Ropewalk as generic real estate. Actions taken by the DoD appeared to be focused on the perception that the property was valued greater as real estate rather than as a statement of local history. Conversely, after the property transfer to the BRA, the Ropewalk's five dedicated overseers¹¹ were conservative in determining potential reuse options, restricting the building reuse proposals to only those that embraced the historic restoration guidelines. These opposing perceptions, to manage property as real estate or a valued historic site, created further delays in the Ropewalk building's availability for development.

Treatment like common real estate

¹¹ The five overseers were the City of Boston's agent, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the National Park Service (MidAtlantic Regional Office), the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Boston Landmarks Commission, and another division of the National Park Service, the Boston National Historic Park.

Department of Defense destroys or sells historic artifacts

The Department of Defense managed the Ropewalk building property as a common asset during the transition years before the City of Boston’s acquisition of it. To aide in the quick transition of the Ropewalk property to its subsequent owners, the Department of Defense swept through its facilities, removing fixtures and equipment and discarding those determined of little value. Building contents, including some machinery were sold. Other, assets were specifically directed to the National Park Service’s Boston National Historical Park (BNHP), for safe

keeping. Included in those deliveries were images, documents, and other historical artifacts.

This cleansing process significantly affected the Ropewalk building’s historic value. This cleansing did not go unnoticed. During this property transition from the Department of Defense to the City of Boston in the 1970’s, the BNHP became concerned with how historic items were being managed. It recognized that a conflict existed for the Department of Defense. By quickly executing the DoD’s base closure objective, little time was available to assess the value of the artifacts that contributed to the story behind

Table 3. Key dates discussed in Chapter 3

1919	Ropewalk addition: women’s restroom added	(Carlson 516)
1942	Ropewalk addition: stairway attached to north wall connecting floors	(Carlson 518)
1943	Ropewalk addition: elevation of long extension to two stories and bridge added connecting Chelsea Street with second story office	(Carlson 518)
1944	Ropewalk addition: ambulance garage added	(Carlson 518)
1975	National Park Service seeks assistance from Advisory Council on Historic Preservation due to potential mismanagement of historic artifacts in Boston Naval Shipyard	(Carlson 206)
1976	Historic American Engineering Record issued indicting artifact removal was destructive to historic integrity.	(Carlson 206)
1981	Boston Redevelopment Authority renovates Ropewalk removing addition (including that from 1943)	(Carlson 522)
2002	Restoration Guidelines for Ropewalk Building issued by five overseeing authorities	(National Park Service)
2010	Carlson through National Park Service publishes Charlestown Navy Yard Historic Resource Study	(Carlson)
See Appendix A for complete list of dates and required reference credits.		

Boston's naval operations. Seeking assistance to raise awareness to this issue, in 1975, the BNHP requested the advice of the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (Advisory Council) as the government's regulator of historic materials management. After consultation, guidance was given by the Advisory Council that the remaining equipment in the Ropewalk building must be retained, as the machinery contributed to the context of the historical integrity of the site. In addition, the Council requested the equipment previously removed be returned and the disposition of goods from the site stop until a complete historical evaluation could be made (Carlson 204). As a result of this advice, the DoD stopped its ongoing clearance efforts; unfortunately however, reacquisition of goods was not feasible.

At the same time, the BNHP escalated the same concerns within its own federal department, the Department of the Interior (DoI). The BNHP filed a report indicating that the materials in the Ropewalk building were not being managed appropriately given its historic value. In response, the Secretary of the Interior Thomas S. Kleppe investigated the site and concluded, as recorded in a notice sent to the Secretary of the Navy, that the removal of fixtures should have been pre-approved with the BNHP. Mr. Kleppe further requested that no additional materials be removed from the Ropewalk building until a decision was made for the building's reuse. The Secretary of Interior noted his cause for concern: "... the buildings and their contents represent an irreplaceable historical, cultural and technological resource, which can never be captured once disassembled" (Carlson 206). In reply, the Secretary of the Navy suggested transferring the Ropewalk building to the Boston National Historical Park for better protection.

In its analysis of how the Ropewalk building was managed during this time, the Advisory Council found no survey valuing the equipment's condition, industrial significance, or historical nature. All federal property is subject to preservation regulations issued by the Advisory

Council; these regulations require an impact assessment be conducted forecasting the effects actions taken by a federal agency will have on historic material.¹² In January 1976, a team did execute such a report, recording its findings in a Historic American Engineering Record (HAER). The team noted that the removal of items from the Ropewalk as well as other buildings was “...so complete [that it] precludes the possibility of documenting in situ certain industrial processes that may have been unique to the Navy Yard” (Carlson 206). This HAER maintained the recommendation of the Advisory Council, and separately the Secretary of the Interior, that machinery left in the Ropewalk remain in place. With this report issued, reaffirming the previous advice, no further removal of furniture, fixtures, or equipment was made from the Ropewalk (Carlson 206). Unfortunately, the result of cleaning the Ropewalk is a reduction in the historic value in what remained of the Ropewalk operations mechanics. With this treatment like the ordinary real estate, only a fraction of the facility’s history remains intact.

Property transition executed with little information regarding condition

At base closure, the Department of Defense provided little information regarding the condition of the onsite facilities. However, certain reports were required to be completed by the

¹² An evaluation of historic value was required to be completed as part of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) which states that before federal agencies take action on properties, they must consider the impact to its historic value (Advisory Council on Historic Preservation).

DoD, including a historic impact report and an environmental impact report.¹³ As discussed, a historic impact report was not executed until 1976. An environmental report indicating the condition of each parcel was not available either. For the Ropewalk building, potential developers were required to conduct their own assessment studies to better understand if issues existed. (Ritch, 23 February 2018). As the federal government occupied the land since 1800, presumably it had an awareness of existing hazards on the property. Had the property's potential issues been disclosed, development may have been expedited had this knowledge been transferred to the BRA. When the historic considerations were documented, had the environmental concerns also been recorded, the developers could have been forewarned about which environmental hazards existed and planned remediation efforts to address them. This lack of transparency into environmental concerns may have contributed to the delays in finding a suitable developer to undertake transforming this building.

Currently in the Shipyard, three other buildings also are to be redeveloped and have varying degrees of environmental hazards: the Chain Forge building, the Power Plant, and the Tarring House. Each of these buildings had specific environmental concerns, which were identified only after their transition to the BRA.

The Ropewalk had several environmental problems. As a manufacturing facility of rope, materials, including tar and machine oils, used in the production process have been absorbed or are present in the area of the Ropewalk building. Two types of hazardous materials have been

¹³ Conclusion determined after reviews of the National Park Service, Boston Redevelopment Authority, and Charlestown Ropewalk LLC records and after discussions with the Charlestown Ropewalk LLC project team.

identified in this building: lubricants and paints. Reuse plans by the current developer, Charlestown Ropewalk LLC, address the need to contain or remove the substances. These plans identify certain areas of hardwood flooring that have been tainted with machine lubricants. To address this, sections of flooring will either be removed or contaminants will be contained under added flooring, depending on the specific location within the structure. Aged paint chips containing lead were also found in the top soil around the building's exterior. While the source of the paint is not apparent, the top soil will be removed and replaced with other materials. Lastly, underground tanks were identified that need to be removed. While it is unknown what was held in these tanks, removal was determined to be the best course of action, eliminating any potentially hazardous materials (Ritch, 23 February 2018).

To determine environmental issues, the developer had to execute an independent environmental study as none of the environmental challenges had been explicitly identified and conveyed by the federal government, as the prior owner of the property. Without these conditions identified, a developer must contract a specialist to identify issues and to create plans to address these issues; this process requires additional time and money that cuts into established budgets and timeline commitments. Had the federal government identified these issues and accompanied them with suggested remediation plans, this may have eased the developer's challenges with managing these environmental concerns.

Traces of Boston Naval Shipyard's evolution removed

Another instance in which the Ropewalk building was treated as common real estate occurred in early 1980s when the Boston Redevelopment Authority renovated the Ropewalk building. As part of the renovation, the BRA removed the four additions made during World

War II, attached to the long 1300 foot westward extension off the main building. By removing this, it brought the building back to its original shape and according to the BRA, in essence, these actions made the building more aesthetically pleasing.

Before the Ropewalk building was altered though, the plans for this apparent cleansing were debated in the mid-1970s. The National Park Service and the BRA discussed whether or not the basis for these renovations was justified for the sake of historic preservation. The National Park Service cited issues with the BRA's development plans for the Shipyard. It noted that the Boston Redevelopment Authority set biased preservation guidelines. Instead of focusing on the Shipyard as a large self-sustaining industrial community, the BRA targeted preservation only to structures built between 1800 and early 1900. By doing so, the National Park Service believes the Shipyard does not reflect the industrial character, which is the basis of its historic nature (Carlson 380).

The National Park Service suggests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority removed the additions made to the Ropewalk building (Carlson 520), as well as additions made to the other structures, as they were not aesthetically appealing and worthy of development. More specifically, the NPS noted that after the BRA's plans, "the [Shipyard] reflect[s] 'the sentiment ... that 19th century granite buildings are more significant than 20th century brick and concrete buildings'" (Carlson 213) In its defense, the BRA indicated it was a coincidence that the structures best suited for development were built in that period (Carlson 213). As the Ropewalk building was one of the 19th century granite structures, it survived the selection process. However, with the removal of the 20th century additions, the Ropewalk's portrayal of its participation in World War II was lost.

Ironically, in the 1970s property transfer documentation, the BRA had been granted permission to alter the condition of certain buildings in the Shipyard. Specifically, an allowance was granted to remove the additions made to the Ropewalk building during World War II as they were perceived to dominate the appearance of the structure and diminish other historic architecture in the Shipyard (Carlson 213). This allowance contrasted with the Shipyard's general preservation requirements that structures only be altered or removed from the Shipyard if the remaining structures still captured the 170 year evolution of the once active military base¹⁴ (Carlson 213). This general requirement was intended to balance accommodating contemporary needs while embracing the naval base's history in the Shipyard's reuse design. By altering the building, the Shipyard's operations supporting World War II are no longer apparent.

Capturing the base's evolution was important, as emphasized by the NPS in the mid-1970s. The NPS noted that Shipyard's significance "...rests in its entire 170-year active history. All buildings, therefore, should be recognized for their contribution to the history of the shipyard, whatever their dates of construction. The early buildings do not 'best represent the historical character of the shipyard.' All the buildings and grounds contribute to this historical significance" (Carlson 213). The NPS remarked that these efforts by the BRA to reduce the Ropewalk building were intended to lure developers with a more attractive building. The results of the BRAs actions, however, weigh more heavily on the elimination of historic value, than on enticing developers.

¹⁴ This was noted by the National Park Service's Interagency Historic Architectural Services Program (Carlson 213).

In its *Historic Resource Study* in 2010, the National Park Service faulted the BRA for taking action before acquiring an evaluation of the historical significance for purposes of meeting preservation regulations (Carlson 520). The BRA is not exempt from regulatory requirements and should have sought out approvals before executing changes. However, as the BRA had already executed changes to the Ropewalk building prior to being reprimanded, impact was that the BRA had to create designs for the New Development Area that maintained strict compliance with its allowances for building demolition (Carlson 213).¹⁵

At times, the Ropewalk building was treated as ordinary real estate. In being treated as such, the Department of Defense and the BRA not only removed the historic context but also contributed to further delays in enabling the structure's availability for development. That is, because of its actions, time had to be spent researching the extent of damage made and in proposing remediation efforts. Conversely, the Ropewalk building's preservation requirements secured its historic integrity. However, these requirements took years to create. While well

¹⁵ It is noteworthy to add that the National Park Service cited the Boston Redevelopment Authority for other concerns regarding continued preservation of the Shipyard, although not pertaining to the Ropewalk building. For one, its naming convention of redeveloped buildings was inconsistent with the keeping of the historical character; its use of Flagship Wharf and Harbor View, both renovated structures, did not conjure images of the former military base, as was the requirement agreed to for the redevelopment. Further, the redeveloped Parris Landing was a facility not built by Alexander Parris, a Shipyard architect, and along the same line, is out of historical character (Carlson 380). Another example is the lack care taken to maintain the now dilapidated Chain Forge building, another significantly historical building, which was to be redeveloped by a successful bidder in 1985, but no action was taken (Carlson 552).

intended to manage the building's value, this also contributed to the delays in the building's reuse availability.

Valued historic site

Establishing preservation standards takes 24 years

In 1978, at the time of property transfer from the federal government, the Ropewalk building was identified as needing further prescriptive preservation requirements (Carlson 205). The guidance for management of the building, as recorded in the deed, was "...preservation with selective restoration (remove 1943 addition)" (Carlson 522). The property deed indicated that more specific guidance must be issued to care for the Ropewalk building's historical characteristics. The BRA in conjunction with four other oversight entities¹⁶ (Carlson 522) designed the *Restoration Guidelines (Guidelines)* for the Ropewalk building (National Park Service, Restoration Guidelines). These were designed over the course of roughly twenty-four years and finally issued in October 2002 (Carlson 1154). Although these preservation

¹⁶ As per the agreement made when the Historic Monuments Area was transferred to the City of Boston (BRA) in 1978, as recorded in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the following parties were required to contribute to the Ropewalk building's stated preservation requirements: the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority. Although not included in this MOA, the National Park Service was also required to contribute (Boston Redevelopment Authority 3).

requirements were helpful to better understand the amount of preservation required, it created challenges, as the prescriptive nature hindered the creative or functional use of the whole facility.

The *Guidelines* for the Ropewalk building stipulated the treatment of existing materials. The objective of the *Guidelines* was "...to provide for some flexibility in the reuse of the building with the primary goal being the preservation of the building's historic character" (National Park Service, Restoration Guidelines). In general, the *Guidelines* contents were influenced by the current state of the Ropewalk building and were designed to prohibit further destructive actions. The *Guidelines*' directive- emphasized by the use of capitalization- is consistent with the National Park Service's advice— "all work must reflect the industrial character of the building and the site. All Existing Fabric, Unless Specifically Noted Otherwise, Shall Be Retained, Repaired, and/or Replaced In-Kind. Any New Fabric Must Duplicate the Existing Historic Fabric" (National Park Service, Restoration Guidelines).

Although the *Guidelines* provide standards for preservation efforts, they demand little to no alteration to original materials. Some preservationists have indicated that these guidelines are too restrictive and are one of the most significant causes that contribute to the Ropewalk's delayed redesign (Carlson 522). In addition to the broader statement of preservation care, which has been noted above, the *Guidelines* offer three additional preservation stipulations pertaining to building accessibility, designated museum space and authoritative review and approval of reuse redesigns.

The first of these other requirements is to provide handicap accessibility with minimal visual or and material impact on the existing structure. Suggestions within the *Guidelines* state that alterations could be made to the landscape in order to bring the ground around the building to a grade level with the doorways, thereby accommodating an easy transition into the building.

Doorways could be altered minimally, only if needed to meet the current building codes (National Park Service, Restoration Guidelines).

The second stipulation was the requirement for an exhibition area in the building for showcasing the evolution of the rope industry and its foundation in the Boston Naval Shipyard. The *Guidelines* stated that a total designated museum space of 28,600 square feet¹⁷ was required in two separate areas—one on each of two floors in the main building (east end). Such space was meant to hold the artifacts from the Boston National Historical Park’s collection of the rope-making process as well as the machinery that is still located on site. The relocation of equipment from other parts of the Ropewalk building to one of these museum sites was allowable (National Park Service, Restoration Guidelines). However, after allocating space to the museums, it left developers with only an estimated two-thirds of the building’s square footage available for reinventing into an alternate use.

Lastly, the *Guidelines* cite a comprehensive review and approval process by five entities. Accordingly, proposals for reuse must be reviewed and approved by these authoritative bodies: the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Boston National Historical Park, the Boston Landmarks Commission, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and the National Park Service (Mid-Atlantic Regional Office). Each entity has oversight responsibility for how the Boston Naval Shipyard could be enhanced.

¹⁷ According to the *Guidelines*, the first floor was meant to hold 20,000 square feet of museum space. The second floor was meant to hold 8,600 square feet of museum space (Boston Redevelopment Authority 2) (*Restoration Guidelines: The Ropewalk (Building 58)*).

Oversight team consists of five authoritative bodies

After determinations were made regarding what should be preserved in the Ropewalk building, as recorded in the *Restoration Guidelines*, five authoritative entities were designated as reviewers and approvers of any proposals. That is, all proposed changes to the Ropewalk property were required to follow a comprehensive application process during which these parties would review and, if appropriate, approve proposed changes. All of these entities were required to be concerned with maintaining the historical integrity of the building on the basis of their participation in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) recorded when the district in which the Ropewalk building was situated, namely, the Historic Monuments Area, was transitioned to the City of Boston.

The first of the five overseers, namely, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, was designated for two purposes. First, the federal government had transferred three parcels of land in the Shipyard to the City of Boston, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority was designated as its custodian. As a custodian of the site, the Boston Redevelopment Authority needed to approve the reuse intentions of the site. Second, as a City of Boston affiliate, it has the responsibility of reviewing the project plans in compliance with the City of Boston's Article 80 (a section in the Boston Zoning Code). This regulation requires developers to document how they intend to execute the building's design and what the process' corresponding impact will be on the environment. (Boston Redevelopment Authority, A Citizens Guide).

As a second authoritative entity concerned with the Ropewalk building's preservation oversight, the NPS's Boston National Historical Park has an interest in investing in the care of the building for two reasons. First, it is required to manage the future exhibition space as a custodian to the Ropewalk building's artifacts. This space was mandated by the *Restoration*

Guidelines, as it has been discussed earlier. Second, as the building is located within the BNHP's boundaries, as resized in 1980, the BNHP has interests in the overall preservation of the Ropewalk's operations (Carlson 1145).

Two other local entities that are overseeing proposed alterations to the Ropewalk building include the Boston Landmarks Committee and the Massachusetts Historical Commission. As the Ropewalk building is a landmark in the City of Boston, proposals also require the Boston Landmarks Committee's review and approval so that the adjustments that are made do not alter the landmark status (National Park Service, Restoration Guidelines). The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' agency that manages historic regulations is the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). Therefore, given the historic nature of the Ropewalk building, the MHC is also a key participant in the approval process.

Lastly, the National Park Service's Mid-Atlantic office served as transfer agent to the MOA contract, thereby enabling the Historic Monument Area's allocation to the City of Boston. As such, they became a participant in the management of the preservation *Guidelines* and are required to review and approve any reuse designs for compliance with appropriate preservation (National Park Service, Restoration Guidelines).

Although the collective review process for approving development plans can be a collaborative effort, it's not without its challenges. As there are five entities from whom permission needs to be sought if changes are proposed, this process can extend over long periods of time and be costly for the developers who outsource to vendors with various specialties in attempts to rectify any concerns that these reviewers have about proposals.

How the Ropewalk building was treated – as common real estate or as a valued historic site – also contributed to the building’s availability for redevelopment. Reparations required after being treated as common real estate delayed the building’s availability as historic and environmental assessment reports were executed to determine the extent of damage made and an appropriate course of action to remedy the issue. These assessments influenced how the property should be treated which was later described in the *Restoration Guidelines*. Taking twenty-four years to record, the untimely generation of these *Guidelines* prolonged the building’s availability for development.

Chapter IV.

Ropewalk building proposals and ongoing development challenges

Finding a repurpose for the Ropewalk building while achieving compliance with the *Guidelines* has been a challenge for any developer interested in converting this building. Incorporating historical characteristics was key to keeping the facilities' story alive. Conversely, incorporating contemporary need could jeopardize the building's historical integrity. Several reuse ideas for the Ropewalk building have been proposed since the base closure. Newspaper articles have cited as many as fifteen proposals for the reuse of the Ropewalk building since base closure¹⁸ (Chesto, New Life Planned). Currently, there is a redevelopment project for the Ropewalk's reuse as residential apartments that started in 2013 and continues to be managed by Charlestown Ropewalk LLC.

Unlike previous reuse plans focused on the whole Shipyard, in 1987 recommendations for the Ropewalk building's reuse were proposed by the BRA in its report, namely, *The Ropewalk at The Charlestown Navy Yard: A History and Reuse Plan*. The report, which was the result of the BRA's study of other New England seaport towns, noted that other communities similar to Boston, sponsored museums reflecting the respective area's unique history. While integrating these results into its recommendations, the BRA proposed that the building should be repurposed to house three floors of separate but related museums. These included a rope-making museum,

¹⁸ There is some debate with respect to how many previous proposals may have been submitted for the Ropewalk building. The current development project team notes that their proposal is the sixteenth, while the Boston Globe notes that the same proposal is the fifteenth (Ritch, 23 February 2018).

a resource depository for Historic New England’s artifacts and a City of Boston nautical museum (Larsen 17). The collection would represent a history of the region’s maritime activities (Larsen 19). Reflecting on this proposal in 2010, Steve Carlson from the National Park Service noted that monetary constraints precluded buildings in the Boston Naval Shipyard, including the Ropewalk building, from being repurposed for exhibition space (Carlson 380). Although these recommendations were, perhaps, warranted from a historical perspective, they did not come to fruition due to monetary issues.

Another proposal, which was made public in December 2004 by Mayor Thomas Menino, recommended that the building be utilized as “a creative business incubator” (Carlson 1155). While these plans offered an interesting and potentially effective use of space to

Table 4. Key dates discussed in Chapter 4

1987	Boston Redevelopment Authority issues a reuse plan specifically for Ropewalk Building	(Larsen 17)
2013	Charlestown Ropewalk LLC files Intent to File a Project Notification Form to renovate the Ropewalk Building	(Casner & Edwards, Attorneys at Law)
See Appendix A for complete list of dates and required reference credits.		
See Appendix B for more detailed timeline of interaction between Charlestown Ropewalk LLC and historic application processes.		

assist with enabling the Ropewalk story, they were not executed. Other proposals made were unfortunately not kept by the City of Boston; the most comprehensive proposal documentation is for the current development work in progress.

The latest reuse plan for the Ropewalk building was submitted by Charlestown Ropewalk LLC. The team’s management, based in Boston, has deep family roots in the city and they are passionate about its history. Consequently, the team is driven to rehabilitate the Ropewalk building, and the firm has been planning to convert the structure into apartments (Casner & Edwards, Attorneys at Law). The plans include redeveloping both the Ropewalk building and

the adjacent Tar House into rental units for both moderate- and low-income tenants. Construction on the building has not yet begun, as all five of the oversight authorities have not fully approved the final proposal.

The developer has already drafted and submitted its proposal for reuse. However, the development proposal process for this building will require time to review and approve before construction can begin. Although oversight is necessary to ensure that the building has a historic legacy, complying with the *Restoration Guidelines* has added to the complexity in managing this project.

Development in progress

The Charlestown Ropewalk LLC needs to manage this project in compliance with the structure's historic *Guidelines* and the City of Boston's zoning and building codes. This effort has taken considerable time and effort. In June 2013, the building's developer submitted its "*Intent to File a Project Notification Form*" (Casner & Edwards, Attorneys at Law) with the City of Boston, which, in turn, officially launched the municipality's rebuilding process in accordance with *Article 80*. As of January 2018, the same vendor is still managing application details pertaining to how materials will be treated for preservation purposes. Even though this rehabilitation process has surpassed four and a half years in the making, the developer's challenges are not over.

Project challenges for the developer can be portioned into the following three categories: those issues encountered in attempts to achieve compliance with the *Restoration Guidelines*, those encountered while managing the City of Boston's *Article 80 of the Zoning Codes*, and those pertaining to funding (and staying solvent). As this is not a typical historic development

project, due to the unique mandates from the *Restoration Guidelines*, there is no comprehensive industry roadmap that this developer can follow to achieve compliance with all project requirements.¹⁹ Due to its complexity, this process requires management by a dedicated project team working with industry specialists who extensively study options for the best use of materials in adherence with requirements.

Compliance with *Restoration Guidelines*

Incorporating these *Guidelines* into a proposal for reuse was challenging not only because compliance obligations were onerous but also because the Ropewalk building itself had a unique size (i.e., a very long, narrow corridor-like structure trailing 1300 feet long by 45 feet wide off a three-story main building). The *Guidelines* required the developer to maintain the historical nature of the building. To achieve this, the developer is to use and maintain all onsite building materials to retain Parris' intended building style, while attempting to minimize visual impact of handicap access points, and integrating an exhibition space. Further, all five authoritative parties were required to conduct a comprehensive review.²⁰

In designing the anticipated residential units, specific instances occurred when the developer could not follow the *Restoration Guidelines*. Conflicts with preservation mandates

¹⁹ Individual process guidance does exist for the City of Boston. The City has published comprehensive zoning processes for Article 80; however, this information does not integrate the historic applications processes required of the NPS, the Massachusetts Historical Commission and the Boston Landmarks Commission.

²⁰ Greater detail regarding each of these four areas has been discussed in Chapter 4.

occurred while trying to preserve features that date back to 1837 and fitting them with contemporary building code requirements. For instance, the *Guidelines* mandated no alterations with respect to exterior walls. The designed plans required the expansion of an existing window to allow for a doorway so as to comply with the building code. Due to the conflicting requirements in these *Guidelines* and the City's building codes, the developer requested an exception to the *Guidelines*. This was granted due to the necessity of meeting building codes and as it did not negatively impact the aesthetics of the building (Chesto, New Life Planned).

The developer had to deal with other challenges while complying with the *Restoration Guidelines*. Another example involved the eight rail tracks that ran the length of the 1300 foot kite tail shape of the building. The reuse plans ensure that each residential unit is self-contained (and not interconnected by these rails). To address this, the developer decided that the floorboards would be flush with the rails creating a seamless floor of rail and wood (Chesto, Developer Patiently Learned the ROPES). Historically, these rails accommodated carts that transferred raw materials and ropes during the cord-weaving process. These tracks are integral in conveying the story of how rope was manufactured in this building.

The development team is not only amending materials that are present but they are also re-creating some to further enhance the story of the site. To improve the historic look of the building site, Charlestown Ropewalk LLC intends to restore a few of the historical features that were formerly found in its landscape. By replicating absent parts from the elevated walkway, the chain railing on the bridge that connects the Ropewalk building with the Tarring House will be repaired. Signage is also being repaired, and any new signage will replicate the features of the existing signs. Another feature to be replaced are the trees that previously flanked a long promenade area next to the Ropewalk building. The developer proposes recreating the historical

setting by planting oak trees along the pathway adjacent to the building. These adjustments and additions will recreate the historic landscape.

Conversely, there are contemporary needs that will potentially hinder the historical appearance of the site. Mechanical systems for heating, air conditioning, and water service need to be added to the Ropewalk building. This equipment will be placed out of the main traffic area and will be situated on the north side of the building, tucked below grade level to minimize visual impact in accordance with the *Restoration Guidelines*. This design plan attempts to balance preservation of historical character with accommodations for contemporary need.

Other components of the Ropewalk's *Guidelines* require allocation of floor space for a museum. Detailed requirements specified two floors of exhibition space totaling 28,600 square feet of interpretive materials to help the public understand the evolution of the rope industry in Charlestown while focusing on the Ropewalk building's operations. However, this dedication of square footage for this purpose limits the developer's available space for repurposing into residences. This National Park Service's imposed requirement, as a custodian of the intended museum, was large enough that it would have to provide attendants for the exhibition area. This was not ideal, as the National Park Service has limited resources at its disposal. Therefore, while agreeing to amend this museum mandate, the NPS reduced the space obligations, requiring only 3,000 square feet of self-guided exhibitions space in the south lobby (Charlestown Ropewalk LLC, Letter to Boston National Historical Park).

The museum intends to showcase the Ropewalk building's operations through media. An interpretive story of the ropewalk industry is meant to be told in a centralized area, also designed as a café. Also, images are to be displayed in hallways running the length of the "tail" portion of the building on the first floor. Artifacts from the Ropewalk building's operations,

which are currently being maintained by the Boston Historic National Park, will be transferred into the museum. In addition to that which was collected at base closure, donations from former employees will also be showcased in the collection (Carlson 206). In addition, the current developers intend to show a documentary film on the rope industry in Boston as well as on the current development of the Ropewalk building. The compilation of these artifacts and film will help convey the history of the Ropewalk operations with special emphasis on Mr. Himmelfarb's tenure managing operations up to present day. It is anticipated that the exhibits will be rotated to showcase the National Park Service's collection of ropewalk artifacts. Despite the artifacts and redevelopment documentary, there will be gaps in the Ropewalk building's history timeline, as both the Department of Defense, removing equipment in its haste to vacate the facility, and the Boston Redevelopment Authority, removing the building's additions constricted to support the World War II effort, removed critical pieces of the story.

The most significant component of the *Restoration Guidelines* identifies authoritative parties who have oversight over any development to the Ropewalk building. While oversight is critical to maintaining the standards designed by the authorities for the developers managing project information with five overseers is an administrative challenge. The five agents and corresponding authorities include the following: Boston Redevelopment Authority as the building's owner and, separately, as the mandated reviewer of large-scale developments within the City; Boston Landmark Commission, as the Ropewalk building is a pending landmark in the City; Massachusetts Historical Commission, as the Ropewalk building is on the state's Register of Historic Places; and the Boston National Historical Park (BNHP, part of the National Park Service), as the Ropewalk building's contents were managed by the BNHP and in the 1980s the

building was added to the BNHP properties. Each of these authoritative entities has the obligation to confirm and accept as suitable any treatment to the Ropewalk building.

The Charlestown Ropewalk LLC's project management team collaborated with these entities for the Ropewalk building by providing proposals (or applications) and additional information, as requested, for further clarification on intended use of materials. Managing this information with five separate parties has been a complex and lengthy process; it has extended over four and a half years. It began with the developer's intent to execute a project filed in June 2013²¹ as a part of the City's building code review process (i.e., Article 80).²² As time progressed and the developer determined how best to manage the building fabric, regulatory applications were drafted proposing detailed plans. In December 2013 and in January 2014, application packages describing the project's scope and preservation treatment of required materials were delivered to the five oversight entities.²³ In terms of approval priority, the project team would first need the Boston Redevelopment Authority's approval as property custodian and

²¹ Submission of the *Intent to File a Project Notification Form* is the first step in the process for ensuring compliance with the City of Boston's Article 80 Zoning Code (Boston Redevelopment Authority, A Citizens Guide to Development Review under Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code.)

²² For this application, the developer followed the Article 80 application process, which suffices for both of the roles that the City has in this scenario.

²³ See (Ritch, 23 February 2018) and Appendix 2: Charlestown Ropewalk LLC Preservation Application History.

subsequently the National Park Service's agreement to the proposed management of cultural materials before proceeding with other authoritative considerations.

The BRA's conditional approval for reuse concept was approved in June 2014. Conditional approvals were later received by the National Park Service in January 2015, and the Boston Landmarks Commission even earlier in July 2014. Conditions of proposal acceptance included nine critical points that required further attention. The architectural and engineering teams spent months experimenting with solutions to address these design questions. One of the nine critical questions, as discussed earlier, pertained to the integration of eight rail tracks into the floor design. Other points included clarification on the placement of remaining building machinery and the treatment of original stone, brick, and wood that had been damaged in previous building fires. The project team spent the next two years working with the National Park Service, the Boston Landmarks Committee, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and their respective team of specialists, as needed, to create a satisfactory design that could be agreed upon. After experimenting with materials, managing administrative needs, and seeking interim feedback from the authorities, the team replied to the National Park Service and Boston Landmarks Committee in January 2017 with recommended solutions to the nine cited conditions.

The application process is lengthy even with authorities reviewing materials concurrently. Also, the review by each oversight party is not necessarily conducted independently. Some of the authoritative bodies work in conjunction with each other. That is, the National Park Service's Mid Atlantic Office relies on the state's historic commission, Massachusetts Historical Commission, to be active at the local level to assist with review and confirmation of the proposed materials' treatment. This kind of collaboration results in a reduced

timeline for this complex application process in comparison with one that might be executed with each authority executing a review individually and sequentially.

Although applications have been submitted and certain conditional feedback has been received from the oversight parties, the development team of Charlestown Ropewalk LLC has not received final approvals. Approvals are necessary so that the project progresses beyond the design phase. Once these design applications have been approved, the team can acquire a building permit and, subsequently, construction can begin in accordance with the proposals.

The application process has required several iterations of the applications be submitted. Over this four-and-a-half-year period, many design updates have been made and reflected in the Charlestown Ropewalk LLC's applications. Changes were driven by the design alterations that were prompted by developers or by authorities seeking clarifications. Nine variations of an applications were submitted to the National Park Service for review and approval between December 2013 and January 2017.²⁴ Similarly, seventeen variations of the application form were submitted to the other oversight bodies (See Appendix 2). This count offers a perspective into the complexities of managing the application process for preservation projects.

Managing different expectations from the five authorities contributes to the complexity of the project. At times, the authorities anticipated varying degrees of compliance with the *Restoration Guidelines*. For instance, the National Park Service and the Massachusetts Historical Commission had different expectations while managing the appearance of the

²⁴ Information regarding applications can be derived from copies that were received by the author from the Charlestown Ropewalk LLC's project management team.

structure's walls. While the National Park Service mandated that the developer should not penetrate the existing exterior walls, with which the Commonwealth agrees, the Commonwealth has extended this interpretation to also include no impact could be made to the roof as well (Ritch, 23 February 2018). In instances such as this in which the mandates vary by an authoritative body, the details in the respective applications to each authority might also vary to accommodate the differences. These deviations to requirements mandated by different authorities create an additional administrative burden to manage the project appropriately.

Compliance with Article 80 of City of Boston Zoning Regulations

The second category of challenges with which the Charlestown Ropewalk LLC had to deal was that related to the City of Boston's Article 80 review. While the review process of Article 80 requires similarly proposed design review and approvals, this process requires solicitation of the community's perceived impact on the development as well as an environmental impact assessment, unlike the overseers' approval process. According to the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Article 80, the Ropewalk building is considered to be a large project based on the threshold that it comprises the development of space that is over 50,000 square feet. In cases of large projects, the BRA takes a holistic look at how the proposed project will be integrated into the community (Boston Redevelopment Authority, A Citizens Guide). This determination relies on the voices in community to help understand where impact might be prevalent.

Therefore, as required, the developer engaged members of the community to discuss this project during a thirty-day comment period. This period was initiated after the Project Notification Form was filed with the City of Boston. To help facilitate a conversation, a

mandatory community meeting was held in May 2014²⁵ (Boston Redevelopment Authority, A Citizens Guide). During this meeting, the developer requested feedback on the Ropewalk's reuse proposal for 90 housing units within 160,000 square feet of residential space.²⁶ Neighbors argued that with the addition of residential units in the small neighborhood, increased competition for parking spaces would reduce the likelihood of finding available parking. After the meeting, viable options were researched, and the developer was able to find a mutually agreeable plan. Subsequently, in place of on-street parking, future tenants of the building would be required to secure off-street, garage parking. The developer would create an oversight process whereby new tenants would file parking requirements with the Ropewalk building's management company. This process would verify the integrity of the developer's commitment to the community in order to avoid putting additional strain on street parking.

Charlestown Ropewalk LLC has not only complied with the obligatory community meeting requirements of Article 80 but it has also publicly advertised its proposed work in newspaper articles and community bulletins in order to inform the community about the pending construction to the Ropewalk building. In May 2016, the responses had been published in two

²⁵ Charlestown Ropewalk LLC's Project Notification Form for the Boston Redevelopment Authority was dated May 14, 2014.

²⁶ This information has been sourced from the Boston Redevelopment Authority's advertisement to the public regarding the meeting. Separately, note that the project has evolved over time and, currently, greater than 90 residential units are anticipated.

newspaper articles about the revitalization of the old Ropewalk building.²⁷ In one article, the Chairman of the Charlestown Neighborhood Council, Tom Cunha, stated that the developer was interested in working with the community and that his management of the parking situation was a good demonstration of this. Further, Mr. Cunha gave credit to the design team for accomplishing a successful plan and was quoted as saying, “It’s a very difficult building to develop, [but] I thought his team was thoughtful, innovative and very responsive to the community’s concerns” (Chesto, New Life Planned). Other information regarding development plans has been published locally. In 2017, information was published in the neighborhood online bulletin of Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard. The article discussed a tour narrated by the Charlestown Ropewalk LLC project team and included a historical overview of the building and its significant purpose (Ritch, Construction of the Ropewalk Building to Begin). The tour was a huge success, as the neighbors were excited to see inside this historic building and hear about its transition plans, as it was described first hand by the project’s management team. With its ongoing release of information to the public about the development, the Charlestown Ropewalk LLC’s team has demonstrated its concern for understanding the community’s voice. Soliciting opinions from the community could have compounded work effort for the developer if extraordinary community feedback was received. However, there were no significant requests from the neighbors that added to the project’s expense or extend the project’s timeline.

²⁷ See: (Chesto, Developer Patiently Learned the ROPES) (Chesto, New Life Planned for Old Charlestown Rope Factory).

Financing challenges

The last category of challenges to be managed by the developer pertained to financial demands. The Charlestown Ropewalk LLC's income and expense demands will vary at different stages of the development life cycle; that is financial demand will vary between three stages: before the issuance of building permit, during construction, and post-construction as operating expenses.

The Ropewalk building is in the pre-building permit phase of its project life cycle, as its construction plans have not been approved yet. As already implied through their name, pre-building permit expenses are those costs associated with the due diligence supporting a foundational plan for the project. This includes the effort involved in designing materials' treatments and developing an overall design of the project. It is intended that a building permit is granted after the designs are approved. In this stage, numerous service providers were engaged. Five kinds of vendors were contracted with for this design stage: project managers, historical preservationists, legal counsel, an architectural team, and a construction team. Each of these vendors' expenses are paid by the developer. Some expenses were to be paid after services were rendered, and others will be paid once the building permit is issued. If payment is made by the developer before the building permit is issued, then expenses are sourced from the developer's capital. Charlestown Ropewalk LLC will not receive any revenue other than through their own equity infusions until the building permit is issued. This a significant financial burden for this developer considering the length of time the project has been in progress and how many vendors and resources have been engaged in it.

The Charlestown Ropewalk LLC development company has proposed a building cost of \$44 million for the Ropewalk building. Funding will primarily be derived from two sources—a

loan and historic tax credits. A loan for \$33 million has been secured through an application with Mass Housing, whereas tax credits will fund \$11 million. According to the project management team, once the building permit has been issued, the loan funds will be released, and roughly \$1.5 million in federal tax credits will be available to offset annual tax obligations (Ritch, 23 February 2018). Considering the substantial financial resources needed to subsidize this project from one's own capital, it limits the potential pool of developers who could execute this type of reuse project. This is another factor in why the Ropewalk building stayed vacant for so long as there few companies willing to engage in this type of reconstruction project who have sufficient capital.

The developer will conceivably spend the majority of the proposed project budget in the construction phase. With the loan amount and balance of tax credits being available to offset tax expense and with the assumption that construction expense can stay within the proposed timeline, the developer can manage the project plan with a funded expense account. In the subsequent, post-construction phase, the developer will have ongoing operating expenses as the intention of the developer, namely, Charlestown Ropewalk LLC, is to rent these residences. These expenses will not only include those to maintain the property as rental units but payments will also be required for the City of Boston, as the developer is leasing the property. The developer has committed to a rent schedule that would progressively increase over the course of the lease agreement. The rent schedule to which commitment has been given has the following

two sections: a scaled rate component that increases in cost over time and a flat rate component²⁸ (O'Donnell, Greely and Davis 4).

There are many factors involved in whether or not the developer meets expenses or starts generating a profit from the 90 units in this project.²⁹ Reflecting on how long this project will be open from submitting the *Letter of Intent to File a Project Notification Form* (2013) to the first year of occupancy (anticipated 2019), the developer will potentially be managing this project for 6 years (i.e., 4.5 years in pre-building permit and 1–1.5 years approximated in construction phase) before the tenants can occupy the building. Even with a successful design, the developer will need to rely on a steady stream of qualified occupants to achieve any profitability.

While there is a significant strain on developer capital when executing projects such as this, there are some potential economic incentives for developers to undertake preservation projects. One financial incentive is the potential to earn tax credits at the federal and state levels. These tax credits, in turn, offset tax obligations. A developer can apply to both the federal and the state programs. Each state has its own guidelines and requirements for acquiring state tax

²⁸ The scaled rent plan roughly increases every five years, starting at a base of \$55,000 per year, arriving at \$190,350 by year eleven, and thereafter increasing every 5th year by 17.5% or the percentage amount of the increase in the Consumer Price Index over the same period. The second component of the rent is a flat 1% of gross rent received with other considerations if the lease is sold (O'Donnell, Greely and Davis 4)

²⁹ Original plans were to create 90 residential units. Later, the developer increased the unit count to 197.

credits. The current Ropewalk project has applied for both sources of tax credits, as each will ease the overall financial burden. However, credits that are awarded by either program will be actualized once the project is completed, meaning confirmation will be required that the redeveloped building follows the approved designs before credits can be fully appreciated. (Ritch, 23 February 2018).

Renovating a uniquely shaped building such as the Ropewalk is a monumental project. Not only are there historic building *Guidelines* to which adherence must be secured but also other historical considerations regarding the adherence to the overall integrity of a historical working military base must be made. Aside from historical requirements, the City of Boston's building code requirements had to be applied to a structure that pre-dated the modern building codes. In addition to these design challenges, there are funding concerns as well, as a project of this size requires a great deal of working capital and borrowed capital to which few people and companies have the access. Lastly, challenges exist with respect to identifying a reuse that will satisfy the property owners' vision, the community's need and then also the developer's financial capabilities. These collective requirements create a particular and daunting experience for any developer and contribute to the reason behind why the Ropewalk building has stayed vacant for so long.

Chapter V.

Development impact

A series of events contributed to delays in the Ropewalk building's availability for reuse. As discussed, political struggles at the federal level with the DoD and with Congress may have initiated the base closure, but the same tension resulted in lagging guidance and assistance for communities impacted by military base closures. Local City and state political struggles between groups wanting to continue with a shipbuilding facility and others wanting a mixed reuse site also contributed to delays setting a reuse direction for the Shipyard. Mismanagement of the Ropewalk's equipment and artifacts as well as the building's detail attributed to the World War II effort derailed further progress towards the building's availability in order that authorities could lay down rules, eventually issued in 2002, regarding what materials could be altered and how. Other factors also contributed to delays include the conflicting roles of the BRA as property custodian, as revenue seeking planner and developer, and as one of the City's building oversight authorities. With these contrasting roles held by one authority, options for reuse are without boundaries. In this case, the BRA appears to have waited for a potentially lucrative, revenue generating, proposal over one that was more community centric. The building's availability for development came only after these challenges were addressed.

Influence on local economy

Unfortunately, measuring the influence, the renovations of the Ropewalk building will have on the local economy and the historic preservation movement in the region is not possible due to the availability of limited data collected for this project, which is not unique to preservation projects. Further, with respect to the Ropewalk building, as the project is still in

its design phase, there is no concluding point against which comparison can be made to determine economic growth, as measured from the project's beginning.

Despite changing the specific architectural details that altered the building's historical context, the real estate value of the neighborhood might improve assuming no general adverse economic conditions. In the case of the Ropewalk building, renovations are intended to attract tenants that will contribute to the local economy. That is, residents will purchase goods at local stores, helping local vendor's profits and contributing to increased tax revenue for the City and state. Also, the planned improvements to the Ropewalk building should help in reducing the type of crime afflicting the property over the years. Arson and looting of building materials have been concerns for some time, as the property has no on-site caretaker now (Carlson 522). With tenants actively engaged with the site, there should be a reduction in criminal activity. The cycle of economic improvement starts with obtaining tenants. Once accomplished, forecasting continued economic growth to the Shipyard's real estate value, and the local economy is reasonable.

More specific to real estate valuations, property values in Boston, MA are maintained by City neighborhood, of which the Historic Monuments Area is a subsection of Charlestown. Statistics note that the Charlestown residential property had a median price of \$441,000 in October 2007, whereas values increased up through April 2017 at a median price of \$705,000 (Zillow). Housing in the Shipyard is in even greater demand and more expensive than in other areas of the Charlestown neighborhood (Aciltelli). Therefore, assuming a steady economy, these renovated properties should maintain, if not enhance, the neighborhood's value.

Continuing historic legacy

Aside from influencing the local economy and real estate values, the Ropewalk's renovations contribute to the Shipyard's story as a former naval base. What story is to be shared with the public and how its shared are primarily directed by the BRA. Continuing to convey the history of the Boston Naval Shipyard by way of its building footprints, and landscapes, by carefully determining what structures are removed and which are remodeled is critical to the property's historic legacy. For the Ropewalk building, the oversight team of five authorities including the BRA, should be able to manage which proposed structures changes are conducive to keeping appropriate Naval history alive.

Preservation movement process changes

The development of the Ropewalk building, including the preservation and building code processes required of the Charlestown Ropewalk, LLC, have shed light on gaps in public facilities administration, limited oversight of required preservation, and inefficiencies with preservation applications. That is, a greater voice should be allowed from the neighbor's impacted by public building preservation efforts, the preservation movement should consider the value in policing for non-compliance, and simplification of the application process should be contemplated to reduce administrative burden to developers and all authoritative bodies.

Stronger voice from the community

From a preservation perspective, if the community had a stronger voice in declaring building reuse, waiting over 40 years and repurposing it into residential units might not have been the Charlestown residents' first choice. While it is understandable for private properties that neighbors do not mandate how buildings are repurposed, the Ropewalk building is owned

by the City of Boston and, as such, the neighbors should have been able to contribute to how this building is being converted. Perhaps, the building would not have remained vacant since the property transition in 1978 if preservation guidelines were different. Also, if the historic impact report (required by Section 106) had been completed by the Department of Defense at base closure, other renovation options might have been made years ago.

Policing preservation mandates

As we cannot reverse any lapses in judgment while deciding what and how to preserve the historic buildings, what efforts regarding policing requirements are available? Protecting our cultural history, as portrayed through architectural structures, should be important. However, there is no system in place that enforces preservation mandates or guidelines that are specific to managing architectural history; this is not an unrealistic notion. Cultural history is important and is protected by government agencies that prevent theft or destruction of cultural property (United States Department of Justice). However, there are no consequences of not following preservation mandates. Realistically, enforcing presentation mandates might not be feasible due to law enforcement's monetary constraints. Currently, the idea of taking care not to remove heritage value by way of destroying historic sites is mostly voiced by members of the community (National Trust for Historic Preservation). This is ironic as the members of the community have concern about how others mis-manage cultural heritage but they have no legal voice in how these cultural assets are to be managed. Therefore, community members' views should be more than suggestions in the historic preservation processes. Local residents should be advising municipalities about their preferences for historic buildings' reuse. A new step can be added in the existing historic review process to integrate this idea. Although it appears that the additional involvement of a party might hinder progress, it might not. Including the community might

provide design inspiration or assistance in expediting the project's execution through volunteer work and voting power by electing politicians who are interested in maintaining cultural assets.

Application process streamlined

The preservation application process contributed to delays in renovating the Ropewalk building and should be reviewed for simplification. The National Park Service has a definitive three-part application that requires proposed changes to be recorded. While some authorities accept the NPS's application for their respective reviews, others have their own application forms. Submitting redundant applications to numerous oversight authorities for similar purpose reviews is not an efficient use of time. This renovation application process for historic structures needs to be revamped. With an established review and approval process being executed under the careful eye of historic-minded individuals, oversight by one party, namely, the National Park Service, should be sufficient. In the case of the Ropewalk building, one party should have agreed to execute review and oversight to reduce the administrative demands that are required to manage this project.

Preserving the Ropewalk building's historic legacy

In addition to changes to the preservation movement's processes, preserving the historic legacy of the Ropewalk building may be better suited with alternative means of reconstructing its historic identity, applying contemporary preservation views to the mandated *Guidelines*, and considering the NPS as custodian, over the BRA.

Reconstructing the past

With regards to conveying the building's history and contributions to the war effort over time, remediation options are limited to repairing the destroyed or removed, historically significant, components of the Ropewalk building. This is a drastic option to reconstruct the part of the building attributed to the World War II additions. Budgetary constraints, however, prevent that from being a viable option. While few people know the story of the Ropewalk building's operations and contributions to the World War II effort, the current state of the building is a reminder to historians of what not to do to artifacts of history.

Similarly, as discussed, there are select features of the Ropewalk building that convey its former use. One of these key historical attributes is the 1300-foot-long building wing. By keeping this 1300 foot long building wing as open space, as intended by Parris, other reuse ideas for the building may have included constructing a farmers' market, indoor athletic fields or athletic courts. These options maintain the key features of the ropemaking process as intended by Parris. The current project design partitions this space and encapsulates other historical components (i.e., conveyor belt system, the weight plate, etc.) in individual apartments. Although the current project designs shields features in individual apartments, the design manages, for the most part, to keep the sanctity of the materials intact.

As a last option for preserving historical value specific to these key features, significant components of the building's history could be virtually re-created in order to keep the building's legacy alive. In archeology, a field related to architectural history, archeologists are utilizing artificial intelligence to re-create the setting in which discovered artifacts might have existed (Barsanti). By reverse engineering, creating a setting based around what is known from their site studies, archeologists are able to approximate a historic setting. Similarly, architectural

historians could employ similar methods to capture the details within and around dilapidated or repurposed historic buildings. A simulated version of the Ropewalk building's past condition could be created for future reference, thereby keeping the Ropewalk's legacy alive.

Contemporary views on aging mandates

Typical historic preservation efforts in the mid 1970s maintained the aesthetically pleasing buildings or architectural features. These views regarding what to preserve progressively changed over the course of time. In the 1990's cultural identity was embraced in buildings of all shapes and styles (Minner 74–75). While comparing the *Guidelines* to that theory, it is clear that these *Guidelines* seem to be focused more on the management of the aesthetically pleasing architectural pieces and less so on the entire historical significance of the site. The Ropewalk building's historic value recognized in 2010 by the NPS, includes the facility's association with the Navy, ropemaking technology, women's social movements, and industrial architecture (Carlson 19). In comparison, the *Guidelines* only focus on the historical importance of architectural features. Further, the *Guidelines* fail to observe the importance of the building in its state in 1966 with its World War II additions. As the whole building contributes to the history of the Boston Naval Shipyard, and not just a component of the building, according to contemporary preservation practices, efforts should have been considered so as not to remove the apparent evolution of the building. Consideration should be made that the *Guidelines* evolve to address more contemporary views on preservation.

NPS as custodian

Despite the presence of the authoritative oversight team, in its role as property custodian, the BRA had control of the reuse for the Ropewalk building, as well as other structures in the

Historic Monuments Area. As discussed, the Boston Redevelopment Authority had several roles in managing the Ropewalk building. First, it was the custodian of the site after its transition from the federal government in 1978 to the City of Boston. Second, it stepped into the role of planner, and developer of the former military base after base closure, thereby dismissing the Massachusetts Land Bank that was tasked similarly. Additionally, in its ordinary course of business, the BRA had a diverse charge that spanned both property planning, development, and oversight. Its general mandates for the City of Boston include fostering job growth, planning neighborhood developments, increasing tax revenue for the City, executing oversight of property development plans, and “ensuring Boston retains its distinctive character” (Boston Redevelopment Authority, BRA Charge). These collective responsibilities of the BRA were in conflict with each other. That is, if one proposes and develops a plan, there should be a separate entity reviewing that plan for suitability with codes and with its intended purpose suitable for the neighborhood and in adherence with property deeds. In this case, the BRA was, the designer, the developer and the compliance officer; the concern being that the checks and balances that should be in place for a healthy review and approval process did not exist in this scenario as no entity performs a supervising role. It is for this conflict that the BRA should not be the custodian of the property. Expressed in a different manner, the team generating tax revenue for the City of Boston should not also be the team tasked with preserving the City’s historic identity. As an alternative, it would be better if another entity, such as the National Park Service, is the custodian of the Ropewalk building instead of the BRA.

If we were to alter the custodian- removing the BRA and replacing it with the NPS- and we were to update the *Guidelines* to include all that which should be important to preserve other than just the architectural parts, the condition of the Ropewalk would be different than it is at

present. A more comprehensive story of the building's contributions to ropemaking and to the United States Navy could be designed. If the National Park Service were to acquire the property, as recommended, instead of the Boston Redevelopment Authority, under private development and away from obligations to generate tax revenue for the City of Boston, other reuse options could be possible. While revenue is critical for the City, it should not be the primary driver of reuse options for publicly owned historic buildings. As in this case, it also contributed to decades of delays before renovation efforts began.

Works Cited

- Acitelli, Tom. "Boston Real Estate Market Reports / Charlestown/ Charlestown Home Prices at the Start of 2018: Navy Yard in the Lead." *BostonCurbed*, 17 January 2018. <https://boston.curbed.com/2018/1/17/16900950/charlestown-home-prices-2018-navy-yard> *BostonCurbed.com*. Accessed 17 March 2018.
- Advisory Council on Historic Preservation. "Section 106 Regulations Summary." Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.com, <http://www.achp.gov/106summary.html>. Accessed 10 March 2018.
- Barsanti, S. Gonizzi; Caruso, G; Micoli, L. L.; Rodriguez, M Covarrubias; Guidi, G. "3D Visualization of Cultural Heritage Artefacts with Virtual Reality Devices." *The International Archives of Photogrammetry, Remote Sensing and Spatial Information Sciences, suppl.* Gottingen, 2015. pp. 165-172
- Blade, Rachel. "The Authority: Why the BRA Needs to Go." *Boston Magazine.com*, June 2013, <http://www.bostonmagazine.com/news/article/2013/5/28/boston-redevelopment-authority/2/>.
- Boston Economic Development and Industrial Corporation and Boston Redevelopment Authority. *The Land Use and Transportation Study of the Boston Naval Shipyard*, 1974. <https://ia801409.us.archive.org/21/items/landusetransport00bost/landusetransport00bost.pdf>. Accessed 11 February 2017.
- Boston Redevelopment Authority. "A Citizens Guide to Development Review under Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code." *Friends of Charlestown Navy Yard.com*, February 2004. <http://www.friendscny.org/wp-content/uploads/ZoningRegulations/Article-80-Citizens-Guide-to-Development-Review-2004-.pdf>.
- . "BRA Charge." *Bostonplans.org*, www.bostonplans.org/about-us/planning-boston-s-future.
- . *Proposal for National Historic Park and Naval Museum*, 1973, Boston.
- . *The Rope Walk in the Charlestown Navy Yard*, 1974, Boston.
- Carlson, Steven. *Charlestown Navy Yard Historic Resource Study*, National Park Service, 2010.
- Casner & Edwards, Attorneys at Law. "Letter of Intent To File a Project Notification Form." *Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard*, 13 June 2013. <http://www.friendscny.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Ropewalk-Letter-of-Intent-18-Jun-2013.pdf>. Accessed January 2018.

- Charlestown Ropewalk, LLC. *Description of Exhibition Space in Ropewalk*. Letter to National Park Service, 20 December 2016, Boston.
- Chesto, Jon. "Developer Patiently Learned the ROPES." *The Boston Globe*, 20 May 2016.
- . "New Life Planned for Old Charlestown Rope Factory." *The Boston Globe*, 19 May 2016.
- Civilian Reuse of Former Military Bases; Summary of Completed Military Base Economic Adjustment Projects*. U. S. Department of Defense, 1990.
- CL Properties Parris Landing. *About Parris Landing*. 2012 - 2018. <http://www.clproperties.com/condo/parris-landing/>. Accessed February 2018.
- Commonwealth of Massachusetts. "Abstract: Base Commission Studies, 1973-1976." *Base Commission Studies, 1973-1976*, 1976. <http://www.worldcat.org/title/base-commission-studies-1973-1976/oclc/8062053>.
- . *Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Massachusetts Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit*, <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/mhctax/taxidx.htm>. Accessed 17 March 2018.
- Cullen, John and David Richwine. "174 Year Old Shipyard Closes Today." *The Boston Globe*, pp. 1 July 1974.
- Donelan, Alyssa. "The 1993 ULI Awards for Excellence." *Urban Land*, 52.12, 1993, pp.15-24.
- Donofrio, Julie Therese. *Preservation as a Tool for Waterfront Revitalization: Design, Management, and Financing Solutions from Vancouver, Boston, and London*, Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 2007.
- EDAW, Inc. "Supplement: Planning Civilian Reuse of Former Military Bases." *Community Guidance Manual XIV*, 1990.
- Hill, Catherine. "The Political Economy of Military Base Redevelopment: An Evaluation of Four Converted Naval Bases." Dissertation, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1998.
- Larsen, Leslie. *The Ropewalk At The Charlestown Navy Yard: A History and Reuse Plan*, 1987, Boston.
- McAlester, Virginia and Lee McAlester. *A Field Guide to American Houses*. Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1984, New York.
- McKee, Bradford. "Military Base Conversions; Architects Begin Returning Sequestered Defense Complexes to their Urban Surroundings. (Charlestown Navy Yard, Boston, Massachusetts; Presidio of San Francisco, San Francisco, California; Williams Air Force Base, Mesa, Arizona; B." *Architecture: the AIA Journal*, August 1994, pp. 99-105.

- Minner, Jennifer. "Revealing Synergies, Tensions, and Silences Between Preservation and Planning." *Journal of the American Planning Association*, Vol. 82:2, 21 March 2016, pp. 72-87.
- National Park Service. "National Historic Landmarks Program." *National Park Service.com*, 11 June 1979. <https://www.nps.gov/nhl/find/statelists/ma.htm>. Accessed 24 February 2018.
- . "National Historic Landmarks Program: Glossary." *National Park Service.com*, 21 August 2014. <https://www.nps.gov/nhl/apply/glossary.htm#HistoricIntegrity>. Accessed 24 February 2018.
- . "National Historic Landmarks Program: Learn about the National Historic Landmarks Program." *National Park Service.com*, 2 September 2014. <https://www.nps.gov/nhl/learn/intro.htm>. Accessed 24 February 2018.
- . "Baton National Historic Park." *Long Range Interpretive Plan, Boston National Historic Park.com*, <https://www.nps.gov/bost/learn/management/upload/BOST-LRIP-2002.pdf>. Accessed April 2017
- . "Research: Spreadsheet of NRHP Listed Properties." *National Register of Historic Places Program*. September 2015, <https://www.nps.gov/nr/research/>. Accessed 24 February 2018.
- . *Restoration Guidelines the Ropewalk (Building 58)*, 2002.
- . "Charlestown Navy Yard Ropewalk & Tar House Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS MA-1247-A)." 1933. *NPS.gov*, <https://www.loc.gov/item/ma1405/>.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Saving Places.org*, <https://savingplaces.org/we-are-saving-places#.Wz5-NS-ZMRU>. Accessed 20 March 2017.
- O'Donnell, Edward, Jonathan Greely and Dennis Davis. "Memo to Request Authorization To Extend Final Designation To Charlestown Ropewalk, LLC, for Redevelopment of Building 58 (The Ropewalk) and Building 60 (The Tar Shed)." 15 June 2017. <http://boston.siretechnologies.com/sirepubbra/cache/2/xdgr305hew0cwkmoh1ik43tn/21268203042018042836902.PDF>. Accessed 28 February 2018.
- Ritch, Sarah. "Construction of the Ropewalk Building to Begin." *The Navy Yard News, Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard*. Winter 2017.
- . *Project Manager, Charlestown Ropewalk, LLC*, Personal Interview. 23 February 2018.
- . *Project Manager, Charlestown Ropewalk, LLC*, Personal Interview. 5 March 2018.

- Twight, Charlotte. "Institutional Underpinnings of Parochialism: The Case of Military Base Closures." *Cato Journal*, Spring/ Summer 1989, <https://object.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/serials/files/cato-journal/1989/5/cj9n1-4.pdf>. Accessed February 2018.
- United States Defense Secretary's Commission. "Base Realignment and Closures." *Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Tech. and Logistics*, February 2018. <https://www.acq.osd.mil/brac/Downloads/Prior%20BRAC%20Rounds/1988.pdf>.
- United States Department of Defense. *Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission*, <http://www.brac.gov/About.html>. Accessed 21 January 2018.
- United States Department of Justice. "Cultural Property Law." *United States Department of Justice*, 2016, <https://www.justice.gov/usao/file/834826/download>. Accessed 30 March 2018.
- United States Office of Economic Adjustment. "Civilian Reuse of Former Military Bases." United States Department of Defense, 1990.
- United States President's Economic Adjustment Committee . "Planning Civilian Reuse of Former Military Bases." Community Guidance Manual. Office of Economic Adjustment and Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1978.
- United States President's Economic Adjustment Committee. *Communities In Transition: Community Response to Reduced Defense Activity*. Community Guidelines. United States President's Economic Adjustment Committee. Washington, D.C.: Defense Office of Economic Adjustment, 1977.
- . "Planning Civilian Reuse of Former Military Bases." Community Guidance Manual II. 1978.
- USS Constitution Museum. *Ropemakers for the Navy: Part I*, October 2016. <https://ussconstitutionmuseum.org/2016/10/06/ropemakers-navy-part>. Accessed 2 June 2018.s
- Wallace, Floyd, Ellenzweig Inc. *Waterfront Activation Network Plan for the Charlestown Navy Yard*, 2007, Boston.
- Weeks, Kay and Anne E. Grimmer. *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*, 1995, Washington, D.C.
- Zillow, "Charlestown Market Overview," Zillow Real Estate.com, May 2017. <https://www.zillow.com/charlestown-boston-ma/home-values>. Accessed May 20, 2017.

Appendix 1:

Key dates discussed in each chapter

See Appendix 2 for more detailed timeline of interaction between Charlestown Ropewalk LLC and historic application processes.		
Year	Activity	Source
1794	Fourteen area ropewalks comprise an informal ropewalk district in downtown Boston.	(USS Constitution Museum)
1796	After fires destroyed part of the downtown ropewalks district, companies relocated to the west side of Boston Common.	(USS Constitution Museum)
1800	Naval site approved in Charlestown, Massachusetts by President Adams	(Carlson 1077)
1837	Boston Naval Shipyard Ropewalk Building completed and operations begin	(Carlson 1084)
1919	Ropewalk addition: women’s restroom added	(Carlson 516)
1942	Ropewalk addition: stairway attached to north wall connecting floors	(Carlson 518)
1943	Ropewalk addition: elevation of long extension to two stories and bridge added connecting Chelsea Street with second story office	(Carlson 518)
1944	Ropewalk addition: ambulance garage added	(Carlson 518)
1950	Onsite rope production reduced and on site operations focused on technological advances in rope industry	(Carlson 522)
1961	Economic Adjustment Committee established providing assistance to military base communities	(United States Department of Defense)
1961	U.S. Military base closure plans start	(Twight 75)
1965	First legislation passed regarding Dept. of Defense requirement to	(Twight 75-76)

1966	The Boston Naval Shipyard recognized as National Historic Landmark and Registered on Historic Places Registry	(National Park Service) Research: Spreadsheet of NRHP Listed Properties
1966	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation approved by Congress with Section 106 requiring federal agencies execute an impact report on historic materials before beginning projects	(Advisory Council on Historic Preservation)
1971	Ropewalk ceased operations onsite	(Carlson 522)
1971	Boston Redevelopment Authority issues Boston Naval Shipyard reuse report	(Carlson 1134)
1973	Boston Naval Shipyard closure announcement	(Carlson 1137)
1973-1975	Massachusetts Land Bank marketed Boston Naval Shipyard as industrial site	(Boston Economic Development and Industrial Corporation; Boston Redevelopment Authority)
1974	Boston Naval Shipyard closed	(Carlson 9)
1975	Boston Redevelopment Authority issued intentions of marketing Boston Naval Shipyard as mixed use site.	(Carlson 1138)
1975	National Park Service seeks assistance from Advisory Council on Historic Preservation due to potential mismanagement of historic artifacts in Boston Naval Shipyard	(Carlson 206)
1976	First section of Boston Naval Shipyard transferred to National Park Service	(Carlson 204)
1976	Historic American Engineering Record issued indicting artifact removal was destructive to historic integrity.	(Carlson 206)
1977	Second section of Boston Naval Shipyard, for public parks, transferred to City of Boston	(Carlson 205)

1977-8	The Historic Monuments Area designated (the third section) and transferred possession to the City of Boston	(Carlson 205)
1979	Fourth section, the New Development Area, of Boson Naval Shipyard transferred to National Park Service	(Carlson 205)
1978	Secretary of Interior's treatment of historic materials guidelines are first released.	(Weeks and Grimmer 2)
1981	Boston Redevelopment Authority renovates Ropewalk removing addition (including that from 1943)	(Carlson 522)
1987	Boston Redevelopment Authority issues a reuse plan specifically for Ropewalk Building	(Larsen 17)
2002	Restoration Guidelines for Ropewalk Building issued by five overseeing authorities	(National Park Service)
2007	Boston Redevelopment Authority issued Waterfront Activation Network Plan	(Carlson 1138)
2010	Carlson through National Park Service publishes Charlestown Navy Yard Historic Resource Study	(Carlson)
2013	Charlestown Ropewalk LLC files Intent to File a Project Notification Form to renovate the Ropewalk Building	(Casner & Edwards, Attorneys at Law)

Appendix 2:

Charlestown Ropewalk LLC preservation application history

This list of records identifies Charlestown Ropewalk LLC’s applications for restoration. These records were referenced in the Charlestown Ropewalk LLC’s project files.

Year	Month	Received From/ Sent to	Record Detail
2013	June	Boston	Casner and Edwards, developer's attorney, filed
		Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”)	Letter of Intent to File a Project Notification Form
	December	2 National Park Service (“NPS”) Offices	NPS Historic Preservation Certification Application: filed Part 1 & Part 2
		Boston Redevelopment Authority	NPS Historic Preservation Certification Application: filed Part 1 & Part 2
		Boston Landmarks Commission	NPS Historic Preservation Certification Application: filed Part 1 & Part 2

2014	January	Massachusetts	MHC Preservation Certification Application: filed Part 1 & Part 2 for State Tax Credit Applications
		Historic Commission	MHC Preservation Certification Application: additional information filed for Part 1 & Part 2 for State Tax Credit Applications
	April	Massachusetts	MHC Preservation Certification Application: amendments submitted to Part 1 & Part 2
		Historic Commission	Massachusetts Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part 1 approved
		National Park Service ("NPS")	NPS Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part 1 approved
	May	Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA")	BRA Meeting to Discuss: The Ropewalk Complex – Project Notification Form
	June	Massachusetts	Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part 2 amended and submitted
		Historic Commission	
		Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA")	BRA Approves Ropewalk Complex Project Concept

	August	National Park Service ("NPS")	Historic Preservation Certification Application: Copy of Part 2 submitted
	September	Massachusetts Historic Commission	Massachusetts Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part 1 & Part 2 amended and submitted
2015	January	Massachusetts Historic Commission	Massachusetts Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part 1 & Part 2 amended and submitted
		National Park Service ("NPS")	Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part 1 & Part 2 conditional approval
	April	Massachusetts Historic Commission	Massachusetts Historic Preservation Certification Application: Part 1 & Part 2 amended and submitted
	June	Boston Landmarks Commission ("BLC")	BLC Hearing Boston Landmarks Commission Application: submitted
	August	Massachusetts Historic Commission ("MHC")	MHC tax credit allocation granted (not issued)

2016	November	Massachusetts Historic Commission ("MHC")	Massachusetts Historic Preservation Certification Application: Clarification submitted for Part 2, Question 5 <hr/> Images and Restoration Guidelines related to Part 2 submitted
		Boston Landmarks Commission ("BLC")	Certificate of Design Approval with Provisos
	December	National Park Service ("NPS")	Letter to NPS Superintendent regarding exhibit space within Ropewalk building, at the request of mortgage lender.
2017	January	National Park Service ("NPS")	Historic Preservation Certification Application: amendment submitted in response to NPS conditional approval (1/20/2015)