BRISTOL WATERFRONT HISTORIC DISTRICT RE-SURVEY 2023-2024

REPORT OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Presented to

Town of Bristol, Rhode Island

and

Rhode Island Historical Preservation &

Heritage Commission

By

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview of Project Goals/Objectives, Findings, Recommendations

As consultants for the Town of Bristol, Rhode Island, Kathryn Cavanaugh and Brent Runyon undertook a Re-Survey of the Bristol Waterfront National Register Historic District ("NRHD") to equip the Town with a better understanding of current conditions within the district, and to lay the groundwork for a future update of the National Register nomination and/or the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone ("LHD"). While the NRHD and LHD overlap substantially, their boundaries are not identical.

This report includes the methodologies used; a summary of findings accumulated through a review of previous documentation, recent field work, and analysis of data collected; and recommendations for updates to the NRHD and the LHD, as well as suggestions for a potential new NRHD. Accompanying this narrative report and incorporated by reference are over 2,500 digital photographs and 38 spreadsheets documenting current survey findings on 1,132 individual buildings, structures, sites, and objects throughout the NRHD.

Methodologies

We first obtained documentation about the district from the Town, including plat maps, plat and lot numbers, a list of properties within the LHD, and a large-scale base map of the NRHD with lot lines, building footprints, and locational information. From the RIHPHC we obtained the 1975 NR nomination, the 1978 complete Inventory List, and copies of historic building data sheets.

Between November 2023 and February 2024, we took photographs and made field observations for each resource. We logged information into spreadsheets, including changes in address, plat and lot numbers, and historic names and construction dates. The primary goal was to document major alterations since 1978, including demolitions and new constructions, and to re-evaluate the Contributing or Non-Contributing status of each extant resource in the NHRD, relative to its age and integrity of materials and design features. Finally, we looked at areas abutting the NRHD to identify potential boundary amendments.

Findings

The NRHD has continued to change since it was created nearly half a century ago, particularly in terms of alterations to individual resources. But remarkably, only 71 resources have been demolished, built new, or relocated since 1978: a mere 6.4% of the total properties surveyed.

The percentage of Contributing properties within the NRHD has declined by about 14% overall (from 81% to 67%), but most of that change occurred outside of the LHD, east of High Street and from Bradford Street north to Bay View Avenue, where there is not local regulatory control of projects.

The most common change throughout the NRHD has been the installation of vinyl replacement windows. Other observable changes affecting the integrity of historic properties were the installation of vinyl siding and trim, modification of porches and steps, additions or changes to dormers, storefront modifications, and large additions.

Recommendations

A clear understanding of which properties are designated as historic, whether through the National Register of Historic Places ("NR") or through local overlay zoning, is important both for individual property owners and for the Town of Bristol. Some financial incentives (such as grants, low-interest loans, and historic rehabilitation tax credits) are available for preservation planning and rehabilitation work on some designated historic properties. State or Federal actions that may impact historic properties must undergo a regulatory review process, and local historic district zoning provides additional protections.

To further strengthen the recognition, protection, and preservation of historic resources that tangibly illustrate more than three centuries of Bristol's history, culture, and people, we recommend the following actions:

- Undertake a significant update of the NRHD nomination, to include:
    - Confirm the Period of Significance as 1680 to 1974: from Bristol's founding to 50 years ago (a basic threshold for National Register eligibility).
    - Conduct additional research on three important historical themes within the NRHD: industrial production and immigration, which were only briefly discussed in the original NR nomination; and communities of color, a theme which was not previously documented. This will provide a fuller and more inclusive accounting of the significance of the district as a whole and of many of its individual resources.
    - Amend the northern NRHD boundaries to include additional properties on of Washington Street (including the Guiteras School and Field) and on Bay View Avenue, as well as a portion of Hope Street that is already included in the LHD.
    - Amend the southern NRHD boundary to include the block of Walley Street between High and Wood Streets.
- Undertake a survey to determine whether an area east of Wood Street may be NR eligible, either as an amendment to the Bristol Waterfront Historic District, or nominated as a separate district.

- Undertake a survey to evaluate the potential for a new NRHD along Hope Street north of the current district.
- Expand the LHD to include the entire NRHD.

NOTE: The findings and recommendations made in this report (and in the accompanying spreadsheets) to change the Contributing/Non-Contributing status of individual properties will not take effect until such time as the NR nomination is updated. Meanwhile, for the purposes of project planning and review by state and local authorities, existing assessments of C/NC status (per the 1978 Inventory List) remain in effect.

INTRODUCTION

The Bristol Waterfront Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, contains a mix of residential, commercial, industrial, civic, and institutional buildings as well as several wharves, burial grounds, and parks, and a multitude of public monuments, collectively representing three centuries of growth and development in the town center. This unique historic and architectural legacy gives Bristol a distinct visual identity, engenders civic pride, and enhances the quality of life for residents. It also acts as an economic generator, supporting local businesses by drawing hundreds of thousands of visitors to Bristol every year, especially during the annual Fourth of July Celebrations when this Historic District hosts the oldest continuous Fourth of July Parade in the United States, as well as many other festivities.

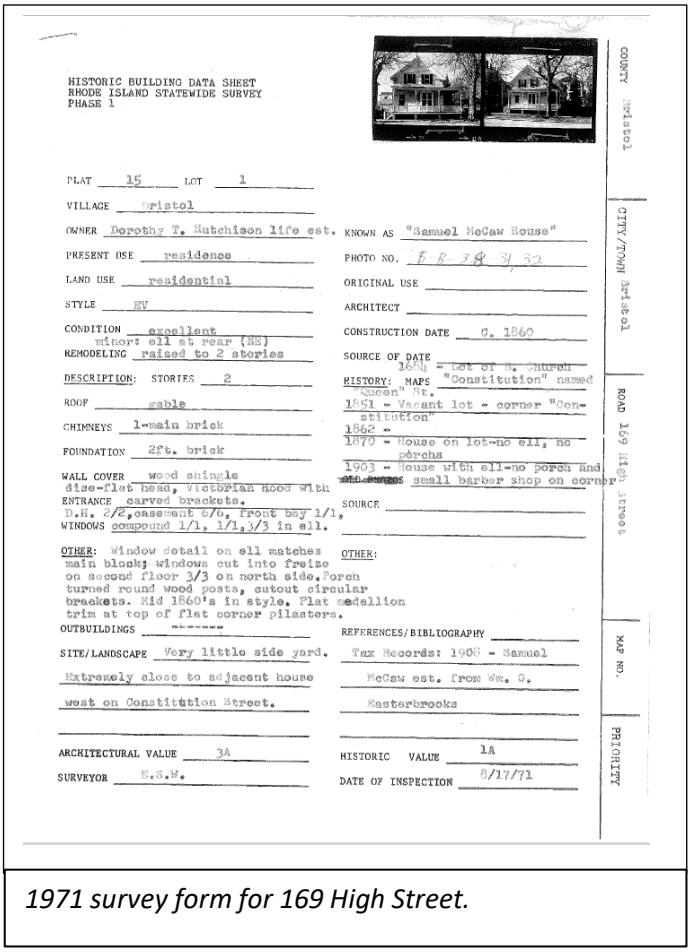
As the 50th anniversary of the Bristol Waterfront Historic District approaches, the 2023-2024 Re-Survey provides updated information about current conditions for 1,132 properties within the district and makes some recommendations for future preservation planning.

To provide some context for understanding the purpose, goals, and objectives of the Re-Survey project and the findings and recommendations presented in this report, this introduction summarizes several decades of previous preservation planning efforts conducted by the State of Rhode Island and the Town of Bristol.

The State Survey and the National Register of Historic Places

The Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission (RIHPHC) is the office of state government responsible for identifying and protecting historic properties. One of RIHPHC's fundamental responsibilities is the State Survey. To date, tens of thousands of buildings, structures, sites, and archeological resources have been recorded in photographs and in written documentation, and each has been evaluated within the context of its community's and the state's historical growth and development. Survey publications have been produced for each of Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns, and also for several thematic studies.

Bristol's first historic survey, done in 1971-1973, yielded several hundred "historic building data sheets" (also called "survey forms"), mostly for properties located in the town center. Each data sheet noted the building's architectural style, materials and features; identified historic names and construction dates based on preliminary research; and had at least one black-and-white contact print photograph attached to it. (An example of a typical survey form can be found on the next page.) Subsequent surveys conducted in 1988 and in 1995 revisited some previously documented properties and identified many more throughout the town.



HISTORIC BUILDING DATA SHEET
RHODE ISLAND STATEWIDE SURVEY
PHASE 1

COUNTY Bristol
CITY/TOWN Bristol
ROAD 169 High Street
MAP NO.
PARCEL

PLAT 15 LOT 1
VILLAGE Bristol
OWNER Dorothy T. Hutchison life est. KNOWN AS "Samuel McCaw House"
PRESENT USE residence PHOTO NO. E-B-38 3,32
LAND USE residential ORIGINAL USE
STYLE EV ARCHITECT
CONDITION excellent CONSTRUCTION DATE c. 1860
REMODELING minor ell at rear (NE) raised to 2 stories SOURCE OF DATE
DESCRIPTION: STORIES 2 HISTORY: MAPS 1694 - Lot of S. Church "Constitution" named "Queen" St.
ROOF gable 1851 - Vacant lot - corner "Constitution"
CHIMNEYS 1-main brick 1862 -
FOUNDATION 2ft. brick 1870 - House on lot-no ell, no porch
WALL COVER wood shingle 1903 - House with ell-no porch and small barber shop on corner
ENTRANCE dise-flat head, Victorian hood with carved brackets. SOURCE
WINDOWS D.H. 2/2, basement 6/6, front bay 1/1, compound 1/1, 1/1, 3/3 in ell.

OTHER: Window detail on ell matches main block; windows cut into frieze on second floor 3/3 on north side. Porch turned round wood posts, cutout circular brackets. Mid 1860's in style. Flat medallion trim at top of flat corner pilasters.
OUTBUILDINGS
SITE/LANDSCAPE Very little side yard. Extremely close to adjacent house west on Constitution Street.

OTHER:
REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY
Tax Records: 1906 - Samuel McCaw est. from Wm. G. Easterbrooks

ARCHITECTURAL VALUE 3A HISTORIC VALUE 1A
SURVEYOR E.S.W. DATE OF INSPECTION 8/17/71

1971 survey form for 169 High Street.

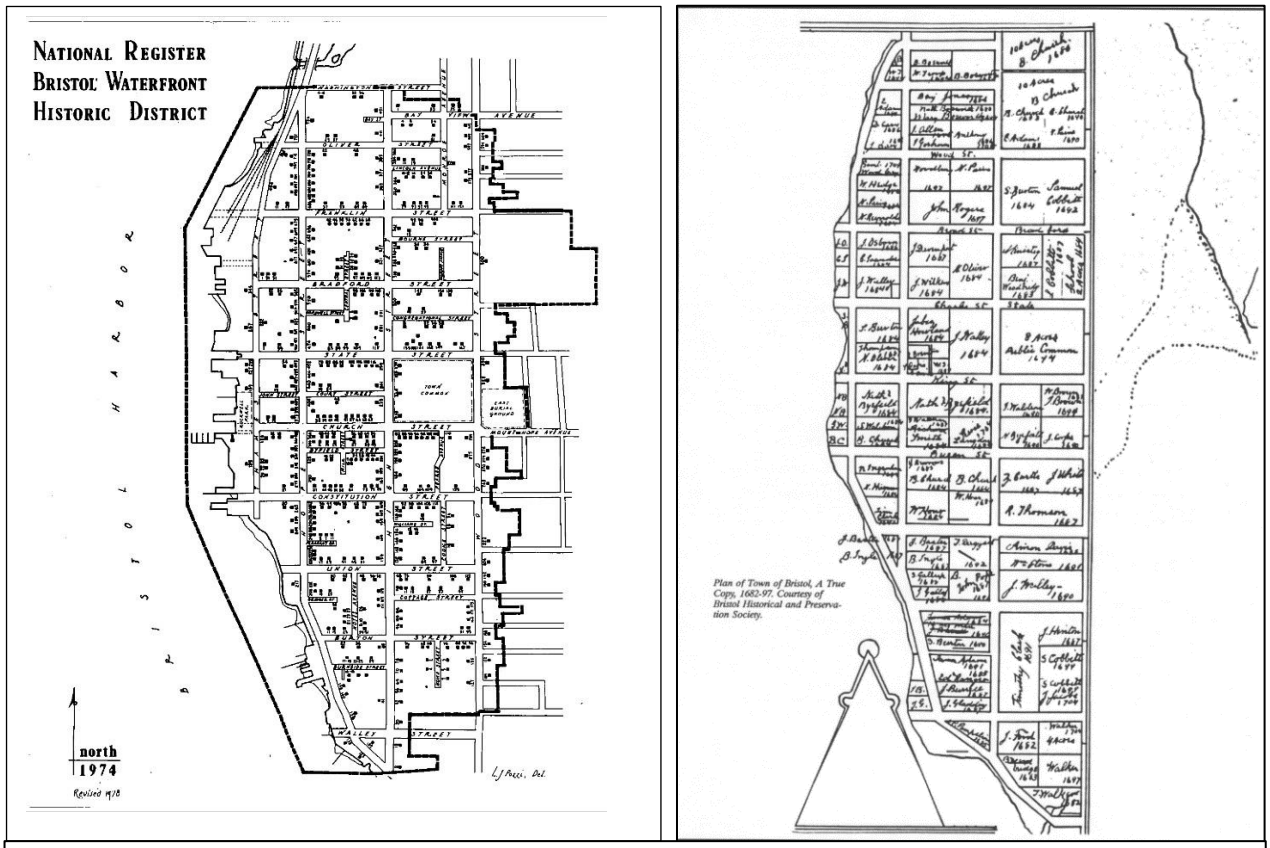
In 1990, RIHPHC published Historic and Architectural Resources of Bristol as part of its statewide series of survey reports. This report included a brief history of the town, a discussion of historic architectural styles illustrated by local examples, a selected inventory of historic properties representing various aspects of local history, and recommendations for future National Register nominations and other preservation planning activities. The Bristol survey report is available at the Rogers Free Library in Bristol (and many other public libraries in the Ocean State Libraries network), the Rhode Island Historical Society Library in Providence, and on RIHPHC's website (www.preservation.ri.gov, click on Historic Places, then RIHPHC Publications).

RIHPHC utilizes the State Survey data to fulfill many of its other duties, including nominating historic properties to the National Register of Historic Places ("NR"). This is the federal government's official list of buildings, structures, sites, objects, and archeological resources that are significant in American history and worthy of preservation. Properties may be NR-listed individually, in a historic district, or in a thematically related group. To be NR-eligible, the property must typically be 50 years old or older; convey an accurate and authentic sense of its past through its materials and design characteristics; and demonstrate significance to the history of the local community, the state, or the nation.

To date, over 17,500 historic properties in Rhode Island have achieved NR listing. Bristol currently has two historic districts and eleven individual properties on the National Register: Bristol Waterfront Historic District; Poppasquash Farms Historic District; Bristol County Jail; Blithewold; Bristol Ferry Lighthouse; Bristol County Courthouse; Bristol Customs House and Post Office; Joseph Reynolds House (also a National Historic Landmark); Benjamin Church House/Home for Aged Men; "Longfield"/Charles Dana Gibson House; Mount Hope Farm/Governor William Bradford House; Mount Hope Bridge; and Juniper Hill Cemetery.

The Bristol Waterfront Historic District encompasses some 280 acres of land in the town center, bounded roughly by Washington Street and Bay View Avenue on the north, Wood Street on the east, Walley Street and Hope Street on the south, and the Thames Street waterfront on the west.

These boundaries encompass the original settlement area of the town dating back to 1680, on ancestral lands of the Wampanoag tribe that had been claimed by Plymouth Colony. (Rhode Island annexed Bristol from Massachusetts in 1746.) Bristol's original proprietors laid out a planned community located on the east side of a natural deep harbor, with surrounding land dedicated to farming and pasturage. "The compact part of the town" had a grid pattern of four streets running north-south (Thames, Hope, High, and Wood), and nine streets running east-west (Oliver, Franklin, Bradford, State, Church, Constitution, Union, Burton, and Walley), resulting in a series of 8-acre blocks. One of those blocks was the Town Common, roughly centered along the grid's eastern edge. Over time, several additional streets were added, but the original street pattern remains clearly discernible.



Above left: NR Historic District map (1974, revised 1978). Above right: "Plan of the Town of Bristol, 1682-1697," published in Historic and Architectural Resources of Bristol, R.I. (R.I. Historical Preservation Commission, 1990) with permission of the Bristol Historical & Preservation Society.

The 1975 NR nomination included the map of the district shown above; several representative black-and-white photographs; two brief narratives documenting the historic district's physical characteristics and significance; and a partial inventory of about 450 properties, representing less than one-third of the total number of resources within the district boundaries. (The NR

nomination is available on RIHPHC's website: www.preservation.ri.gov, click on Historic Places, then National Register.)

In 1978, RIHPHC produced a more comprehensive "Bristol Waterfront Historic District Inventory List" of 1,370 buildings, structures, sites, and objects within the NRHD boundaries. The list included houses, domestic outbuildings like carriage houses and garages, commercial buildings, houses of worship, schools, government buildings, mills and factories, wharves, parks, burial grounds, public monuments, and other historic resources. (Some properties on this list were added after RIHPHC did additional survey work in the 1980s and 1990s.) The 1978 Inventory List noted street addresses, historic names, construction dates, and "Contributing" or "Non-Contributing" status based primarily on age and/or the integrity of historic exterior architectural materials and features. "Contributing" and "Non-Contributing" are terms used by the National Register to indicate whether or not each individual property embodies some aspect of significance within the Historic District as a whole.

Town of Bristol: The Bristol Historic District (Overlay Zone)

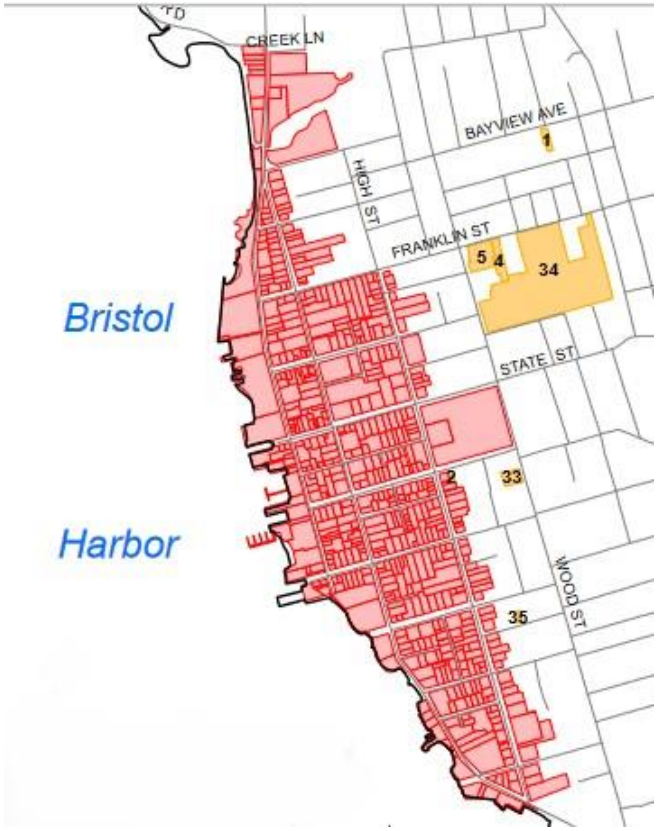
Six years before the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 created the National Register of Historic Places, Rhode Island launched its first statewide historic preservation program. In 1960 the General Assembly, recognizing that "The preservation of structures of historic and architectural value and historic cemeteries, wherever located within a city or town, are declared to be a public purpose," enacted statewide enabling legislation (R.I.G.L. 45-24.1, as amended) allowing municipalities "to regulate the construction, alteration, repair, moving, and demolition of these structures" through the local zoning ordinance. Historic District Overlay Zones, also known as Local Historic Districts (LHDs), are intended to:

(1) Safeguard the heritage of the city or town by preserving a district in a city or town which reflects elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history;
(2) Stabilize and improve property values in that district;
(3) Foster civic beauty;
(4) Strengthen the local economy;
(5) Promote the use of the historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the citizens of the city or town; and
(6) Provide, where feasible, that in these historic districts housing, including, but not limited to, limited equity cooperative housing, be made available to low and/or moderate income residents.

To date, 18 Rhode Island municipalities have created Historic District Overlay Zones under their local zoning ordinances; the Town of Bristol did so in 1987.

The "Bristol Historic District," shaded in red on the map on the next page, covers much of the same area as the NRHD, but does not include Wood Street or several blocks north of State Street and Franklin Street; it also extends further north on Hope Street (to Poppasquash Road)

than the NRHD does. Subsequently, the Town also designated some individual properties as part of the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone. Seven of these are included on the map below and are related to this study of the NRHD; there are others outside the bounds of this map. The numbers shown in yellow refer to:



Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone.
Source: Bristol Historic District Commission.

1 - 132 Bay View Avenue

2 – 88 Church Street*

4 – 150 Franklin Street*

5 – 160 Franklin Street*

33 – 275 Wood Street*

34 – 500 Wood Street*

35 – 27 Cottage Street*

The asterisks (*) indicate which of these properties also lie within the NR Historic District. Three are houses built in the first half of the 19th century, while 500 Wood Street, 150 and 160 Franklin Street are part of the former National Rubber Company complex (1864 et seq), recently rehabilitated as the "Unity Park" development.

The Bristol Historic District Commission ("BHDC"), with seven members appointed by the Town Council, reviews all proposed exterior repairs, alterations, new construction, demolition, and site improvements within the Overlay Zone. Property owners must obtain a "Certificate of Appropriateness" from BHDC before getting a building permit or beginning work. (For more information about the BHDC: https://www.bristolri.gov/DocumentCenter/View/126/Historic-District-Commission-Brochure-PDF?bidId=)

National Register listing is primarily a planning tool; it provides limited protection for historic properties from being altered or demolished when the project involves federal or state funding, licensing, or permits (in which case RIHPHC review is required). Historic District Overlay Zones provide additional protection through local regulation.

PURPOSE, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The 1975 National Register nomination for the Bristol Waterfront Historic District is a product of its time, when documentation requirements were less comprehensive than they are today. It does not provide:

- A complete inventory of all buildings, structures, sites, and objects within the district boundaries.

- A designation of each property as “Contributing” or “Non-Contributing” to the historical and architectural significance of the Historic District; and a total count of contributing and non-contributing resources.

- A defined “Period of Significance:” the length of time when the historic district was associated with important events, activities, or persons, or attained the characteristics which qualify it for National Register listing.

- A map that clearly defines the Historic District boundaries in relation to individual property lines; and a boundary justification statement explaining how the boundaries were chosen.

The 1978 Inventory List for this NRHD likewise contains information that is now several decades old.

One reason that current information is important is that National Register listings, and the Contributing or Non-Contributing status of properties within NRHDs, are relied upon by federal, state, and local governments when performing legally mandated review of planning and development projects that affect historic resources. Local historic district commissions, such as that in Bristol, also may use this information when making findings of fact in their decisions on applications for Certificates of Appropriateness.

In 2023, RIHPHC awarded a grant to the Town of Bristol to re-survey the Bristol Waterfront Historic District, as a first step toward updating the nearly 50-year-old NR nomination. The Town then solicited qualified historic preservation consulting services through a public bidding process. The Invitation to Bid (Bid #1020) outlined the project goals and objectives, scope of work, work products, and schedule. A contract for consulting services was awarded in mid-October 2023.

Goals: to enable the Town of Bristol and RIHPHC to better understand current conditions within the NRHD, and to lay the groundwork for a future update of the National Register nomination and/or the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone.

Objectives were to be achieved through the review of previous documentation, field work, and analysis of data collected. (No new research was to be conducted for this project.)

For each property within the NRHD:

1) Provide current digital photographs.
2) Identify whether the property is included in the 1975 NR nomination inventory.
3) Identify whether the property is also included in the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone.
4) Identify exterior alterations to the property that have occurred since the 1978 Inventory List was compiled, such as replacement windows, replacement siding, additions, and demolition.
5) Identify the 1978 assessment of Contributing/Non-Contributing status, and make preliminary recommendations whether to change that status based on the current age and integrity of the property.
6) Present findings in spreadsheet format, organized by street address.

For potential amendments to the 1975 NR nomination for the NRHD as a whole:

7) Make preliminary recommendations about whether the district boundaries should be changed and, if so, where and why.
8) Make a preliminary recommendation for defining the district's period of significance.

Work Products and Deadlines:

- Photographs and draft spreadsheets submitted by February 29, 2024.
- Draft report of findings and recommendations submitted by April 30, 2024.
- Final work products submitted by June 30, 2024.
- Public presentation at a Bristol Historic District Commission meeting on July 10, 2024.

METHODOLOGIES

Step 1: Prepare for Field Work.

From the Town of Bristol, we obtained:

- Assessor's plat and lot numbers, tax cards, and plat maps for all properties within the NRHD.

- A large-scale base map of the NRHD showing its boundaries relative to property lot lines and street addresses.

- A list of properties in the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone.

From RIHPHC, we obtained:

- Copies of the 1975 NR nomination and the 1978 Inventory List.

- Copies of previous historic building data sheets for all addresses in the 1978 Inventory List (as well as addresses that had inadvertently been omitted from that list, as available).

    - The 1978 Inventory List contained many duplicate addresses, indicating the presence of more than one resource (e.g., a house and its associated garage) on the same property, each separately deemed Contributing or Non-Contributing. In addition, the list included some vacant lots and parking lots, as well as side or rear yards that were located on a separate lot from their associated building. Outbuildings (unless located on a separate lot) and undeveloped lots (except for public open space) were eliminated from the current survey.

Step 2: Field Work and Recording of Survey Findings.

We visited Bristol multiple times between November 2023 and February 2024 to take photographs and make field observations for 1,132 buildings, structures, sites, and objects within the NR Historic District.

- **Photographs.** Typically, we provided two color digital photos per building, shot from the street or sidewalk and showing three-quarter views of the front and both side elevations (associated outbuildings were included in these views wherever possible). In some cases where trees, shrubbery, or the close proximity of adjacent buildings obstructed

sightlines, only one photo could be provided. Certain properties (e.g. parks, burial grounds, industrial sites, buildings on corner lots) required more than two images.

  - We submitted a total of over 2,500 photos, consistent with RIHPHC technical requirements for size and resolution. All photos were labeled with the street address and compass direction of the image: e.g., "BRIS_CourtSt010_NE." Photos were organized in digital file folders by street name, plus one folder for photos of public monuments and memorials in various locations.

- **Field Observations.** These included: address numbers posted on buildings; current conditions of exterior architectural features and materials; and noting the presence of any plaques identifying the building's historic name and date. We also identified post-1978 demolitions, new construction, and additional public monuments and memorials installed.

- **Recording of Survey Findings.** Since the Scope of Work required us to record survey findings in spreadsheet format, we created one spreadsheet for each of the 37 streets in the NRHD, plus a separate spreadsheet for all public monuments and memorials in various locations. Each spreadsheet provides the following information:

  - Current Address. Typically, this is the number(s) displayed on a building; if no numbers were observed in the field, we matched the visual appearance of the building to a previously surveyed address, or to the address or plat/lot number identified on tax cards. Changes in address numbers since previous surveys, and any conflicts in address numbers between different sources, were noted in the "Comments" column. Where a building stands on a lot bounded by two different streets and address numbers are displayed on both sides, that building will be found under its primary address (relative to the principal façade), but the secondary address is also cross-referenced.

  - Assessor's Plat and Lot Numbers. Changes to these numbers since previous surveys (e.g., due to the merger or subdivision of lots) are noted in the "Comments" column. Where two (or more) primary buildings stand upon the same lot, or a single building occupies more than one lot, that was also noted.

  - RIHPHC Identification Number. RIHPHC has an internal numbering system for surveyed historic resources; identification numbers were obtained from the 1978 Inventory List.

  - Historic Names and Construction Dates. Typically these were taken from the 1978 NR inventory list. Where name and/or date discrepancies emerged between the 1975 NR nomination, the 1978 Inventory List, and/or plaques affixed to buildings, those discrepancies were highlighted as needing resolution prior to a future update of the NR nomination.

- Approximately 170 buildings within the NRHD have plaques on them, most issued by the Bristol Historical & Preservation Society. (A few were of unknown origin.) All plaque names and dates are noted in the spreadsheets. A list of all plaques found within the NRHD was also shared with BH&PS.

- Architectural Style**.** Typically, styles were identified in the 1975 NR nomination or previous survey forms, otherwise from visual observation. Some of this information will need to be updated in a future update of the NR nomination, in accordance with the NR's current preferred terminology for architectural styles.

- In the 1975 NR inventory? Yes/No.

- In the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone? Yes/No.

- Major Alterations Since 1978. We compared current observations of exterior architectural features and materials with the photos and written descriptions noted on previous survey forms, focusing primarily on changes affecting six major architectural features: height, massing, wall material, trim, windows, and porches. Other alterations deemed to have had a notable impact on overall integrity were noted in the Comments column.

  - Buildings demolished since 1978 were noted in the spreadsheets. In cases where a new building replaced a demolished building, the spreadsheet will have two entries for the same address.

  - Buildings constructed after 1978 were not assessed for changes to their major architectural features.

- Contributing/Non-Contributing Status in 1978, and Recommended Assessments for 2024.

  - For buildings previously deemed Contributing, we evaluated the impact of post-1978 alterations affecting the six designated major architectural features. Buildings with changes to three or fewer of these features were typically assessed as "C," while buildings with changes to four or more features were assessed as "NC." Since a multitude of nuances can enter this calculus, including the cumulative impact of various other alterations, we used our best judgment in making these assessments. In cases where the determination could go either way, we used "C?" and "NC?" to indicate that guidance from RIHPHC is needed.

  - For buildings deemed Non-Contributing in 1978 because they were less than 50 years old at that time, but have now aged into potential NR eligibility, we also

evaluated the impact of post-1978 alterations on the six major architectural features, and recommended changing the status to "Contributing" as applicable, pending confirmation of the NRHD's Period of Significance.

- For other types of structures, sites, and objects that were deemed "C" or "NC" in 1978, we compared the physical characteristics noted on previous survey forms with field observations, and used our best judgment to evaluate their integrity to determine our recommendations for current "C/NC" status.

- Any resource that is currently less than 50 years old (built in or after 1974) was deemed "NC" by virtue of age.

- Photo Numbers**.** Labels for all photographs accompanying the survey findings are included in the spreadsheets.

- Comments. Changes to address and plat/lot numbers; other notable alterations beyond the six major architectural features; the presence of a Bristol Historical & Preservation Society (or other) plaque; and other pertinent information is noted in this column.

- **Monuments and Memorials.** The NRHD contains about 50 monuments and memorials located in public open spaces and on public sidewalks. Some of these objects recognize historical individuals, entities, events, or themes: e.g. the Capt. Benjamin Church Monument on Constitution Street, the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company Monument on Hope Street, and the R.I. Slave Medallions at Linden Place on Hope Street and the DeWolf Warehouse on Thames Street. Many honor military service in various wars, as well as public service by police officers and firefighters.

  Commemorative objects like these are typically not considered NR eligible except under certain criteria, one of which is being "integral to a historic district," and the other is having some particular significance in its own right due to "design, age, tradition, or symbolic value" (as those terms are defined by the NR). Monuments and memorials identified in the 1978 NR inventory list were typically deemed "Contributing" (including some that were less than 50 years old at that time); most of these retain their "C" status as no physical changes were observed. For monuments and memorials that were installed after 1978, such as the Bristol War Veterans Honor Roll Garden on Hope Street, and the Rhode Island Slave Medallions noted above, guidance from RIHPHC will be needed for final determinations of "C/NC" status.

Step 3: Investigate the Potential for Expanding the NR Historic District Boundaries.

We looked at properties immediately abutting the boundaries of the NRHD (i.e., to the north of Washington Street and Bay View Avenue, to the east of Wood Street, and to the south of Walley Street) to identify possible candidates to be added to the district. This assessment was done visually through a "windshield survey," and by reviewing any previous survey forms found in RIHPHC files; no new research was conducted.

We also contacted representatives of the Bristol Historical & Preservation Society and Research BIPOC History to learn more about some current research projects that are relevant to a future update of the NRHD.

- The "Bristol Timeline of Enslavement" focuses on Bristol's engagement with the trans-Atlantic slave trade and documents the presence of enslaved persons living in Bristol during the Colonial and post-Colonial eras.

- The "New Goree Mapping Project" focuses on a neighborhood primarily occupied by people of color that existed on and east of Wood Street between about 1790 and 1920.

Neither of these historical themes is well-represented in the 1975 NR nomination for the Bristol Waterfront Historic District: the statement of significance briefly noted Bristol's, and the prominent DeWolf family's, involvement in the slave trade, and the inventory included a few DeWolf properties. But New Goree was not mentioned in the NR nomination at all, and no properties were specifically identified as associated with enslaved or free people of color. The 1990 Bristol Survey book did briefly reference New Goree, but did not identify any surviving buildings from that neighborhood.

We also arranged a site visit with RIHPHC staff to consider whether some areas adjacent to the boundaries of the Bristol Waterfront NR Historic District merit further study and evaluation for potential NR eligibility (see Recommendations).

Step 4: Reporting of Findings and Recommendations.

The photographs, spreadsheets, and other information derived from RIHPHC, Bristol Historical & Preservation Society, and Research BIPOC History were collectively analyzed to develop the findings and recommendations presented in this report.

All work products (photographs, spreadsheets, project report) were submitted in draft form to the Town of Bristol and to RIHPHC for review and comment before being finalized.

SURVEY FINDINGS

The findings on individual buildings, structures, sites, and objects within the Bristol Waterfront Historic District are reported in the 38 spreadsheets and accompanying photographs which are incorporated into this project report by reference.

This section describes the analytical findings that resulted from a close examination of current conditions in the district compared to the 1970s-era National Register documentation, as well as to information supplied by the Town of Bristol for the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone. Findings are presented here in six subsections.

- Snapshot of the NR Historic District today.
- Post-1978 changes to the NR Historic District inventory: demolitions, new construction, relocations.
- Post-1978 changes to the NR Historic District inventory: alterations to individual buildings; updates in contributing/non-contributing status.
- Patterns of change within the NR Historic District.
- Period of Significance.
- Technical corrections: errors and inconsistencies in the 1975-1978 documentation to be addressed in a future update of the NR nomination.

Snapshot of the Bristol Waterfront Historic District in 2023-2024

Total resources surveyed: 1,132

Buildings: 1,066

Other Structures[1]: 2

Sites (parks, burial grounds): 13

Objects (monuments/memorials, other): 51

[1] St Michael's Church Bell Tower and State Street Wharf.

Total historic resources (50 years old or older): 1,028

17th century (1680-1699): 2

18th century (1700-1799): 78

19th century (1800-1899): 641

20th century (1900-1974): 307

Total Contributing resources: 813

Changed from NC to C since 1978: 37

Total Non-Contributing resources: 278

Changed from C to NC since 1978: 139

C/NC status not yet confirmed (pending additional research and evaluation): 41

Total resources also in the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone: 606

Note: Construction dates were obtained from RIHP&HC documentation, or from Town of Bristol tax cards (when RIHPHC documentation did not note a date for a specific building, and for post-1975 construction). Dates for some buildings will need to be updated based upon additional information that came to light through the efforts of other researchers, including Bristol Historical & Preservation Society plaques. Dates for 17 resources were unknown.

Post-1978 Changes to the NR District Inventory

Demolitions, New Construction, and Relocations

The NR Historic District has continued to change since it was created nearly half a century ago, particularly in terms of alterations to individual resources. But remarkably, only 71 resources have been demolished, built new, or relocated since 1978: a mere 6.44% of the total properties surveyed.

Demolitions

Twenty-seven buildings have been demolished since 1978: 25 primary buildings and two outbuildings that stood upon separate lots. These were noted (in italics) in the spreadsheets of

survey findings. Of the 27 demolitions, 14 are on parcels currently within the LHD (indicated by an asterisk below).

The list of demolitions includes buildings from the last three centuries: five from the 18th century (four pre-Revolution); seven from the 19th century; ten from the early 20th century (pre-1945); and five from the mid-to-late 20th century, including two mid-century gas stations. (Identification numbers beginning with "BRIS" were assigned by RIHPHC.)

13 Bourne Street (BRIS00707) – House (c. 1780)

21 Bradford Street (BRIS00263) – Samuel Royal Paine House (pre 1775)*

21 Bradford Street, July 1971

63 Bradford Street (BRIS00270)- Pastime Cinema (1934)*

123 Franklin Street (BRIS00892) – Store (c. 1940)

125-129 Franklin Street (BRIS00894) – Mixed use Commercial/Residential (c. 1915)

125-129 Franklin Street, September 1972

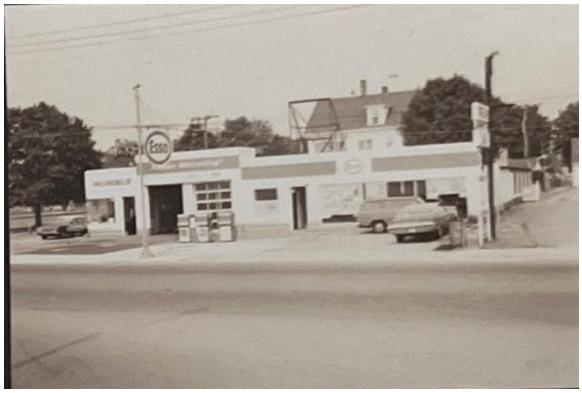
157 Hope Street (BRIS00611) – Harold C. Paull House (c. 1930)*

209 Hope Street (BRIS 00621) – Villa Serena (1950s)*

539 Hope Street (no ID) – Bristol Furniture Company (1896)*

740 Hope Street (BRIS0948) – House (c. 1840)*

756 Hope Street (BRIS00950) – Berretto's Gas Station (mid 20th c.?)*



756 Hope Street, August 1971

6 Howe Street (BRIS00956) – Boiler House for Herreshoff House at 64 High St (c. 1890)

32 Monroe Avenue (BRIS00977) – John Pozzi House (1903)

2-10 State Street (BRIS00455) – Popeye's Diner (n.d.)*

10 State Street (BRIS00456) – Building (c. 1750-1799)*

39-41R State Street (BRIS00453) – Van Doorn House (c. 1740)*

133 State Street (no ID) – E.H. Wardwell House (c. 1875)

200 Thames Street (BRIS00204) – Warehouse (c. 1940)*

200 Thames Street (BRIS00203) – Warehouse (c. 1930)*

345 Thames Street (BRIS00226) – Building (1970s)*

345 Thames Street (BRIS00228) – Collins & Aikman Co./Premier Thread Co. Mill (1942)*

171 Wood Street (BRIS1124) – House (c. 1830)

204 Wood Street (no ID) – Chaffe Cottage (c. 1760)

266-1/2 Wood Street (BRIS01162) – House (c. 1900)

326 Wood Street (BRIS1178) – House (c. 1860)

465 Wood Street (BRIS1198) – Gas Station (c. 1955)

485 Wood Street (BRIS1202) – House (c. 1865)

485 Wood Street, July 1973

501 Wood St (BRIS 01206) - Store (1928) [“501” was its former address; the store stood, facing Bourne Street, behind a house on the same lot that currently has the address 501-503 Wood]

Demolitions of historic structures are not desired, but the outcomes of those demolitions can vary, depending on what happens subsequently. In the 200 block of Thames Street, where two adjacent warehouses were demolished, that site is now a parking lot; this use serves local businesses but visually represents a negative space on an otherwise intact streetscape. On the other hand, the demolition of the Collins & Aikman Co./Premier Thread Co. Mill at 345 Thames Street led to a new, architecturally similar building that provides many units of housing next to a vibrant open space. The demolition of 539 Hope Street allowed for the preservation and expansion of the Rogers Free Library in its downtown location.

Warehouses formerly at 200 Thames Street

Recent New Construction

Forty-one buildings (including two outbuildings on separate lots) and two public parks were constructed after 1978, according to dates found on tax cards. Of the 41 new constructions, 21 are on parcels currently within the LHD (indicated by an asterisk below).

Note that three of the "new" buildings listed below have the characteristics of historic architecture (32 Noyes Avenue, 10 Summer Street, outbuilding at 61 Church Street), and two appear to be older buildings that were extensively renovated (3 William Street, 9 William Street). These anomalies were noted in the "Comments" column of their respective spreadsheets as needing further research.

1 Bay Street – House (2018)

5 Bay Street – House (2017)

15 Bay Street – House (1989)

17 Bay Street – House (2018)

13 Bourne Street – House (2004)

21 Bradford Street – House (2024)*

12 Byfield Street – House (2008)*

61 Church Street (outbuilding) (2008)*

7 Cooke Street - House (1981)

123-127 Franklin Street – Multi-family house (2022)

425 High Street – House (1988)

121 Hope Street – Lobster Pot Restaurant (ca. 1987)*

138 Hope Street – House (1994)*

Hope Street opposite Walley Street - Walley Park, now Halsey C. Herreshoff Park (ca. 1991)*

169 Hope Street – Beauregard House (ca. 1979)*

190 Hope Street – Building (1989)*

209 Hope Street – House (1986)*

740 Hope Street – House (2004)*

756 Hope Street – Commercial Garage (1985)*

8 Howe Street – Old Orchard Condominium (1986)

9 Howe Street – House (2001)

10 Howe Street – Old Orchard Condominium (1986)

11 Howe Street – House (1996)

13 Howe Street – House (2017)

14 Howe Street – House (2015)*

15 Howe Street – House (2015)

12 Milk Street – Garage for 22 Byfield St (2023)*

Next to 23 Milk Street – Garage for 23 Milk Street (2024)*

32 Noyes Ave - House (2002) - ? - looks early-mid 19th century*

79 Oliver Street – House (1988)

41R State Street – Mixed Use Building (2010) – behind 41 State*

10 Summer Street – House (2010) - ? - looks early 20th century*

251 Thames Street – Gilbert's Seafood (late 20th c.)*

259 Thames Street – Old Bank of Bristol (1797/2004) – 2nd and 3rd floors reconstructed*

341 Thames Street – Multi-family dwelling (2005)*

Left: 32 Noyes Avenue, built 2002. Right: 10 Summer Street, built 2001. (Dates according to tax cards.)

Left: 251 Thames Street, built c. 2004.
Right: 259 Thames Street, built c. 1797, top two floors reconstructed c. 2004

345 Thames Street – Bristol Harbor Inn (part of) (2004)*

47 Walley Street – House (2014)

49 Walley Street – House (2016)

3 William Street – Apartment Building (pre-1971 or 2006?) – needs further research

9 William Street – House (ca. 1910 or 2022?) – needs further research

81 Wood Street – House (2004)

380-382 Wood Street – Multi-family Dwelling (1994)

Wood Street & Franklin Street, southeast corner – Mosaico Park (1997)

Left: 3 William Street, built before 1971 or in 2006?
Right: 9 William Street, built c. 1910 or in 2022?
(Dates from RIHPHC records and tax cards, respectively.)

New construction has been scattered throughout the NRHD, though two residential streets have concentrations of recently built houses. Bay Street has four houses built between 1989 and 2018. Howe Street, which has several historic buildings associated with the Herreshoff Manufacturing Company, also has seven houses built between 1986 and 2017. (Both of these streets are outside the LHD, with the exception of one parcel on Howe Street.) The visual impact of these recent buildings has been minimal: all are of similar scale, massing, and materials as their historic neighbors; both streets are cul-de-sacs, with little vehicular or pedestrian traffic; and views from adjacent streets are largely obscured by other buildings or by trees and plantings.

Due to its prominent location, the most impactful area of redevelopment to date has been on the west side of Thames Street, north of its intersection with State Street, where a group of buildings between 251 and 267 Thames Street, identified in the 1978 Inventory List as "J.T. O'Connell's Complex, 1797, 1818, c.1840" was redeveloped using historic rehabilitation tax credits ca. 1999. ("J.T. O'Connell's" was apparently the name of a business that occupied the site in the 1970s.) The complex included the Old Bank of Bristol (1797), B. Diman's Counting House, (c.1840), the DeWolf Warehouse (1818) and Gilbert's Seafood (late 20th c.). The tax credit project resulted in a reconstruction of the second and third floors, plus a significant rear addition, at the Old Bank of Bristol; a new building on the corner of Thames and State Streets; a new building or renovation of Gilbert's Seafood; and other rehabilitation work.

Relocations

- Two freestanding granite memorials that previously stood adjacent to the Burnside Memorial Building at 400 Hope Street were moved to other locations:

    - Bristol Police Department Memorial - date of relocation unknown; now at Police Headquarters at 395 Metacom Avenue (outside the NR Historic District).

    - Bristol Volunteer Fire Department Memorial - moved in 1996 to Firefighters Memorial Park on Thames Street opposite Church Street (within the NR Historic District).

Left: Firefighters Memorial Park.

Above: Bristol Volunteer Firefighters Department Memorial (1957, relocated 1996 from 400 Hope Street to this park).

- Three other freestanding granite memorials that had previously stood at 400 Hope Street were removed sometime after 1978 (present location unknown): the World War II, Korea, and Vietnam Conflicts Bristol Honor Roll Memorial; the Vietnam Conflict Memorial; and the Vietnam Conflict Honor Roll Monument. These removals may have coincided with the completion of the Bristol Veterans Honor Roll Garden at 400 Hope Street, which honors all of the town's citizens who served in the U.S. military and in various wars throughout our country's history including World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. The Honor Roll Garden holds several dozen monuments and memorials, numerous inscribed brick pavers, and an expansive granite wall inscribed with the names of individual service members.

<u>Alterations to Individual Resources; Re-Evaluation of Contributing and Non-Contributing Status</u>

One of the major tasks of the 2023-2204 Re-Survey of the Bristol Waterfront Historic District was to identify changes that have occurred to each individual historic building, structure, site, or object within the district boundaries. These findings are recorded in the 38 spreadsheets that are incorporated into these reports by reference.

We also re-evaluated each resource in terms of its Contributing or Non-Contributing status: that is, whether or not it has historic and/or architectural significance within the context of the significance of the Historic District in its entirety.

Collectively, these findings helped us to understand how the NR Historic District as a whole has changed, which informed some of our recommendations.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Status – Changes Over Time: 1978 to 2024

The 1978 Inventory List assigned Contributing or Non-Contributing status to each individual resource within the NR Historic District. (These assessments had not been made within the 1975 NR nomination, which also had an incomplete inventory.) Determinations of Contributing or Non-Contributing are predicated on two factors:

- The age of each building, structure, site, or object, relative to the Period of Significance for the NR Historic District.

    - The "Period of Significance" is the length of time when the historic district was associated with important events, activities, or persons, or attained the characteristics which qualify it for National Register listing. In a Historic District, the start date is usually when such associations or characteristics began to occur, and the end date is when they stopped. If a specific end date cannot be identified - e.g. if the Historic District has continued to develop and evolve in the recent past - then the end date can be 50 years before NR listing.

    - The 1975 NR nomination for the Bristol Waterfront Historic District did not specify a Period of Significance, but it briefly summarized Bristol's history and development from its founding in 1680 to 1974. While the presumed end date for a Period of Significance would be 1925 (50 years prior to NR listing), the nomination mentions eighteen mid-20th century resources in its partial inventory, and several more within the text of the Narrative Description and Statement of Significance. The 1978 Inventory List contains 124 resources dated between 1925 and 1975, and five more dated after 1975. (See findings on Period of Significance, below.)

- The physical integrity of exterior materials and design features.

    - RIHPHC staff evaluated all properties on the 1978 Inventory List for integrity. The fact that some post-1925 resources were deemed Contributing when they were less than 50 years old may be due to periodic updates of the list after 1978.

For the purposes of the 2023-2024 Re-Survey, we assumed that any resources constructed between 1680 and 1974 could potentially be considered Contributing by virtue of age. As noted in the Methodologies section of this report, we then evaluated the integrity of 1,028 pre-1975 resources (most of which are buildings) by focusing on six specific "major architectural features:" height, massing, wall material, trim, windows, and porches. Where changes had occurred to one, two, or three major architectural features, we typically deemed that building to be Contributing; changes to four or more major architectural features typically resulted in an assessment of Non-Contributing. However, in some cases where fewer than three alterations had occurred but the alterations were considered substantial; or there was an accumulation of additional changes affecting architectural elements other than the six designated major features, we made a judgment call for Non-Contributing. Other types of structures, as well as sites and objects, were evaluated for integrity on the basis of known information about their materials and design features as of 1978, compared to current conditions.

Typically, any building, structure, site, or object constructed after 1974 was deemed Non-Contributing by virtue of age. Based on guidance from RIHPHC, we have categorized memorials and monuments related to important historical themes in Bristol, and to late 20th and early 21st century military conflicts and personnel, as Contributing or Non-Contributing based solely on their age; further evaluation should be undertaken when the NR is updated. In addition, some resources will need more research to verify that they were indeed built after 1974.

Final determinations will be made by RIHPHC in conjunction with a future update of the NRHD nomination (meanwhile the existing C/NC status will continue to prevail), but we have recommended:

Contributing: 813 resources (37 of which were NC in 1978)	72% of total
Non-Contributing: 278 resources (139 of which were C in 1978)	25% of total
To Be Determined pending RIHPHC Review: 41 resources	4% of total

A list of Contributing and Non-Contributing resources by street can be found in Appendix A.

Contributing/Non-Contributing Status - Changes Within and Outside of the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone

As noted in the Introduction of this report, the Bristol Historic District Commission regulates all proposed exterior architectural repairs, replacements, alterations, new construction, demolition, and site improvements within the Local Historic District (LHD), which overlaps with a sizable portion of the NR Historic District.

As would be expected with this additional local oversight, the LHD has seen fewer changes overall, and fewer changes from Contributing to Non-Contributing status.

Within the LHD, there were 14 demolitions and 21 new constructions after 1978; no discernible pattern was found with regard to their locations. Thames Street north of State Street had the most changes from Contributing to Non-Contributing status; in other areas of the LHD, changes were more randomly distributed.

Outside the LHD, there were 13 demolitions and 22 new constructions after 1978. An accumulation of alterations on many individual buildings led to a higher percentage of re-evaluations from Contributing to Non-Contributing. These changes were distributed throughout the area, with higher concentrations north of Bradford Street. More research is needed to understand the reasons for this. It is notable that while these negative changes occur on every street, they were less prevalent on certain blocks:

- The north side of Franklin Street between Hope and High streets;
- The south side of Bradford Street between High and Wood streets;
- State and Church streets facing the Town Common; and,
- East-west streets in the southern portion of the NRHD, including Walley, Burton, Union, Cottage and Constitution.

Conversely, some blocks exhibited relatively higher instances of negative changes in status, including Oliver Street; Lincoln Avenue; Franklin Street between High and Wood streets; Wood Street between Union and Constitution streets; and Murphy Avenue.

Patterns of Change

Our analysis revealed some observable patterns of change to character-defining architectural features, within the NRHD as a whole as well as within and outside of the LHD. These patterns, the cumulative result of actions undertaken by individual property owners over the past half century, also reflect some broader trends in American society. Synthetic building materials have become widely available, and have been vigorously (if not always accurately) marketed to consumers as inexpensive, maintenance-free, and energy efficient. Public health regulations enacted to address concerns about lead paint have prompted the replacement of painted wood

exterior architectural features, especially windows, even when other forms of mitigation may be permitted. Workers in the building trades may lack access to preservation education and specialized skills training. The rising cost of maintenance and repairs, especially for older buildings, has become a significant concern for many property owners, and although some financial incentives are available to facilitate preservation-oriented solutions for historic properties, property owners may not be aware of those incentives, or qualify for them in some cases.

Windows

The single largest change throughout the NR Historic District, both within and outside the LHD, has been the installation of vinyl replacement windows, particularly in houses where the characteristic historic window was the wood double hung sash with "true divided lights:" individual panes of glass inserted into a muntin grid. This created a distinctive "multi-light" pattern reflecting a particular architectural period or style, such as 12/12 (twelve panes in the top sash, twelve in the bottom) and 9/9 for Colonial houses; 6/6 for early-mid 19th century Federal and Greek Revival; 2/2 for mid-late 19th century Italianate, Gothic Revival, Second Empire, and Queen Anne; 6/6 or 6/1 for early 20th century Colonial Revival; and other patterns. Vinyl replacement double hung windows are manufactured as 1/1, although an internal or attached muntin grid may be provided to simulate a historic pattern. But our survey findings revealed many cases where the simulated muntin grid is inaccurate for the period and style of the building, or 1/1 sashes replaced historic multi-light sashes.

Siding and Trim

Within the LHD, there were numerous instances of replacing painted wood shingles with unpainted wood shingles, and of replacing wood clapboards with wood shingles. These changes typically did not adversely affect the integrity of the resources or the overall historic architectural character of the district.

Outside the LHD, the most common change to wall materials was the installation of vinyl siding, taking the place of asbestos, aluminum, and wood clapboards and shingles. In nearly every instance, vinyl trim and soffits accompanied the vinyl siding. Frequently, the installation of vinyl siding, trim, and windows caused historic wood windowsills to be shortened and any extant wood lintels to be obscured.

Clockwise from Top Left: 188 High Street – Replacement slider-style windows; 26 Noyes Avenue – replacement 1/1 vinyl windows, shortened sills, vinyl siding and trim; 77-79 Union Street – replacement 1/1 vinyl windows, shortened sills, vinyl siding and trim; 29 Noyes Avenue – 8/8 and 4/4 windows replaced by 2/2 windows.

Porches and Steps

While porch shapes and sizes typically remained unchanged, alterations to historic wood porch railings, posts, decorative details, decks and steps frequently occurred, especially throughout the non-LHD portions of the NRHD. Common changes included: replacement of square balusters with turned balusters or decorative patterning; boxed columns in lieu of turned posts; and removal of decorative brackets.

Left: 115 Union Street - Porch replaced with concrete deck and iron posts and railings. Right: 25 Cooke Street - Front porch enclosed, decorative posts/railings removed.

Dormers

Within and outside the LHD, dormers were added in various configurations or changed in design. For example, at 11 Constitution Street (in the LHD), three gabled dormers were added on the front roof slope; while at 1-3 Bradford Street (in the LHD), three of four gabled dormers were changed into shed dormers. At 189 Wood Street (outside the LHD), individual gable and shed dormers were combined to form a continuous shed dormer.

Left: 11 Constitution Street, June 1988. Right: Same house, 2024.

Storefronts

With the reduction in neighborhood commercial enterprises, several commercial storefronts were changed to accommodate residential use. These changes were typically accompanied by other alterations that caused the building's status to change from Contributing to Non-Contributing.

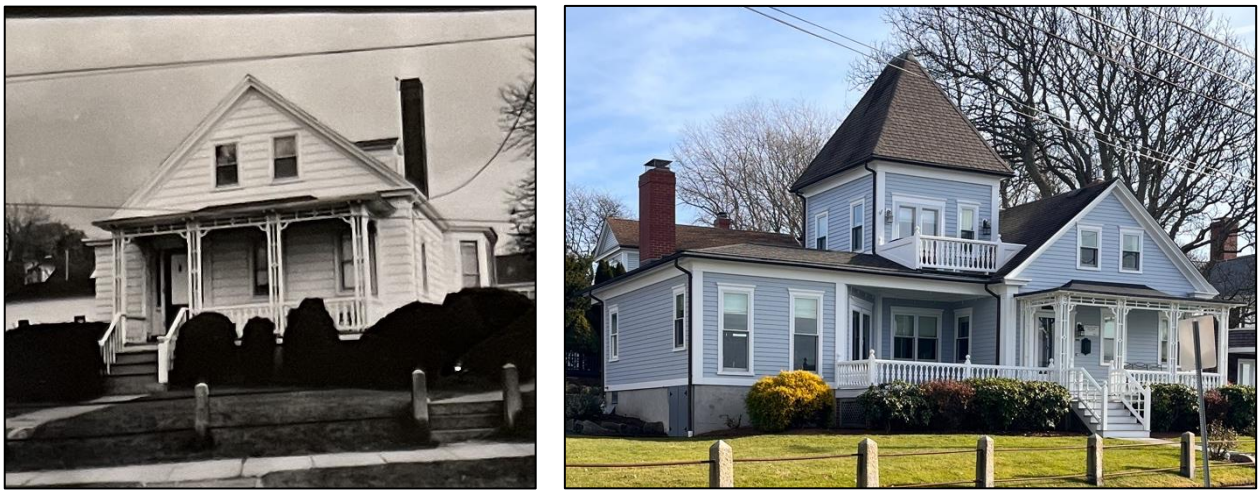
Left: 10-14 Bradford Street – Right storefront enclosed. Right: 137 Bradford Street – First floor storefront changed to residential style.

Additions

Additions were built in various configurations on side and rear elevations of houses. The sizes and details varied throughout the district, but the largest changes took place outside the LHD, as at 283 Wood Street, where a former 1-story "wing" was replaced with a 2-story rear addition.

Large additions sometimes contributed to a change in status from Contributing to Non-Contributing, as at 202 Hope Street (in the LHD) where major side and rear additions and a 2-story tower were added. (Whether these changes were made after the 1987 creation of the LHD and were subject to BHDC review was unclear at the time of this report.)

In some instances, major additions did not affect the C/NC status of resources, as at 38 Central Street, a house within the LHD. (While it was previously NC, the reason was solely based on age, not integrity.) The large post-1988 addition is attached to the original house via a small connector. It is compatible with but differentiated from the original house and was doubtless helped by BHDC review.



Left: 202 Hope Street – before additions. Right: 202 Hope Street – after additions.

Above: 38 Central Street – Compatible addition on the right side of the house.

Period of Significance

As noted in the previous section, although the unspecified Period of Significance for the Bristol Waterfront Historic District might reasonably be inferred to be 1680 to 1925 (50 years prior to NR listing), the NR nomination's partial inventory includes eighteen buildings (or additions), sites, and objects constructed between 1925 and 1974:

20-30 Burnside Street - Herreshoff Manufacturing Co. complex ("1865-1948")

56 Burton Street - Cottage (ca. 1925)

90 Church Street - Residence (ca. 1925)

9 [misidentified as 10] Court Street - Bristol Police Station (1935)

20 High Street - Dixon-Leahy House (ca. 1931)

300 High Street - First Congregational Church, school addition (1961)

411 High Street - Apartments (ca. 1925)

125 Hope Street - Herreshoff House and Model Room (ca. 1940)

142 Hope Street - Cup Defender Monument (ca. 1960)

[378] Hope Street - St. Michael's Church Bell Tower (1961)

515 Hope Street - U.S. Post Office (1961-62)

574 Hope Street - Andrews Memorial School (1938)

601 Hope Street - Industrial National Bank (1951)

99 State Street - Dr. D'Angelo House (1939), site of [undated] Methodist Church destroyed in Hurricane of 1938

141 State Street - Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, addition (1971)

Thames Street opposite Church and John Streets - Rockwell Park (1930), site of DeWolf Inn (1895-1930)

30 Union Street - James E. Sullivan House (1941)

127 Wood Street - Cottage (ca. 1962)

The partial inventory did not specify Contributing or Non-Contributing status for these post-1925 resources. But the mere fact that the inventory contained less than one-third of the district's total resources indicates that each resource mentioned in the inventory was deliberately selected because it was considered historically or architecturally notable.

Moreover, the NR nomination's Narrative Description (on Continuation Sheet 5) cited three mid-20th century buildings as "a few examples of good contemporary architecture:" the Industrial National Bank at 601 Hope Street, the U.S. Post Office at 515 Hope Street, and the Old Stone Bank at 464 Hope Street (1964; not in the inventory). The Statement of Significance (on Continuation Sheet 9) mentioned the construction of the St. Elizabeth Church School (1954; not in the inventory) to serve the needs of that Portuguese parish, noting in the same paragraph that in 1974, fully half of Bristol's population was of Portuguese heritage, Bristol public schools offered Portuguese language instruction, and the Rhode Island School of Design had initiated a program to help Portuguese immigrants "assimilate into Rhode Island's cultural life with special emphasis on local history."

Clearly, the nomination's author believed that some mid-20th century resources in the Historic District deserved recognition for their historic or architectural significance.

The 1978 Inventory List for the Historic District contains 129 primary buildings, other structures, and objects dated between 1925 and 2000. (The list was periodically updated after 1978.) Of those resources, 72 were deemed Contributing, including most of the post-1925 properties cited in the NR nomination (although in some cases with different names and/or dates) as well as ten monuments and memorials. Fifty-seven resources were deemed Non-Contributing, notably including all three mid-20th century buildings cited in the NR nomination as "good contemporary architecture." Here is a breakdown of this group by decade:

1925-1929	17 Contributing	0 Non-Contributing	17 Total
1930-1939	27 Contributing	1 Non-Contributing	28 Total
1940-1949	12 Contributing	9 Non-Contributing	21 Total
1950-1959	8 Contributing	18 Non-Contributing	26 Total
1960-1969	4 Contributing	16 Non-Contributing	20 Total
1970-1975	3 Contributing	9 Non-Contributing	12 Total
Post-1975	1 Contributing	4 Non-Contributing	5 Total
	72 Contributing	57 Non-Contributing	129 Total

Six of these post-1925 buildings were demolished after 1978; one memorial was removed and one was relocated out of the NR Historic District. Omitted from the 1978 Inventory List were two additional mid-20th century resources: St. Michael's Church Bell Tower at 378 Hope Street (1961), and a house at 100 Wood Street (1952); plus, a 1961 addition to the First

Congregational Church at 300 High Street, and a 1971 addition designed by architect Oresto de Saia to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church at 141 State Street.

Left: St. Michael's Church Bell Tower, built 1961.
Right: The Andrews School, built 1938.
Below: 127 Wood Street, built ca. 1962.

Technical Corrections: Errors and Inconsistencies in Previous Documentation

Properties Missing from 1978 Inventory List

Fifty-six historic properties within the boundaries of the NR Historic District (most of which had been surveyed) were found to be missing from the 1978 Inventory List. In our spreadsheets of survey findings, the absence of these properties from the 1978 inventory list and/or from RIHPHC survey files is noted in the "Comments" column.

2 Bay Street - House (c. 1915) – previously surveyed as part of 413 Wood St.

12 Bay Street - House (1977)

1 Bay View Avenue- House (1860)

2 Bay View Avenue - House (1920)

3-5 Bay View Avenue - House (1900)

4 Bay View Avenue - House (1920)

6 Bay View Avenue - House (1900)

7-9 Bay View Avenue - House (1900)

8 Bay View Avenue - House (1900)

15 Bay View Avenue - House (1950)

17 Bay View Avenue - House (1960)

18 Bay View Avenue - House (1780)

22 Bay View Avenue - House (1900)

26 Bay View Avenue - House (1900)

30 Bay View Avenue - House (1954)

33 Bay View Avenue - House (1900)

34 Bay View Avenue - House (1785)

35 Bay View Avenue - House (1914)

36-38 Bay View Avenue - House (1930)

108 Church Street - House (1811)

12 Congregational Street - House (date unknown; stands behind/on same lot as 282 High St. and 8 Congregational St.)

98-1/2 Constitution Street - House (1860)

31 Cottage Street - House (c. 1850?)

65 Court Street - House (c. 1900)

93 Franklin Street - F. Pearce House (c. 1865)

107 Franklin Street - House (c. 1855)

2 High Street (c. 1719) – John Walker Lot, Historic Cemetery BR006 [not visible from a public way]

300 High Street (c. 1684) – First Congregational Church Cemetery, Historic Cemetery BR009

381 High Street - William H. Sprague House (1860)

384 High Street - Edwin Middleton House (1879-80)

400 High Street - House (late 19th c?)

426-428 High Street - Multi-Family House (c. 1930)

427 High Street - House (c. 1930)

427-1/2 High Street - House (early 20th c?)

429 High Street - House (early 20th c?)

377 Hope Street – St. Michael's Church Cemetery, Historic Cemetery BR010

378 Hope Street - St. Michael's Church Bell Tower (1961)

500 Hope Street – Linden Place (1810) [note: this is in 1975 NR inventory]

692 Hope Street – House (c. 1830)

697 Hope Street – D.T. Bradford House (c. 1800)

12 Howe Street – Codman Carriage House (1872)

19 Monroe Avenue – House (1948)

21 Monroe Avenue – House (c. 1895)

74 Oliver Street – House (1885)

1 or 10 Resolute Lane - Herreshoff Mfg. Co. Warehouse (early 20th c.)

135 State Street – Bristol Train of Artillery Hall (1842, 1869)

141 State Street - Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church (1917-18)

564 Thames Street – Pump House (early 20th c)

107 Union Street - Multi-car garage (early 20th c?) - previously surveyed as part of 99-100 Union

55 Walley Street – House (1959)

10 Wardwell Street/500R Hope Street – Three Linden Place outbuildings (c. 1850-1905) [note: the former Ballroom is mentioned in the NR inventory under "Wardwell Street – Bristol Art Museum"]

100 Wood Street – House (1952)

131-1/2 Wood Street – House (19th c?)

[behind 192] Wood Street - Outbuilding (late 19th c?), stands on a separate lot

501-503 Wood Street – Mixed Use Building (1928) (previously surveyed as 497-499 Wood)

577 Wood Street – St. Elizabeth's Church (1913)

Discrepancies Between the 1975 NR Nomination, the NR District Map, and/or the 1978 Inventory List

The 1975 NR nomination, which included a written boundary description as well as an accompanying boundary map (captioned "1974, Revised 1978"), and the 1978 Inventory list, were not completely consistent with each other.

- The written boundary description and the "Revised 1978" map excluded some properties on Washington Street and on Bay View Avenue. The rationale was not explained in the text of the NR nomination, but these exclusions are puzzling because the land area appears to have been within the original town plan of 1680, and the dates of most of these buildings (some of which need to be confirmed) indicate that they were more than 50 years old in 1975. (See "Recommendations.")

- Although all of Bay Street and a portion of the south side of Bay View Avenue lay within the NRHD district boundaries as mapped, neither street was included in the 1975 NR inventory or the 1978 Inventory List. (See "Recommendations.")

- The "Revised 1978" map excluded the block of Walley Street between High Street and Wood Street, yet the 1978 Inventory List included six houses on that block. (See "Recommendations.")

- The 1978 Inventory List includes the following properties which are not within the NRHD. These five contiguous properties were all found to be Non-Contributing due to age or diminished integrity and should be deleted from that list.
    - 80 Wood Street – House, ca. 1950
    - 81 Wood Street – House, 2004
    - 89 Wood Street – House, 1900
    - 98 Wood Street – House, 1951
    - 100 Wood Street – House, 1952, renovated 2023

Discrepancies in the Bristol Local Historic District Inventory List

The Town of Bristol provided us with a list of 769 parcels (some of which reflect multiple condominium units within a single building; and some do not contain buildings) that are situated within the boundaries of the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone ("LHD"). We used that "LHD Inventory List," as well as the LHD map (available online), to fill in the "In LHD?" columns of our spreadsheets of survey findings, and derived a total of 607 resources within the LHD.

A base map that was generated for the purposes of this project, illustrating building footprints and property lines in relation to the boundaries of both the NR Historic District and the Local Historic District, revealed some discrepancies in the LHD Inventory List, where buildings were missing or misidentified:

Missing from the LHD Inventory List

- 40 Byfield Street (same parcel as 38 Byfield Street).
- 36 Church Street (same parcel as 366 Hope Street).
- 41R and 41-rear Constitution Street (respectively, the Benjamin Doty Carpentry Shop and the Edna Wall Playhouse, both named in the 1975 NR inventory) (same parcel as 41 Constitution Street).
- 48-½ Constitution Street (same parcel as 48 Constitution Street).
- 64 Constitution Street.
- 74-½ Constitution Street (same parcel as 74 Constitution Street).
- 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 15 Howe Street. (Only 14 Howe Street, a house built in 2015, was on the LHD Inventory List. But Howe Street has 14 total houses, of which seven are historic (2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 12 Howe); the rest are all recent construction.)
- 26 Noyes Avenue.
- 4 School Court and 6 School Court (same parcel as 2 School Court).

Misidentified in the LHD Inventory List

- 2 Church Street (address number on the building) is in the LHD Inventory List as 127 Thames Street (Assessor's address).
- On John Street, the LHD Inventory List contains four addresses for Assessor's Plat 10/Lot 3: 1 John, 2 John, 15 John, and 17 John. The addresses 1 John and 2 John do not exist in the field. AP 10/3 contains two buildings (each with multiple condominium units) at 15-17 John Street and 423 Hope Street. Both of these buildings are represented on our spreadsheets under those addresses.
- 125 Thames Street is a large industrial complex that spans multiple parcels (Plat 10/Lots 60, 61, 62, and 73). In the LHD Inventory list, Plat 10/62 and Plat 10/73 are found under Constitution Street, with no address numbers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As part of our Scope of Work, we were asked to make some recommendations to facilitate a future update of the 1975 NR nomination:

- Provide a complete list of properties within the NR Historic District, identified by current street addresses and assessor's plat and lot numbers.

- Re-evaluate Contributing/Non-Contributing status for each individual property.

- Define a Period of Significance for the Historic District.

- Re-evaluate the Historic District boundaries and identify possible boundary amendments.

The spreadsheets of survey findings list all primary buildings as well as structures, sites, and objects within the NR Historic District, and also indicate our recommendations for Contributing and Non-Contributing status of each of those resources.

Below are our recommendations for the Period of Significance and Boundary Corrections and Amendments, some additional recommendations to consider for a future update of the NR nomination, and some for the Local Historic District as well.

Period of Significance

We recommend that in a future update of the Bristol Waterfront Historic District NR nomination, the Period of Significance should be 1680 to 1974, beginning with the founding of Bristol and ending fifty years ago. (The end date could be extended to 1975 or later, depending on when an updated nomination may be prepared and submitted for approval.)

This recommendation is based in part upon the standard 50-year age threshold for NR eligibility, and in part on the fact that RIHPHC staff had previously identified as many as 72 resources dating between 1925 and 1974 as Contributing to the Historic District (and had inadvertently overlooked four others). Although eight of those 76 resources no longer exist, still nearly 7% of the total resources that we surveyed fall into this category.

Note also that RIHPHC's 1990 survey publication (pp. 29-33) contains a chapter on "The Recent Past: 1920-Present," that explores that period of time in more detail than the NR nomination did. It indicates that Bristol's manufacturing sector (primarily textiles, rubber products, and

boatbuilding) declined in the first half of the 20th century, despite brief upticks in demand and production during both World Wars. Foreign immigration likewise slowed considerably until after World War II, when there was another surge of newcomers of Portuguese heritage, a community that constituted 13% of Bristol's population by 1970. Between 1950 and 1990, as Bristol became a suburban town in the Providence metropolitan area, its population nearly doubled; while most new development occurred outside of the NR Historic District, such a large influx of new residents prompted some architectural and other changes within the Historic District as well. These themes also factor into the recommended Period of Significance.

NRHD Boundary Amendments

Northern Boundary - Recommended Amendments

1) Thirteen properties on Washington Street, Bay View Avenue, Monroe Avenue, and Wood Street were excluded from the NRHD, though the lots would have been within the original town plan, and most of the buildings were built within the presumed Period of Significance. We recommend the northern boundary be adjusted to correct the unexplained exclusion of these properties. This would also smooth out a currently jagged boundary line and would bring both sides of Bay View Avenue between High Street and Wood Street into the NR Historic District.

    - 70 Washington Street – House, ca. 1920 (recommended C?)
    - 72 Washington Street – Commercial Building, ca. 1960 (recommended C?)
    - 74-76 Washington Street – House, ca. 1926 (recommended C?)
    - 78 Washington Street – House, ca. 1900 (recommended C?)
    - 82 Washington Street – House, ca. 1900 (recommended C?) – on same lot as 86 Washington Street
    - 86 Washington Street – House, mid/late 20th century (recommended C?) – on same lot as 82 Washington Street
    - 65 Monroe Avenue - House, late 19th c. (recommended C?)
    - 41 Bay View Avenue – House, ca. 1900 (recommended C)
    - 43 Bay View Avenue – House, ca. 1900 (recommended NC)
    - 45 Bay View Avenue – House, ca. 1900 (recommended C)
    - 612 Wood Street – House, ca. 1915 (recommended NC)
    - 614 Wood Street – House, ca. 1952 (recommended C)
    - 623 Wood Street - House, ca. 1900 (recommended NC) – on same lot as 45 Bay View Avenue

All of the above properties are listed in our spreadsheets of findings (in italics) and noted as recommended to be added to the NRHD; they were not counted toward the current total of resources surveyed.

Two buildings in the proposed northern expansion boundary area.

Above: 72 Washington Street.

Right: 45 Bay View Avenue

2) We recommend that the northern district boundary be extended further north to encompass two historic buildings that RIHPHC's 1990 Bristol survey publication had recommended be considered for National Register nomination, and that are already in the Local Historic District. This expansion would also incorporate a bridge, a war memorial, and two public open spaces.

- 35 Washington Street - Guiteras Memorial Building, now Guiteras School (1925), designed by architects Wallis & Howe; built as a junior high school, now an elementary school. NR recommended in 1990. Situated on the north side of Washington Street immediately abutting the NR Historic District. In the Bristol LHD. Town-owned.
    - Also on the school property, standing at the corner of Washington Street and Hope Street, is a memorial erected in 1975 to honor PFC Bernard "Butch" Almeida, who was killed in action in Korea in 1954.
    - An individual NR nomination for the Guiteras School was recently submitted to RIHPHC, and is awaiting review.

35 Washington Street, Guiteras School

- 25 Washington Street - Guiteras Field (date unknown); athletic field associated with the Guiteras School. Needs research to confirm NR eligibility, but incorporating this property along with the Guiteras School would bring both sides of Washington Street into the NR Historic District. Not currently in the Bristol LHD. Town-owned.

- Hope Street north of Washington Street - Silver Creek Bridge (R.I. Bridge #153). Originally constructed in 1922, rebuilt in 2020. Part of the bridge's retaining walls are stone walls erected by the federal Works Progress Administration in 1932-1935. Needs research to confirm NR eligibility. In the Bristol LHD. State-owned.

Silver Creek Bridge

- Hope Street north of Washington Street - Anthony & Eva Thomas Park at Silver Creek (ca. 2008-2017). A public park that includes "Mrs. Perry's Garden," dedicated to a founding member of the Bristol Garden Club (founded 1928), whose family owned the adjoining house at 814 Hope Street in the 1920s. Needs research to confirm the size of the property and its NR eligibility, but the park lies between the Guiteras School and the Bosworth house. In the Bristol LHD. Town-owned.

Anthony & Eva Thomas Park

- 814 Hope Street - Deacon Nathaniel Bosworth House/"Silver Creek" (1683 et seq.). NR recommended in 1990. Although much altered, this is the oldest surviving house in Bristol and was documented in the Historic American Building Survey (RI-109). In the Bristol LHD. Privately owned.

All of the above properties are listed in our spreadsheets of findings (in italics) and noted as recommended to be added to the NR HD; they were not counted toward the current total of resources surveyed.

Note: The Northern Boundary Amendments Map is attached as Appendix D.

814 Hope Street

Southern Boundary - Recommended Amendments

To resolve some of the boundary discrepancies noted in "Findings," above, we recommend the following:

On Walley Street east of High Street, map boundaries should include:

- 47 Walley Street – House, 2014 (recommended NC)
- 48 Walley Street – Horton-Rockwell House, ca. 1860, ca. 1925 (recommended C)
- 49 Walley Street – House, 2016 (recommended NC)
- 50 Walley Street – House, ca. 1960 (recommended C)
- 51 Walley Street – House, ca. 1961 (recommended C)
- 54 Walley Street – House, ca. 1930 (recommended C)
- 55 Walley Street – House, 1959 (recommended C)
- 56 Walley Street – House, 1970 (recommended NC?)
- 99 Wood Street (northwest corner of Walley) - House, 1955 (recommended C)

Left: 54 Walley Street. Right: 99 Wood Street

At the southern end of High Street, map boundaries should include:

- 2 High Street (Assessor's Plat 21/Lot 24). In 1975, this property contained three abutting lots, but only the lot containing the house was mapped as lying inside the district boundaries. After 1978, those three lots were merged into one large 2.6-acre lot that also fronts on Hope Street (where a tall stucco-clad perimeter wall continues from High Street along Hope Street to an associated outbuilding) and on Walley Street.

- Assessor's Plat 21/Lot 23. On the Assessor's map, this is identified as "Walker's Burial Ground," a 3,824 sq.ft. lot situated 167.44 feet north of Hope Street, and surrounded on the west, north, and east by the 2 High Street property. (The burial ground's southern abutter is 20 Hope Street, which is outside of the NRHD.) This site is not visible from any surrounding street. The R.I. Historical Cemeteries Database locates the "John Walker Lot," containing 25 burials (three of them identified, and dated 1719-1724), "at the northeast corner of High and Walley Streets behind a house at 20 High Street," but no burial ground is visible from either street at that location. The photographs of this burial ground show it surrounded by dry-laid stone walls, with a wood-frame shed standing just outside one section of the wall; on the Assessor's map, a small outbuilding for 2 High Street abuts the west side of the burial ground lot. This seems to indicate that "20 High Street" may be a typo that misidentified "20 Hope Street."

Note: The Southern Boundary Amendments Map is attached as Appendix E.

Eastern Boundary – Recommended Study Area for Potential Amendment

An area east of Wood Street, bounded by Bay View Avenue on the north, Magnolia Street, Third School Street and Fox Hill Avenue on the east, and Richmond Street on the south, merits further study for its potential either to be added to the Bristol Waterfront NRHD, or perhaps nominated as a separate district.

Much of the building stock appears to date from the mid-19th century to the mid-20th century. The predominantly residential streetscapes exhibit similar density, scale, building types and materials, and architectural styles as found within the NRHD. Many individual buildings have undergone some degree of alteration, similar to changes in integrity that we found in some parts of the NRHD.

Our recommendations here are as follows:

1) Conduct a historic architectural survey to document the approximately 440 properties within the boundaries described above. (About 90 were surveyed by RIHPHC several decades ago, but that information needs to be updated.) This work should include new historic building data sheets (or spreadsheet equivalents) and digital photographs for each property. (See Appendix B for a list of addresses in this study area.) Note that the Bristol Historical & Preservation Society has research files on some buildings that were moved into in this study area from elsewhere, e.g. to accommodate mill construction on Thames Street.

2) Research the development history of this area, with particular focus on three important themes of Bristol history: industrial production, immigration, and communities of people of color. The study area may be NR-eligible under Criterion A (associated with the broad

patterns of history) even if it does not qualify under Criterion C (architecture). Each of these themes deserves more documentation in a future update of the Bristol Waterfront NRHD nomination as well (see "Recommended Amendments to Narrative Description and Statement of Significance," below).

a) Industrial production.[2] In 1865 the National Rubber Company began manufacturing vulcanized rubber products in a complex of stone and brick buildings constructed on ten acres of land on the east side of Wood Street south of Franklin Street. Rebranded as the United States Rubber Company in 1888, the business grew exponentially over the next several decades: its workforce doubled to about 1,500 employees by 1901, while the physical plant expanded to 37 structures on 19 acres of land bounded by Wood Street, Franklin Street, Magnolia Street, and Shaw's Lane. U.S. Rubber was Bristol's largest employer for much of the first half of the 20th century, particularly during World War I and World War II as demand for insulated wire products skyrocketed; the wartime workforce was between 4,000 and 6,000 people. In 1957 the Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation acquired the plant and manufactured aluminum cable there until 1977.

   The U.S. Rubber Company complex is already in the NRHD, but since the company apparently did not build any employee housing of its own, its steadily growing workforce presumably prompted the development of the surrounding blocks east of Wood Street into a dense residential neighborhood between ca. 1865-1957. As this area is also within a one-half mile radius (walking distance) of Bristol Harbor, some housing built (or relocated to this area from the town center as new commercial and industrial sites were being developed) during that period was likely occupied by residents who worked elsewhere in the town center.

b) Immigration.[3] Bristol's late 19th century manufacturing sector (which also included several other sites within the NRHD such as textile mills along the Thames Street waterfront and the nationally renowned Herreshoff Manufacturing Company Boatyards on Burnside and Hope streets), prompted a surge in foreign immigration. In 1850 less than ten percent of Bristol's population was foreign-born; by 1875 that percentage was nearly a quarter, and by 1900 fully half of the town's residents had immigrated from various European countries, particularly Ireland, Portugal, and Italy. The largest and most rapid surge occurred between 1900-1920, when Bristol's population nearly doubled.

[2] Bristol survey book (1990), pp. 19-20 and 116-117.
[3] Bristol survey book (1990), pp. 20-21.

Irish, Portuguese, and Italian enclaves developed adjacent to the U.S. Rubber Company, anchored by three Catholic churches respectively serving these communities: St. Mary's Church at 330 Wood Street (1911, replacing an earlier church built in 1855), St. Elizabeth's Church at 577 Wood Street (1913), and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church at 141 State Street (1918-19). Both Our Lady of Mt. Carmel and St. Elizabeth's built parochial schools next to the churches in 1952 and 1954, respectively. These three churches and two schools are already in the NR Historic District, as are several other buildings that are occupied by businesses and organizations related to these immigrant communities.

c) Communities of Color: New Goree. Named for Gorée Island near Dakar, Senegal, West Africa (the largest slave-trading center on the African coast from the 15th to the 19th centuries, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site[4]), New Goree was a neighborhood founded and predominantly occupied by people of color that existed on and east of Wood Street from ca. 1790 to ca. 1920.

Research on New Goree is ongoing, conducted by members of the Bristol Historical & Preservation Society and another local organization called Research BIPOC History. The neighborhood boundaries have not yet been confirmed, and how many New Goree buildings may survive is not yet known. But information that has come to light thus far indicates that New Goree was established by a small group of formerly enslaved Africans and African Americans near the intersection of Wood and Franklin Streets. By the mid-19th century New Goree had about 200 residents as well as some local businesses, an African Methodist Episcopal church, a school, and social and cultural organizations serving the community. The construction of the National Rubber Company plant displaced many New Goree residents, disrupting the neighborhood's physical, economic, and social fabric. Some New Goree homes were moved to other locations; others were demolished. Some residents relocated to adjacent blocks on the east side of Wood Street south of State Street; others left Bristol altogether. But New Goree apparently survived as an identifiable neighborhood of people of color into the 1920s.

To date, researchers have confirmed eight houses associated with New Goree. Six are already in the NR Historic District, but at least two others survive east of Wood Street:

- 360 Wood Street (moved there) – New Goree style
- 363 Wood Street (moved there)
- 495 Wood Street (moved there) – Maria Hazard House, New Goree style
- 513 Wood Street (currently occupied by Golden Shears salon) – New Goree style
- 527 Wood Street (moved there)
- 564 Wood Street – Daniel Slade House, New Goree style

[4] https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/26/

- 211 Franklin Street – New Goree style
- 11 Wilson Street – New Goree style

Six of the New Goree houses also exhibit a design characteristic that researchers have determined is reminiscent of African building traditions: a narrow 15-7/8" span between structural members. More information is needed on the defining characteristics of "New Goree style," and whether this is a typology unique to Bristol or has also been identified in other Rhode Island communities that had large populations of color in the 19th century.

New Goree had an African Methodist Episcopal Church, which also contained a school. This was identified as "African Church" on an 1851 map of Bristol, on the west side of Wood Street between Bradford and Congregational Streets. That site is now 417 Wood Street, occupied by the Bristol Sports Club, which was founded in the early 1960s by soccer enthusiasts in the local Portuguese community. [5]

Clockwise from Top Left: Catherine Street Streetscape; Roma Street Streetscape; 11 Wilson Street, a New Goree House; 513-1/2 Wood Street, a New Goree House (in the NRHD).

Note: The East of Wood Street Study Area Map is attached as Appendix C.

[5] New Goree information derived from Research BIPOC History website and conversation with Dr. Kevin Jordan on 19 June 2024.

Other Recommended Amendments to NR Nomination

Narrative Description and Inventory

- Update all historic names and dates for resources, pending additional research to resolve discrepancies identified in the survey findings spreadsheets.

- If "New Goree Style" can be confirmed as a distinct building typology in Bristol, its characteristics should be described within the text of the Narrative Description.

- The six houses and one historic site known to be associated with New Goree, as well as any additional resources that may come to light through further research, should be identified as such within the inventory.

- Sites known to be associated with historic immigrant communities in Bristol (and others that may be found through additional research) should be identified as such within the inventory, including:

    - United Brothers Synagogue, 205 High Street
    - Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church and Parochial School, 141 and 127 State Street
    - St. Mary's Church, 330 Wood Street
    - African Methodist Episcopal Church, later Bristol Sports Club, 417 Wood Street
    - Azorean Butcher Shop, 529 Wood Street
    - St. Elizabeth's Church and Parochial School, 577 Wood Street
    - Sons of Italy Hall, later Portuguese Independent Band Club, 588 Wood Street

Areas of Significance and Statement of Significance: Additional Research Needed

The 1975 NR nomination identifies several Areas of Significance for the Bristol Waterfront NR HD: Aboriginal Historic, Architecture, Art, Commerce, Education, Industry, Invention, Landscape Architecture, Military, Political, Religion/Philosophy, Social/Humanitarian, Theater, Transportation, Urban Planning and Recreation.

We recommend that an updated nomination should include these categories and subcategories, as defined in *National Register Bulletin 16A: How to Complete the National Register Registration Form*:

- Art
- Commerce
- Community Planning and Development
- Engineering
- Entertainment/Recreation
- Ethnic Heritage: Black, Indigenous and European

- Industry
- Invention
- Landscape Architecture
- Maritime History
- Military
- Performing Arts
- Politics/Government
- Religion
- Social History
- Transportation

The thematic categories have been slightly refined since the 1970s, so most of these areas of significance are already represented in the existing nomination, albeit briefly; many will merit more expansive discussion. However, it is notable that while the 1975 nomination does discuss Bristol's, and the DeWolf family's, involvement in the trans-Atlantic slave trade during the Colonial period and into the early 19th century, it does not include any information about the Black population of Bristol during the entire Period of Significance. We strongly recommend that the NR nomination be updated to include information on Black Ethnic Heritage, for both free and enslaved Black people. A summary of the New Goree neighborhood is stated above, but the study of Black Ethnic Heritage should be done for the entire NR Historic District.

In addition, the Bristol Timeline of Enslavement to date has identified nearly 500 enslaved or likely enslaved African, African-American, and Indigenous inhabitants of Bristol in the late 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries, indicating that White ownership of enslaved persons and the practice of human trafficking were more prevalent in early Bristol than was previously known. Many of these people (enslavers and enslaved) lived and worked within what is now the Bristol Waterfront Historic District; the locations of some sites have been identified thus far. (See https://www.researchbipochistory.org/.) Any existing sites associated with enslaved persons should be noted in an updated NR inventory and discussed within the context of an Area of Significance.

Recommendation for the Proposed "Northern Hope Street Historic District"

RIHPHC's 1990 Bristol survey publication recommended a NR nomination for the "Northern Hope Street Historic District," a linear district extending from the Bosworth House at 814 Hope Street north to the Levi DeWolf House at 996 Hope Street (just south of Vantage Point Drive). "This would include the [National Historic Landmark] Joseph Reynolds House; several mid-eighteenth century to mid-nineteenth century farmhouses; an 1840s fire station; the Seth Paull House; a number of late nineteenth-century two-family dwellings; and several fine examples of Colonial Revival architecture."[6]

[6] Bristol survey book (1990), p. 41.

If, as recommended elsewhere in this report, the Bosworth House is incorporated into an amended NR nomination for the Bristol Waterfront Historic District, a "Northern Hope Street Historic District" may still be viable. Properties on both sides of the street from the Beach House Restaurant at 805 Hope Street north to VFW Post 237 at 850 Hope Street are already in the LHD.

We recommend that a study area extending from 805 Hope Street to 999 Hope Street (at the corner of Vantage Point Drive), incorporating both sides of the street, should be surveyed (or re-surveyed, as appropriate, to obtain updated photographs and architectural findings) and evaluated for potential NR eligibility.

Recommendations for the Bristol Historic District Overlay Zone

Discrepancies in the LHD Inventory List

As noted in Findings, there are several missing and misidentified properties in the LHD Inventory list. We recommend the BHDC cross-reference our spreadsheets to obtain an accurate list of addresses and plat/lot numbers for all resources within the LHD boundaries.

Recommended Expansion

We recommend that the Town of Bristol consider expanding the Historic District Overlay Zone to include the entire NRHD (with revised northern and southern boundaries as may result from other recommendations in this report).

If and when a formal historic architectural survey is conducted within a study area bounded by Wood Street on the west, Bay View Avenue on the north, Magnolia Street, Third School Street, and Fox Hill Avenue on the east, and Richmond Street on the south, the findings of that survey may also prompt consideration of a further expansion of the Overlay Zone.

Design review guidelines that are specific to both of these areas could be developed to encourage preservation-oriented repairs and rehabilitation, yet allow existing non-historic exterior architectural materials and features such as vinyl siding, vinyl replacement windows, and other previous alterations and additions to be repaired or replaced in kind. Certain minor alterations could also be reviewed by staff, to expedite the approval process. But the guidelines should require Bristol Historic District Commission review of proposed major alterations, additions, new construction, and demolition, to ensure that the historic streetscapes are preserved and respected in terms of height, massing, setbacks, scale, and materials.

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APPENDICES

ATTACHED AS SEPARATE FILES

APPENDIX A: Bristol Waterfront Historic District at a Glance (2024)

APPENDIX B: Study Area East of Wood Street – List of Addresses

APPENDIX C: Proposed Study Area East of Wood Street

APPENDIX D: Northern Boundary Amendments Map

APPENDIX E: Southern Boundary Amendments Map