

# COLLEGE<sup>482</sup> HILL

## a demonstration study of historic area renewal

Conducted by the Providence City Plan Commission in cooperation with the  
Providence Preservation Society and the Housing and Home Finance Agency

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1959

**COLLEGE HILL**

Demonstration Grant Study

Project R. I. D-I

**IN CITY COUNCIL**  
**AUG 6 - 1959**

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### **For the Plan Commission:**

Frank H. Malley, Director of the Plan Commission  
William D. Warner, Project Director  
Allen Day  
Mrs. George E. Downing  
Miss Marjorie Olson  
Gerald Cross  
James Skeritt  
Martin Adler  
Mrs. Gilbert W. Warren  
Miss Edith D'Iorio

### **For Blair Associates:**

Lachlan F. Blair  
Stuart W. Stein

## **COLLEGE HILL DEMONSTRATION GRANT STUDY**

Conducted by the Providence City Plan Commission with the assistance of Blair Associates, City Planning Consultants, Providence, Rhode Island

Supported by: The Housing and Home Finance Agency  
The City of Providence  
The Providence Preservation Society



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# FOREWARD

Throughout the nation historic architecture in the urban scene has been subjected to a continuous process of loss and deterioration. The art that is architecture cannot be collected in a gallery but lives on in the buildings themselves. Cities are the museums of buildings and the people are their curators; the citizens of old cities are responsible for finding ways to safeguard, renew and bring historic architecture into living use in the contemporary world. If over a period of time, the best structures of the past can be saved and the poor ones replaced, the cities will become repositories of man's outstanding architectural achievements. Unfortunately, but few mechanisms for control and judgement of architecture exist on a city-wide scale, and good buildings are indiscriminately torn down with the bad as city changes take place.

## ORIGIN OF STUDY

Awareness of the problems of architectural erosion in the College Hill section of Providence prompted the Providence Preservation Society to turn to the City of Providence authorities for help and the city subsequently turned to the Urban Renewal Administration for help. In April, 1957, under the provisions of Section 314 of the Federal Housing Act, the federal government granted the Providence City Plan Commission \$48,533 in funds equalling two-thirds of the cost of a demonstration study aimed at developing and improving techniques for urban renewal in a historic area. The terms of the grant required local financial support and the Providence Preservation Society raised \$18,530 by popular subscription, while the Providence City Plan Commission guaranteed contributions in staff services to make a total budget of \$72,800. The project was allotted eighteen months and was carried out by the city by and through its City Plan Commission which in addition to special project staff engaged the services of the firm of Blair Associates, city planning consultants in Providence. In compliance with the terms

of the grant, this report has been prepared and the findings are submitted herein.

## SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Since both federal and local sources have contributed to the support of the study, its goals, while complementary, are two-fold. The federal government considers College Hill sufficiently typical of other areas in the United States where historic communities have survived. It has chosen to support this particular study so that ideas and techniques could be developed which would prove helpful to other cities in their efforts to renew or preserve historic areas. It is hoped that this study will serve to enlarge the present store of ammunition to be used in the fight to renew the cities of the nation.

On the other hand, local residents have been interested in solving the problems which plague the area, and which made undertaking the study necessary in the first place. Civic officials and the residents of Providence want a plan to help them restore and protect their historic architecture, safeguard and renew their residential neighborhoods, check encroaching blight, chart future growth, build needed modern housing, make good use of waste land, ease traffic and parking situations and create needed parks and playgrounds. The study and the resulting report have been planned to meet the requirements of both federal government and local residents.

## COLLEGE HILL

The College Hill study area lies immediately east of the Providence business district, and extends from the Providence River on the west to Hope Street on the east, from Olney Street on the north to the George M. Cohan Boulevard on the south. It contains the original seventeenth century settlement laid out in the time of its founder, Roger Williams, and is one of the few communities in the country where properties in close proximity to the central business district have been held in residential uses, and where descendants of the original settlers are still living.

By-passed by the business expansion of the downtown area, in part because of its steep hillside location, its most important early buildings remain. Still standing is the First Baptist Church in the United States, one of the outstanding colonial buildings in the country. Merchant mansions built just after the Revolutionary War in the first period of great prosperity and some of the finest homes in Providence lie within its confines. All told the area contains over two hundred and fifty residences and sixty-four public and other buildings of the colonial and federal eras. These brick and wooden buildings, edging the sidewalks of the old streets, make a community of early building that give as nothing else can the palpable sense of the city's (and with it, part of the nation's) past. Early Victorian mansions interspersed throughout the area add their note of sober dignity.

Approximately 13,000 people presently live in the area. Of these 3,000 are students in residence at the four higher educational institutions of College Hill: Brown University, Pembroke College, Bryant College and the Rhode Island School of Design. The limited commercial uses on College Hill are primarily related to the neighborhood except for a long strip of office and wholesale activity adjacent to the downtown area.

**PROBLEMS**

The study area contains overcrowded slums and neglected and worn out buildings. Some of its most important early building, now being submerged in city blight, is in dire need of special attention if the area is to survive. The area contains narrow streets choked with heavy traffic, and the parking problems within it are difficult. It has at present almost no recreational facilities and is in need of a new elementary school. Brown University and Rhode Island School

of Design, hemmed in by built-up residential areas some of which contain concentrations of historic architecture, are faced with numerous planning problems as a consequence of their growth. Thoughtful and cooperative planning is needed if these city problems are to be solved and if the area is to retain its unusual character and its distinctive place in the life of the city.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Designed as an intensive city planning study, the purpose of the project has been to consider the broad range of community problems which beset an old section of a city and to develop proposals for the solutions of the physical, economic and social problems of College Hill. A primary intent of the study has been to develop methods and techniques for a program of preservation, rehabilitation and renewal in a historic area which can serve as a guide for other areas with similar problems. The specific aims have been to:

- develop a system for rating historic architecture;
- develop techniques for integrating areas of historic architecture into proposed redevelopment programs;
- develop a comprehensive master plan for the future growth of College Hill, in which the plans for the historic area take their place in the framework of the larger neighborhood plans;
- develop a comprehensive program of historic area preservation by reviewing methods in use elsewhere in the country and combining these with the new ideas developed in the study;
- demonstrate visually how contemporary architecture can successfully relate to existing historic architecture; thus attempting to dispel the idea that historic area preservation need foster eclecticism.

# SUMMARY

The final report of the College Hill Study has been planned as a blue print for action, and has also been designed to serve as a model for historic area renewal. It is composed of three major divisions:

## PART I. PRESERVATION IN AMERICA

This section is designed to give a review of the necessary background information for the development of the College Hill program. It consists of a study of preservation efforts being carried out elsewhere in the country. An attempt has been made to investigate all types of methods and techniques of preservation in use in order to determine relative effectiveness and to judge which ones would best fit the needs of the College Hill area. The more significant findings of the investigation, particularly those involving areas similar to College Hill, have been discussed. They include a study of the various surveys and listings of historic buildings and discussion of the following topics: historic buildings in contemporary use, zoning and governmental control of buildings and land in historic areas, other forms of governmental control, master plans and urban renewal projects for historic areas, museum villages, historic trails and others.

The analysis of techniques for historic preservation in practice throughout the country has proven helpful in checking ideas and programs which the staff has considered feasible for the College

Hill area. It has also pointed up the fact that there is need for a comprehensive approach to the problems of renewal of historic areas. In the development of the plan for College Hill, such a comprehensive approach has been attempted. It is hoped that the review of other historic areas included in this section of the report will serve to help other communities with historic preservation problems.

## PART II. SURVEY TECHNIQUES

This section has been devoted to a presentation of the techniques developed for discovering, evaluating and incorporating into community planning, areas and buildings of historic or visual significance. It includes a list of and commentary on the criteria set up for judging worth of building; a description of the techniques devised for identifying and evaluating significant structures, including the methods used for collecting, recording and charting information and for scoring the buildings; uses to which the techniques can be put in developing the program of renewal; a history of College Hill from its origin to the present day and; for easy reference, an analysis of the building styles represented in the area. It is hoped that the techniques developed in this part of the study will be of use, not only for the College Hill program, but will aid other communities groping with similar problems.

## PART III. RENEWAL OF COLLEGE HILL

This section contains the comprehensive plan for College Hill in which the techniques for historic analysis, developed in the previ-

ous section, are employed in incorporating historic architecture preservation into the framework of the planning, and more specifically, the urban renewal program. The plan evolves in three steps: a description of the area's characteristics, the general plan, and detailed proposals and designs.

The description of the area's physical and social characteristics provides the base of data from which stems the general plan. Subjects discussed here include description of peripheral areas, general land use, topography, assessment and taxes, population growth, and institutions and civic organizations.

The general plan is presented as a series of maps and proposals on separate topics and is preceded by a summary sketch master plan. This section is introduced by a statement of goals and a review of all official and private plans which have a bearing on the area. Specific proposals are made for traffic and parking, land use, zoning, recreation facilities, a new school, a special zoning ordinance to protect historic architecture, and an Urban Renewal project within which areas are designated for clearance, rehabilitation, and conservation. Following the general plan is a presentation of the detailed proposals and the accompanying physical design. For this purpose the area is presented in two parts according to the general program of implementation: the first, the urban renewal project area; and the other, the university area with its different problems and different solutions. In this part of the report the architectural designs of the planning proposals attempt to show how contemporary design can complement existing group-

ings of buildings of a past era. Concluding this presentation and relating all of the proposals visually is the 25-year general plan of College Hill showing new buildings, pedestrian ways, and open spaces.

The last section of Part III, *Carrying Out the Program*, relates the specific proposals described above to a program of implementation recommended to accomplish the major goals of renewing the College Hill area and of restoring its historic buildings. Among the steps recommended are:

- a proposal for an urban renewal project which would include resumption of urban renewal activity on the Constitution Hill Project at the northern end of College Hill, and an extension of the boundaries of the already designated urban renewal area to include a large portion of the southern part of College Hill. This program would incorporate plans for rehabilitation of the historic areas and buildings with a program of clearance for certain restricted areas within the confines of the total renewal area;
- a proposal to develop a historic trail along Benefit Street as an anchor for the whole community of historic buildings in its immediate neighborhood, and to realize the full potential of historic interest in the old section of Providence;
- a proposal to develop a park and museum around the spring which was the center of the original Providence settlement, the house site and burial site of Roger Williams to be a memorial to

Roger Williams as the founder of the Rhode Island Colony and as a national leader in religious freedom. This proposal is made in conjunction with the recommended proposal for the Benefit Street Trail to be a natural starting point for the trail;

- various public agency programs including proposals for public works, traffic and parking, a new school and recreation areas;

- regulatory programs, in particular, a proposal for historic area zoning designed to include the western slope of the hillside for most of the length of Benefit Street and other parts of the study area. This zoning program has been designed as the mechanism by which other historic areas located outside the project area can effect the protection needed for structures of historic and architectural value. Draft of a historic area zoning legislation are presented in this section of the report for study and submission to the state legislature and the Providence City Council;

- a program recommended for consideration by the institutions in the area, designed to be used as a basis for cooperative planning for future expansion and as a policy-making guide for the protection of the historic building in the environs of the institutional holdings;

- proposals designed to encourage private investment by enlisting the cooperation of individuals and organizations to invest in key areas, and recommending a special mortgage facilities program to help individuals and groups in their attempts to check deterioration and to rehabilitate historic neighborhoods; and

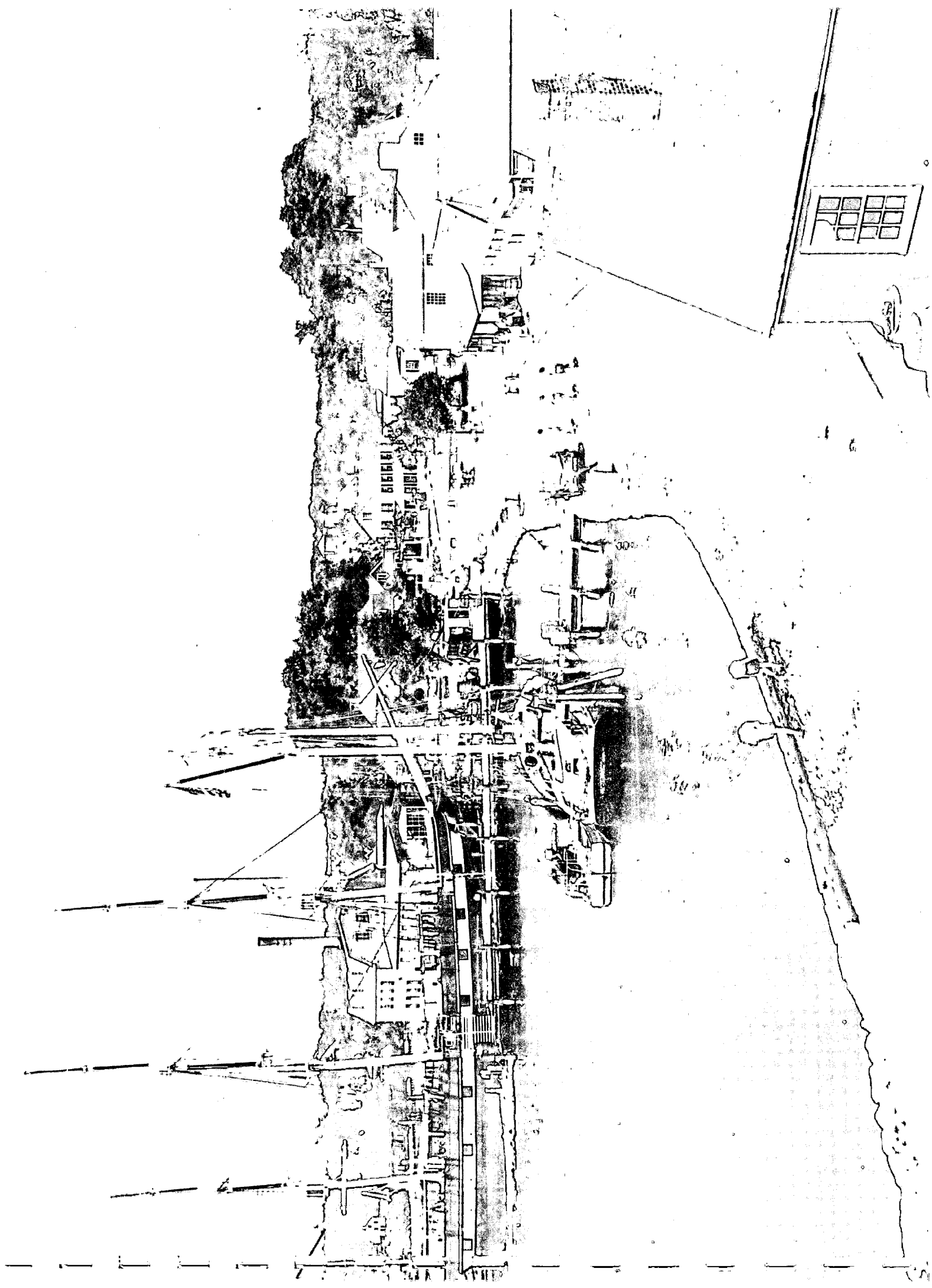
- proposals to establish representative citizen action committees charged with continuing to work for the accomplishment of the objectives of the program; such as the supervision of the landscaping programs, administration of the Benefit Street Trail program, maintenance of a real estate clearing house, a center for information and for advice on repairs and decoration of old houses, direction of publicity and organization of such projects as open house days, demonstration houses, etc.

### CONCLUSION

The publication of this report brings the College Hill Study to a close, but the real work of the project — creating a satisfactory environment in an area rich in historic architecture — has just begun. The City of Providence hopes that the programs developed in the course of the study can help to solve some of the problems which face the city in its attempts to improve its old neighborhoods and renew its historic buildings, so that its heritage can be kept as a legacy for future enrichment and enjoyment. It is hoped that this detailed study of a particular historic area will also serve to clarify the problems of other old cities and point the way to their solution. If in the future these goals are achieved, the basic purposes of the study will have been accomplished.

Appreciation is deeply felt for the many persons and organizations that have rendered assistance or participated actively in the development and completion of this report. Particular thanks should go to the membership of the Providence Preservation Society which provided, in addition to financial assistance, their inestimable moral support continually throughout the study. And to the others who are too numerous to mention, go our thanks for their time and energy.







PART I.. PRESERVATION IN AMERICA

A major purpose of any historic preservation is to communicate the lessons of history, in order that the present and the future may learn from the past. The subject of this study – College Hill in Providence – is an area that contains many structures remaining from an earlier period. It is truly a place where the city's residents can learn from the past.

But the problems of College Hill are not only those of historic preservation; they encompass the renewal of a living part of the city, and the broad range of all city planning factors must be considered. The nature of the area, however, dictates that historic preservation be the key to development of a program for its future and that the other elements of such a program have a strong relation to historic preservation efforts.

As a starting point, attention was turned to a review of preservation efforts elsewhere in the United States. The experience of others was sought to guide work to be done in College Hill. An effort was made to investigate methods and techniques of preservation being carried out in the country to determine their relative effectiveness, and to judge which would be promising for further investigation for possible use in the study area. This part of the report sets forth the more significant results of this investigation, with the hope that it will aid other communities in the United States currently tackling historic preservation problems similar to those in Providence. Information was gathered by use of questionnaires, by personal visit, by correspondence, and by study of publications and articles.

Almost every city, town, and hamlet in the United States boasts of some historic event, important personage or special structure. It is human nature to feel pride in one's home town. Chambers of Commerce and other local groups are adept at emphasizing the historic importance of any unusual occurrence in order to attract tourists. Many of these are relatively insignificant. Nonetheless, there are many worthwhile cultural monuments throughout the country worth the zealous publicity given to them by local boosters. Mention is made of this situation to explain why no effort was made to reach every historic site in the country. No list of such places can ever be complete. Extensive use, however, has been made of the files of the National Trust for Historic Preservation in Washington, D. C., and special attention paid to those locations

selected for inclusion in *The American Heritage Book of Great Historic Places* published in 1957.

The areas selected for detailed review were carefully chosen and those that seemed to offer the possibility of providing significant information were contacted or visited. In general, these are areas with heritage similar to that of Providence, areas with similar problems, or areas that contained groups of historic structures, rather than single historic buildings. Major cities that were known to be active at present or to have shown a significant degree of activity in the past concerning historic preservation were also contacted.

Eleven major techniques for evaluating preservation needs, stimulating interest and understanding of these needs, and effectuating action or control in regard to preservation were found worthy of study for application in College Hill and for the guidance of other communities. Each of these major techniques is discussed in this part of the report under the categories listed below:

1. Surveys of historic buildings
  2. Contemporary use of historic buildings
  3. Historic area zoning and architectural control
  4. Other forms of governmental control
  5. Master plans and urban renewal projects
  6. Museum villages
  7. Historic trails
  8. Open-house tours
  9. Seminars for historic preservation
  10. Non-profit corporations, foundations, and trusts
  11. Private financing techniques

1. SURVEYS OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

The evaluation and recording of historic structures is an important first step in any preservation effort. There have been many surveys of historic buildings made by local groups. The most comprehensive and well-known of these is the Historic American Buildings Survey sponsored by the National Park Service in the 1930's. It involved the recording of data, photographs, and detailed measured drawings for a large number of outstanding structures throughout the country. The Historic American Buildings Survey documents are available for public use in the Library of Congress and in various local repositories. Frequent additions have been made to the original materials by Chapters of the American Institute of

Architects and other groups, using in many cases a short printed form developed in cooperation with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

A revival of interest in the Historic American Buildings Survey occurred in 1958 when the National Park Service launched new study projects in several areas. In part due to interest created by the College Hill Study, Providence was selected for one of these, and 400 photographs were taken of 150 significant buildings of architectural and historic merit. Other projects included a photo survey in the Virgin Islands; experiments in photogrammetric preparation of measured drawings by Ohio State University; a survey of one hundred and twenty buildings in the Schuylkill River Valley by the University of Pennsylvania; measured drawings and photographs of buildings in the Mill Creek Hundred area of Delaware; a photographic survey in Greenville, Tennessee; a survey of the lock buildings on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal at Harpers Ferry and in West Virginia and Maryland; and a photographic survey of Chester County, Pennsylvania.

A very broad historical survey was undertaken in 1957 for the entire state of Virginia. This survey was made possible by a gift of \$16,000 from the Old Dominion Foundation, and its purpose was to accelerate the program then in progress under the cooperative direction of the National Park Service, the Library of Congress, and the American Institute of Architects. The survey is attempting to record every structure of historic and architectural significance in all the one hundred counties of Virginia and to nominate for protection the most significant buildings.

Other local surveys have been made or are currently being undertaken in many places throughout the United States. Examples of some of the more significant ones are mentioned here. Charleston, South Carolina, prepared a comprehensive survey of historic buildings in 1941 supported by the Carnegie Foundation. Almost 1200 structures were classified into four historical periods and into five groups according to importance. The final report of the survey was published by the Carolina Art Association in 1944 in a booklet entitled *This Is Charleston*. Preservation work is now being conducted by the Historic Charleston Foundation.

The St. Louis County Historic Buildings Commission is currently surveying all remaining early buildings in the county and from this information will recommend a list of structures for preservation. The survey will list historical and architectural data for each building and each will be photographed.

In Boston, Massachusetts, the National Park Service has undertaken a special survey of historic sites in and around Boston. The Boston National Historic Sites Commission, established by special act of Congress, is directing the project and a major portion of its study has been devoted to the Battle Road of April 19, 1775, in the towns of Lexington, Lincoln, and Concord. Its first objective is to find solutions to the problems of individual historic structures and sites of national historical significance.

A local survey is also being carried out in Sacramento, California where the History Section of the state Division of Beaches and Parks is studying the historic values of buildings and sites in the city's old west end.

In Chicago, Illinois, the city council created the Commission on Chicago Architectural Landmarks and charged it with the job of a) preparing criteria for determining and evaluating architectural landmarks; b) preparing a system of identifying and marking such landmarks; c) listing and identifying landmarks; d) preparing a policy and framework for preservation; and e) taking steps to stimulate public education and interest. A great deal of the Commission's activity has been concentrated on prevention of the destruction of Frank Lloyd Wright's Robie House. The Commission expects to record all structures worth saving in the city, to document each structure, and to make a map showing the location of each.

Among other significant areas surveyed are the following: Newport, Rhode Island, by the Preservation Society of Newport County; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, by the Advisory Commission on Historic Buildings; Savannah, Georgia, by the Historic Sites and Monument Commission; Winston-Salem, North Carolina, by Old Salem, Inc.; New Castle, Delaware, by Historic Newcastle, Inc.; Germantown, Pennsylvania, by the Germantown Historical Society; and San Antonio, Texas, by the San Antonio Conservation Society.

Many of the methods and criteria used in these various historic area surveys have been incorporated into the techniques developed in Part Two of this report.

## 2. CONTEMPORARY USE OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

Currently, preservation philosophy has been favoring the technique of adapting historic structures for contemporary use wherever possible. It has been felt that the fewer museums the better, and that many more structures could be saved if a practical function could

be found for them. In addition to contributing to the community's assets, structures that are lived in and used assist in their own survival.

There are many historic neighborhoods and whole historic communities throughout the country in active contemporary use, in good condition, and enjoyed by their inhabitants. The list of such places is long: Beacon Hill in Boston, Chestnut Street in Salem, Massachusetts; Benefit Street in Providence, Rhode Island; Elfreth's Alley in Philadelphia; Newcastle, Delaware; Charleston, South Carolina; Natchez, Mississippi; Church Hill in Richmond, Virginia; Georgetown, District of Columbia; and the Vieux Carré in New Orleans. All are famous examples of historic communities in contemporary use. In addition, there are numerous small communities in New England, the South and the Middle West that have not received recognition, but which are nevertheless charming examples of historic communities that are well-loved and cared for.

All of the above places have seen a great deal of interest in the renewal of their historic areas. This has been due, in part, to local efforts as well as to much broader factors at work affecting the growth of metropolitan areas. There are organized societies and citizens' organizations in all of the above cities. In addition, efforts in some cities have been strengthened by governmental action in the form of planning, urban renewal and zoning.

Historic communities seem to be attractive as places to live and to use for some or all of the following reasons:

- a) the unusual character of the neighborhood and the prestige of living in a historic area;
- b) the integrity of the architecture;
- c) the fine sense of human scale of the environment;
- d) the renewed interest in American history and culture;
- e) the adventure and challenge in renovating a run-down structure;
- f) the greater value received in expenditure for shelter in terms of space compared with new construction;
- g) the value placed on homes as antiques as they are in limited number. (There are obviously no more authentic structures of their kind being built and with the historic association attached to each house, their value is assured).

Particular mention should be made of specific historic structures

that are successfully being put to contemporary use. Outstanding Rhode Island examples of such structures are as follows:

The White Horse Tavern in Newport, which was recently a dilapidated and little used house. It was built in the late 1600's and was used as an inn for a good part of its early life. In 1957, the house was restored and is currently operated as a restaurant by the Preservation Society of Newport County.

Arnold Hoffman and Co., Inc., recently restored a building on the edge of downtown Providence to be used for its offices. The restoration has made a very handsome office building out of what formerly was a dyeworks and early warehouse. This is a good example of preservation of early industrial buildings.

Brown University has successfully restored the handsome 18th Century University Hall on its campus for office use. Hope College, a building which was built in 1822, is currently being restored for dormitory use.

The Rhode Island School of Design in Providence uses an outstanding landmark in the city, the market building, for education purposes. Located in downtown Providence, the structure is appropriately being used as the college's architectural school.

Some of the uses of historic structures in other parts of the country that have come to the attention of the National Trust are as follows:

Restaurant — Fraunces Tavern, New York City  
Tea room — Lorrillard Snuffmill in New York Botanical Garden  
Tourist Reception Center — Jail at Waterford, Virginia  
Community Center — Adelphi Mill, Maryland  
Parish House — Silas Wright house, Canton, New York  
American Legion headquarters — Gadsby's Tavern, Alexandria, Virginia  
Library — Octagon house, Red Hook, New York  
Bookstore — Becky Thatcher house, Hannibal, Missouri  
Chamber of Commerce headquarters — first pharmacy in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania  
Study center — Dunbarton Oaks, Washington, D. C.  
Nursing home — Belo house, Winston-Salem, North Carolina  
Fine Arts Museum — George Parish house, Ogdensburg, New York  
Office — Aiken house, Charleston, South Carolina  
Restaurant — Levi Lincoln house in Sturbridge, Massachusetts

### 3. HISTORIC AREA ZONING AND ARCHITECTURAL CONTROL

Historic area zoning is a form of architectural control that is applied to an area containing concentrations of historically significant structures. The goal of such control is to prevent willful destruction of the cultural value inherent in the existence of these historic structures. It is a regulatory device enacted and employed by municipal government and in many cases is made a part of the standard zoning ordinance of the city. As such, its aim is the same as the standard zoning ordinance: to regulate the development of land and the construction of buildings thereon in the interest of the general welfare.

The principle of zoning has long been upheld in the courts of this country. More recently, the extension of zoning into the area of regulation of land use and development in historic areas has been accepted by the courts as a legitimate function of government where the regulations are reasonably applied. The use of such an ordinance is not new; Charleston, South Carolina passed historic area regulations 28 years ago, and New Orleans enacted them soon after. The passage of such ordinances is justified on the basis that community appearance is important to the public welfare and that historic areas add to our culture, education, and enjoyment by keeping history alive and visual.

At this time, it appears that there are twenty-one laws of various kinds in effect in the United States and territories that regulate land use and structures in historic areas. The communities that have such ordinances are as follows:

New Castle, Delaware	Albuquerque, New Mexico
Washington, D. C.	Santa Fe, New Mexico
Lexington, Kentucky	Winston-Salem, North Carolina
New Orleans, Louisiana	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Annapolis, Maryland	San Juan, Puerto Rico
Boston, Massachusetts	Charleston, South Carolina
Lexington, Massachusetts	Alexandria, Virginia
Nantucket, Massachusetts	Charlottesville, Virginia
Salem, Massachusetts	Richmond, Virginia
Natchez, Mississippi	Williamsburg, Virginia
	St. Croix, Virgin Islands

These regulations, while differing in detail, are quite similar in their general approach. A more or less standard procedure is to

make historic regulations a part of the existing zoning ordinance. When this is done, a new district is created within which special regulations are applied. The heart of many such regulations is the creation of a special commission, which is given various names such as the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission (Boston) or the Commission of Architectural Review (Richmond). This special commission is given the powers of approval or rejection of plans for building, alteration, repair and demolition of structures within the district. The action of the commission may or may not be binding on the actions of the building inspector. The powers of the commission, however, are usually limited to a review of exterior design and construction to assure harmonious development within the district. Many ordinances specifically direct the appointed commission not to consider interior arrangement, nor make requirements except for the purpose of preventing developments obviously incongruous to the historic aspects of the surroundings.

The variations in ordinances are interesting and give indications of "trouble-spots" that may arise in the drafting and enactment of an ordinance. One of the details that varies is the matter of selection of the members of the commission. Usually, representatives of local groups, such as the American Institute of Architects, Historical Societies, and Real Estate Boards, that are concerned with the historic area are chosen. Occasionally representation of such groups is not required and members are chosen at large. In some cases, the mayor or administrative head of the city has discretion as to who is chosen from these groups, but more often he must accept a chosen representative or select a person from a list submitted by the group.

Another detail that has been troublesome is the method for handling demolition of historic structures. Until recently, most ordinances shied away from taking any action to prevent or forestall demolition, apparently fearing that such measure of interference with private enterprise was unreasonable and would reduce the chances of acceptability of the ordinance. Recently, however, cities with historic area ordinances have approached this problem with more vigor, as a result of the loss of important structures. Spurred by the feeling that no man has the personal right to destroy historic values, cities like New Orleans, Philadelphia, Richmond, and Alexandria have enacted strict regulations concerning the demolition of historic structures. In 1958 the Massachusetts legislature passed a bill giving the newly created Historic Beacon Hill District stronger powers to forestall or prevent demolitions.

Still another point of difference in regard to historic area laws is the regulation of architectural style. Actually, the differences in this respect arise in interpretation rather than in the text of the ordinances, for most ordinances are quite general in this regard. The phrase, "appropriateness of architectural features wherever such features are subject to public view from a public street" occurs regularly in the ordinances and, as it is written, makes no mention of architectural styles nor does it preclude the design of a structure in any style. In practice, however, most commissions regulate for certain favored historical styles and frown upon contemporary design. In some extreme instances, permission to make alterations has been allowable, only if the changes follow eighteenth century designs, even when the building in question belongs to a later period. The makeup of the commission is important in this respect, and to discourage this attitude it should reflect the general opinion of those persons in the community most strongly affected by the ordinance. It is apparent from the workings of commissions elsewhere that lines of communication between the community and the commission be kept open so that ideas can flow easily in both directions.

Underlying all regulations of this sort is the very delicate matter concerning the legal basis of aesthetic judgment. There is not as great a backlog of legal decisions supporting zoning for aesthetic reasons as exists for standard zoning legislation. However, there have been a sufficient number of decisions supporting the legality of such activity to warrant the conclusion that, unless arbitrarily administered, aesthetic judgment is an appropriate function of what is legally termed the police power.

Perhaps the two strongest arguments against the use of the police power to these ends are 1) that it interferes with the rights of property-owners to determine the use of their property, and 2) there is no precise criteria by which aesthetics can be judged. In answer to the first argument, the following is quoted from a recent legal paper: "... we prefer that community officials should not intervene in the allocation and planning of land use unless the privately determined use of land deprives other persons within the community of basic values, among which is the enjoyment of beauty by a wide number of people. Because the interests of particular individuals are not always compatible at the points of most intense reaction (e.g. a particular land use, such as a billboard, which increases the wealth of one person may be to others aesthetically offensive in certain contexts), community officials must sometimes intervene to secure the maximization of all community

values. According to our basic social hypothesis, this intervention should occur only when community values are seriously damaged or threatened by specific uses of land. . . . Now it seems fairly clear that among the basic values of our communities, and of any society aboriginal or civilized, is beauty. . . . it needs to be repeatedly emphasized that a healthful, safe, and efficient community environment is not enough. More thought must be given to appearances if communities are to be really desirable places in which to live. . . . Whether . . . an ordinance of this type should be declared invalid should depend upon whether in the particular institutional context the restriction was an arbitrary method of achieving an attractive, efficiently functioning prosperous community—and not upon whether the objectives were primarily aesthetic."<sup>1</sup>

As another answer to the argument against the propriety of aesthetic control, the following was stated in a 1954 United States Supreme Court decision: "... The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive. . . . The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, aesthetic as well as monetary. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well as healthy. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

In answer to the second argument pertaining to criteria for aesthetic judgment, the following is quoted from the same legal paper as above: "... The cry for precise criteria might well be abandoned because it does not make sense. Beauty cannot be any more precisely defined than wealth, property, malice, or a host of multi-ordinal words to which courts are accustomed. Planners can give reasons for saying a particular arrangement of objects in the environment is beautiful based upon perspectives common in high degree among the people in a community, but they cannot prove it, and proof which is strictly unattainable should not be demanded. What is needed to decide whether beautiful can be used in an intelligible manner by planners is not a foredoomed search for precise criteria for its correct employment, but rather a clarification of some of the operations indicating how the general public and planners use the word and an evaluation of these operations by reference to community goals."

<sup>1</sup>J. J. Dukeminier, Jr., "Zoning for Aesthetic Objectives: A Reappraisal", *Law and Contemporary Problems*, Duke University School of Law, Spring, 1955, pp. 224, 225, 231.

<sup>2</sup>Berman v. Parker, 348 U. S. 26, 99 L. Ed. 27, 75 S. Ct. 98

An excellent review of the techniques for having an ordinance adopted is contained in the report entitled "Preservation of Historic Districts by Architectural Control," by John Codman of the Beacon Hill Civic Association, Boston. This report was published by the American Society of Planning Officials, Chicago, Illinois. It is recommended reading for anyone in a community anticipating the enactment of an ordinance regulating land and buildings in a historic district.

#### 4. OTHER FORMS OF GOVERNMENTAL CONTROL

Another form of governmental control is tax exemption for historic structures. The Vieux Carré Commission in New Orleans is empowered to make tax exemption recommendations to the Commission Council of the city. This is done in special circumstances for structures having historical and architectural value and the exemption may remain in effect for a period of years. Taxes may be exempted by the city provided that the owners of such structures and their heirs and assigns agree by formal contract that the structures shall never be altered or demolished without the approval of the Vieux Carré Commission.

The power to purchase or acquire by expropriation is another governmental control given to the City of New Orleans. The Vieux Carré Commission has the power to recommend that the city acquire historic properties by these methods if a structure is in danger or would best be in the hands of the city. In addition the Commission of Architectural Review in Richmond, Virginia is empowered to report to the City Council recommending whether historic structures or sites shall be set aside by the city for preservation and protection.

The demolition of historic structures is regulated in several cities. Usually this is made part of the zoning ordinance and some cities have stronger provisions than others. The Vieux Carré Commission in New Orleans is seeking the power to prevent absolutely the demolition of historic structures. The City of Philadelphia places a six-month waiting period on an application for the demolition of historic structures. During this period, it is hoped that some means can be found for saving the structure. If no way is found within the six-month period, the owner is permitted to demolish the building.

#### 5. MASTER PLANS AND URBAN RENEWAL PROJECTS

A few cities have made master plans for historic districts and have recognized the opportunity for the use of the federal urban renewal law for preserving and developing historic districts. The most notable example is in Philadelphia where plans have been drawn for the historic Society Hill area of that city. This project encompasses a large area near the heart of Philadelphia, including the Independence Hall project of the National Park Service and many historic structures built in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Approval has been given by the federal government to an urban renewal project in this area and plans for its development are proceeding. It is proposed as a combination rehabilitation and clearance project and most of the historical and architecturally valuable structures will be retained.

Other cities that have urban renewal programs in process or under consideration in areas of historic or architectural significance are Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; New Haven, Connecticut; Portland, Maine; Nashville, Tennessee; Portsmouth, New Hampshire; and Los Angeles, California. In Bethlehem, the Workable Program for urban renewal recently approved by the federal Urban Renewal Administration states that "every care will be taken to preserve the distinctive eighteenth century historical amenities of this community which was founded by Moravian colonists in 1741." The Workable Program followed up an interim report made by the Redevelopment Authority of Bethlehem and published in 1956. This report proposed the clearance of an area in the historic section of the city to be used for a new city hall and other buildings. The plan recognized the value of the historic section and indicated that the plan was so drawn as to remove from the so-called "Old and Historic Bethlehem District" some of the low-standard construction not in harmony with the present or hoped-for character of the area. The interim report also recommended historic area zoning for this district, but such zoning has not as yet been passed.

The New Haven Redevelopment Agency is currently developing plans for the Wooster Square area of that city. This is an area of old mansions mostly of victorian design, close to the heart of downtown New Haven.

The City of Portland, Maine, is presently engaged in two projects for the redevelopment of residential areas which were settled over one hundred years ago. They were the first areas to be settled on the Portland peninsula. The emphasis in these and in the New

Haven project is not on historic preservation but on the attempt to make these very old areas productive and efficient parts of the city. The relation of the work to historic areas, however, is worth noting.

In Nashville, Tennessee, the Housing Authority has underway a project with historic preservation overtones in the vicinity of the Tennessee State Capitol. An area of residential blight has been cleared around the capitol and land in the Capitol Hill Redevelopment Project is available for resale. Re-use of the land is to be for commercial purposes.

The City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire is studying the possibility of rehabilitating its historic section with the aid of the Urban Renewal Program. The Olvera Street section of Los Angeles was originally considered as a potential redevelopment site and comprehensive plans for the area were drawn by the city. This area, of great historic importance to Los Angeles, has been the subject of studies over the last decade and is a good example of a city's efforts at an approach, through comprehensive planning, to the preservation of an important historic area. Plans for renewal as a federal project have been dropped recently in favor of a joint private-city-state effort for developing the Olvera Street section.

Other local efforts of master planning for historic areas have been made in Natchez, Mississippi; San Diego, California; and Albuquerque, New Mexico. In Natchez, a very thorough plan was drawn by a private consultant and many of the recommendations subsequently adopted. The City of Albuquerque has prepared a plan which includes the historic district, and San Diego for a long time has planned for the renewal of its Old Town section. All are good examples of the comprehensive planning approach to historic preservation.

## 6. MUSEUM VILLAGES

Museum villages have proved to be excellent means of interpreting history and are quite popular with visitors. The museum village is a historic community which involves a group of structures open to the public for display. There are great differences in the extent of interpretive programs carried out in these villages. In some, much is done to make the visitor feel as if he were observing the period of history of the village he is visiting. Local trades are demonstrated, guides are dressed in costume, troubadors roam the grounds singing ballads, and transportation of a by-gone day carries vis-

itors through the grounds. Some do not go to this extent, but only partially open some buildings to visitors. Whatever the extent of interpretation, a visit to a museum village is usually a rewarding experience and in most cases is a valid and useful way to accomplish the preservation of historic structures.

There are a number of museum villages in the United States. A list of the more important ones follows:

**COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG** in Williamsburg, Virginia is an excellent reconstruction of the colonial capitol of Virginia. It has more than four hundred museum buildings and a complete contemporary center for visitors. It has proved to be one of the outstanding tourist attractions in the country.

**COLUMBIA HISTORIC PARK** in Columbia, California known as the "Gem of the Southern Mines" is the best preserved of the early mining towns of California's Mother Lode. Gold was first dug there in 1850 and a town of 10,000 or 15,000 persons grew from this beginning. The principal remaining structures are of brick, native stone, or wood. The State of California has acquired the main part of the town's historic structures and sites, and it is operated by the Division of Beaches and Parks, of the Department of Natural Resources of the State Park Commission.

**THE FARMERS' MUSEUM** in Cooperstown, New York is a historic village that is meant to reflect the life of ordinary people who lived in rural New York State between 1783 and the 1840's. The emphasis in this village is on the everyday crafts and demonstrations are shown for woodworking, spinning and weaving, broom-making and the like. A dozen buildings have been brought together from a hundred mile area to show what life was like in rural communities. The village is run by the New York State Historical Association.

**GREENFIELD VILLAGE** in Dearborn, Michigan is operated by the Edison Institute which also runs the Ford Museum and a school system at the village. The village represents, historically, significant developments in American science, agriculture, industry, music, and statesmanship. All structures formerly stood on other sites and were brought together in the village. The structures are places where famous people lived, worked, or in which some significant developments of the American scene took place. The buildings date from the seventeenth century and structures from all eras, including the twentieth century, are represented.



MYSTIC SEAPORT in Mystic, Connecticut is a recreated nineteenth century New England coastal village which has been organized to perpetuate the age of the sail. The seaport is still in the process of development but currently there are a number of structures standing along a charming waterfront street. Several sailing ships open to visitors are tied to a dock along the waterfront. Many crafts and business operations relating to sea trade are shown at the village. Mystic Seaport is run by the Marine Historical Association.

NEW SALEM STATE PARK near Petersburg, Illinois is a restoration of an early pioneer village on its original site. All buildings except one were rebuilt as nearly as possible as they existed originally. The prime reason for this restoration was that Abraham Lincoln lived in the village in his early years. The original village had an extremely short life of about ten years during which Lincoln lived there, worked, and started a business. The village was abandoned about 1840 as the nearby city of Petersburg grew. Thirteen cabins, a tavern, and ten shops, stores, industries and a school have been reproduced and furnished as they were in the 1830's. The village is run by the Illinois Division of Parks and Memorials.

THE OLD MUSEUM VILLAGE OF SMITH'S CLOVE in Monroe, New York contains buildings, shops and collections of tools, utensils, appliances, machines, costumes, and vehicles used by early generations. These exhibits trace the development of these articles from their first use in this country until their replacement by improved equipment or materials. Currently there are twenty-seven buildings which were either moved to the site or reconstructed. The exhibits, rather than the structures, are emphasized.

OLD SALEM in Winston-Salem, North Carolina is a Moravian Congregation town in the 100,000 acre tract named Wachovia. The church ownership and development of this area as a craft and trade center was unique and provided sufficient importance for preservation and restoration. The restoration program is meant to recapture the Salem Village of 1766-1830. Restoration of structures at the village is a continuing process. Currently ten original structures have been restored, one building was reconstructed and there are thirty original structures not yet restored. Buildings in the historic area are operated by a non-profit organization called Old Salem, Incorporated.

PLIMOTH PLANTATION in Plymouth, Massachusetts is the newest of the museum villages. It is currently being developed and is to be a replica of early Plymouth, with its village and Fort-Meetinghouse on a hundred acre tract of land near the original site. Mayflower II will be permanently moored in the river which runs along one edge of the property. Nineteen little houses are being authentically recreated on a new street and each house will be marked with the name of the family that occupied it in 1627.

SCHOENBRUNN VILLAGE in New Philadelphia, Ohio is a reconstruction of the first town in Ohio built by Christian Indians under the leadership of the Moravian Church. The Ohio State Archaeological and Historical Society reconstructed the village and currently operates it. There are fifteen log-cabin type structures open for viewing in a pleasantly landscaped park.

SHELBURNE MUSEUM in Shelburne, Vermont consists of twenty-one buildings on twenty-five acres of land. Also included in the exhibit is the sidewheeler Ticonderoga, the last sidewheel passenger packet of its kind in the world. It is an early rural Vermont small town made up of buildings brought in from other towns in Vermont. The museum is privately owned.

SPRING MILL STATE PARK near Mitchell, Indiana is an old watermill and village trading post situated in a deep valley. It served southern Indiana in the early eighties and was later abandoned for lack of business. Reconstructed are a grist mill which grinds corn for visitors, a hat shop, post office, still house, boot shop, apothecary, and many of the original buildings. It is operated by the Indiana Department of Conservation and is set in a large state park covering more than a thousand acres.

OLD STURBRIDGE VILLAGE in Sturbridge, Massachusetts is a recreation of a typical New England village of the period around 1790-1840. The village covers two hundred acres and is centered around a green. There are more than thirty buildings in the village, all of which were moved from various sections of New England. In these buildings, some of which date as early as 1704, craftsmen demonstrate early American Skills and crafts. Horse and ox drawn vehicles provide visitors with transportation. The village is operated by an independent non-profit educational corporation called Old Sturbridge Village.

The following estimates of recent attendance figures will give an



idea of the popularity of museum villages throughout the country:

	Annual Attendance
Columbia Historic Park . . . . .	300,000
Farmers' Museum . . . . .	120,000
Greenfield Village . . . . .	850,000
Mystic Seaport . . . . .	150,000
New Salem State Park . . . . .	950,000
Schoenbrunn Village . . . . .	280,000
Shelburne Museum . . . . .	40,000
Spring Mill State Park . . . . .	220,000
Old Sturbridge Village . . . . .	190,000

The establishment of a museum village in the College Hill area was given consideration in the course of development of the plans. Such a village, however, was not considered to be appropriate in the urban setting of the historic area of College Hill and the idea was thus discarded.

7. HISTORIC TRAILS

Laying out routes for visitors to historic or scenic areas is a ramification of preservation efforts. There are several communities which do this as an aid in the interpretation of historic sites in the community. By guiding the visitor through an area, the range of history can be seen and a better feeling of the past can be obtained from this broad overview.

The tourist trail also aids the community in its preservation efforts, and it is probable that the creation of a tourist trail would have these beneficial effects on the historic community: it would a) provide a focus for the diverse activities engaged in preservation efforts; b) lend greater prestige to the properties along its route, induce owners to upgrade their properties, and attract organizations and families who will be interested in rehabilitating structures; c) stimulate the renewal of areas in proximity to the trail; and d) attract attention outside the city to the assets of the historic community.

Examples of tourist trails in historic areas can be seen in Boston Plymouth, and Salem, Massachusetts, and in St. Augustine, Florida. Ideally, it would be better to view an area by foot as more can be seen in that way, but most of the trails are so long as to require an automobile.

Usually, three aids to the tourist are necessary for the initial development of a tourist trail: trail makers, plaques for buildings, and a descriptive brochure. The initial cost of these aids is usually quite small for the benefit to be derived from them. The costs in the cities mentioned were borne by local organizations or businesses, and upkeep is performed by the locality.

8. OPEN HOUSE TOURS

Preservation-oriented organizations often hold open-house tours to allow visitors to view the interiors of significant historic structures. In several cities this is the extent of preservation efforts, while in others it forms only a part of a more comprehensive program. In this way, attention is focused on the historic assets of a community and the best is put on exhibit for all to see. In practically all cases, a fee is charged for the tours and the proceeds are used to further preservation efforts in the community.

Open-house tours are conducted in New Castle, Delaware; Providence, Rhode Island; Natchez, Mississippi; Charleston, South Carolina, and in many other places in the country. New Castle annually holds an "Open House Day" and currently charges a fee of \$3.50 which goes for the restoration of a church. The tours are held in May and have been a regular event for more than thirty years.

Providence initiated open house tours in 1958 with a "Street Festival" in the historic College Hill area of the city. A fee of \$2.00 was charged which allowed visitors to view twenty historic houses and to partake in festivities that continued throughout the day. The proceeds of the festival went to the Providence Preservation Society to aid in its preservation efforts in the city. The festival was held in May and it is anticipated that it will be continued as a biennial event, but along different streets of the historic district.

Natchez, Mississippi conducts the "Natchez Pilgrimage" each year during the entire month of March. The Pilgrimage is sponsored by two garden clubs of Natchez and many thousands of visitors are attracted. Thirty antebellum houses are open to the public and visitors are welcomed and guided by ladies in hoopskirts. To complete the tours of all the houses requires three days. There are two tours each day making six tours in all. The prices of the tours are as follows: one tour, which permits a visit to five houses, \$4.00 per person; the series of six tours required to see all thirty

houses costs \$20.00 per person. Proceeds of the Pilgrimage are used to aid preservation efforts in the area.

Charleston, South Carolina, has conducted eleven annual open house tours to date. These tours are usually held during the last two weeks of March. There are six different groups of houses open in the two-week period with five houses in each group. In any two-day period, three groups of homes may be visited. All the homes are located within a ten-block area and the visits can be made on foot which gives the visitor a chance to see more of the historic area. The fee for each tour is \$4.00 and proceeds go to the Historic Charleston Foundation which sponsors the tours for the preservation of historic buildings. To date, the foundation has received help from the tours to aid in the restoration of the city's Old Exchange Building and to pay off the final indebtedness of another important historic house.

## 9. SEMINARS FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

To aid in the dissemination of knowledge about preservation and thus to further the preservation movement, several places use the technique of holding seminars. A "Historic House Keeping" course has been held at Cooperstown, New York for the past few years. This was an experiment entered into jointly by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the New York State Historical Association, because of a feeling that there was a great need for a scholarly, practical, and realistic presentation of the methods by which historic houses can be made centers of sound historical teaching.

These so-called short-courses have proved very valuable and popular, so much so that other cities have taken up the idea recently. Rhode Island held a preservation seminar for the first time in 1958 in Providence and Newport. The seminar was held under the joint auspices of the Providence Preservation Society, the Rhode Island Historical Society, the Newport Preservation Society and the National Trust. A number of prominent persons in the field of historic preservation presented interesting lectures and participated in discussions.

Other seminars have been presented recently in St. Louis where a "Preservation Short-Course" was sponsored by the National Trust and the Missouri Historical Society. The course dealt with, among other things, standards and criteria for preservation projects, com-

munity efforts, and the architectural contributions of the Missouri area to America's heritage.

The New York "Preservation Forum" was held recently at the Museum of the City of New York under the joint auspices of the Museum and the National Trust.

These and other cities are using this technique of the preservation seminar to great advantage in furthering preservation work in their area.

## 10. NON-PROFIT CORPORATIONS, FOUNDATIONS AND TRUSTS

The establishment of special funds has been a very common technique to aid in the preservation of historic structures or areas. These funds are usually established either for saving a specific structure or for general use in saving an area of historic structures. No thought of financial return is considered and funds are usually sought and spent for civic purposes.

There are many such organizations in existence throughout the country. Some examples will give an idea of their range and mode of operation. The Nantucket Historical Association recently announced the establishment of a trust fund to be used in assisting local organizations in furthering cultural aims. One of the specific purposes as listed by the trustees is to preserve, restore, repair, or maintain buildings, monuments, sites, and property of historical value on Nantucket Island.

Historic Fallsington, Inc. is an example of a non-profit corporation and is located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. It was formed to preserve the historic homes and buildings in its colonial village; to encourage the owners of such properties in this preservation and to extend appreciation of the beauty and historic significance of Fallsington. The initial goal of this corporation is to raise a sum of money for the purchase and restoration of an important historic structure to serve as headquarters for the Fallsington Restoration project.

Boscobel Restoration, Inc. is a non-profit corporation that was organized for the purpose of restoring one important historic structure in New York State. In addition, the corporation is planning a park, assembly room, gift shop, and special exhibits.

A private corporation called "El Pueblo de Los Angeles" is an important part of the program for development of an area of historic importance in the city of Los Angeles. A cooperative arrangement between the city, county, and state provides for the joint acquisition of land and improvements for the development and operation of a monument by the corporation. The development of the monument is the key to the rehabilitation of the entire area around the monument.

Historic Savannah Foundation, Inc. in Savannah, Georgia is a private organization of interested citizens organized to preserve and restore sites and buildings of historic or architectural interest, and to promote an interest in preservation work among the citizens of Savannah. This organization is responsible for the restoration of two historic houses in Savannah.

Perhaps one of the most significant examples of a foundation is the one in Charleston, South Carolina. The Historic Charleston Foundation has recently expanded its program considerably and has launched a campaign to raise an unlimited amount of money to manage, purchase, restore, and preserve a number of important historic buildings. Another private foundation has pledged a large sum of money to the Historic Charleston Foundation for these purposes upon condition that an additional sum be raised and added to its gift. It is setting up a revolving fund which it will use to meet its preservation objective of developing a living historic community. Its plan of action is broader than most and interesting as an example of what such a foundation can do. The foundation's program states the following:

- That historic areas rather than individual houses be given preferential consideration for restoration.
- That properties to be saved be purchased and developed into rental units such as apartments and stores. Exterior restoration rather than elaborate interior redecoration are to be emphasized.
- That worthy properties be purchased for resale with restrictions concerning future alterations and use.

■ That, in the case of purchases for resale and rental, adjacent properties of little value be bought and buildings torn down to create either gardens or well-designed open areas.

■ That properties be purchased or accepted as gifts with life occupancy by existing tenants.

■ That the Foundation seek to have worthy properties willed or donated, with no restrictions as to their use and that these properties may be sold to persons who will agree to maintain their architectural integrity.

■ That loans secured by mortgages which would be difficult to obtain through normal lending channels be made to individuals to buy or restore houses of merit.

■ That the fund be flexible enough to meet individual situations as they arise.

■ That sound business practices will be employed in all cases although the fund will not be administered under the necessity of operating at a profit.

■ That it will be the policy of the Foundation to employ professional services in all its operations and to pay customary fees for such services, unless they be given gratuitously.

The program of the Historic Charleston Foundation is indeed an intelligent and ambitious one. It will be interesting to watch the progress of this program over the coming years.

## 11. PRIVATE FINANCING TECHNIQUES

One of the more promising techniques for historic preservation has been the recent development of privately financed profit-making corporations oriented towards preservation and rehabilitation. Bolton Hill in Baltimore, Maryland is an excellent example of what can be done privately to renew a historic area. Bolton Hill, Inc. is engaged in the real estate business as a principal and not as an agent or broker. Its business consists of buying, renovating and either selling or leasing to others residential property in the City

of Baltimore. Its activities have been confined thus far to the so-called Mt. Royal area of the city. The proceeds from the sale of stock are put into a revolving fund and are used for the stated purpose. As each structure is rehabilitated, it is either leased or sold and the proceeds are used for more rehabilitation work. In the first year of its operation, the corporation reported a ten per cent profit. During that year thirteen properties were acted upon. The area in which the corporation is active is rapidly becoming stabilized and has become a more desirable place to live.

In Cincinnati, Ohio, the Cincinnati Renewal Corporation was formed to help rehabilitate the Avondale-Corrville section of the city. The emphasis in this corporation's activities is not so much on historic preservation as it is on rehabilitation of blighted structures, but its methods are worthy of consideration. The corporation is attempting to demonstrate that private enterprise rehabilitation can be profitable to landlords and can fulfill a civic purpose at the same time. It has raised what it calls "socially-inclined capital" by the sale of shares and is currently rehabilitating several structures. As with the Bolton Hill Corporation, it expects to use the proceeds from its operations to do more rehabilitation work in Cincinnati.

Historic Georgetown, Inc., in Washington, D. C. successfully bought and rehabilitated several outstanding examples of mid-eighteenth century architecture at 30th and M Streets in that city. In 1951, the houses were about to be torn down to build a parking lot. To save these buildings, a group of Georgetown residents formed Historic Georgetown, Inc. The aim of the corporation was to make not only a sound architectural restoration but also a sound business achievement. Money was raised by the sale of stock to Georgetown residents and a plan was worked out whereby subscribers might donate their stock to the National Trust and take a tax deduction for this gift at par value. As a result, the National Trust is now the largest single stockholder in the corporation. The restoration of these buildings is now complete except for one small apartment. The completed part is fully occupied on long-term leases and the rentals provide a sizeable surplus above upkeep, taxes, interest and preferred dividends. The operations of the corporation are deemed locally to be quite successful.

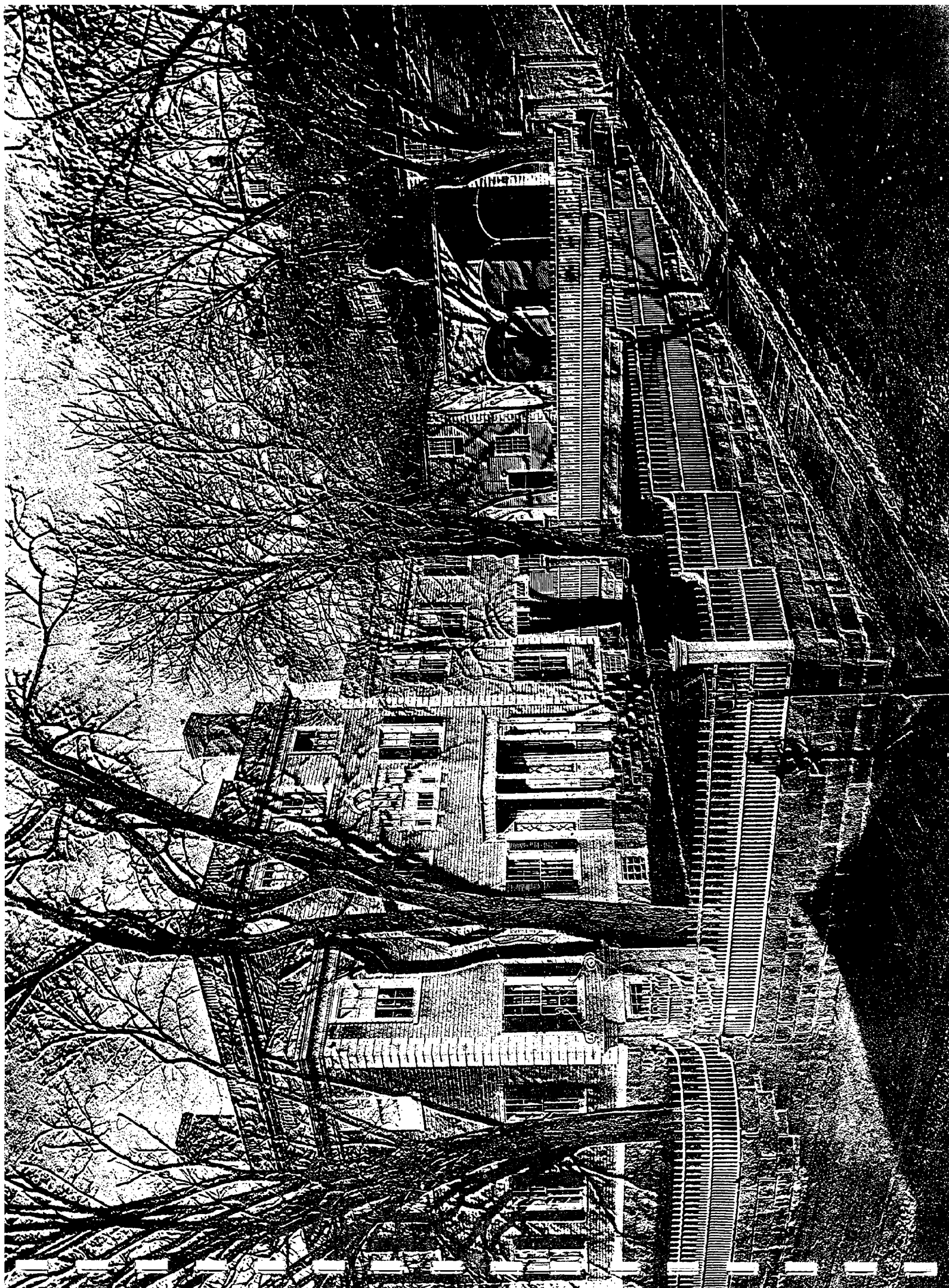
There are two good examples of private financing in Savannah, Georgia. Savannah Restorations, Inc. is an organization composed of private citizens, the stated purpose of which is to restore

"downtown Savannah's fine old buildings to their former beauty and to renew their usefulness as apartments, shops, or offices." Within the past year, the corporation has purchased two houses in the downtown area for restoration and conversion into apartments that will, when completed, be placed on the market for rent or sale.

The Trustees Gardens is an actual restoration project being carried out by the Savannah Gas Company. The Gardens were established as a horticultural experiment area at the time of original settlement in 1733 and a fort was subsequently built on the site. At the time the Savannah Gas Company commenced its restoration work, Trustees Gardens had become the locale for some of the most reputable housing in the city. Over the past ten years individual houses have been torn down or moved and the entire area has been landscaped. The project is not yet completed but is entering the final stages. At the present time the project is one-hundred per cent filled and stays that way for much of the year. When a vacancy occurs it is only for a few days. This project, too, has been a very successful venture in the field of historic preservation.

These are only a few of the examples of techniques for historic preservation throughout the country. It has been seen that there is a wide variety of techniques applicable to the renewal of historic areas. Historic preservation is becoming a very popular activity as witnessed by the proliferation of preservation techniques and by the increasing membership in organizations devoted to preservation throughout the country. This is a good sign, as the need for such activity has become more and more acute in the last few years. The historic area of our communities is an important part of our heritage and preservation is a valid segment of the efforts to renew our cities.

Unfortunately, the approach in most cities has been piecemeal, and except in a few instances, only one or two of the techniques described in this report are in operation at any one time in a locality. The comprehensive approach to renewal of a historic area is needed and the techniques described in this report may guide the way for such renewal in College Hill and in other parts of the country.



# PART II--SURVEY TECHNIQUES

## SUMMARY

This part of the report is devoted to the development of techniques for surveying and judging historic buildings, as well as indicating the methods by which the materials derived from such survey and judgment efforts may be incorporated into the standard processes of city planning and urban renewal. College Hill is used as the testing ground for these techniques and methods, in the following major topics of Part Two:

- A brief history of Providence from the time of the first Colonial settlement, with particular emphasis on College Hill.
- An analysis of the various styles of architecture found in College Hill and their place in the development of American architecture as a whole.
- The criteria which have been set up for evaluating historic and architectural worth.
- A description of the techniques which have been developed in this study for collecting and charting information about the architecture of the area.
- How these techniques can be used to help protect the architectural heritage of a given area or city.

One objective of the College Hill Study is to perform research aimed at the development of new urban renewal and planning techniques that will enlarge the present store of ammunition to be used in the fight to renew American cities. The problem of developing a working method for incorporating a system of protecting historic buildings into an urban renewal program is a difficult one. The psychological approach required for saving old buildings frequently seems to be diametrically in opposition to the approach generally accepted as necessary for the solution of other urban renewal problems. From the point of view of the planner and the developer, historic architecture can often be very inconveniently located. In most cases, the city has continued to grow where it

had its beginnings. As a result, in the course of time, the older buildings have been torn down, built over, or altered. If they have survived, the land they stand on may be at a premium or slated for clearance for any number of reasons. To find ways of safeguarding these survivals means adding another problem to an already complicated situation.

In general, many American cities approach solutions for renewal of areas of a city by considering only proposals for sweeping the decks clear and beginning over. The idea that ways to make use of the old buildings, or that they have values of their own which can enhance the potential of the city by giving it a dimension in time, has generally seemed too romantic to accept. In periods of expansion or change, the older buildings have been torn down like packing boxes or remodeled beyond recognition. Frequently replacements have had far less value than the originals. Often too, and certainly on College Hill, many worthwhile structures have been destroyed because their worth has not been recognized. Conversely, many structures are given more consideration than is their due.

In order to develop successful ways of protecting historic architecture in any setting, the first step must be a clear and generally accepted recognition that it is important for a city to keep its heritage from the past, and therefore, worth the considerable effort which doing so will frequently involve. Beyond this primary recognition, however, there is a basic need for a competent method of identifying significant structures and evaluating their relative worth in regard to preservation. To do this, it will be necessary to develop an objective system of fact finding and evaluation which can be used for describing all the buildings in the selected areas. This system should be applicable also for buildings and sections of the city which fall outside the designated areas but which may be protected in other ways if adequate data about them is readily available.

To define the areas of special architectural and historic importance



it is necessary to have a general knowledge of the character and date of the buildings and of the growth of the city as a whole.

Selection of areas for protection will normally depend on the presence of a high concentration of historic buildings which lie where, in conjunction with other factors, they can be afforded protection. Old residential sections, even though deteriorated, where business has not encroached offer natural starting points, but warehouse and wharfside survivals, early shops and markets, civic buildings and churches should not be ignored. In the case of Providence, College Hill, following roughly the bounds of the home lots of the first settlers, has retained some of its residential character and much of its early architecture. It has therefore become a feasible area for a treatment, which, in the course of developing a master plan for the area, would include a program for revitalizing the historic and architectural heritage of the community.

The specific information needed for the addition of the historic building factor in the selected urban renewal area will be:

- A history of the growth of the city and the development of the College Hill area.

- An analysis of building styles represented in the area.

- Criteria for judging worth of buildings.

- A survey of extant buildings in the area, including data regarding:

- Date and style
- Architectural worth
- Condition
- Amount of alteration

- A set of maps and charts drawn from the survey data which will show among other things:

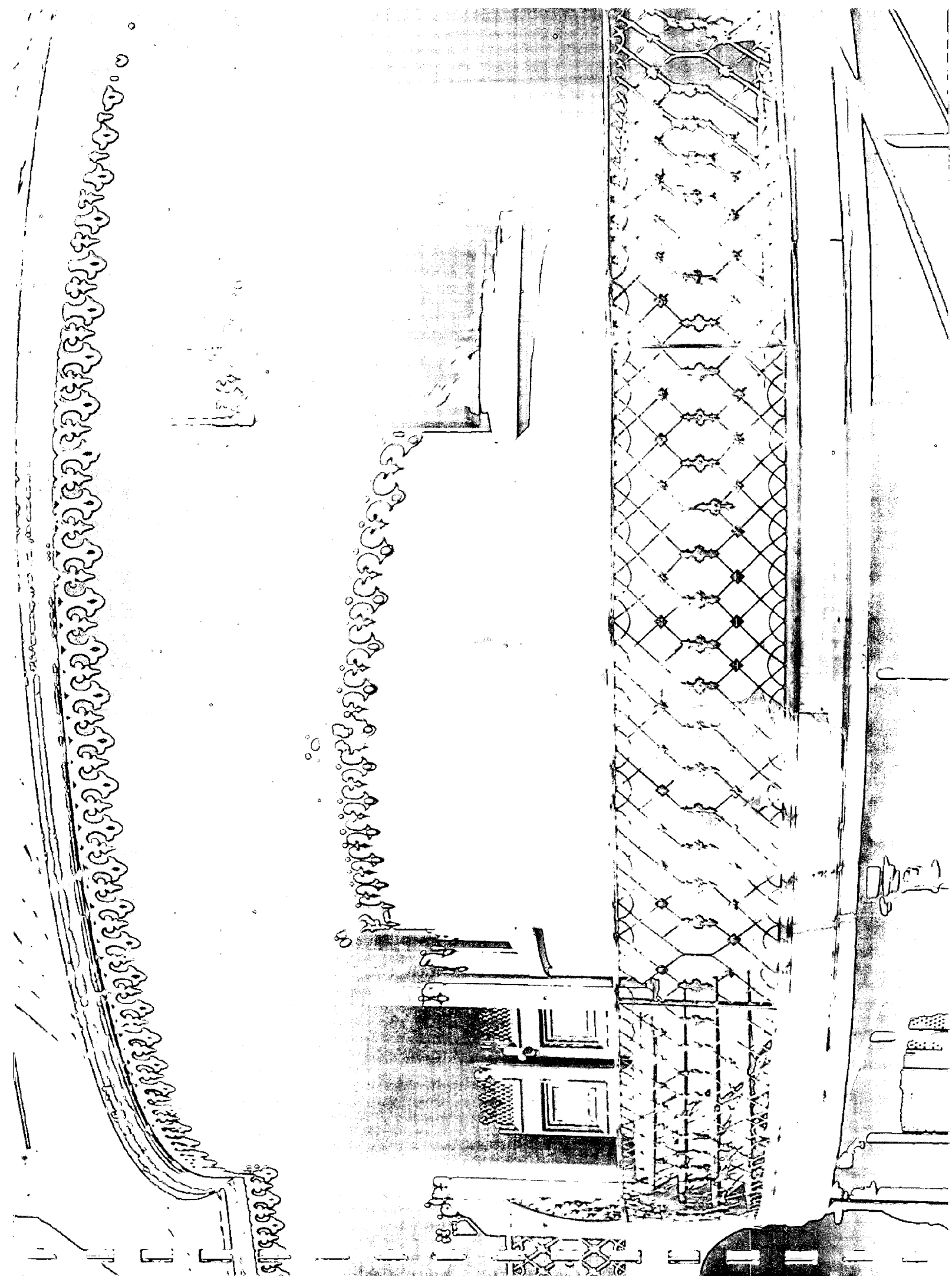
- The areas of concentration of buildings of each period
- The architectural worth of all buildings in the area
- The buildings of historic importance

The development of the techniques outlined here should augment

present procedures for delineating urban renewal areas. The specific information made available through the completion of the current survey can give planners and citizens alike a clear picture of the amount, location and caliber of the architectural heritage in the confines of the study area. Dissemination of this information should help to create a new climate of pride and interest in the local heritage which will of itself be a protection to the buildings designated, and which can be of great usefulness to the citizen groups particularly concerned with historic preservation and restoration as well as with neighborhood renewal.

The identification of historic buildings in a blighted area may be a significant factor in marking it for renewal and in raising its priority for action in the city's total renewal program. Furthermore, the fact that an area is rich in historic building should be a strong consideration in shaping redevelopment plans for that area. In most cases, rehabilitation efforts will be more appropriate than clearance, due to the highlighting of historic structures.

The maps and records will supply the data necessary for drawing up the boundaries of any historic area zones set up to protect by special legislation concentrations of historic building. They should prove helpful in developing ways to safeguard important buildings lying in areas where historic zoning does not seem to be the solution. Because of the availability of the survey data, attention can be drawn to historic and important buildings situated in areas needed for development purposes and the means for saving them can be worked out early in the planning phases of the projects when arrangements to move them or to fit them into the new schemes can be made with a minimum of confusion and difficulty. The maps should be especially helpful in showing where buildings can be removed and new ones constructed without damage to historic areas. The institutions in the area should also find the information helpful when they need to make decisions about directions for expansion or about acquiring or avoiding the acquisition of buildings which might pose problems of preservation beyond their capacity.





## II A.-HISTORY OF COLLEGE HILL

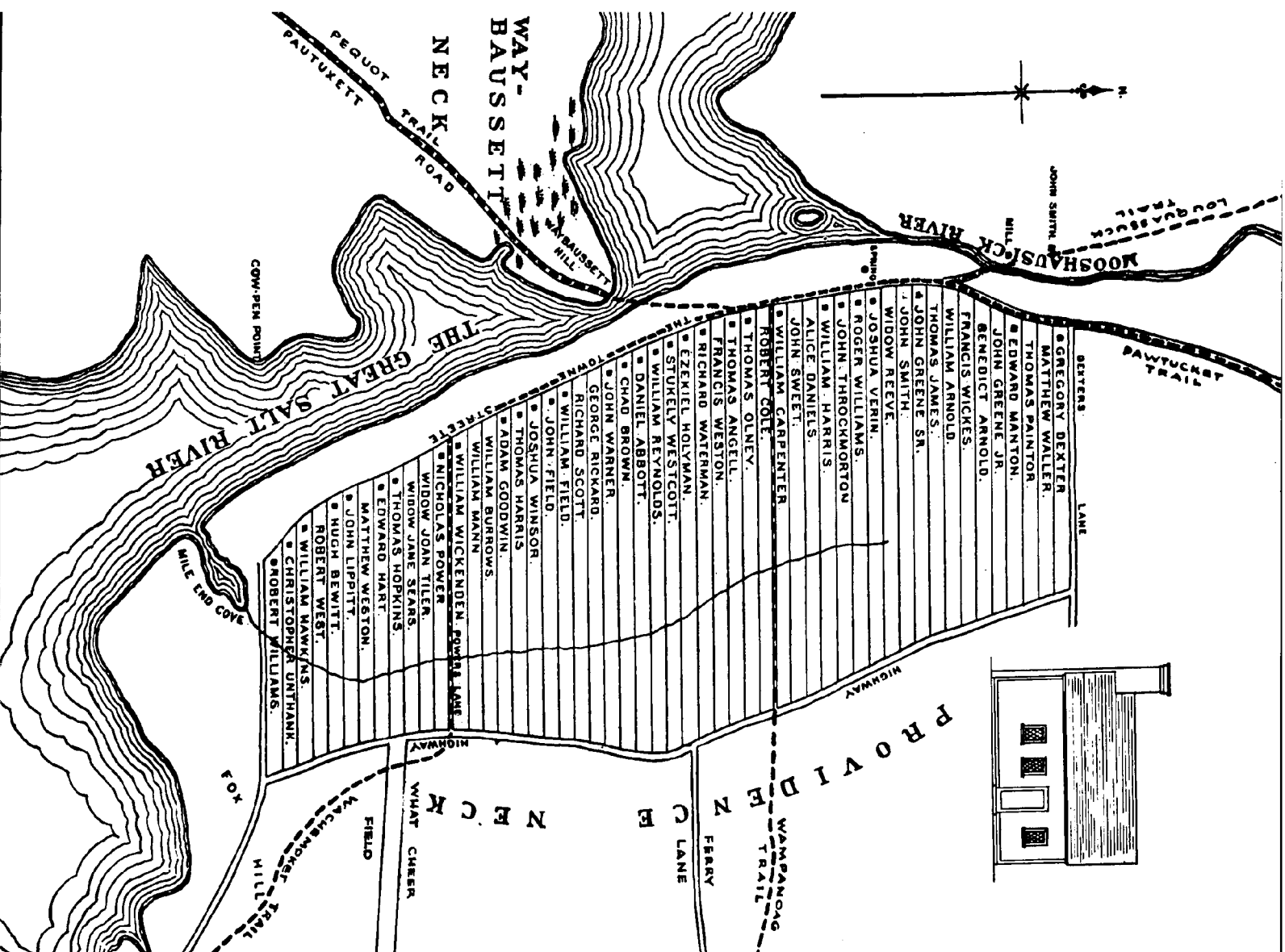
A brief history of the College Hill area as it is related to the growth of Providence has been included at this point in order to indicate the pattern of development through the years which has produced the College Hill of today.

**THE FIRST SETTLEMENT** – The landing of Roger Williams and the beginning of a new Colony.

The outline of the College Hill area today had its origin in 1636 when Roger Williams, religious leader and Indian trader, and his followers, exiled for heresy from Congregationalist Salem, set up a colony at the crossroads of two Indian highways, at the head of Narragansett Bay and at the confluence of the Moshassuck and Woonasquatic Rivers. The new settlement grew around a spring of fresh water located on the west side of North Main Street near the present Alamo Lane, a short distance south of Smith Street. From the first, the colonists were dedicated to the principle of religious liberty: separation of Church and State was crystallized a year later in the compact of August 20, 1637 in the words, "We do promise to subject ourselves. . . to all such orders or agreements as shall be made for the public good", but "only in civil things."

The separation of Church and State was partly responsible for the pattern of the town's growth. Massachusetts and Connecticut towns were Congregational towns where the church, often built before the houses, was set on one side of a green and became the center around which the settlers grouped their homes. In Providence, however, where dissenters were welcomed, no church was built until 1700 and no village green was ever contemplated. Instead, the Proprietors laid out deep narrow home lots in a straggling line along an Indian pathway on the eastern shores of the Great Salt River, and extending back over the steep hill to the present Hope Street. In 1646, John Smith built the first semi-public building, a mill, at the falls of the Moshassuck River, near the junction of Charles and Mill Streets and here, in the earliest "civic center", town life centered for fifty years or more.

MAP NUMBER 1. Providence in about 1650, showing the main Indian Trails and the first division of Home Lots. (From Greene—*The Providence Plantations*)



The bounds of the College Hill study area coincide with the bounds of the original lots. North and South Main Streets follow the Indian way, later the Towne Street, which meandered in front of the Proprietors' houses along the waterfront. Olney Street, first called Dexter's Lane, is near the northern bound and Wickenden was the southern. Hope Street follows a highway laid out at the head of the home lots; what is now Waterman Street follows the old way to the ferry and Red Bridge stands near where the ferry crossed the Seekonk into what was then the Massachusetts Colony. The Weybosset side was linked to the neck by a wading place and later by a bridge located in front of the site where the Market House now stands.

The tax list of 1650 shows that the only public and commercial buildings were John Smith's mill and a tannery, both of which were near the falls of the Moshassuck. Some 51 houses made up the compact part of the town, most of them strung along the Towne Street with a few more nearer Pawtucket or on Foxes' Hill. Two were on the Weybosset side and were reached by boat or by fording the river. None of these buildings has survived, but they were known to have been frame, small, steeply pitched buildings with great end chimney walls of stone into which huge fireplaces were built. John Smith Jr.'s house consisted of two rooms, a "lower room" and a "chamber" above it. Roger Mowry's tavern, built in 1653, was also small. It survived in rebuilt form until 1900.

John Smith Jr. was one of the few energetic settlers who engaged in coastwise sea trade, and there is a record that in 1654 he sent a shipment of "flour, tobacco and pease" to Newfoundland. By 1655 a few merchants had established a tenuous traffic with the Barbados, but most of the colonists who made up the population in Providence of 1650 or 1660 were planters. Unlike their Newport neighbors, their eyes did not turn seaward for some years to come.

In 1663, John Clarke of Newport, president of the Colony, came back from England with the liberal charter granted by Charles II which proclaimed the intention of the colonists "to hold forth a livelie experiment that a most flourishing civil state may stand and best be maintained . . . with full liberty in religious concerns." Rhode Island was thus the first colony to be assured of religious freedom; its body politic of heady individualists was set even more firmly on an independent course.

## KING PHILIP'S WAR AND THE REBUILDING OF PROVIDENCE -

The beginning of an era of civic growth and commercial development.

In March of 1675 during King Philip's War, Providence, like the other towns on the mainland, was burned by the Indians. As far as is known, only two houses, Mowry's and Field's garrison house, escaped. In the next weeks the inhabitants gradually drifted back and began the arduous task of clearing away the ruins and rebuilding the town.

The reconstruction marked the beginning of an era of civic growth which saw considerable commercial and industrial development take place. The grist mill and tannery were rebuilt and in addition, a sawmill, iron works, lime kilns and a blacksmith shop were established. A schoolhouse was built near Dexter's Lane (Olney Street). Grimmer aspects of the town's life were the stocks erected on Olney Street in 1684 and the prison built south of Olney in 1700.

Civic activities also centered in the northern part of town. Mowry's tavern on Abbott Street had escaped the flames of war and Epenetus Olney rebuilt his tavern on the Towne Street near Dexter's Lane. John Whipple opened a public house on Constitution Hill and in 1685 William Turpin opened another north of Olney's.

The first church building, too, was built in this northern part of town. In 1700 Elder Pardon Tillinghast erected a meeting house "in the shape of a haycap with a fireplace in the middle, the smoke escaping from a hole in the roof", at the corner of North Main and Smith Streets.

By this time, Providence had some 1,200 inhabitants, most of whom were living on the shores of the cove and the Providence River along the east side of the Towne Street. Their houses were now often two stories high but were still built with steep pitched roofs, casement windows and great end chimneys of stone. None are left but most of them resembled the story and a half Thomas Clemence House on George Waterman Road in Manton, or the two story "Splendid Mansion" Eleazar Arnold put up in 1687 on the Great Road to Mendon.



to come, also lived in the fashionable south part of town where he had a shop and a distillery built after his successful voyage to the West Indies in 1722.

Industrial, civic, and commercial activity thus began to center in the northern part of the town and the seafaring interests in the southern part. In the meantime Weybosset Street, which had taken its present curving shape to skirt the high hill which stood where Westminster runs today, was also being settled.

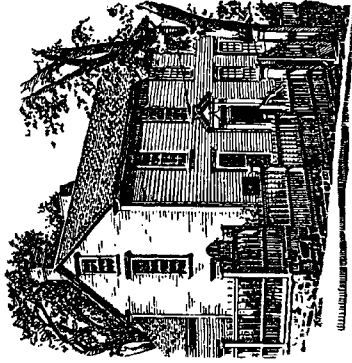
In contrast with the massive stone-end houses of the first settlement, the new houses were larger and were often of central chimney plan. Sash windows replaced the small casements, and classic cornices and doorways trimmed with pilasters and classic detail became common. Brick now almost universally supplanted stone for the chimneys and in about 1730 brick houses began to go up. One of these, Richard Brown's gambrel roofed half-a-house built in 1731, is still standing on the grounds of Swan Point Cemetery. However, most houses, whether of end or central chimney plan, gable, gambrel or hip roofed, were built of wood. Stephen Hopkins' house at the corner of Benefit and Hopkins Streets and Benjamin Cushing's house at 38½ North Court Street are typical.

Providence still lagged behind Newport but the stage was now set for future growth.

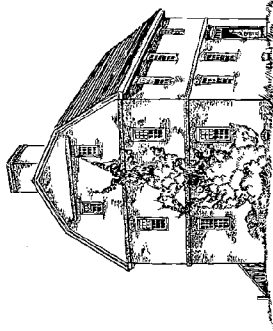
#### THE SECOND HALF OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY - The emergence of Providence as a major Colonial city.

By the eve of the American Revolution, Providence had taken its place with other Colonial towns, and its destiny as the outstanding Rhode Island city could be predicted. All the enterprises undertaken in other colonial towns were now pursued successfully by Providence merchants. Privateering in the Spanish and old French Wars had proved lucrative. The trade with the West Indies was flourishing. The staple West Indian products of sugar and molasses were brought to Providence to be converted into rum by shore side distilleries. The rum was then shipped to the coast of Africa where it was used for the purchase of slaves, who in turn were shipped to the West Indies for labor in the sugar plantations.

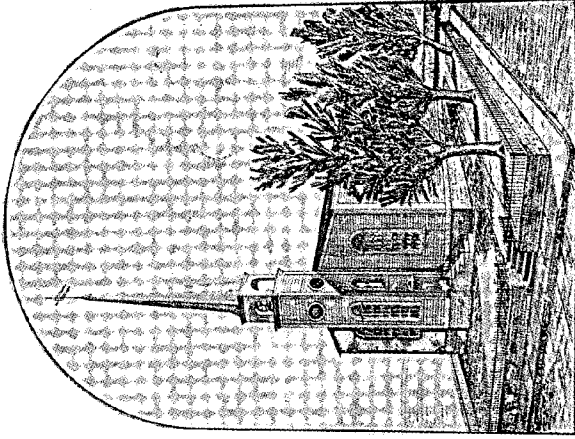
The firm of Nicholas Brown and Company, along with other Providence merchants, had a stake in all these ventures, but the slave trade proved unreliable and most Providence firms turned to traffic in sugar and manufacture of rum, letting others try for success in the Guinea trade. Nicholas Brown and Company also set up a spermaceti works and in 1761 nine Newport, Providence, and Boston companies organized the "united firm of Spermaceti Chandlers" which regulated prices for the purchase of head matter and for sell-



Stephen Hopkins House



Richard Brown House



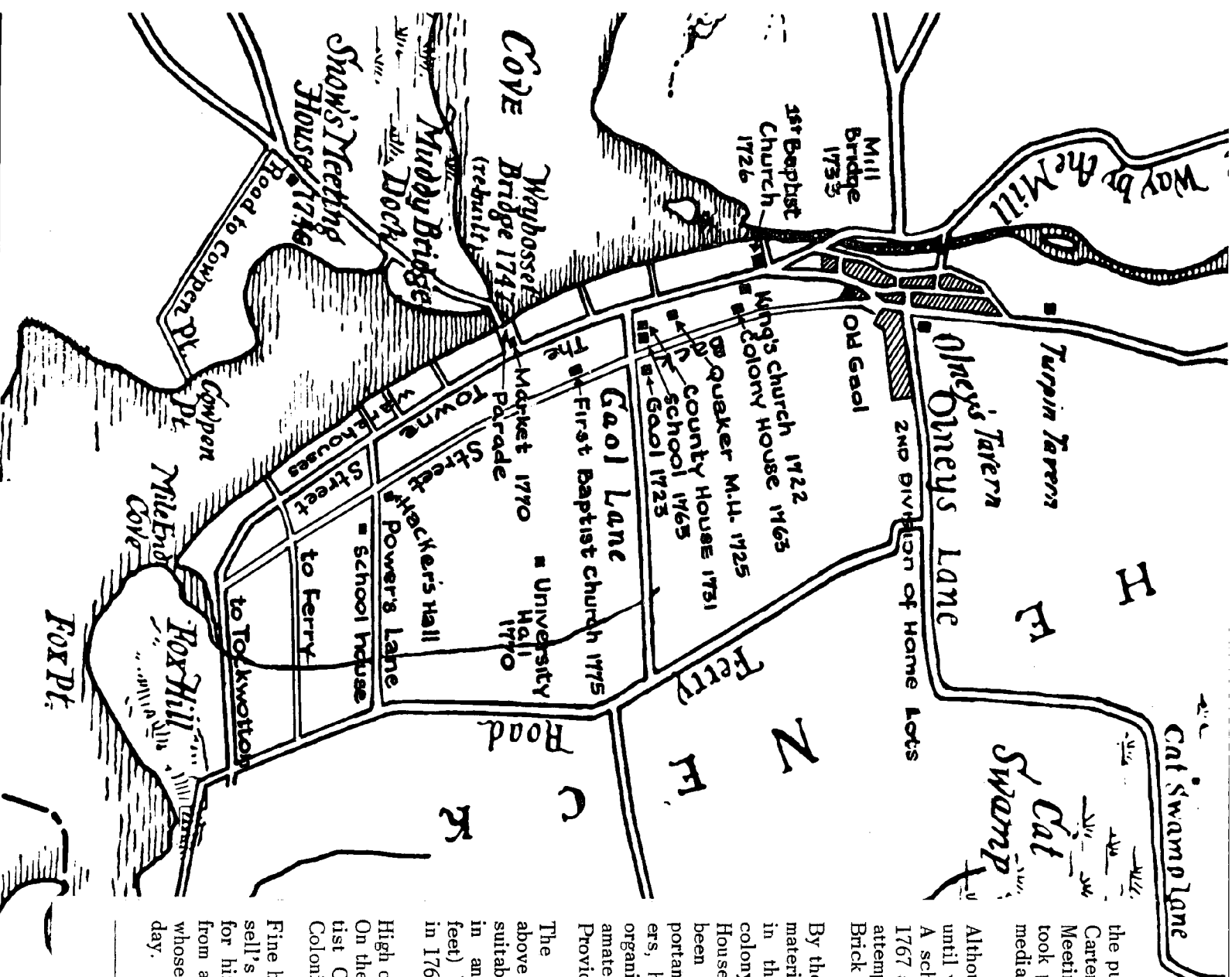
Kings Chapel, 1722

ing finished candles. This combine has been called the first American Trust.

The spermaceti works, the distilleries, the shops and warehouses along the waterfront, the West Indiamen, the sloops and schooners anchored in the harbor gave a busy commercial air to this southern part of town.

In 1765, Brown established Hope Furnace in Scituate and three years later pots, kettles, and ash pans from the Hope Iron works were being sent to Nantucket, Norwich, New York and as far as Dominica and Tobago. Other merchants, Welcome Arnold, Thomas Lloyd Halsey, Philip and Zachariah Allen, John Corliss, the Russells, the Tillinghasts, the Clarks, the Nightingales, the Dexters, the Hopkins and the Jenckes were all involved in the mercantile ventures of the day.

Civic activities and new building reflected the flow of wealth into the town. The Providence Library Company was formed in 1764 with books brought from England. William Goddard arrived in Providence in 1762 and set up the first printing office where he began



the publication of the Providence Gazette, later carried on by John Carter at the "Sign of Shakespear's Head" in the building at 21 Meeting Street. In that year, too, the first theatrical performance took place, but an ordinance forbidding such productions was immediately passed and no similar venture was undertaken until 1792.

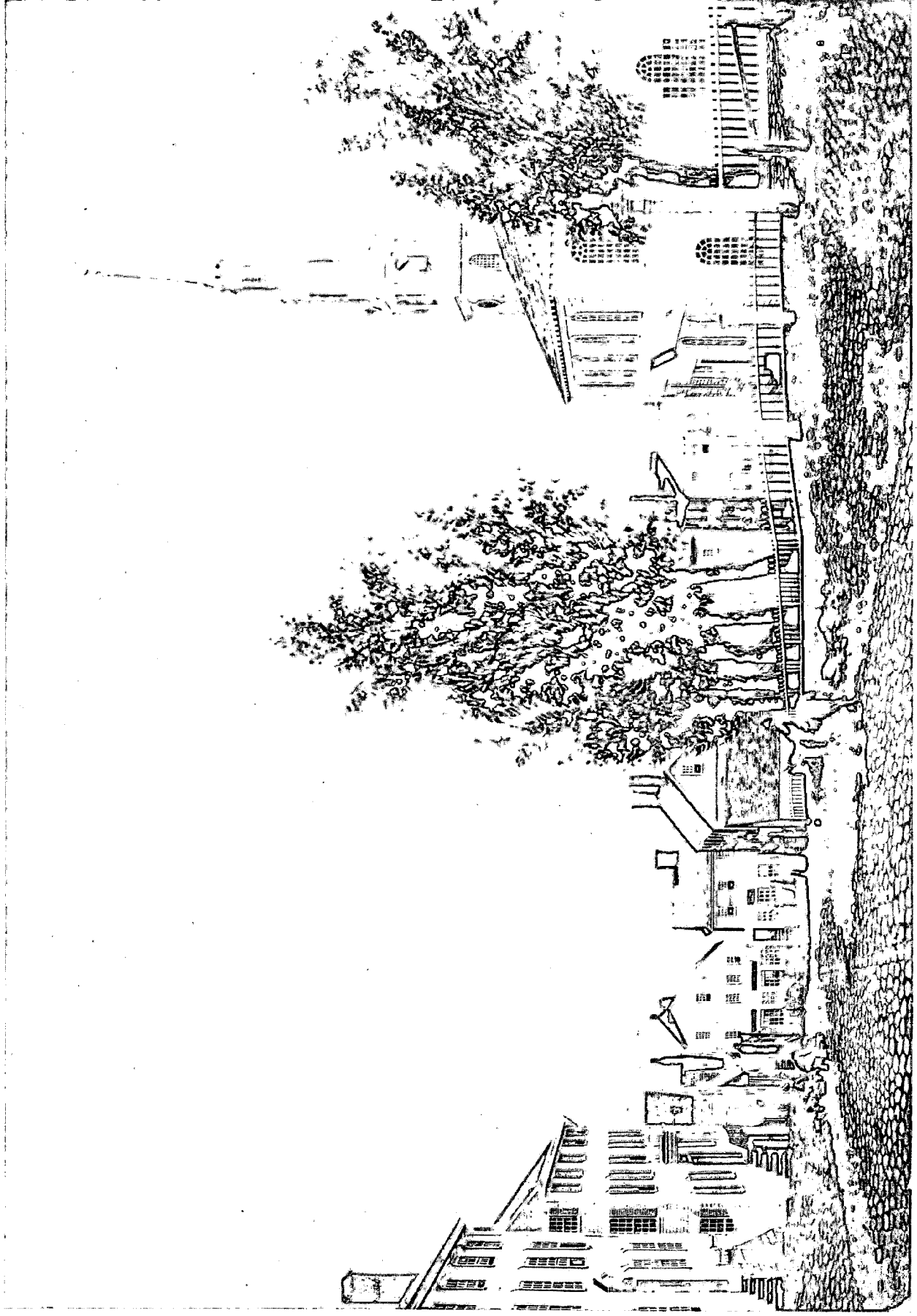
Although a public school system was not successfully established until well into the next century, there were several private schools. A school house was built on the Weybosset side in 1754 and in 1767 a first attempt was made to establish free town schools. The attempt failed, but two school houses were built, one of which, the Brick School House on Meeting Street, is still standing.

By the outbreak of the War the appearance of Providence had been materially enhanced by a number of handsome brick and wood houses in the full tradition of the Georgian style. In 1763 the second colony house, built of brick along the lines of the Newport Colony House of 1749, was put up to replace the earlier one which had been destroyed by fire. Joseph Brown designed most of the important buildings erected after 1770. One of the four Brown brothers, he was an astronomer, a member of the faculty of the newly organized Rhode Island College (later Brown University), and an amateur architect, and his work has left a permanent stamp on Providence.

The brick market was built in 1772. Originally one story high above an open arcade, it stood on Market Square which, to make a suitable setting for the new building, had been graded and filled in and enclosed with a retaining wall. A widened, (twenty-two feet) Weybosset bridge just in front of the Market had been built in 1764.

High on the hillside rose the new four story brick College building. On the Towne Street north of the Market, stood the new First Baptist Church, one of the finest architectural achievements in the Colonies of its day. All three were designed by Joseph Brown.

Fine houses were also being built. Such buildings as Joseph Russell's brick house (1772) and the house that Joseph Brown built for himself, with its ogee pediment, helped transform Providence from a town of small wooden dwellings of simple character to one whose architecture was described with respect by visitors of the day.



View down Waterman Street, showing first Baptist Church, houses  
and the cove in about 1820. Watercolor by Joseph Partridge.

**PROVIDENCE DURING AND AFTER THE REVOLUTION** - The eclipse of Newport as Rhode Island's largest town, the rapid expansion of maritime pursuits and industrial forces at work.

The tension between England and the American Colonies had now reached the breaking point. Rhode Island, engaged in activities which brought its commercial existence into direct conflict with Great Britain's interests, was already in a state of sullen resentment. In 1772, the British Revenue schooner, the *Gaspee*, was scuttled and burned by a band of Providence men and on May 4, 1775, two months before the formal Declaration of Independence, Rhode Island made its own declaration separating it from British rule.

During the ensuing years of war, Providence commerce was crippled by the blockade of Narragansett Bay, but the town did not suffer occupation by the British for three years as did Newport, and its commerce recovered quickly after the war. Soon Providence had supplanted Newport as the leading port in the state.

By 1800 the population of Providence numbered over 7,500 whereas Newport's population had dropped from 9,000 to about 4,000 between 1775 and 1780. A map made by Daniel Anthony in 1803 shows that the town growth still followed the old line of Main Street along the waterfront continuing from Heamton's Lane (Rochambeau) on the north to Fox Point, Hope Street and India Point on the south. The Back Street, or Benefit Street, which had been opened in 1750 was partially lined with houses. The section around Transit and Wickenden and the newly opened streets of Williams, John, Arnold and Sheldon were also being built up. The Weybosset side was filled as far west as Stewart Street, and the town now had eight bridges to ease transportation over the many water crossings.

The years after the Revolution saw the rapid expansion of maritime pursuits. One hundred and twenty-nine sailing vessels belonging to Providence came into port in the single year of 1781, and by 1800 fifty-eight wharves had been built. These years were also the heyday of the short lived but profitable East India trade which continued until the Embargo of 1809 hastened its collapse. John Brown, who in 1787 had helped establish the Providence East India trade, was developing Tockwotton and India Point where his Indians and other vessels docked. There he had the shops, warehouses, an air furnace, a distil house, a glass house and the

spermacei works which made a maritime center of the Point. Rope walks were laid out east of Brook Street. The center of the West Indies trade, however, still continued farther north in the Providence River near Transit.

As the number and size of the industrial plants increased, the complexion of the town began to change, especially along the waterfront where factories and shops gradually began to replace the dwelling houses, whose owners moved out to newly converted farm lands, or up on the southern slope of the steep hillside. The most industrialized section lay along the Moshassuck where the tanyards, grist mill, slaughter houses, a distil house, a sugar house, cooper's shop, blacksmith shops, a chocolate and fulling mill, a paper mill and an iron shop all gave proof of a thriving industrial development. Seril and Nehemiah Dodge were working in silver by 1796 and by 1805 there were thirty establishments for manufacturing in precious metals.

Other important industrial forces were also at work. In 1790 the first successful American cotton manufactory was established in Pawtucket by Samuel Slater under the auspices of Moses Brown. It was an epoch-making event in the industrial history of Rhode Island.

In the meantime, among matters of civic concern, the need for public education was receiving particular attention; in 1800 the state passed legislation to establish free schools. The act was repealed in 1803 and another was not successfully passed until 1826 but Providence, under the leadership of John Howland, developed a system of its own.

Five or six of the grand mansions built in the last years of the eighteenth century and the first years of the nineteenth century by Providence's successful merchants are still standing. They were large and square, looked backward in style and were opulent in detail. John Brown's three story brick house on Power Street, designed by his brother Joseph in 1786 was reckoned by John Quincy Adams as "the most magnificent and elegant private mansion that I have ever seen on this continent." The nearby Joseph Nightingale house, 1792, the Thomas Poynton Ives House, 1806, the Carington House, 1812, and the Samuel Arnold House, c. 1810, all characterized by their late colonial architectural style, gave ample proof of the town's burgeoning wealth.







## THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY – The beginning of an industrial epoch.

The nineteenth century was to be chiefly an industrial epoch. Textile mills multiplied and it was not many years before merchants began to sell their ships. Their former captains became superintendents of prosaic cotton mills, and the inland waterways were taken over for manufacturing plants. By 1812, over thirty cotton mills were in successful operation and fortunes founded on shipping were now augmented by native industry. Providence economy was to be increasingly based on manufacturing and on wholesale and retail commerce.

In 1823, Daniel Anthony made a second map of Providence, reproduced as map 5, which showed how rapidly the town itself was growing; when the first Providence Directory was published a year later, the population stood at 15,000. Providence became a city in 1832, and commenced its life as such with a population of 17,000.

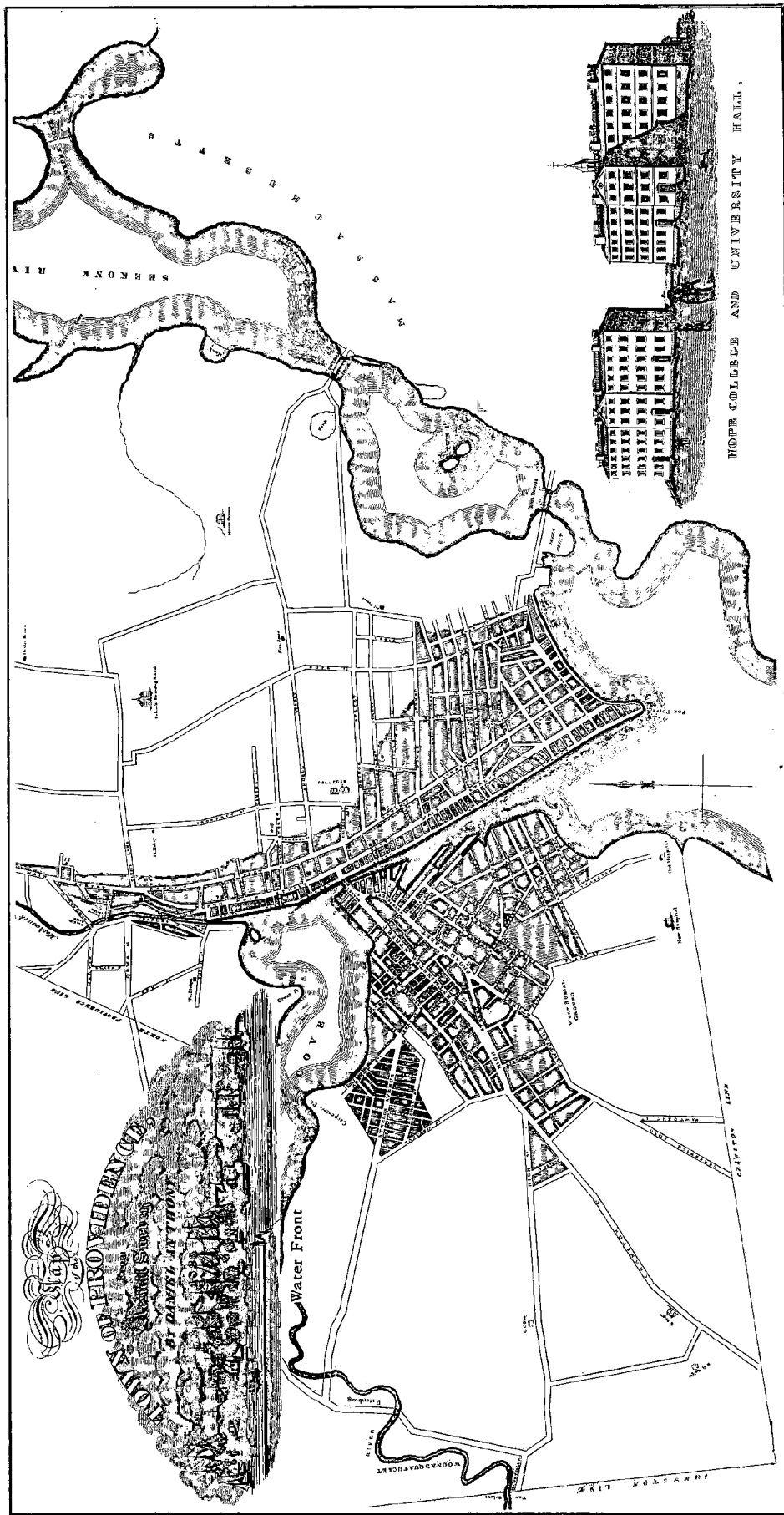
In the years between Anthony's first map and the incorporation of the new city many changes had occurred. Elijah Ormsbee's trial runs of his only partly successful steamboat "the Experiment" in the Providence Cove had been given up in 1792, but by 1817 the launching of Robert Fulton's "Clermont" meant changes in sea traffic that in years to come were to sweep away the packets, sloops and schooners. The steamship "Firefly" began to operate between Newport and Providence in that same year. In 1819 regular runs to New York were instituted.

Other modes of transportation were also being explored. A canal between Worcester and Providence was opened in 1820. It served as an inland waterway for some twenty years, but a new form of transportation was soon to curtail its usefulness. In 1831, the first steam railroad made a halting run from Providence to Boston.

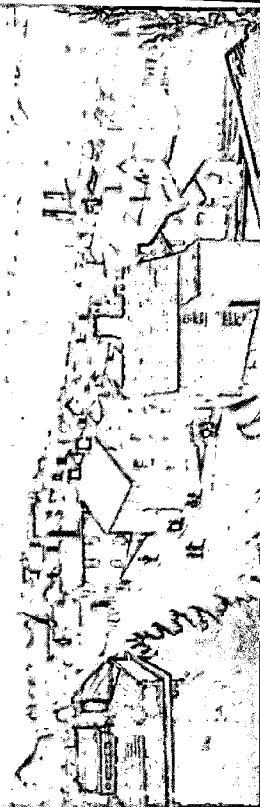
It was 1820 before the Town Council ordered the erection of oil lamps to light the principal streets of the town. Hitherto, pedestrians had made their way at night with the aid of hand lanterns. In the same year the town's first order was given for flagstone sidewalks. They were to be laid on South Main Street replacing the cobblestones that had until this time extended across the street from house to house.

In the meantime, a drastic change was taking place on the waterfront. A serious fire had occurred on South Main Street in 1801 and the hurricane of 1815 resulted in the destruction of some five hundred buildings including most of the old wharves and wooden warehouses which lined the shore from India Point to Weybosset Bridge. In the ensuing reconstruction, a new harbor line was established, South Water and West Water (Dyer) Streets were constructed and Fox Hill was leveled and the material used to fill Mile End Cove (at the south end of Fox Point). The new warehouses were built of brick or stone and fire records make frequent reference to such fire proof features as iron windows and floors and roofs laid in mortar. Most of these buildings are now gone, but here and there may be seen broad gable-roofed three or four story warehouses which still give a waterfront character to this section.

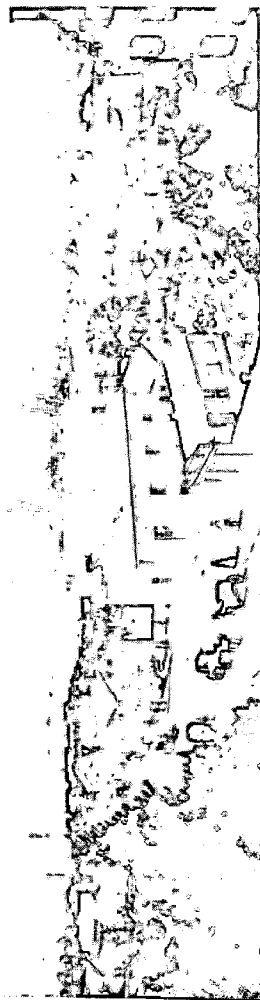
Up the hill new structures were going up in rapid succession. Just as Joseph Brown had been responsible for most of the significant building immediately before and after the Revolutionary War, so the imprint of the work of the architect-builder, John Holden Greene, was stamped on early nineteenth century Providence. He designed almost every important building during these years and by the time his career closed in 1830, the aspect of the town had changed. A new St. John's church, 1809, built in the "Gothick" manner, was his first Providence building. In 1816, he designed the First Congregational Church to replace the one which had been destroyed by fire two years earlier. In 1819 he built the Friends' School (now Moses Brown School). Three buildings, the Franklin Hotel, Roger Williams Bank Building and the Hotel Bristol, all built between 1823 and 1824 and all now gone except for the end of the Franklin Hotel, altered the character of Market Square. In 1824 he built the Dexter Asylum for the poor. Besides these public buildings, he designed Sullivan Dorr's new house (1809) and a series of brick and wooden square monitor-roofed houses, many of which stand today. In 1822 the College built Hope College, its second "Edifice". This, and Greene's buildings were among the last in Providence built in the late Georgian (or Early Republican) tradition. Most of the buildings of the next two decades were associated with the names of Russell Warren, James Bucklin and William Talman and were Greek Revival in style.



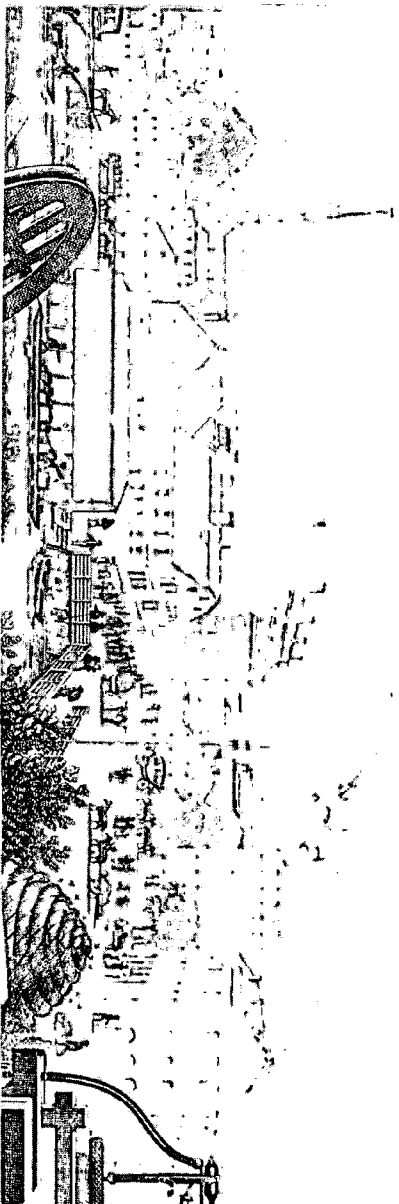
MAP NUMBER 5. Providence in 1823 by Daniel Anthony.



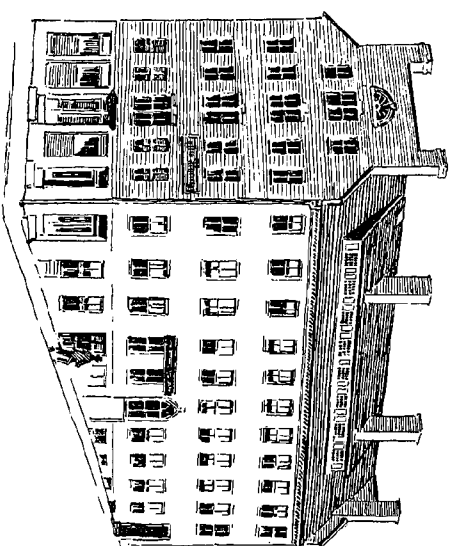
Southern Benefit Street in 1830 by E. L. Peckham RIHS



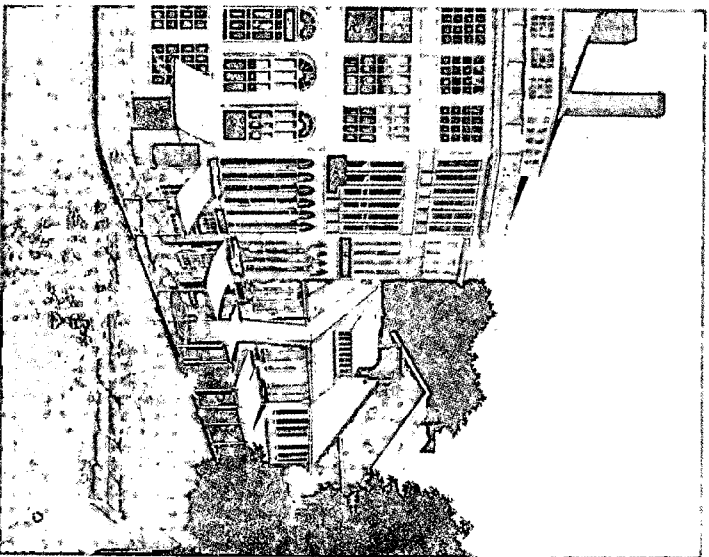
Southern Benefit Street in 1845 by E. L. Peckham showing St. Stephen's Church now Baker Playhouse. RIHS



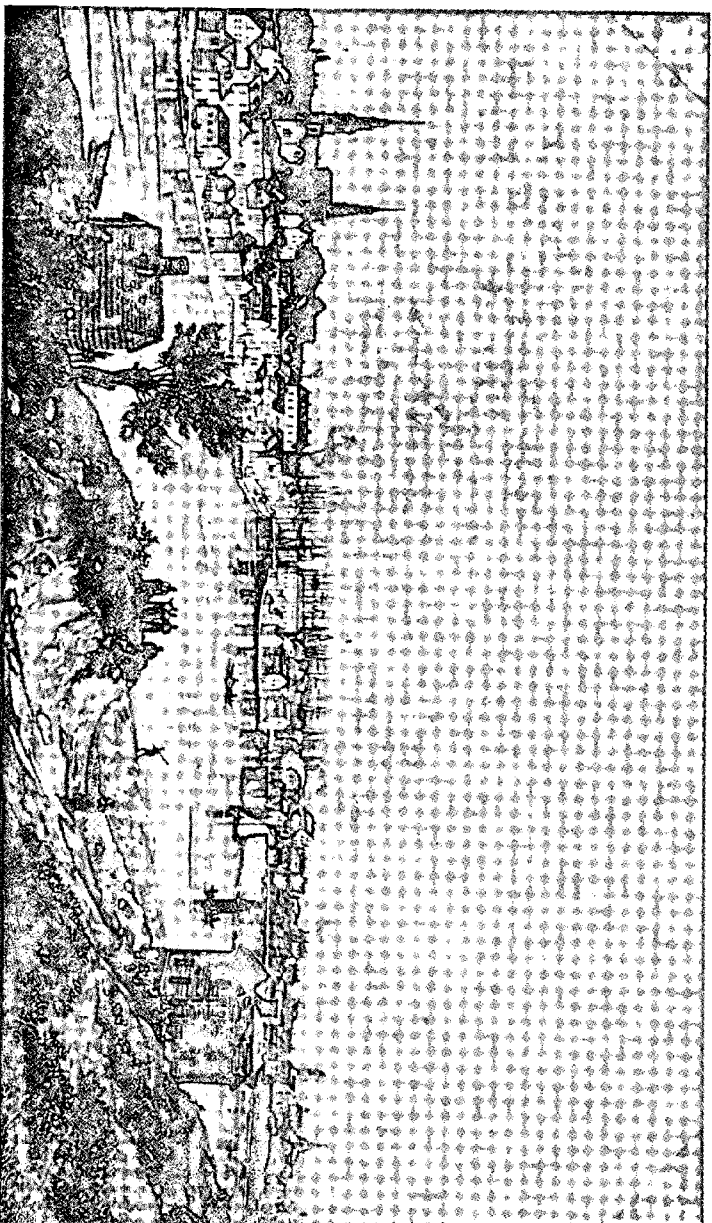
Market Square in 1823.



Franklin House, by J. H. Greene, now Part of Rhode Island School of Design.



"Cheapside," Market and College Street, in 1843, showing Hotel Bristol by J. H. Greene.



View of Providence in 1827, by Milbert.

**THE SECOND AND THIRD QUARTERS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY** – City growth and decline of the West Indies trade and expansion of commercial and industrial enterprises.

In about 1857, Walling and Cushing published a map of the city of Providence which showed all the buildings as well as the network of streets. Part of this map is shown on the following page. The population had now reached the 50,000 mark and the city was spreading south and west and north, although vacant lots still made up the bulk of the land in the College Hill area north of Waterman Street and east of Prospect.

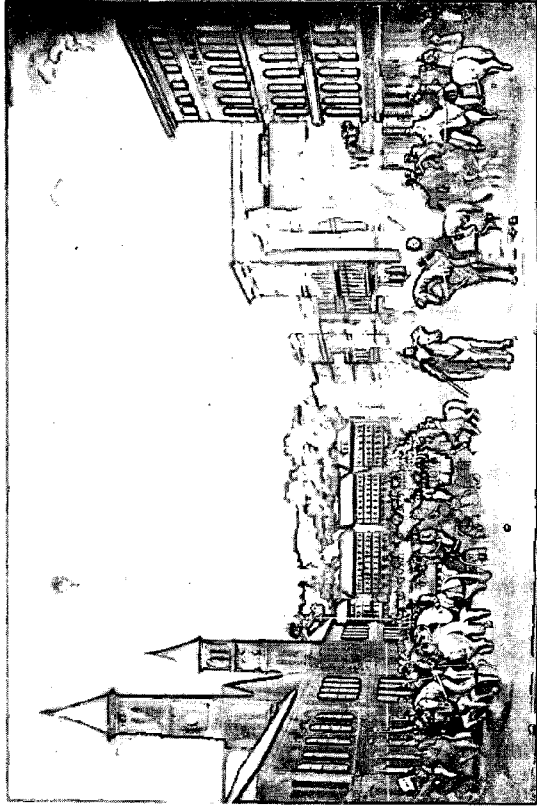
By this time, the cove waters had been confined into a circular basin. Along its shores stretched the tracks of the railroads which had expanded from the limping start of 1831 to include several important lines. On the south side of the Cove, stood the new Providence and Worcester station designed in 1848 by T. A. Tefft in the Lombard Romanesque style. Tracks extended from the station down South Water Street to India Point and the docks along the shore to connect with the shipping and make a link between land and sea.

In the meantime, changes in commerce had taken place. The East India trade had passed away, with only Rufus Greene's barque to arrive in port occasionally in the 50's and 60's laden with dates, palm oil, ivory and gold dust from Mozambique. The West Indian trade was declining; whaling had risen and gone. All this was replaced by coastwise domestic commerce and the increasing fleets of merchant vessels were now loaded with coal and cotton.

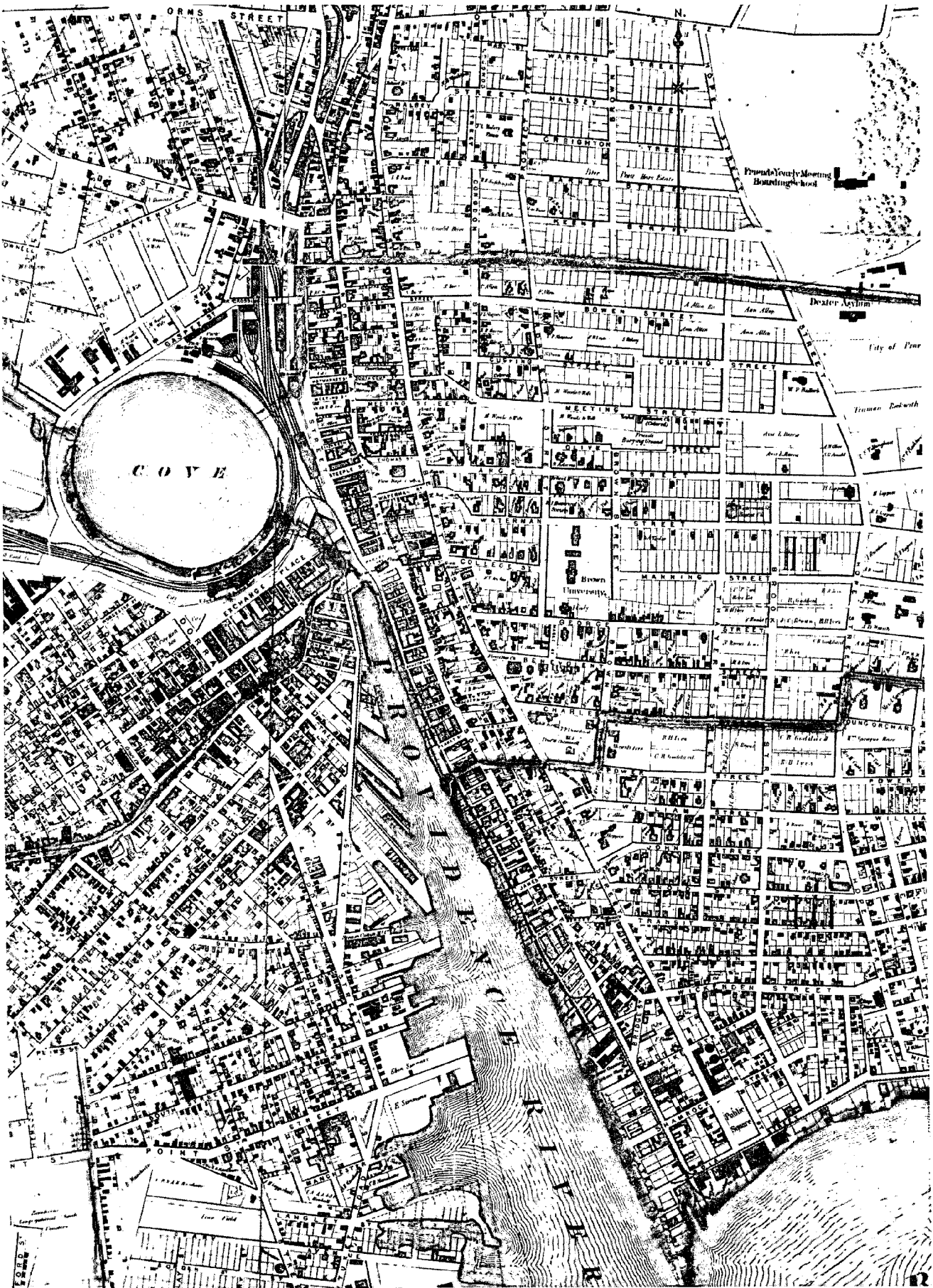
The character of the Main Street also was changing, with mansion houses converted into shops or subjected to removal for business blocks. Canal Street, South Water Street and India Point were becoming centers for heavy industry such as iron foundries, a print works, a screw company, a bleachery and engine works. The Gas Works, established in 1847, was built on Pike Street.

Wealthy mill owners, industrialists and merchants were now building their houses at the southern end of Benefit Street, or along Prospect where they had a fine view of the city, or on Angell or Hope and further east in a colony on Cooke and Governor Streets.

At this time, taste in architecture was undergoing a change which was to have a profound effect on the appearance of College Hill and the city. The broad classic proportions and in some instance stuccoed walls of Greek Revival buildings were already interspersed among the red brick and the clapboarded buildings of earlier days. The romantic spirit which had induced designers and patrons alike to turn to the Greek temple now led them to look for other unusual and exotic forms for their new buildings. Tefft, who had designed the railroad station, built several houses of brownstone in the style of the Tuscan villas near Florence, and most of the other buildings were strongly influenced by the Italian Renaissance. Such houses, high and heavy in scale, with bracketed cornices and Italian classic porticoes all dating from the years before the Civil War, may be seen in numbers on the East side today.



Exchange Place in about 1860 showing old Railroad Station. R.H.S.



MAP NUMBER 6, College Hill area, taken from a map of Providence, Walling and Cushing, 1857.

**PROVIDENCE AFTER THE CIVIL WAR** – Continued civic and industrial development encouraged by improvements in transportation and the inauguration of electricity, telephone and telegraph systems.

The years after the Civil War witnessed rapid growth. Population which had stood at 50,000 in 1860 had more than doubled by 1885. By this time, there were over a hundred iron and steel companies in the city and environs and a hundred and sixty or more shops for working precious metals. Coastwise commercial shipping continued to increase to such an extent that these years have been called "the steamboat era."

Major improvements in transportation facilities of all types were undertaken. In 1880 the channel of the river was dredged and the harbor was extended north to Central Bridge over the Seekonk. Rail facilities were extended and the Cove was completely filled in 1892, thus making more land available for tracks and yards.

Local transportation needs were also being met. A horse-drawn street railway system was established in 1865. In 1890 cable cars to mount the steep east side hill were put in operation up College Street. With the increasing flow of traffic, improvement of the highways became a pressing concern. In the 1890's North Main Street was widened and straightened and it was about this time that paving with cobblestones was abandoned in favor of granite paving blocks laid in concrete; in 1891 the first asphalt pavement was laid.

In the meantime, the inauguration and the installation in 1876 of telephone and telegraph systems, and in 1882 of electricity, paved the way for modern civic development. During this period also city problems of water supply and sewerage systems were being met. The water supply was extended by a reservoir in the Fruit Hill section and another, Hope Reservoir, in the College Hill area, at Hope and Olney. A sewerage plan, instituted in 1874, was improved in 1897 and again in 1900, but the problem of pollution of the river and bay waters from mill waste continued to increase rather than abate. It was at this time, too, that the first unsightly rows of cheaply constructed three-decker tenements crowded into

restricted lots began to go up. The problems of the rapidly growing city had become apparent and have imposed increasing difficulties with the passing years.

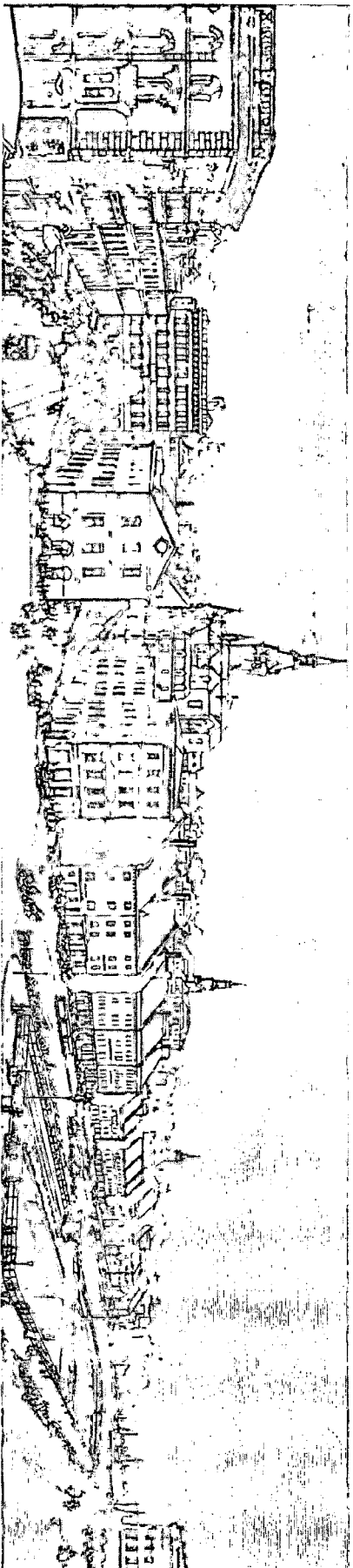
Physically, part of the city began to grow upward, with tall buildings supplementing the rows of two and three story buildings characteristic of earlier Providence. The business center on the Weybosset side already had a group of high buildings, which included the Bank of North America, the Merchants Bank Building and the Custom House, all built before 1860. The Butler Exchange, 1872, and the new City Hall, both mansard roofed buildings in the French Renaissance manner, were among important additions. On College Hill Infantry Hall (1879), and the new Court House (1877) had been built and their towers changed the silhouette of South Main Street.

College Hill was now becoming a center for schools and colleges. By 1895, Brown Campus had extended east to Thayer Street and its plan included some eight buildings in Gothic Romanesque, Renaissance and Early Republican styles. The Rhode Island School of Design, established in 1878, moved into the College Hill area in 1892, and in the same year a women's college, later to become Pembroke College, was associated with Brown. Its campus was established on Meeting Street in 1897 with the building of Pembroke Hall. The first Hope High School went up in 1898. It was the second high school building in the area, the first having been built in 1843 at Benefit and Waterman Streets. Friends' School, later Moses Brown, had been in operation since 1819.

Two East side tracts, Prospect Terrace (1867) and Tockwotton Park (1888) had been added to the City's Park system. Across Hope Street, the site of Dexter Asylum assured open land for years to come.

Meanwhile, mansard-roofed houses began to fill up the lots north of Waterman Street, while a few large asymmetrically planned, towered, Italian villas went up on Prospect Street. Their high Italian scale and irregular plan broke the relationship with building of the past but their castle-like turrets, towers and domered gabled roof lines gave a picturesque air to otherwise sedate streets.



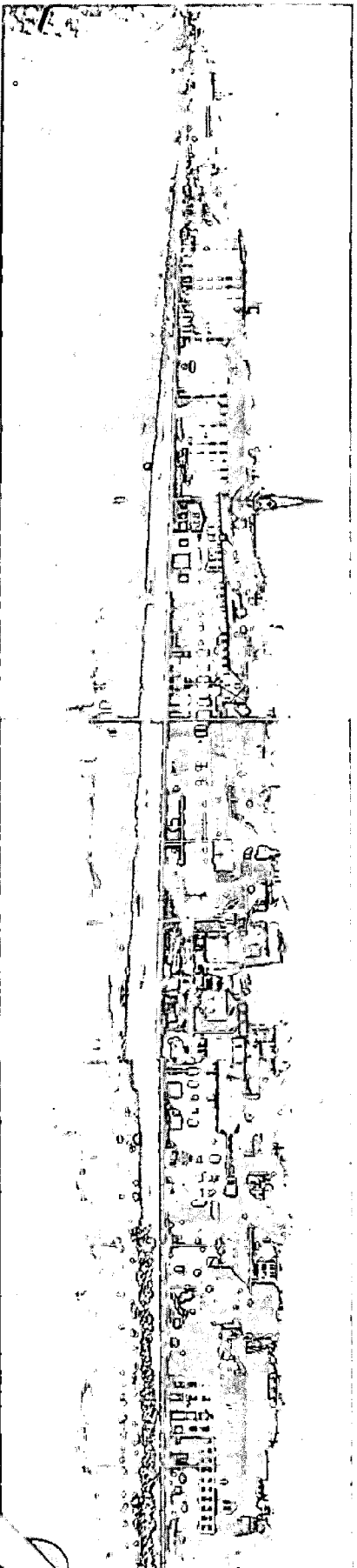


College Hill from Market Square in 1885 showing old Court House and Warehouses on Water Street.



(From Greene - The Providence Plantations)

A Bird's Eye View of Providence in about 1900 showing:  
 (1) Federal Building. (2) Providence Washington Building. (3) Butler Exchange. (4) City Hall. (5) Old Station. (6) New Station.



Waterfront in 1959.

## THE TWENTIETH CENTURY — The developments of modern day Providence.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the population of Providence was 175,000; fifty years later it had increased to 250,000. Moreover, the complex of cities adjacent to it now placed Rhode Island in the category of a city-state.

As in the late nineteenth century, heavy industry, precious metals, jewelry-making and coast-wise shipping, chiefly of coal, continued to be the basis of the city's economy. In addition, several large oil storage plants were now established on the harbor front in Providence and East Providence.

Finding ways to augment transportation facilities became mandatory. In 1910, the harbor was deepened and a quay wall 3,000 feet long was built on the west side of the river for a municipal dock. In 1896, the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad which had absorbed the earlier companies, built a new station somewhat north of Tefft's station of 1848, and took more land in the important central part of the city for tracks and freight yards. This was followed in 1903 by the construction of a viaduct overpassing Canal and North Main Streets and in 1908 by a railroad tunnel through the east side of Providence from North Main to Ives Street and a bridge to connect with the Warren and Bristol branch in East Providence.

In 1914, as part of a plan to improve the approach to College Hill, the United Street Railways also constructed a tunnel from North Main to Thayer Street, thus making it possible to abandon the cable car system up College Hill.

By this time, the city had become a trading center for the Metropolitan area, and, with the extension of suburban transportation, for most of Rhode Island and part of Massachusetts as well. As a result the unchanged narrow streets of the colonial town were increasingly overtaxed by the converging flow of traffic into the civic center. The coming of the automobile compounded the need to develop adequate traffic lanes. Widened streets, new thoroughfares, new bridges resulted in changed street lines but could not solve the problems created by the constant flow of automobiles over streets established more than two centuries earlier. More recently whole blocks of buildings, particularly in the downtown area, have gone down to make room for parking as well as for thoroughways.

The chief street changes in the College Hill section have been the

further widening of North Main Street in 1903, the extension of Waterman Street to Canal Street and the new Washington Bridge (1926) and its approach (now George M. Cohan Boulevard). In 1954 the area south of Transit Street on South Water, South Main and the west side of Wickenden was cleared for the new eastern leg of the North-South Freeway which now closes the southern end of the area.

Other changes in College Hill have been effected by the development of the Market Square and South Main Street area and by the expansion of the Rhode Island School of Design, the construction of a new Hope High School on the site of the former reservoir, and the growth of Brown University which together with Pembroke College has put up some twenty new buildings since 1900.

By 1900 building style reflected the swing away from the more romantic aspects of Victorian design to academic architectural forms. The state capitol built in that year of white marble by McKim, Mead, and White is the outstanding Providence example of the trend.

About this time, too, interest in colonial building was renewed and in Providence the red brick building of the Early Republican period was revived. In 1929, the new Court House, a red brick building with Georgian detail, designed by Jackson, Robertson and Adams, was built in the block between College and Hopkins, South Main and Benefit Streets. It is one of the largest buildings in this style ever constructed and it has set the pattern for the future development of Market Square as well as a trend in style which is still in effect.

At the same time the setting for the Market Square buildings was drastically altered by the demolition of the row of warehouses which still lined the west side of South Main Street from Crawford Street to the Market Building. The open area thus created in front of the new Court House was converted into a park and that south to Crawford Street Bridge was made into a parking area. The additional space created by the demolition of buildings on the west side of the river for the 1957 Freeway has combined with the river to produce a dramatic open sweep and has effectively separated College Hill from the downtown section.

Following the example of the Court House, other South Main and Market Square buildings have been constructed in red brick, as have the new Brown and Rhode Island School of Design buildings. Most of the twentieth century domestic building has been of mixed character with Colonial revival predominating. Only one or two houses have been designed in the contemporary idiom.

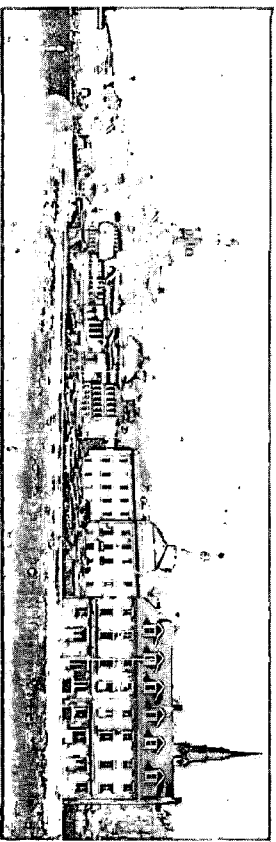


## II A-SUMMARY

Reference to the map of College Hill as it is today will show what recent changes have taken place in the character of College Hill. Most of the heavy industry which once fringed North Main Street, has moved away. The street, still a main traffic artery, has been in part given over to stores and parking lots. Canal Street has become a center for wholesale meat business.

Nothing but the line of the old Towne Street and a small park marking the site of Roger Williams spring is left to recall the seventeenth century community. But St. John's Cathedral and the rows of houses up the streets from North Main to Benefit and along Benefit Street form a sizable segment of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century town. In Market Square, the First Baptist Church, the Brick Market and the Joseph Brown and Benoni Cooke houses, all survive as an important architectural heritage. They are now surrounded by the massive groups of twentieth century red brick buildings and are situated facing an open park which makes a dramatic foreground setting.

The port activities, once centered in the southern part of the area, have declined, with the result that many of the buildings along South Main Street and South Water Street have fallen on evil days. In spite of this, the shells of several mansions on the east side of South Main Street and the rows of nineteenth century warehouses on the west side still manage to present a picture of the era when Providence sea trade filled the harbor with tall masted schooners and clipper ships. The new North-South Freeway has recently begun to infuse fresh life into this area and already there are signs of another development here, which while it may soon sweep away



Waterfront 1959

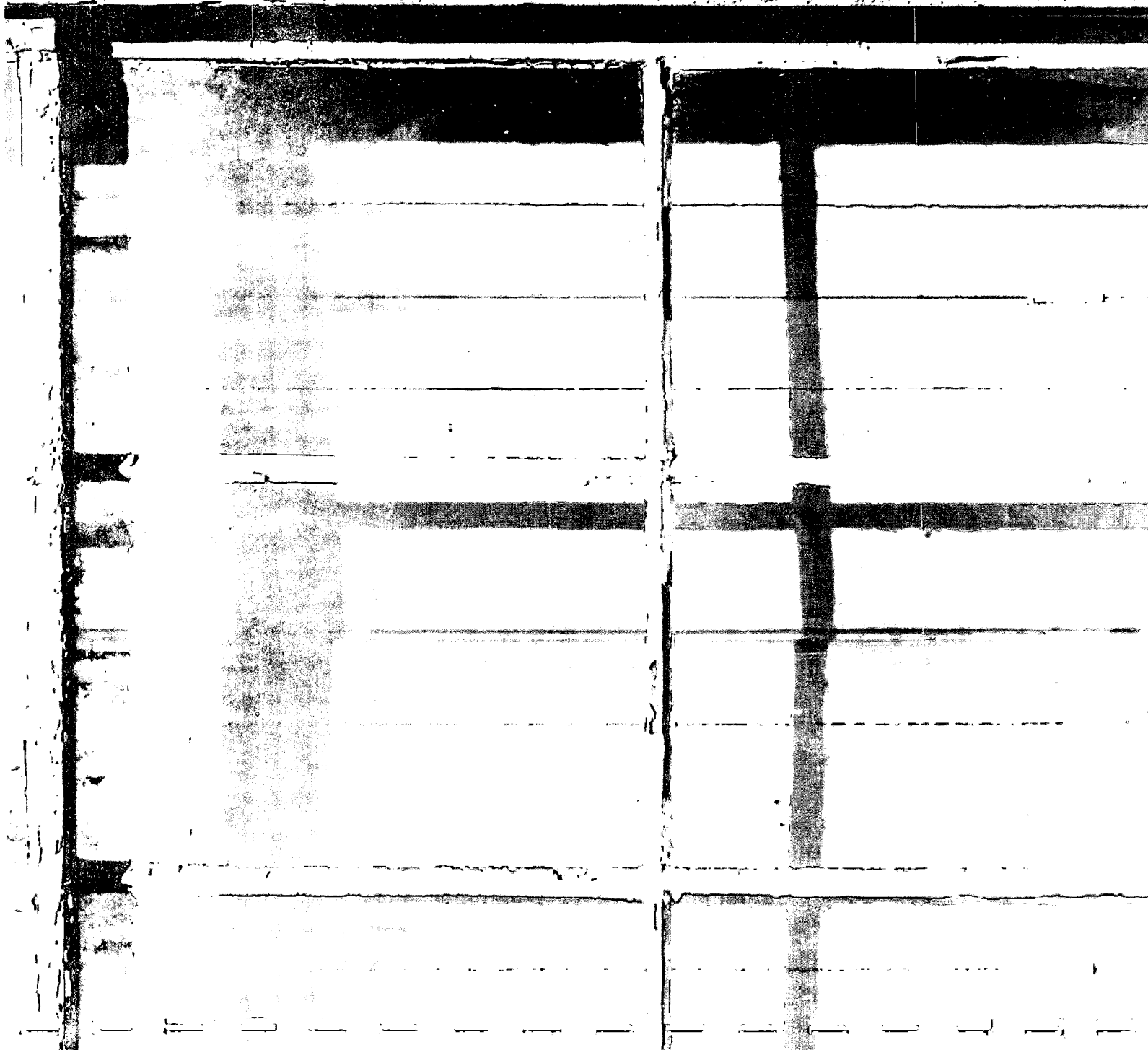
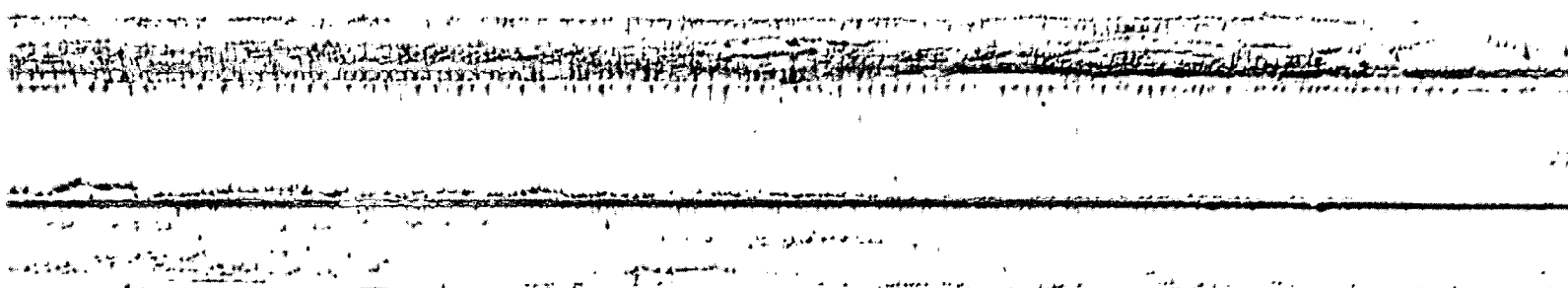
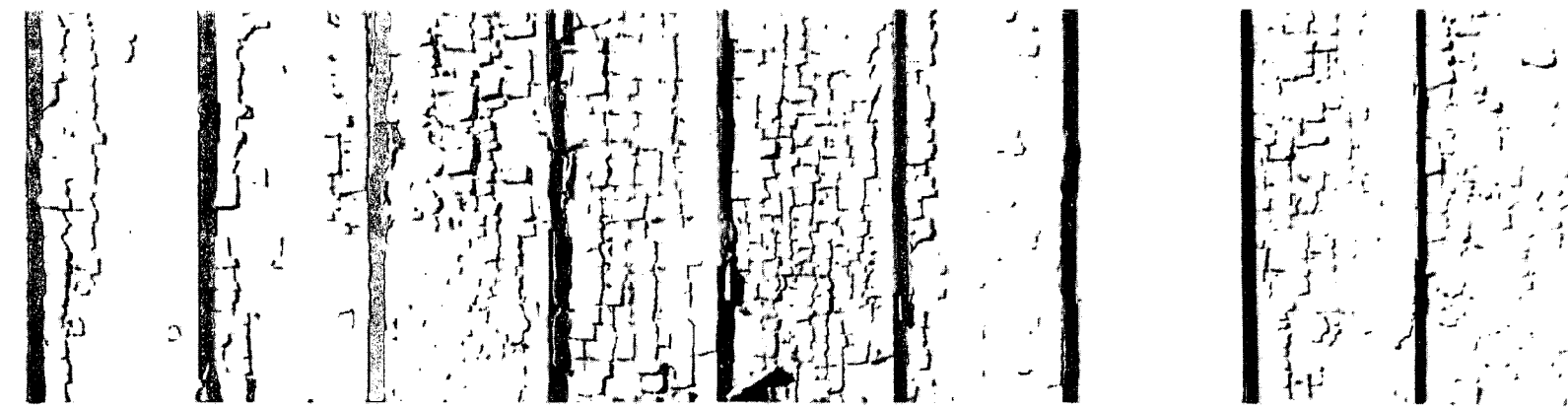
the last memory of the shipping center, could still incorporate some of the old buildings into the new growth.

On the hill, the area has been cut into two sections by the new hillside buildings and the new constructions of Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design. All of these structures are large or extended in area. As a result, they have broken with the domestic scale of the earlier neighborhoods which they have supplanted. Moreover, the Brown University and the School of Design buildings have been the first major encroachments into the hillside residential section. Brown University has acquired Dexter Asylum, thus extending its holdings to the northeast. Bryant College on the edge of the area is also causing change in the eastern part of College Hill.

Map 7 is planned to show when the structures in the area were built, to give a picture both of what remains of the early architecture and its location.

As the map indicates, the remaining eighteenth and early nineteenth century residential sections are now concentrated along northern Benefit and south of George Street where a remarkable group of merchant mansions have survived, some of them still in the possession of the families who first owned them. The northeastern part of the area, from Waterman and Prospect Streets to Hope and Olney, is also residential, and was built up for the most part shortly after the Civil War.

Signs of deterioration have been evident for some time in the northern and extreme southern sections where the smaller early houses are situated. Unfortunately, the poorly built three-decker wooden tenements built in the early part of the twentieth century when population was expanding most rapidly, have damaged the character of the colonial and early nineteenth century residential neighborhoods along northern Benefit and on Transit and Sheldon Streets. Pratt Street has been built up almost entirely of such tenements. Utility buildings, garages and stores of poorer character have also been interspersed among the old warehouses on Canal, North and South Main and South Water Streets. They are scattered along Benefit, Brook, Thayer and Wickenden Streets as well. Nevertheless, an important legacy of the past has survived in this part of the city.



## II B-ANALYSIS OF STYLE

The emphasis of this study is placed on history, especially architectural history, and on developing ways to protect and make use of the remaining historic architecture in a modern city. For this reason, it has been considered important to discuss in some detail the characteristics of the building styles to be found in the study area, both in themselves and as they relate to the development of architecture elsewhere in Rhode Island and in New England as a whole.

This part of the report, therefore, comprises an analysis of American building style in so far as it is applicable to the smaller arena of Providence and of College Hill. It is intended to serve: 1) as a guide for planners and for those interested in defining the important qualities and characteristic elements of the successive building periods and 2) as a yardstick when making planning decisions as to the value of the architecture in an area.

In this part of the study examples are drawn from the building of Rhode Island and more particularly from College Hill. However, the pattern of growth in the state follows in general the development of English Colonial building and it is hoped that this analysis can provide a framework which will prove helpful in other studies of areas where sizeable amounts of early building have survived and are in need of charting, evaluation and rehabilitation.

### SUMMARY OF STYLES

From the first seventeenth century settlement until the third decade of the nineteenth century, both New England's and Rhode Island's architecture was derived chiefly from English sources. After that time, inspiration was drawn from more varied sources and was often eclectic in nature. Rhode Island building of the twentieth century continued in an eclectic path and in this respect is not representative of contemporary architectural concepts.

#### THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The history of Colonial building in New England began with the first huts the settlers of any new colony provided for themselves until they could build their "English houses." These structures are known for the most part from records, journals, and letters.

Seventeenth century colonial building concepts stemmed from late medieval English building practices and the "English" houses built by the colonists from 1620 to about 1700 resembled Elizabethan country building. No structures of this type have survived in the study area.

#### EIGHTEENTH CENTURY CONCEPT

By 1700 the medieval concepts of the early colonists were being superseded by contemporary English ideals stemming from Italian Renaissance sources. The new concepts of building obtained until well into the nineteenth century and resulted in a long unified style of building known generally as the Georgian period.

From about 1690 to about 1720, buildings were often transitional and were characterized by details of large scale based on classic forms applied over the heavy framed construction. Such structures are now rare and none are left in College Hill.

The first major eighteenth century phase, designated as Queen Anne or first Georgian, lasted from about 1700 to about 1750 and was marked by baroque elements found in the work of Sir Christopher Wren. The most important examples are to be found in Newport but a few simpler examples still stand on College Hill.

The second phase, dating from about 1750 to about 1775 or 1780 was inspired by the works of English architects under the influence of Inigo Jones and of Italian architects, in particular, Andrea Palladio. Newport building of this period is outstanding, a group of very fine buildings went up in Providence just before the Revolution but their style was derived from earlier English models.

The third phase, called third Georgian, post-Revolutionary or Early Republican, lasted from the period of the Revolutionary War until about 1800 or 1810 and reflects some French influence, the influence of the Adam brothers, Chippendale and others as well as an original and specifically American handling of wood.

The fourth phase, which continued into the nineteenth century is generally known as Federal. It merged with the third Georgian period and continued the trends toward lightness, and variety in ground plans, elevations and decorative detail. With the close of this phase in about 1835, the Renaissance tradition begun in the first years of the eighteenth century also drew to a close. Providence is particularly rich in buildings of these last two phases, especially in a group of late eighteenth century merchant man-

sions and a number of square monitor-roofed buildings put up in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century.

NINETEENTH CENTURY CONCEPTS

The ideals of the Georgian period were superseded in the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century by a concept of building derived from a strong interest in the picturesque which was reflected in a search for romantic forms. This search led to a rapid succession of buildings put up in widely differing styles, most of them eclectic in nature.

THE GREEK REVIVAL PERIOD

From about 1825 to about 1850 the influence of classical Greek architecture was the dominating one in American building throughout the country. Most of the examples in the College Hill area belong to the simpler form of wooden dwelling houses, dubbed "poor man's Greek Revival," but there is a fair representation of important Greek Revival buildings as well.

THE VICTORIAN PERIOD

Concern with the picturesque continued to be a motivating factor in architectural design throughout the Victorian period, resulting to a certain extent, in the revival of various "styles" of building.

Before the Civil War, buildings in the Gothic Revival (from about 1835) and Romanesque Revival (about 1845 to 1855) styles, Swiss Chalets (in the 1850's) and in the manner of Tuscan villas and the Italian Renaissance were predominant. Providence has a very fine body of pre-Civil War building particularly influenced by the Italian Renaissance.

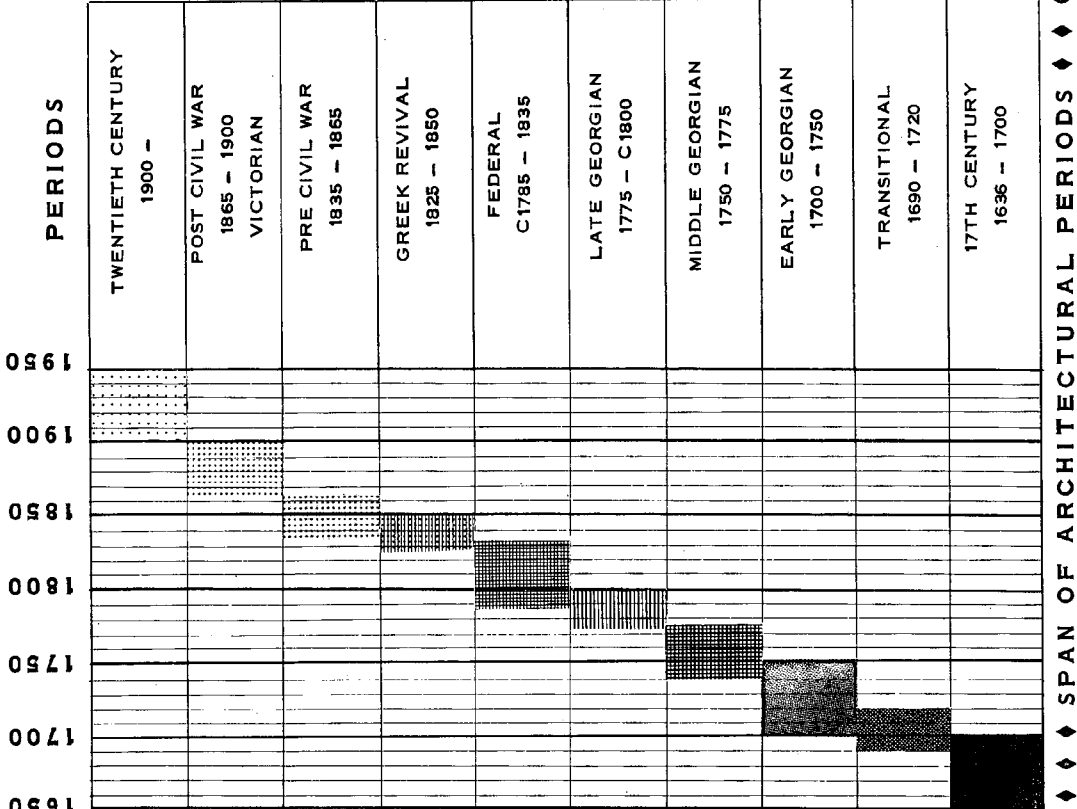
After the Civil War, the French Mansard, French Romanesque, Richardson Romanesque, Gothic Revival and Classic Renaissance styles were all developed. In the 1880's the influence of Norman Shaw's English houses and a renewed interest in colonial building resulted in a "Queen Anne" revival. About 1890 Providence architects turned to the local red brick building of the early Republican period for inspiration.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

In the first decade of the twentieth century and under the influence of the Chicago World's Fair and the Ecole des Beaux Arts, important buildings were built in the classic renaissance manner. The red brick building of the early nineteenth century, however, has been the dominating influence on twentieth century Providence building. A few rather minor College Hill buildings have been

executed in the contemporary idiom, although contemporary building modes are still suspect in conservative modern Providence.

The accompanying bar graph gives a picture of the span of architectural periods in the building of the College Hill area. The following pages are devoted to a discussion of the character and development of the building styles found in the study area.



SEVENTEENTH CENTURY BUILDING

Source of Style

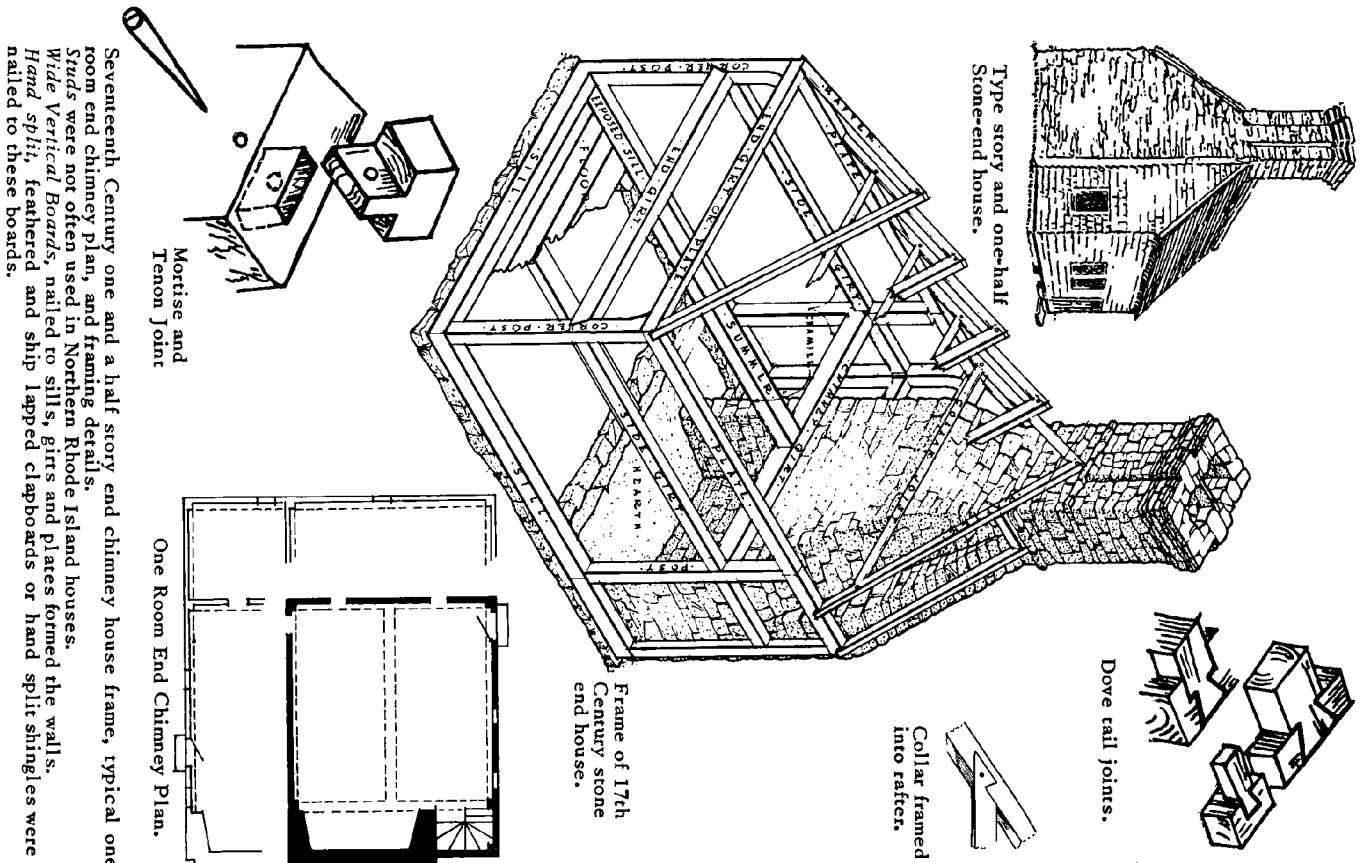
In the American Colonies of the seventeenth century, concepts of building were still medieval. Most of our early colonists came from rural England and they brought with them English building traditions handed down by generations of country carpenters. The tools, the methods of workmanship and the forms used were drawn from an England still untouched by the classic ideals of the important city architects like Inigo Jones, John Webb and later Sir Christopher Wren, whose influences were to be paramount in the eighteenth century.

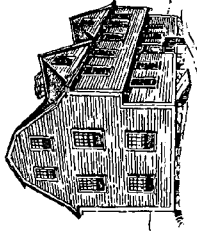
The "English house" which the American colonist built for himself was comparable to an Elizabethan half-timbered dwelling, even sometimes to the peaked gable and the framed and overhanging second story common to Elizabethan building. Small wooden houses in Kent and Rye show strong resemblances to New England building. The special feature of the huge stone end chimney prevalent in northern Rhode Island building has also been found in small fifteenth century houses in Sussex and in Wales.

Characteristics

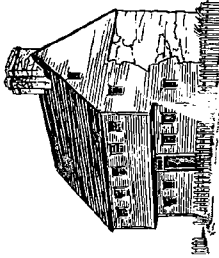
The northern Rhode Island seventeenth century house was essentially a rectangular box, frequently composed of a single room with a three foot half story above, and covered with a steeply pitched gable roof. It was generally built of wood, although there are records of a few stone houses. Brick was not used, even for chimneys, in northern Rhode Island until the end of the century. A huge chimney built of local stone (gneiss) split along the lines of cleavage formed almost the whole end wall. At first its top was finished as a square with a row of capping stones, but later it was sometimes finished with a kind of applied plaster treatment. This type of house is known as "The Rhode Island Stone Ender".

When the house was increased in size, as it frequently soon was, a new room was built beside the original one and the chimney wall was widened to include a second fireplace; the new room was often covered with a lean-to roof. This method of enlarging the house was in variance with the Massachusetts and Connecticut method of making a house of central chimney plan by putting the new room on the other side of the massive chimney.

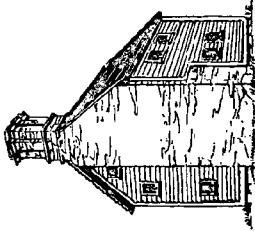




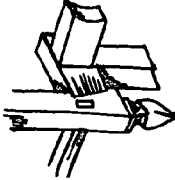
Sueton Grant House.  
c. 1650, Newport -  
gambrel roof.



Coddington House.  
c. 1640, Newport -  
framed overhang.



Thomas Fenner House.  
c. 1680, Cranston 2-story.  
end-chimney.



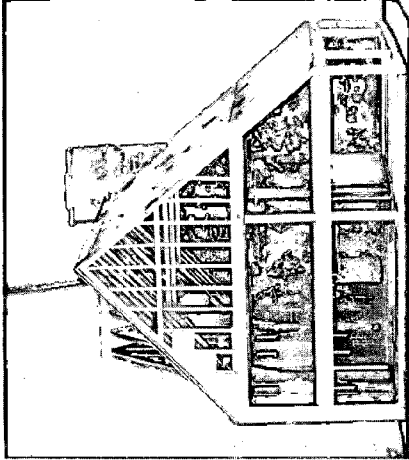
Framed overhang.

The framed overhanging second story did not appear often in northern Rhode Island, probably because most northern Rhode Island houses were only a story and a half in height until after the framed overhang went out of fashion.

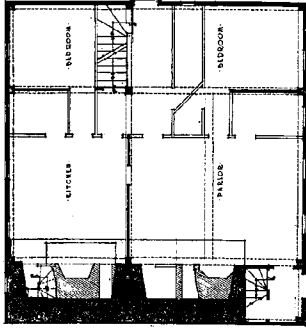
Like all seventeenth century New England buildings, a Providence house was constructed of great hewn oak beams framed together a wall at a time with mortise and tenon, dovetail and half dovetail joints, and pinned together with wooden tree nails. The massive frame was dressed smooth and left frankly revealed on the interior of the house. Windows were small casements filled with oiled paper or little leaded panes of glass and doors were made of vertical boards and battens.

The mark of the hand tool was visible in every part of the house. Shingles, laths and clapboards were hand riven; beams were cut to fit, numbered for place, dressed with the broad axe and chamfered at the corners; sheathing boards and floor boards were hand planed; nails, hinges and other hardware were hand wrought. Mortar was made with shell lime, or in northern Rhode Island, from lime deposits at Limerock just outside of Providence. Plaster was bound together with hair.

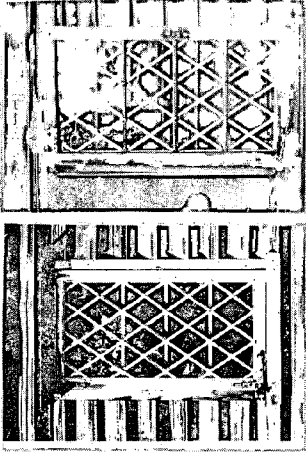
The exposed frame construction, huge fireplaces and handworkmanship makes even the simplest seventeenth century building a study in medieval carpenter craftsmanship.



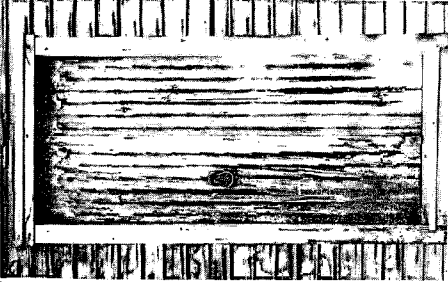
Eleazer Arnold House, 1687 Saylesville.



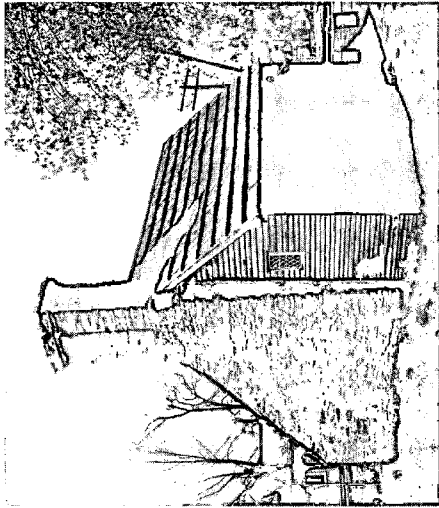
Four Room,  
end-chimney plan.



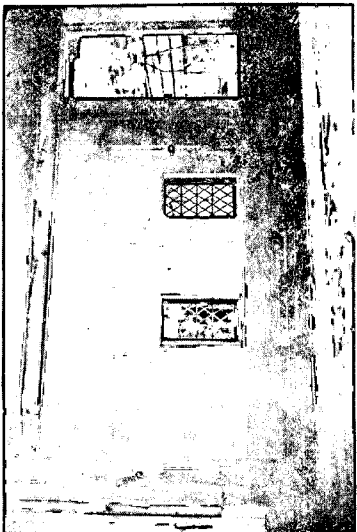
Exterior and Interior Windows, Clemence House.



Door,  
Clemence House



Thomas Clemence House,  
c. 1680, Manton. HABS



Clemence House, "keeping room" HABS

*Walls* were sheathed or lathed and plastered.

*Foundations*, of stone were generally laid up dry.

*Sleepers* to take floor above were at first laid in the underpinning stone. *Floors* were laid directly on sleepers at first, later, framed into ground sills.

*Sills* were laid on stone underpinning and in the earliest examples over the floor. This means that the floor was set below the sills.

*Posts*, framed into the ground sills, were usually flared or gunstock at the top to take framing of girts and plates.



Sheathing Profiles  
Seventeenth Century



Corner Framing.

Summer Beam

Clemence House, fireplace "keeping room" RHHS.

*The fireplace*, built with splayed side walls was sometimes nearly twelve feet wide and five feet high.

*The earliest baking ovens* were located on the back wall.

*The summer beam* runs from end girt to chimney girt in most northern Rhode Island houses.

*Floor joists* were flush with the top of the summer beam and the girt into which they were framed. In early houses they were smoothed and left exposed, and with the floor above, formed the ceiling.

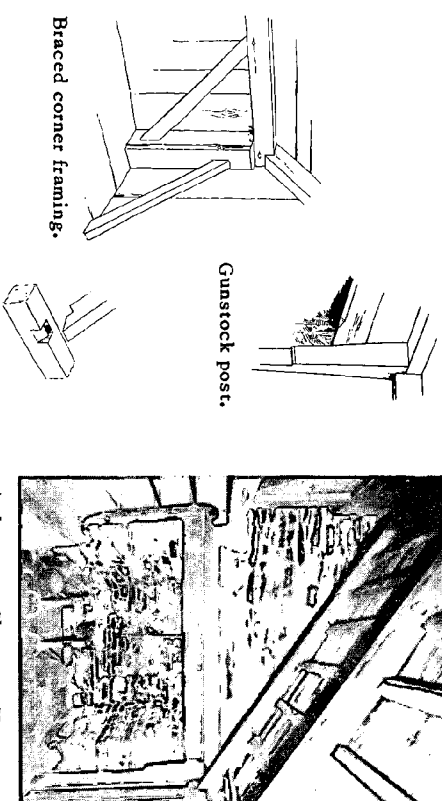


Clemence House, stairs.

*Stairs* were steep and were usually boxed in beside the chimney. Sometimes they had small *balusters* set in a closed string course.



Samuel Gorton house, 1680, stairs.



Gunstock post.

Braced corner framing.

Rafter footing.

Attic story, Clemence House, showing braced framing, rafters and purlins. HABS.

*Roofs* of Rhode Island houses were framed without a ridge pole.

*Rafters* were framed into the plates, framed together at the ridge, and pinned with wooden tree nails.

*Purlins* appeared in northern Rhode Island building.

*Collar beams* were framed into the rafters, with dovetail or half dovetail joints.

*Braces* were framed into posts and girts, or posts and plates.

## EIGHTEENTH CENTURY BUILDING

### General Considerations

About the beginning of the eighteenth century, the medieval spirit of colonial building was supplanted by more contemporary English concepts. For nearly one hundred and thirty years following, ideals derived ultimately from Renaissance and baroque Italian architecture permeated the thinking of carpenter, builder and householder alike. During this long span of time, there was a gradual evolution in interpretation of the classic detail in general use but the basic concept of building remained almost unchanged.

The eighteenth century and early nineteenth century citizen, as had the seventeenth century builder, conceived of his house as a kind of rectangular box covered by one of several roof forms. However, the latter builder wanted a symmetrical house to which he applied classic detail at focal points, concentrating chiefly on the doorway, windows and cornices. On the interior he hid the structural framing, which continued in use until well past the mid-nineteenth century, behind dropped and plastered ceilings, boxed-in corner posts and classic stile and rail paneled walls.

Although the new decorative detail was drawn from classical sources and was superimposed over the structure, it was nevertheless produced by hand methods similar to seventeenth century methods. The student should know the methods of construction in order to understand fully the particular character of the building style.

### TRANSITIONAL PHASE (1690 - 1720)

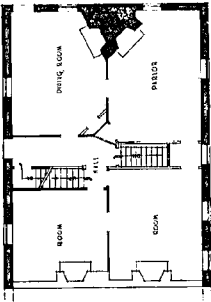
#### Source of Style

English buildings, chiefly those of Sir Christopher Wren, of the time of the Stuarts and William and Mary furnished the inspiration for the decorative detail used in colonial building of the turn of the century.

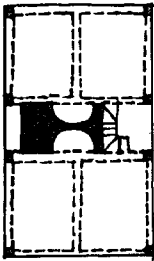
#### Characteristics

Buildings of this transitional type were characterized by their still massive, framed and exposed construction to which was applied a few classic elements of large scale derived from English building under Italian Renaissance influence.

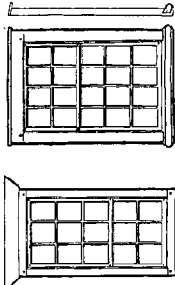
In addition, some modifications in construction, plan and materials made their appearance. Brick now came into common use for the



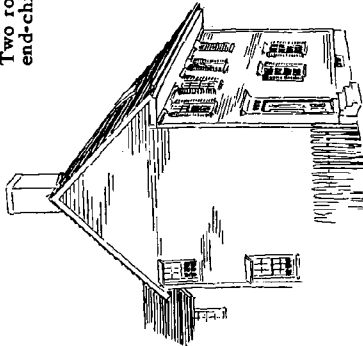
Triangular end-chimney plan.



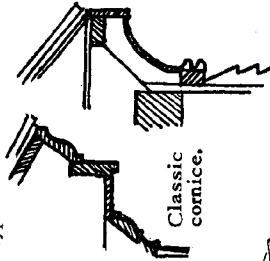
Two room end-chimney plan.



Window types.

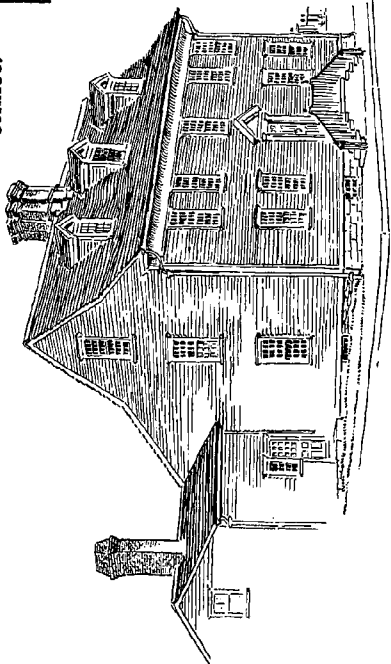


Gable roof and cornice overhang.



Classic cornice.

Plaster cove cornice.



Wanton-Lyman Hazard House, c. 1695 showing plaster cove. Newport.  
EARLY 18th CENTURY PLANS, HOUSE TYPES AND CORNICES

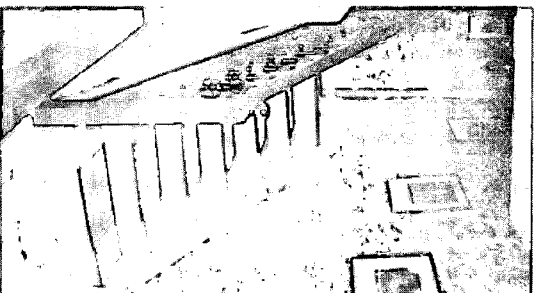




Reynolds House, Bristol, 1700, showing bolection paneling and marbled wall decoration.

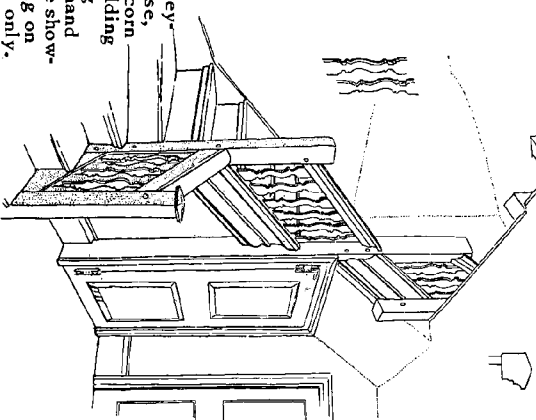


Detail, profile bolection molding.



Reynolds House, staircase, showing closed string course.

Details, Reynolds House, stairs 1) acorn drop 2) molding from string course 3) hand rail profile showing molding on outer edge only.



Stairway, about 1720, showing flat balustrade with balusters, 3 run plan, closed string course.

#### EARLY 18th CENTURY HOUSES AND INTERIORS

chimneys, which sometimes, but not always, retained the pilastered form at the top. Occasionally an entire house was built of brick in Rhode Island but wood continued to be the predominant material. Houses of central chimney plan were more frequently built, although the end chimney "half-a-house" was not supplanted. They were covered by still steeply pitched roofs, chiefly the gable, gambrel, hip and gable-on-hip styles.

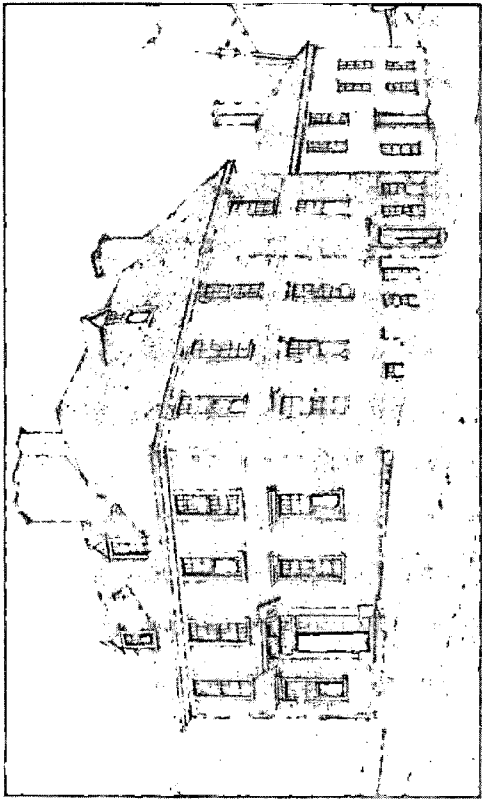
Sash windows, composed of small panes of glass set in thick muntins and with the upper and lower sash usually of unequal size, now replaced the small leaded casement windows of the previous century. Doorways decorated with classic detail handled in an archaic manner, but often including pilasters and a pediment, became common.

Cornices were usually composed of run moldings, set under a wide boarded jet. These same run moldings, broken forward, invariably formed the caps of the upper windows. Typical also of this period was the use of a large plaster cove cornice. If the houses were painted at all, they were generally painted Spanish Brown, a barn red color, but many were simply allowed to weather.

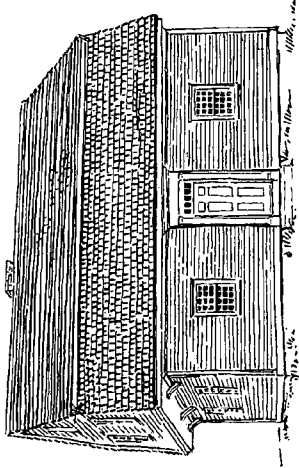
On the interior, the construction beams, still heavy and still visible, were enclosed by a casing of thin boards beaded at the edges. The walls, particularly the mantel wall, were often paneled with large scaled stile and rail paneling of the raised type called "bolection" which was in common use in Wren's time. This paneling was often stained and grained or marbled in an effort to simulate materials used in English houses. Woodwork in simpler houses was usually painted Spanish brown or some form of gray blue green. Ceilings were dropped and plastered over to cover the floor joists, but frequently the summer beams and girts were still exposed.

Fireplaces became smaller, except for the kitchen fireplaces which kept their ample proportions; ovens, formerly placed on the back wall, were now located on the splayed side wall. Some brick fireplaces had rounded sidewalls and a large cove above which formed the space between the chimney tree and the chimney girt. Hearths were made of single slabs of stone.

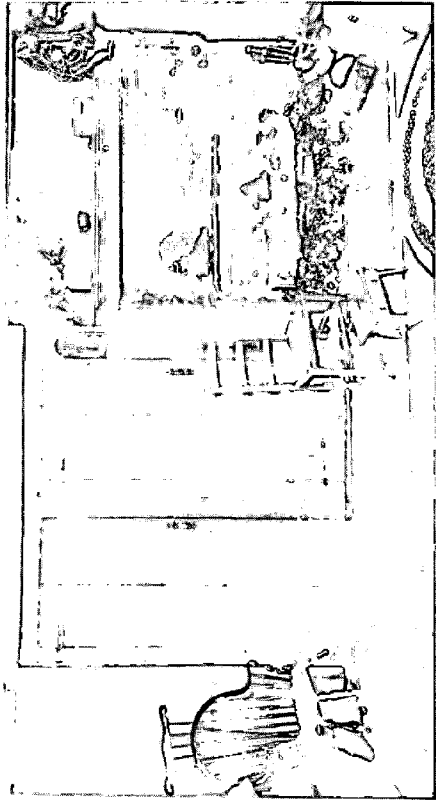
Stair cases were somewhat more spacious and were often fitted with squat, robust turned balusters or with balusters sawn to an "S" shape from flat boards. The closed string course was finished with heavy run moldings.



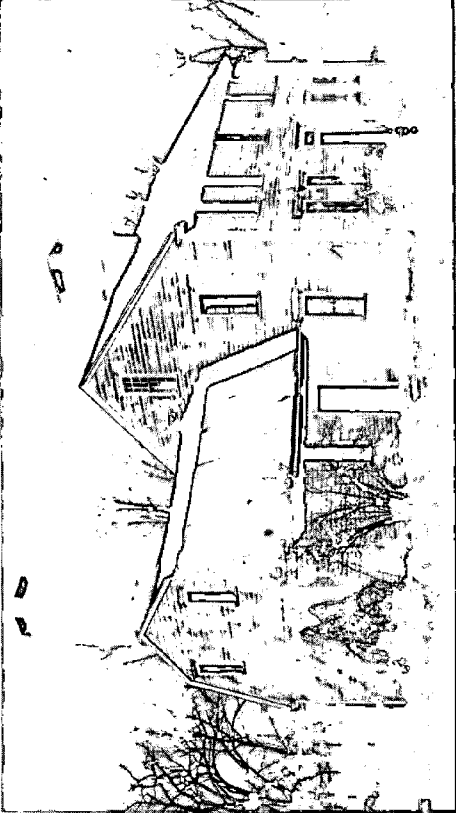
Philip Tillinghast House, 1710, formerly South Main Street. Hip roof.



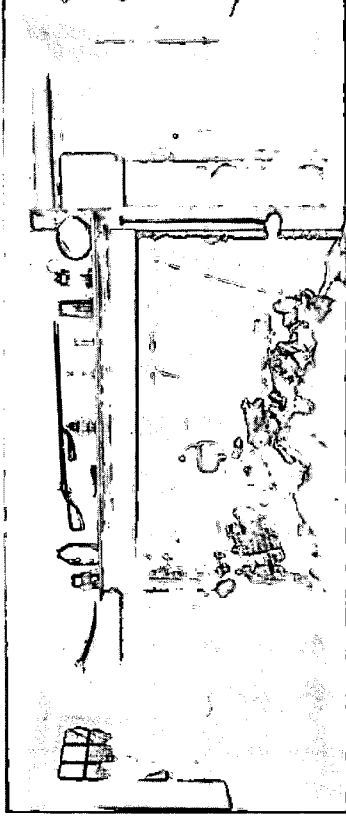
Croade Tavern, Lincoln, showing end overhang and gambrel roof.



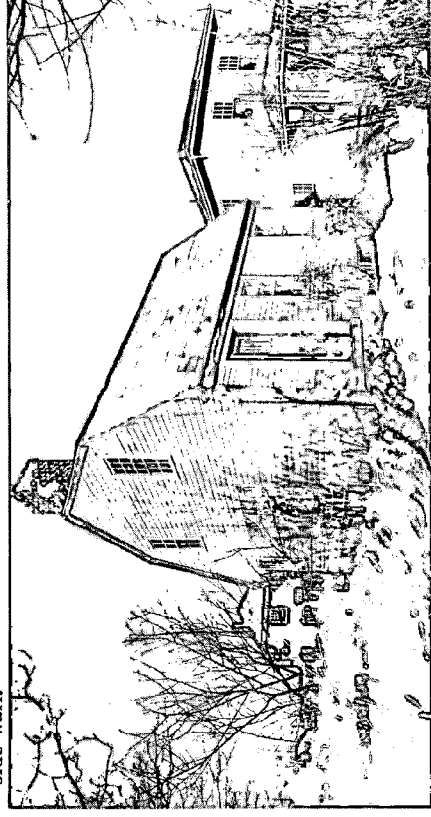
Tripp House, c. 1720, Manton, Interior showing oven on back wall of fireplace.



Israel Arnold House, Lincoln, gambrel ell, 1715; gable roofed house, 1750.



Israel Arnold House, 1715. Keeping room of original house, showing oven on side wall.



Tripp House, c. 1720, Manton, showing beehive oven in brick end chimney.

## EARLY GEORGIAN OR QUEEN ANNE (1700 - 1750)

### Sources and Characteristics of Style

At the end of the seventeenth century, growing wealth and an increased sense of security made it possible for the Colonial townsmen to improve and expand their houses and to plan important churches and public buildings. It was at this time, after the disastrous London fire of 1666, that Sir Christopher Wren was rebuilding many of that city's churches. His style was marked by a lightness of touch and he used broken and scroll pediments as well as the carved consoles and exuberant ornament common to the baroque manner. All these elements appeared in modified form in eighteenth century colonial buildings. The church of England, which was just becoming established in the colonies, was a strong force in the spread not only of traditional church of England forms but of the new building style.

Newport was the first settlement in Rhode Island to reflect the effects of expanding commerce; the buildings there were also the first to reflect the change in style. The works of Newport's carpenter-builder Richard Munday-Trinity Church, the Sabbatarian Meeting House, and the Colony House—are among Rhode Island's outstanding buildings of this period. Providence lagged commercially and its building was restricted in size and simpler in character.

### Materials

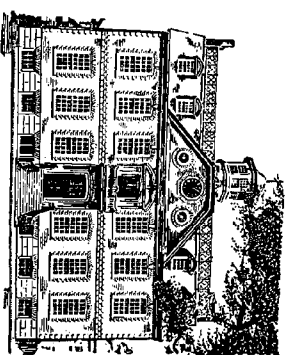
Perhaps under Flemish influence, Wren often used brick combined with quoins and rusticated stone; this material now appeared in the Colonies especially for public buildings. Wood, however, remained the chief material and clapboards, handsplit and feathered and lapped at the ends, or hand riven shingles, were typical wall coverings.

### Painting

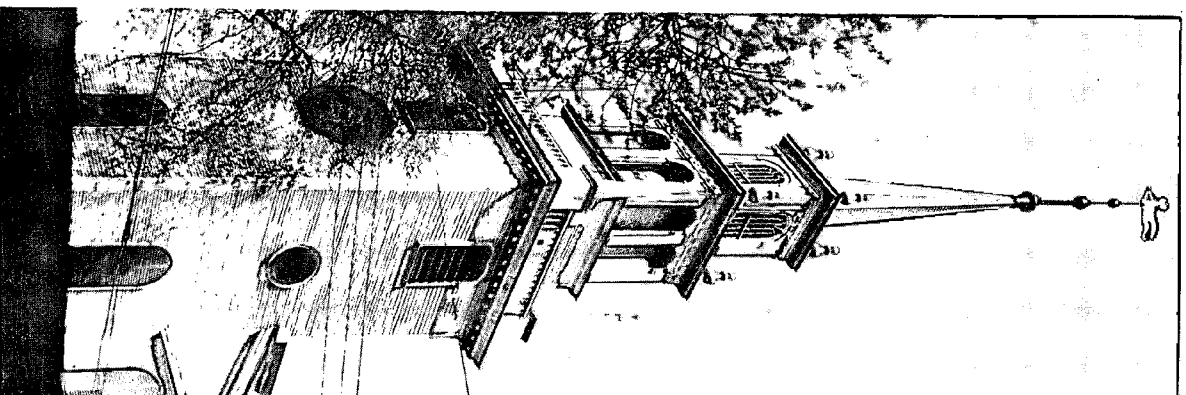
Most houses were allowed to weather or were painted barn red but eighteenth century records and paintings indicate some were painted a slate blue, some a darkish green, and some a buff yellow. They sometimes had white trim, but all-white houses were not common until later.

### Roofs

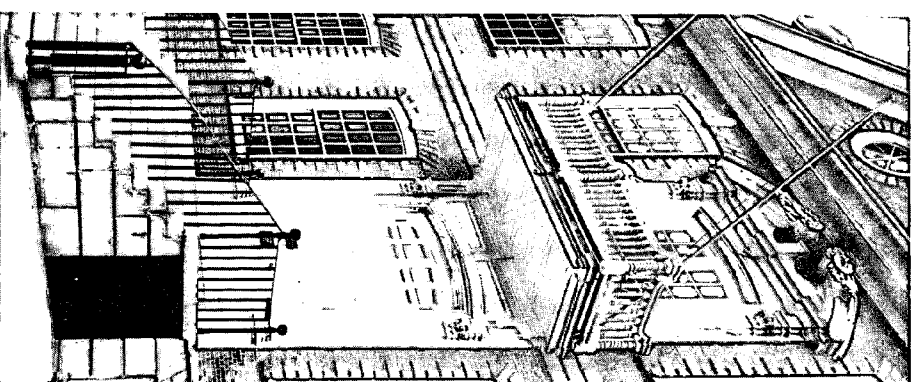
The great new houses, now increased in size, were generally covered with either broad gambrel or gable-on-hip roofs, the prominent



Colony House, Newport, 1739.



Trinity Church, Newport, 1726. Spire, Covell photo.



Colony House, Balcony, showing carved pediment and twisted balusters. Meservey photo.

### EARLY 18th CENTURY NEWPORT BUILDING

visibility of which gave them an unclassic look which belied the classic features of their decorative detail.

Construction

In Newport important houses were often built with stud-constructed walls which were then boarded horizontally and clapboarded over the boarding. On the interior they were lathed and plastered or paneled. The walls of most Providence houses were made of vertical boards, with the result that the walls were thin and the window and door frames projected on the exterior as much as three inches. This method of construction was still being used in the nineteenth century.

Plans

Larger houses were now often built with a wide hall running through the center and with rooms opening on either side, but in Providence and for ordinary houses the central chimney plan prevailed, expanded into one of five rooms with a room on either side of the chimney and three across the back. The half-a-house with the chimney at the end and the entry at one side continued in use.

Detail

Detail, although drawn from Italian classic sources, was handled in an archaic manner. Moldings were complex and numerous; the horizontal moldings were broken out and mitred around the vertical members; pilasters were usually set on high pedestal bases.

Windows

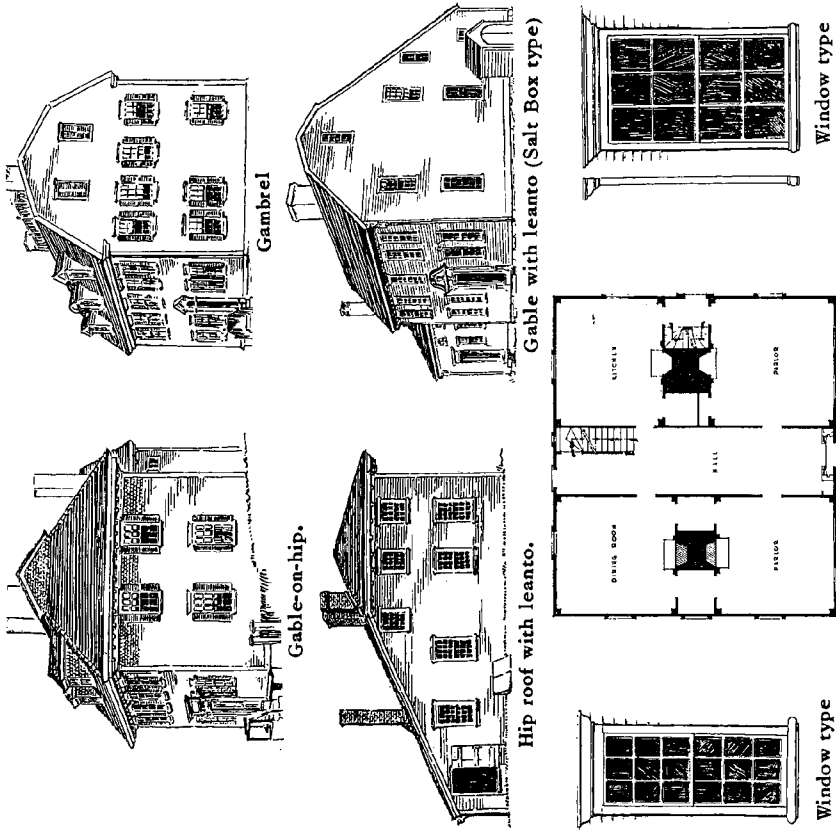
Sash windows increased in size as the century wore on but they still retained wide muntins, small panes of glass, and molded caps. The caps of the upper windows formed part of the eaves cornice which was mitred around them.

Doorways

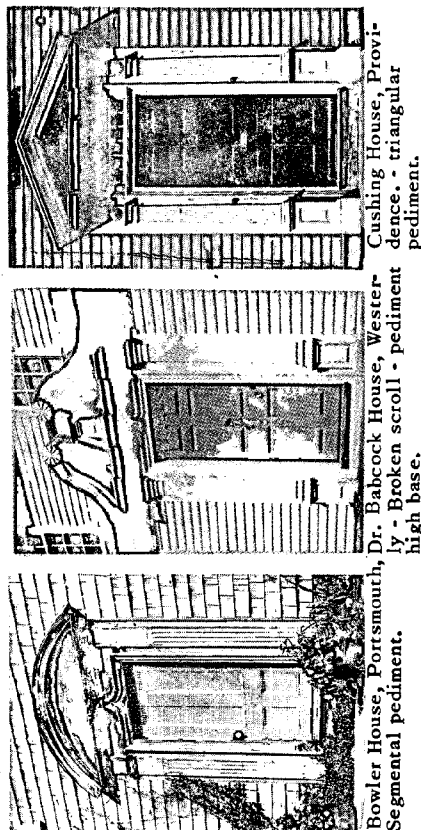
The detail was concentrated on the central entry with the doorway framed by pilasters in the Doric, Ionic, Corinthian or Composite orders and topped with a molded cap or a scroll, segmental or ogee pediment. Important buildings sometimes had a balcony entered by a pedimented doorway and enclosed by a balustrade made of twisted balusters.

Interior treatment

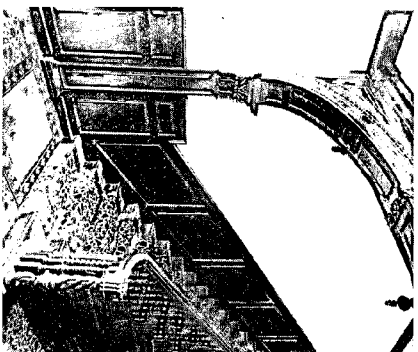
On the interior the finest rooms were finished with the raised pan-



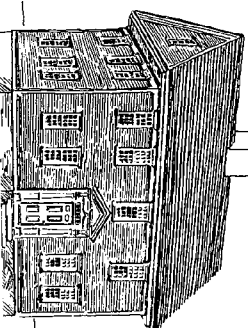
Central hall, two interior chimney plan



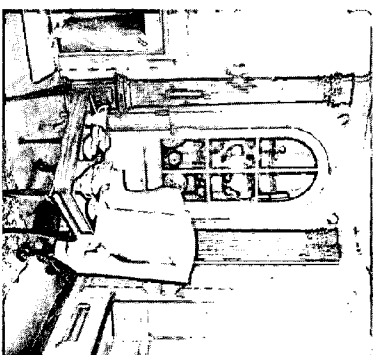
EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY HOUSE TYPES



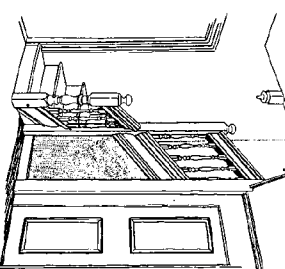
Stairs, Cheesborough House, c. 1740, Newport, showing twisted balusters and hall arch.



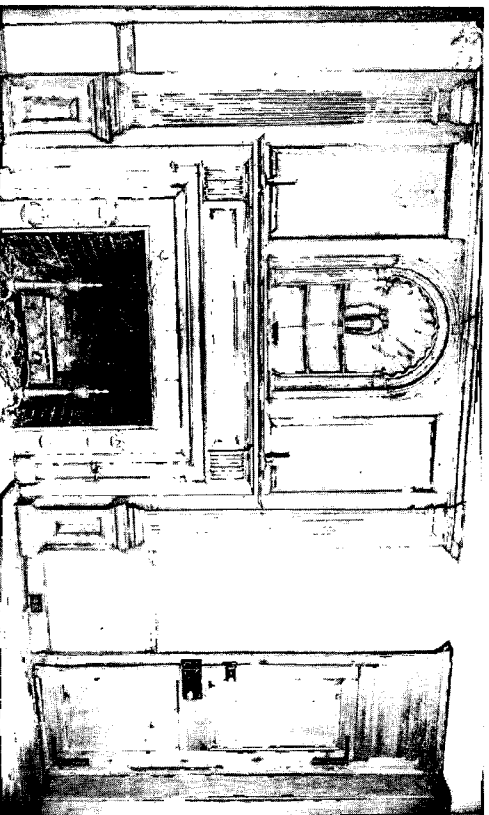
Benjamin Cushing House, Providence, 1737, showing gable overhang. HABS



Parlor, Hunter House, c. 1750, Newport, showing pilastered wall decoration, shell cupboards and bolection paneling.



Stairs, Cushing House



Parlor, Cushing House, showing over mantel shell cupboard. HABS.

EARLY EIGHTEENTH CENTURY TYPES, CONTINUED

eling and the detail found in English houses of Queen Anne's time. Floor to ceiling paneled walls were common and in a typical scheme, the fireplace was flanked by pilasters set on high pedestals and by a pair of shell topped cupboards. The fire opening was framed with a wide bolection molding and often was fitted with a row or double row of Dutch or English tiles. The windows had broad seats and inside shutters which folded into reveals. As in the past, paneling was usually painted or stained and grained to look like walnut, rosewood, or mahogany, or was marbled or decorated with pictorial scenes. The colors were full and warm and all the decoration was intended to produce an effect of stately enrichment.

Stairways with ramped rails, open string courses, scroll decorated riser ends, twisted balusters, and flame drops, were popular. They were normally set at the back of a central hallway and separated from the front part by a carved arch supported on brackets or pilasters. They rose in two flights with a landing and were lit by a landing window which at first was round headed and later was of Palladian form.

#### Providence

In Providence no public building of the period is left, but a drawing of King's Chapel (1722) as shown in the accompanying illustration, indicates that it was of church plan with a tower and spire and that it had round headed sash windows, the usual form for churches and public buildings.

The few remaining Providence houses all date after 1730. The Benjamin Cushing house on North Court Street, built in 1737, is a good example. It is two stories high with a central chimney and a gable roof which overhangs on one end, a feature which appeared in other Providence houses of this period. The central doorway is pedimented and is finished with pilasters set on high pedestals and a carved scallop shell decorates the frieze above the pilaster cap. On the interior, the parlor detail is limited to a shell cupboard over the mantel, and small overdoor and over window panels. The stairway still has the old closed string course form.

Other examples are the gambrel-roofed Corlis house at 201 South Main Street, the Stephen Hopkins house at Benefit and Hopkins Street and Richard Brown's gambrel roofed brick house on the Swan Point Cemetery grounds. The latter two are shown in accompanying illustrations.

## MIDDLE GEORGIAN PERIOD (1750-1775)

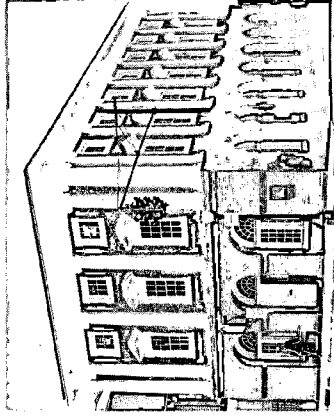
### Sources and characteristics of style

About 1750, important colonial buildings began to reflect an academic trend then current in England. Under Lord Burlington's sponsorship a group of English architects had been turning from the baroque elements seen in Wren's designs to the puristic classical ideals of Andrea Palladio, whose work had inspired Inigo Jones in the early 1600's. They published important books which had a profound influence on English Colonial building. The titles of these volumes indicated their source of inspiration; *Vitruvius Britannicus*, 1716 by Colin Campbell; *Palladio Londonsensis* by William Salmon; *Designs of Inigo Jones and Others* by Isaac Ware, etc. James Gibbs' *Book of Architecture*, 1728, had special importance for Providence and since it reflected the work of Wren Providence building retained a somewhat earlier manner.

Newport again led the way. The complex moldings, broken scroll pediments, ogee curves, and naturalistic carvings, like that of the balcony door of the Colony House, disappeared and were replaced by robust academic forms including classic modillion cornices and full-formed cyma recta, cyma reversa, cove, torus, and scotia moldings.

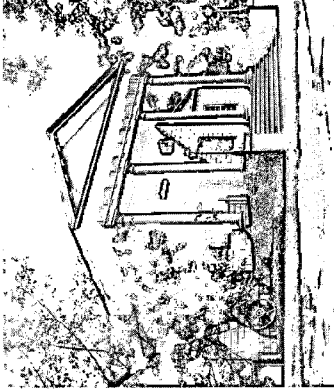
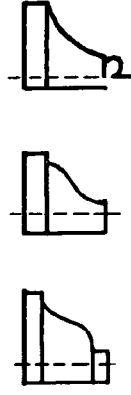
The buildings designed by Peter Harrison, who arrived in Newport from England in 1738, furnished the best examples of this change in character. Redwood Library, 1748, a correct Roman Doric temple with wings, was built of wood rusticated, sanded, and painted to look like stone. Similar buildings are shown in Hoppus' *Palladio* and in Ware's *Designs of Inigo Jones and Others*. Newport's brick market, 1761, was drawn from a design for Old Somerset House by Inigo Jones published in Colin Campbell's *Vitruvius Britannicus* of 1716. The Jewish Synagogue built by Harrison in 1763 was a square two story brick building with a strong modillion cornice, a low hipped roof, and a double row of round headed windows. A one story Roman Ionic portico was its chief exterior decorative feature. The interior design was inspired by the works of Kent and Gibbs.

The Vernon house is the best remaining example of the formal tendency of Newport domestic building. It is square and has a low hipped roof with a flat deck and double balustrades. It is built of wood and like the Redwood library is rusticated, sanded, and painted to imitate stone. The unimpeded doorway is of the Roman Doric order.

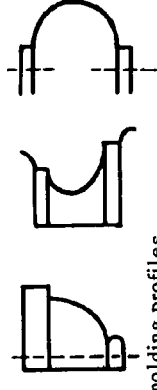


Brick Market, 1761.

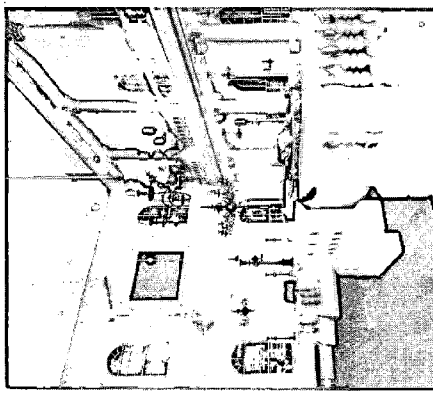
RHS.



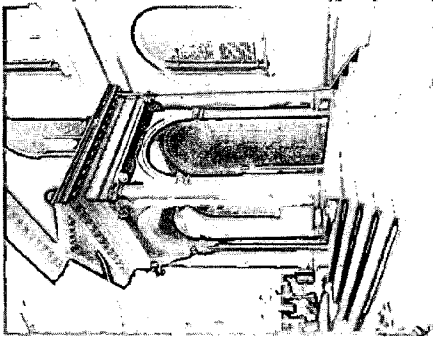
Redwood Library, 1748. Arnold Photo.



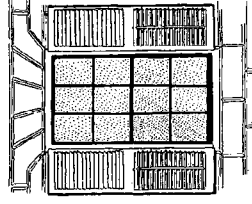
Eighteenth Century molding profiles.



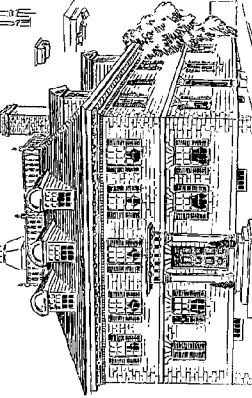
Newport Synagogue, Interior.

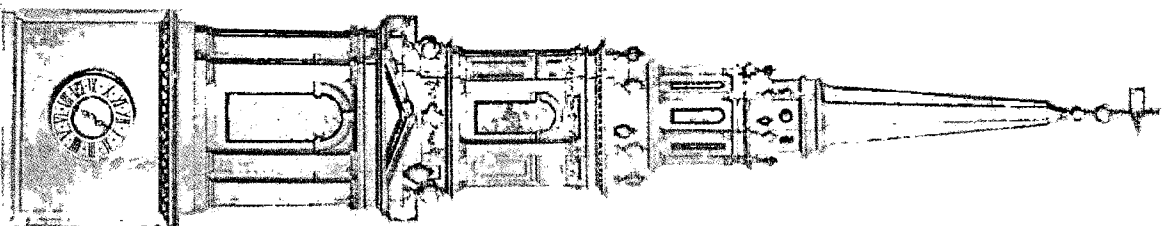


Newport Synagogue, 1763, Porch.

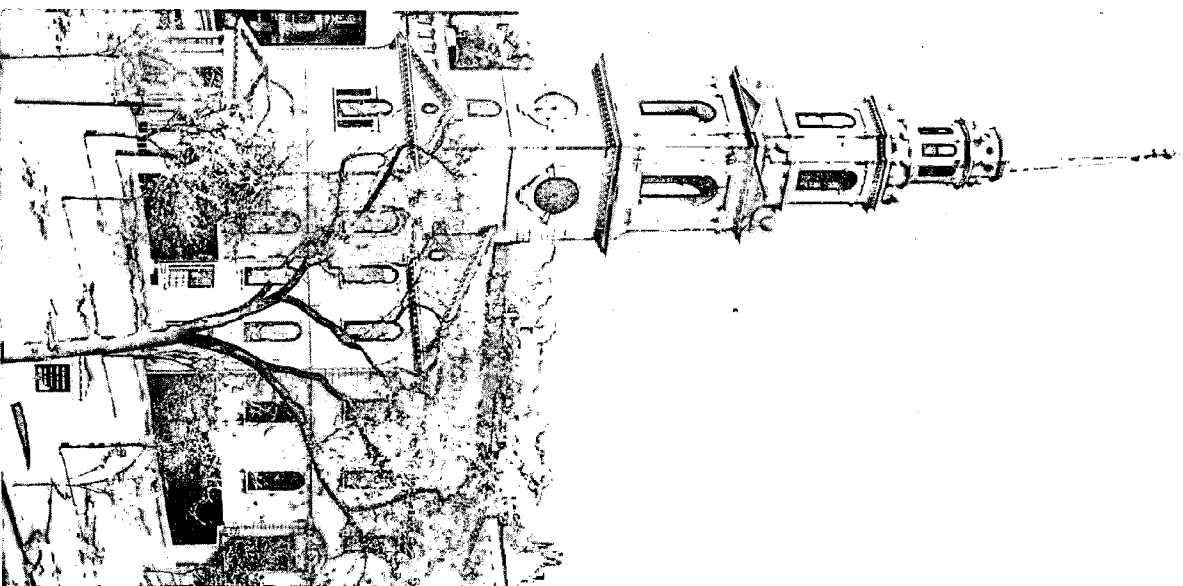


Vernon House, Newport.





Rejected spire for St. Martins-on-the-Fields, Gibbs.



First Baptist Church, 1775. RHHS.

## Plans and interiors

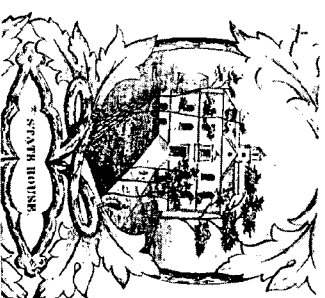
Plans and interior detail were more traditional although bolection paneling and shell cupboards went out of fashion and two story mantels made their appearance. Stairs with ramped rails and twisted balusters remained popular until about 1785 but their scale became more delicate. Other types of stairways, with turned balusters and drops, generally had ramped rails and open string courses.

## Providence

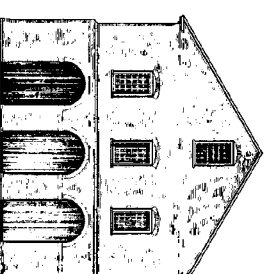
In Providence increasing prosperity was reflected in the public and domestic building put up just before the Revolutionary War. Joseph Brown, one of the four Brown brothers, a scholar and an amateur architect, designed most of the new buildings. He owned James Gibbs' *Book of Architecture* of 1728 and Swan's *Designs* of 1745 both of which reflected characteristics of Wren's time. Brown's work shows their influence, and Providence building, although as imposing as that of other colonial cities, never fully followed the classic Palladianism found in Newport. For instance wood rusticated to look like stone seldom appeared in Providence; on the other hand, red brick with stone or wooden trim became a favorite building material second only to wood.

In 1770 Joseph Brown designed the "College Edifice", Brown University's first building. Of red brick trimmed with stone, it was modelled after Nassau Hall in Princeton as a long four story hip-roofed block topped by a balustraded flat deck and a belfrey. Its plain mass was broken by a central pedimented pavilion.

The brick market of 1773, also built by Joseph Brown, was a red brick gable-roofed building with wood trim and brick belt course.



Original appearance of the Colony House, 1763.



The Original Market House  
Original appearance of the Brick Market, 1773. RHHS.

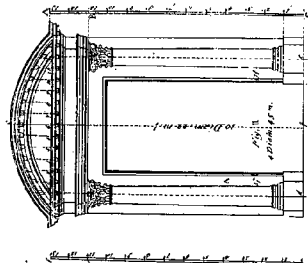


It originally had only one story set over an open arcaded basement but a third story was added in 1793.

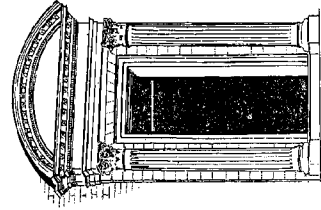
Providence's most important eighteenth century building, the First Baptist Meeting House, was designed by Joseph Brown in 1774. It was built of wood and elements of the design were drawn from Gibbs' *Book of Architecture*. The spire was in fact a copy of a rejected spire for St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, London.

Only a few houses of the period remain in the College Hill area. Joseph Russell's house built in 1772, which stands raised and stripped of its interiors at 114 North Main Street, is one of the most important. It is a square brick building with a modillion cornice, a low hip roof, belt course, and segmental pedimented doorway, the model for which appears in Battey Langley's *Com-pleat Builders Assistant*. Laid out on a four room central hall plan, the main parlor scheme had a mantel wall composed of old fashioned circular headed niches flanking a two story pedimented mantel piece. The stair hall with its broad carved arch separating the front and back hall and its staircase with ramped rails, flame drops, and twisted balusters also followed an earlier scheme.

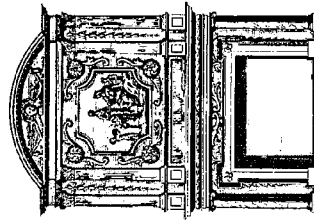
In 1774 Joseph Brown built his own house of red brick with an ogee pediment set end to the street in a scheme suggestive of the baroque designs of Wren's day. Originally a double flight of steps led to the main entry above a high sandstone basement entry at the ground level. A carved modillion and dentil cornice continues across the pediment end; a Chinese Chippendale balustrade encloses a Captain's walk; and turned balusters with urns at the posts form an eaves balustrade. The interior had a central hall plan with staircase of twisted balusters and other finish similar to the Russell House.



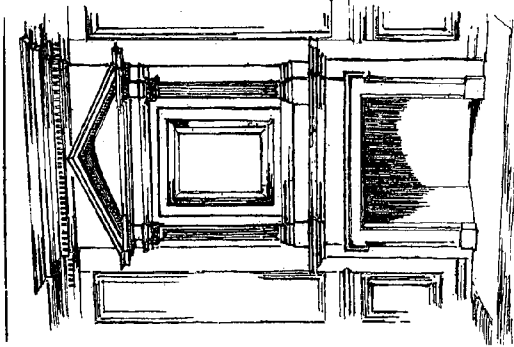
Model for Russell House door from Battey Langley.



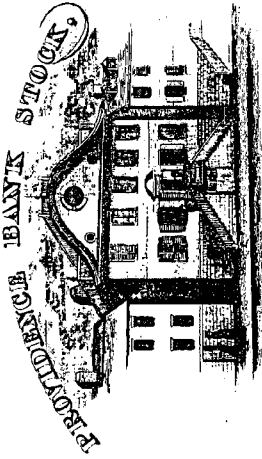
Door, Russell House.



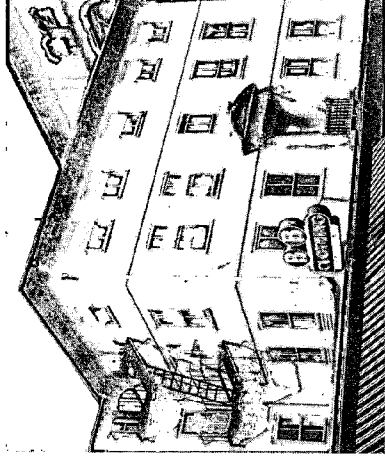
Mantel from Salmon's Palladio, Londonensis.



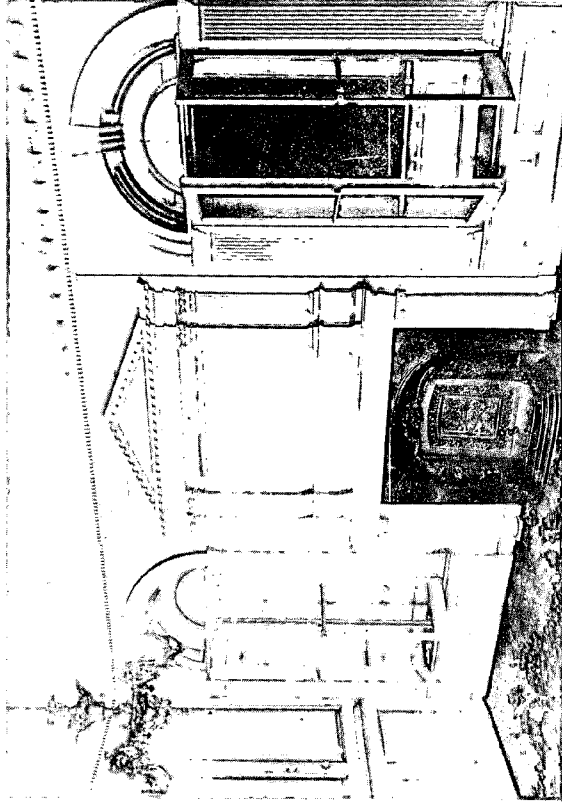
Mantel Joseph Brown House.



Original appearance, Joseph Brown House.

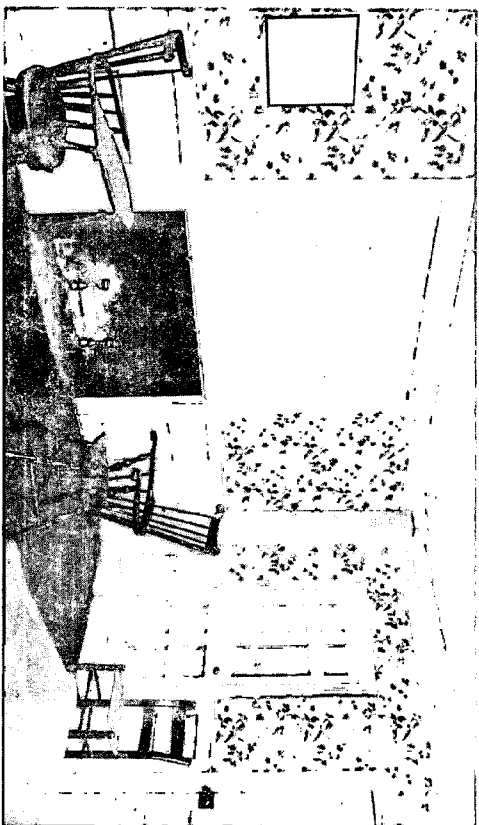


Joseph Russell House. HABS.

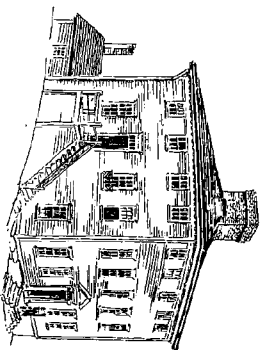


Parlor, Joseph Russell House.

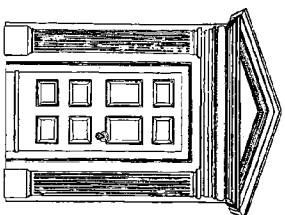




"Shakespeare's Head", Mantel wall, parlor. HABS.



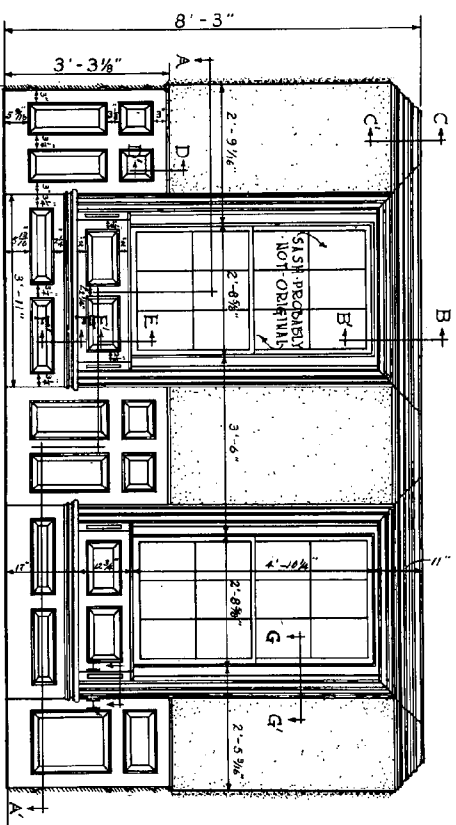
"Shakespeare's Head"



Typical doorway.



"Shakespeare's Head", kitchen fireplace showing oven at side. HABS



Parlor, North wall, "Shakespeare's Head." HABS

Simpler houses were marked by changes in detail rather than in basic form. The box-like house set at the sidewalk edge and covered with a gable, a gambrel or a gable-on-hip roof remained typical. Doorways continued to be the chief decorative feature with the plain triangular pedimented form the one most commonly used. They were supported by pilasters of the Doric or Ionic order, and when the Ionic order was used the cushion frieze, a part of that order, was also employed. The Corinthian order seldom appeared at this time.

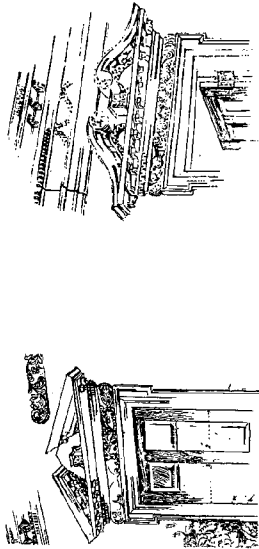
Central chimney, central hall and end chimney plans were all common. In interiors of the smaller houses, typical mantel walls displayed a paneled section for the fireplace composed of a bolection surround for the fire opening and a small and large panel above. The kitchen fireplace had by this time become reduced in size and the oven was now brought forward and was placed at the side and flush with the mantel wall.

"Shakespeare's Head," the home of the *Providence Gazette*, built by John Carter in 1772 on Gaol Lane, now Meeting Street, is a good example. It is a hip roofed building, three stories high, and is built on the old central chimney plan. On the interior the staircase of three runs butts against the chimney and the detail of the main rooms is limited to classic cornices, paneled wainscoting and mantel sections. Other Providence houses of this period are the gable-roofed Amos Allen house at 62 Benefit Street and Captain Joseph Tillinghast's house at 403 South Main Street. Both have pedimented doorways.

### THIRD GEORGIAN OR POST-COLONIAL (1775-1800)

#### Source of Style

The trend set by Providence building of the years just before the Revolutionary war continued as a normal evolution of the style until the Greek Revival period rang down the curtain on the long Georgian development. At first, however, the chief changes apparent in post-Revolutionary Providence houses involved the increased size, elaboration of detail and a tendency toward lightness and delicacy of scale due to the influence of Adam taste. Several great merchant mansions were built on the hillside during these years. They were notable for their conservatism in design.



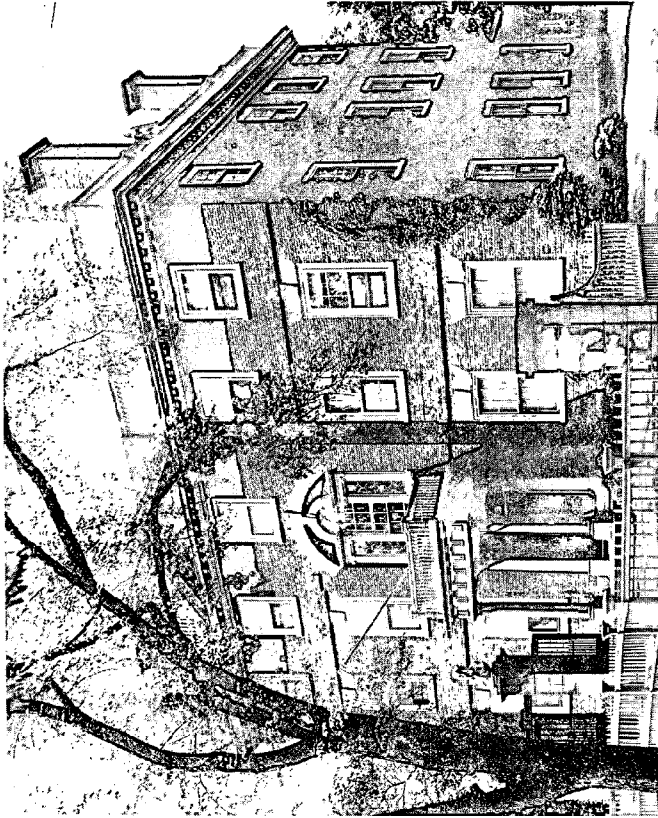
John Brown House, pedimented door heads.

#### Characteristics and Examples

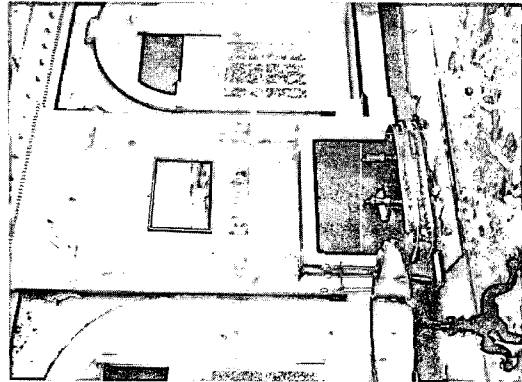
In 1786, Joseph Brown built a large brick stone trimmed house for his brother John, which in general form became the model for other such buildings. It is square, of central hall plan and is three stories high, with four exterior wall chimneys, a hip roof and double parapets. The front was designed with a central slightly projecting pedimented pavilion and a one story balustraded Doric portico, one of the earliest to appear in Providence. The doorway has leaded (modern) elliptical fan and sidelights, and the second story central window, which is of Palladian form, is set under a relieving arch. All these elements were to be found in English buildings of Gibbs' time.

The lavish interior woodwork set a precedent in elaboration and reflected the influence of Adam in carving and detail; but followed on the whole the schemes that had already appeared in the Russell and Brown houses, with such features as windows recessed behind arches which flanked a two story pedimented mantel.

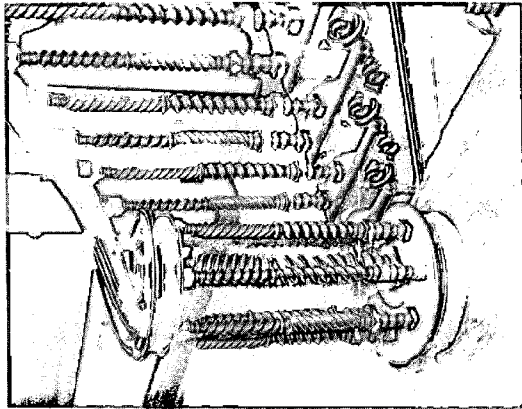
The house Caleb Ormsbee built for Joseph Nightingale in 1792 repeated in wood the general scheme of the John Brown house, but the exterior detail was somewhat heavier, with heavy quoins and rusticated window caps. The interior trim includes broken scroll



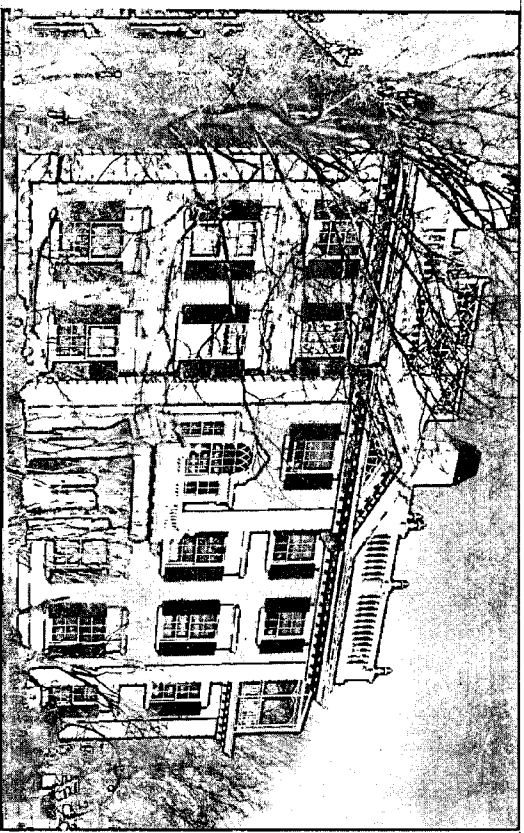
John Brown House, 1786, RIHS.



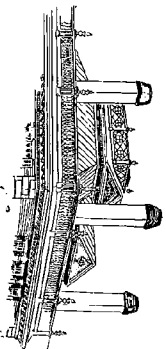
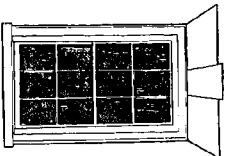
John Brown House, Southeast parlor.



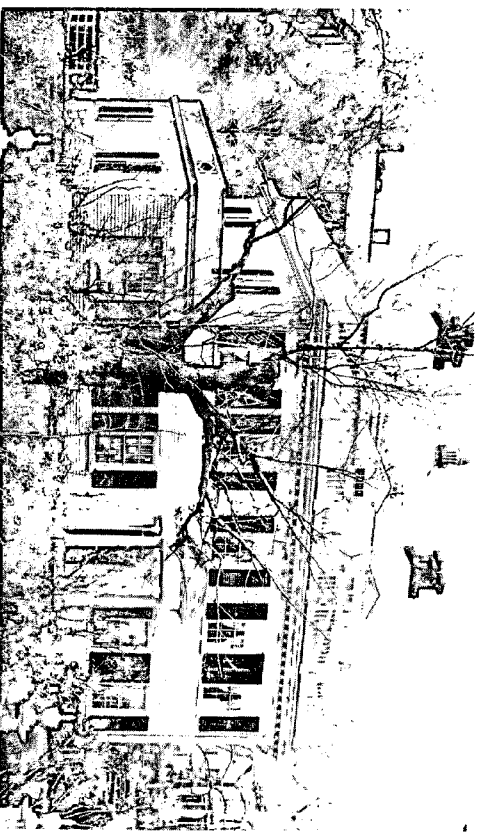
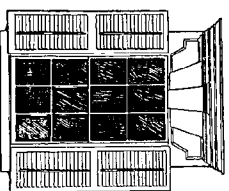
John Brown House, stairs.



Nightingale-Brown House, 1792. — HABS.



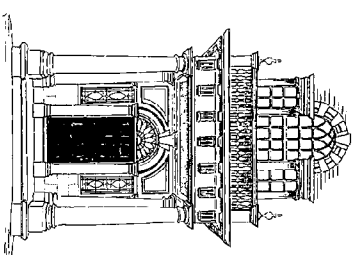
Details, Nightingale-Brown House.



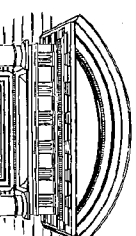
Captain George Benson House, 1796. HABS.

mantel and over door pediments adorned with Adamesque carving but reflects in general the character of the John Brown parlors and hall.

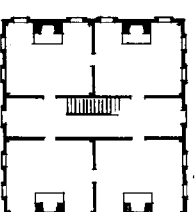
Other houses of this period are the two story hip roofed wood house Captain George Benson built on Angell Street in 1797 and the gable roofed house Seryl Dodge built on Angell's Lane (Thomas Street) in 1787. This house has fine interior detail with naturalistic carving in deep relief reminiscent of earlier eighteenth century work.



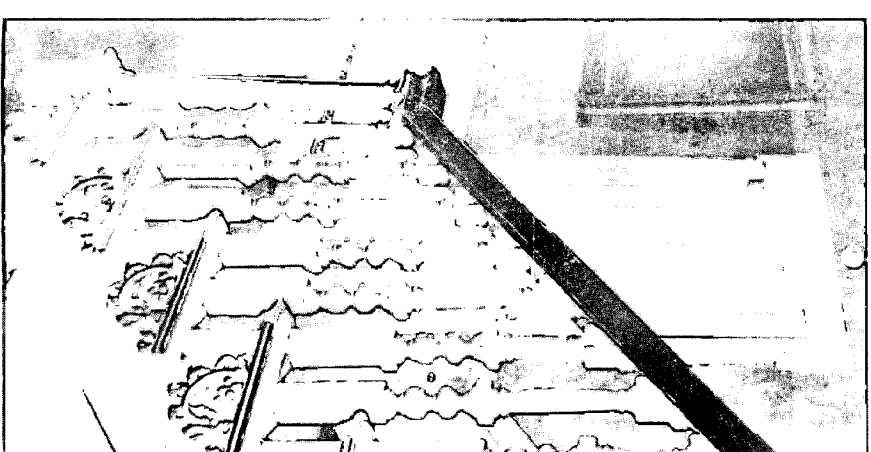
Nightingale House, porch.



Benson House, door.



Four room plan.



Seryl Dodge House, 1787, stairs.

## FEDERAL PERIOD (1785-1830)

### Sources and Characteristics of Style

About 1785, a new trend appeared in American Building. English architects whose work was always reflected in American building were now turning away from the classic Palladianism sponsored by Lord Burlington. Georgian heaviness began to give way to refinement and attenuation of scale.

The Adams brothers working in England in the second half of the eighteenth century reflected this change. They incorporated such features into their work as dressing alcoves, oval saloons, and rooms with curved ends revealed in exterior curved bays. They were inspired by the recently discovered Graeco-Roman art of Pompeii and their manner was characterized by graceful delicacy. Their decorative vocabulary was composed of classic forms lightly handled: the egg and dart, reeding, dentils, a Greek key pattern, the honeysuckle pattern, garlands, swags, and rosettes and a sunburst design. They also used urns, lamps, and groups of figures combined with garlands, festoons and swags, carved in marble or wood or applied in French putty.

At the same time, the detail of Chippendale and the cabinet makers began to exert more influence on American building. Fret patterns, wave and scroll designs, and the interlace of Chippendale's Chinese manner were popular.

In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, "Gothick motives" added another note of variety. As early as 1765, William Halfpenny and Battey Langley were publishing examples of the "Gothick Order". Horace Walpole's house at Strawberry Hill and Pope's villa at Twickenham were both essays in the "Gothick" taste. The Gothic detail was delicate and was applied as an order to buildings arranged in the approved symmetrical manner.

### Carpenter Detail

In the colonies all these motives were often interpreted and simplified by carpenter craftsmen. For instance, a running motive of five gouged lines and a gouged rosette popular at this time was probably derived from the Adam version of the Doric frieze. Simple gouges, auger borings, lozenges, circles, reeding, etc. in many combinations were made to represent a whole gallery of decorative forms. This complexity of detail was at its height from about 1785

to about 1810 after which date a tendency toward simplification became apparent.

### Influence of architectural handbooks

Architectural books were used with more latitude. The important publications still served as models for the churches, public buildings, and fine houses but a series of smaller carpenters' handbooks, reflecting Adam style and written by such men as William and James Pain, William Halfpenny, Abraham Swan, and Battey Langley, were used constantly. They showed detailed designs for "frontispieces", mantels, doors, cornices and windows, together with stair details, floor plans, room proportions, and roof framing. After 1797 the Massachusetts carpenter-architect, Asher Benjamin, published his own handbooks, among the first of a series of indigenous publications.

### Influence of professional architects

About this time, too, professional architects began to influence American style. In Colonial America trained architects had been almost unknown. In Rhode Island Richard Munday, Peter Harrison and Joseph Brown were all amateurs. So were the nineteenth century architects Russell Warren and John Holden Greene, both of whom worked in Providence. Charles Bullfinch of Boston, who was deeply influenced by the Adam brothers, played an important role in forming nineteenth century New England taste and several Rhode Island buildings are directly derived from his work.

### Providence

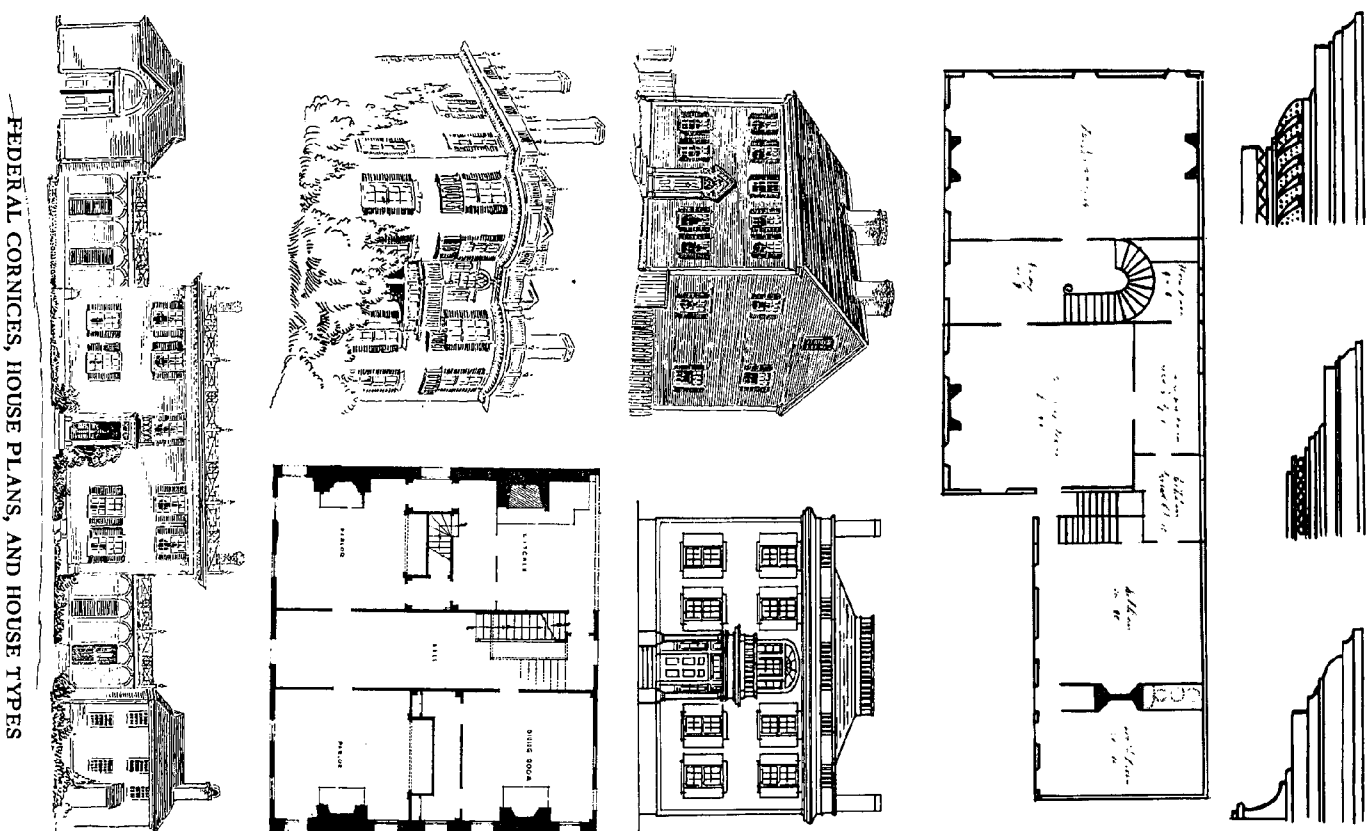
In Providence, the attenuated scale and the carpenter and Adamesque detail on both the exterior and interior showed the change in spirit most clearly.

### Materials

Although wood continued to be the chief material employed, red brick trimmed with wood or stone was also common and occasionally stone was used for an entire building.

### Painting

In accordance with the increased lightness of scale, colors used for both the exteriors and for interior woodwork tended to become paler. A creamy yellow was popular for the exteriors, while pale gray green and a grayed yellow green, known as "light stone color" as well as a grayed buff color are frequently found on paneled walls of early nineteenth century date. Before 1830 the vogue for white houses and for white painted interior walls and paneling which continued through the Greek Revival period had begun.



FEDERAL CORNICES, HOUSE PLANS, AND HOUSE TYPES

## Plans

Many Providence houses built between 1785 and 1830 adhered to the old colonial scheme of rooms flanking a central hallway. In the typical Federal plan, the hallway became restricted in size and was often separated into front and back sections. The stairways, frequently curving, were sometimes placed in a well at one side. Due perhaps to the increased use of brick, chimneys, usually four in number, were most often placed in the exterior walls but the scheme of two interior chimneys, and even of central chimney or end chimney plans, persisted in smaller houses. The simple room shape was now occasionally broken by a curving bay and the main rooms often had arched recesses to take the major pieces of furniture.

Sometimes the outbuildings and court yards were also planned as part of the building scheme.

Double houses were not unusual and a double house plan, really two half houses with doors doubled in the center under one decorative cornice, became common after about 1815.

## Roof Types

Gable-roofed houses of a lower wider pitch continued to be built throughout the entire period but gambrel-roofed and gable-on-hip roofed forms went out of fashion soon after the Revolutionary War. The square house with central entry topped by a low hipped roof, often finished with a flat deck and double parapets, was a favorite form especially during the years from about 1790 to about 1810.

Dormer windows, generally with triangular pediments, were nearly always part of the scheme in the hipped roofed houses.

## Parapet Rails

Parapet rails were popular, varied, and until about 1815, light in scale. John Holden Greene often used turned balusters with rosettes carved at the bulge or a pierced checker-board pattern. Other varieties such as an interlacing wheel pattern appeared in the second and third decades of the century.

## Exterior Cornices

Cornices reflected the same trend toward delicacy and variety. They were made up of combinations of run moldings, modillions and/or dentils. Curved corbels sometimes replaced the modillion course and sometimes a fret pattern, a running interlace, festoons, or other Adam detail appeared. After about 1810 several new motives were used including a rope molding, a row of balls strung on

a rod, and shaped mutules, all of which were illustrated in Asher Benjamin's *American Builder's Companion* published in 1816.

### Doorways

As in the past, the doorways were the focal point for decorative detail and showed great variety. About 1785, a doorway type with pediment pierced by a fanlight often shown in the carpenters' handbooks became universally popular in the colonies. It appeared in Providence houses from about 1785 to about 1810 and gradually supplanted the plain pedimented form.

In eighteenth century examples, the fan had wooden muntins, and the frieze section of the entablature, if of the Ionic order, had the Palladian cushion form. In nineteenth century versions, the fanlights were often filled with leaded glass, and the proportions of the order used tended to become more slender. Doric, Ionic, Corinthian and composite orders were all used, while a decorative motive, usually a single open flower, was applied to the frieze.

Doorways, also framed by an order, were sometimes finished with entablatures and cornices and either a fan or a transom but without a pediment. They often had side lights as well.

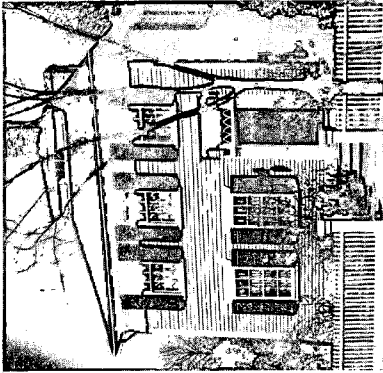
Doorways with elliptical fan and sidelights of the type used for the John Brown house were popular. They were framed in several ways, sometimes by curving-moldings or, after 1810, by slender banded Gothic colonettes, by rustication, or by strung balls (after 1820). An overdoor fanlight framed by a plain wooden or stone segmental or semi-circular arch came into use about 1800.

### Porches

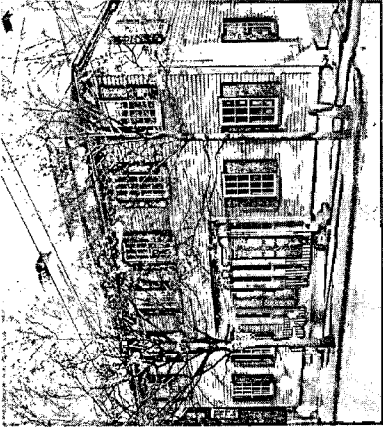
The one story portico with columns and balustrades or pediment first seen in Providence in the John Brown House appeared with increasing frequency in either curving or angular form handled with typical Federal lightness. Porches with two story columns across the front of the house appeared after 1810 but Providence examples have been lost. The Carrington House two story porch was put on when the third story was added in 1812.

### Steps

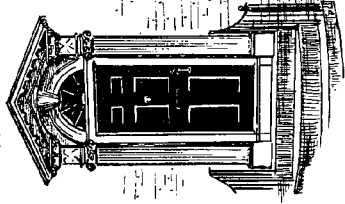
Many Providence houses were set at the sidewalk's edge. They were often reached by a double flight of steps, stone or wooden,



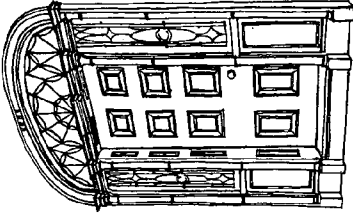
House, 160 Power St., Monitor Roof. HABS.



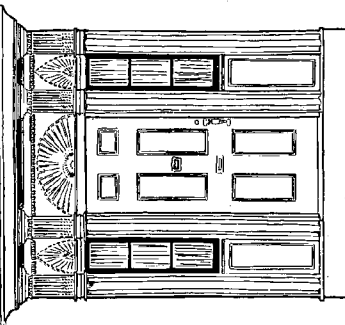
Double House, 27-29 John St. HABS.



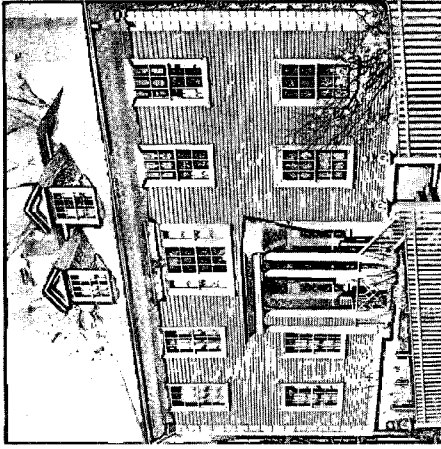
Fanlight Door.



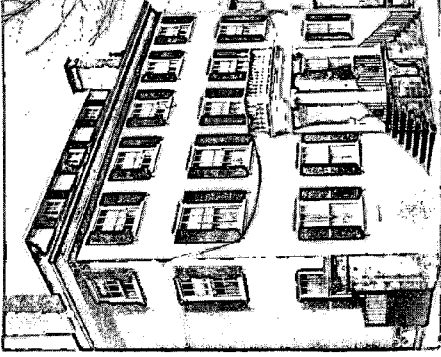
Elliptical Fan Door.



Flat topped door.



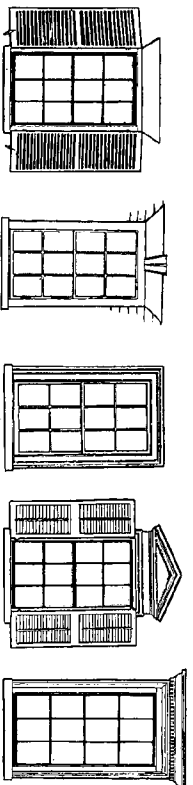
Richmond House, 36 Bowen St., Hip roof. HABS.



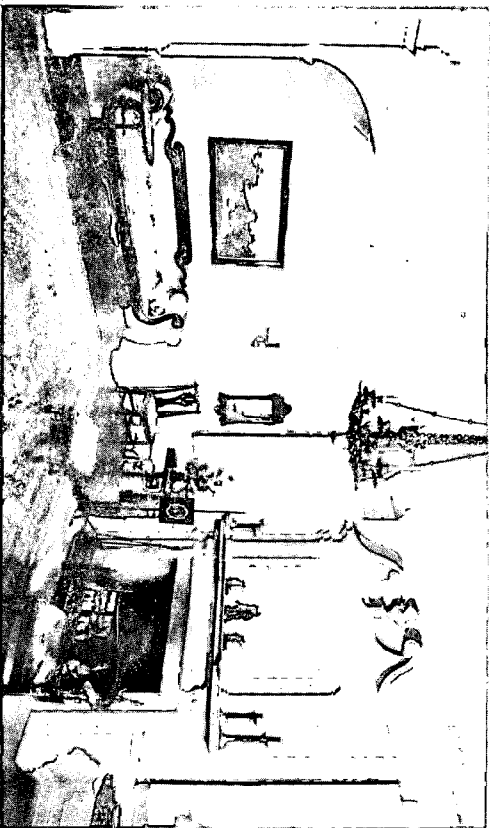
Joseph Haile House, 106 George St., 1805, HABS

FEDERAL HOUSES, PORCHES AND DOORWAYS

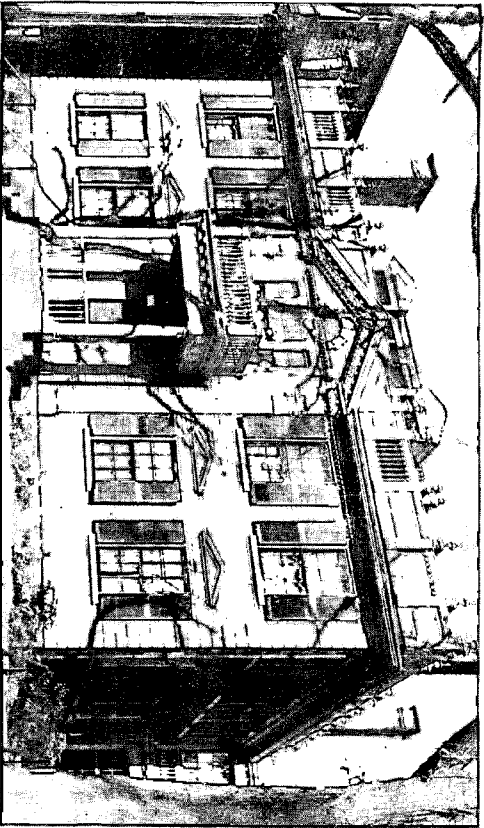




Early Nineteenth Century Window types.



Edward Dexter House, parlor

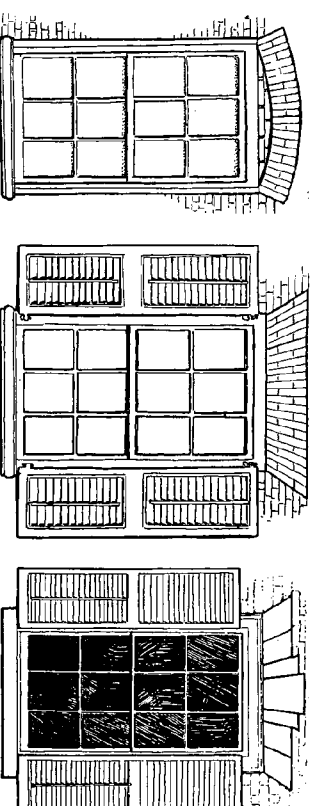


Edward Dexter House, 72 Waterman St., c.1800

finished with wrought iron railings (for stone steps) or wooden turned balusters.

#### Windows

In the eighteenth century, windows in wood buildings had most frequently been finished with molded caps. Most windows in brick buildings had segmental arched heads, although Peter Harrison used semi-circular headed windows for the Synagogue in Newport (1763). Later flat headed arches also appeared. After the Revolution, caps of splayed lintel form, with or without key-blocks, which had appeared earlier on occasion, became common for both wood and brick buildings. In the latter the lintel shape was sometimes rectangular and often had end blocks and a raised block in the



Window types in Brick Houses.

center. The mitred window frames which had appeared in some brick buildings were now frequently used in wooden buildings.

In the eighteenth century the caps of the upper windows had invariably been part of the eaves cornice. They were now set below the cornice and finished separately, and as the century wore on, the distance between the cornice and the upper windows increased. In three story houses the third story was lower and the windows were consequently smaller than those of the other two stories. Window panes became larger and muntins more slender.

The central second story window, often treated as an ornamental feature, underwent change which may be traced by referring to the balcony door of the Newport Colony House of 1739, with its carved broken segmental pedimented door, the John Brown house Palladian window (1786), and the Ives house elliptical fanlight window (1806). After about 1810, a form of flat headed grouped triple window was also used.

### Interiors

The interiors were marked by changes in the decorative detail described above, and by a steady decline in the amount of paneling used. One story mantels, decorated with festoons, classical figures, ovals and other Adam detail replaced the two story mantels of the Georgian period. Where paneling survived, in doors and dadoses, it was sunk below the stile and rails and finished with a light beaded molding. Stencil designs or scenic wall paintings and papers were popular finishes for otherwise plain plastered walls. The interiors of the Edward Dexter House (1799) on Waterman Street have many federal elements although the exterior with its pilastered and central pedimented treatment resembles the pre-Revolutionary Longfellow House in Cambridge.

### Examples

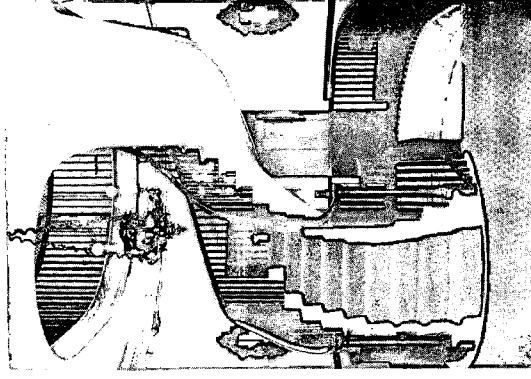
The Thomas Poynton Ives House of 1806 is an outstanding example of a Federal mansion. It was one of the last great three story houses built in Providence until the Tuscan villa style of the eighteenth fifties brought back the grand scale. Although it is as palatial as the John Brown House its lighter proportion and detail makes an instructive contrast with the earlier building. It is built on the traditional central hall plan but the horizontal lines of its plain square mass, unbroken by a pedimented pavilion, are emphasized by a carved modillion cornice and a turned parapet rail which conceals the hipped roof. The balustraded semi-circular Corinthian portico, the elliptical fan balcony window and main entry, and the curved bay at the side, reflect the taste for curving forms and for delicacy.

The spiral staircase is the outstanding feature of the interior. It is set in a curving well and is completely free standing from the second to the third story.

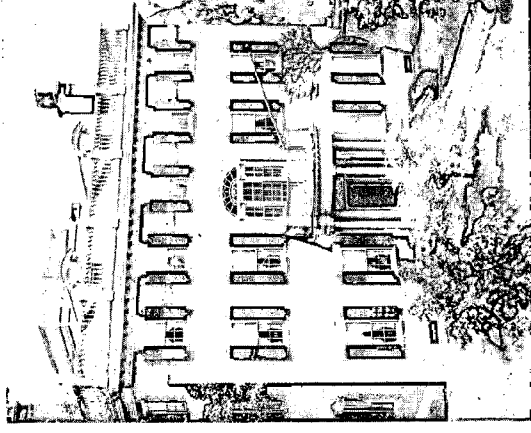
### Building Trends of the Second and Third Decades

From about 1809 to about 1830, John Holden Greene's work dominated Providence building. It reflected the tendencies shown in designs and a trend toward simplification of detail.

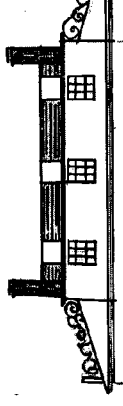
In 1809 Greene designed a house for Sullivan Dorr which showed a combination of Georgian and Gothic motives. The design of the house, with raised flat-roofed balustraded central section and flanking flat-decked wings was inspired by Pope's villa at Twickenham. The cornice, the delicate portico and the second story Palladian window, one of the last to appear in Providence, are all enriched with Gothic detail. The interior detail is composed of plain run moldings and indicates the break with fanciful carving



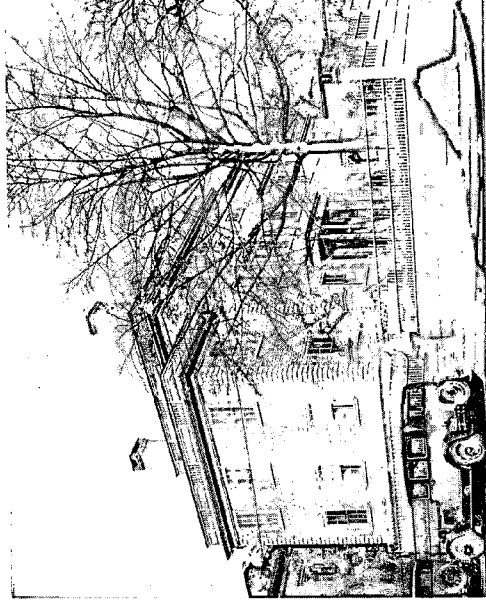
Ives House, spiral staircase.



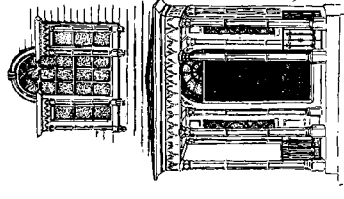
Thomas Poynton Ives House, 1806.  
RHS



Greene's drawing for Dorset house cornice.

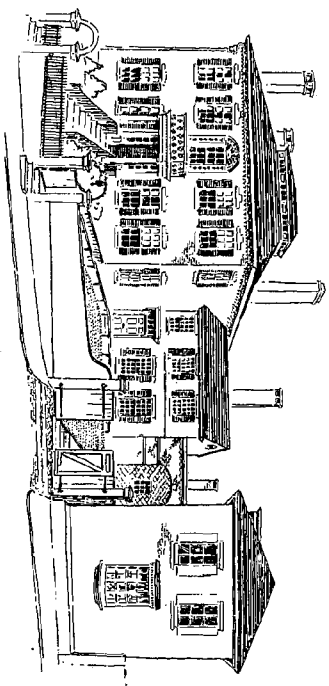


Sullivan Dorr House, 1810. Benefit St. RHS.

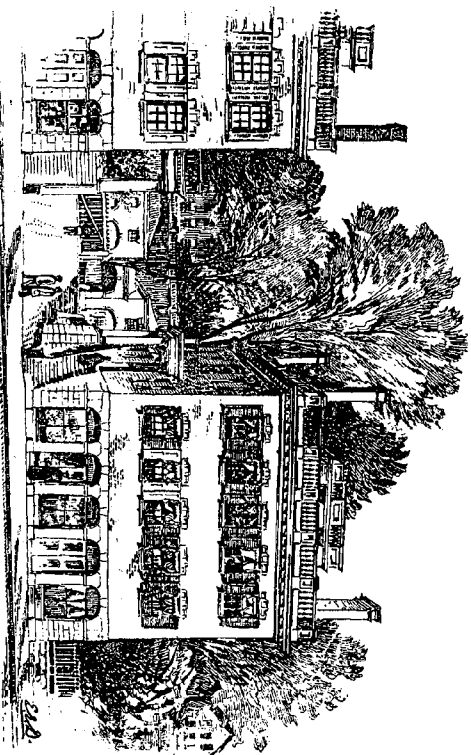


Porch, Dorset House.

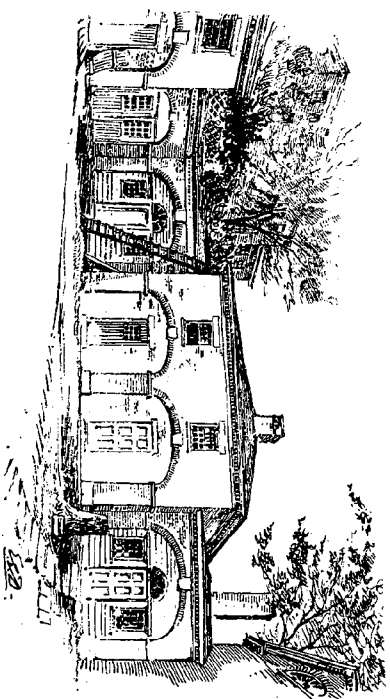




Truman Beckwith House, 1826 College Street.



Benoni Cooke House, 1826, South Main Street.

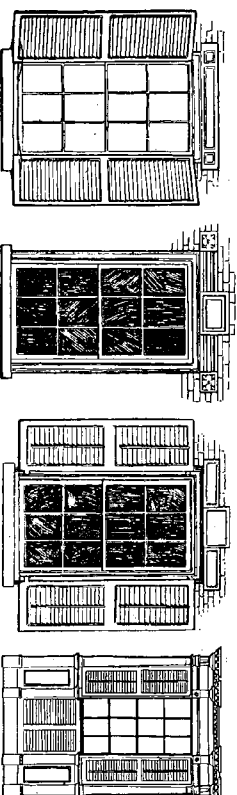


Benoni Cooke House, Carriage Houses.  
HOUSES BY JOHN HOLDEN GREENE

and carpenter work. All the mantels are of the one story type and are austere classic in treatment.

After 1810, a tendency to reduce the scale became apparent and houses built at this time were apt to be compact and were generally two stories high. The monitor-roofed house was popular and remained in favor until about 1835. The form was used for both small wooden buildings and for important brick houses.

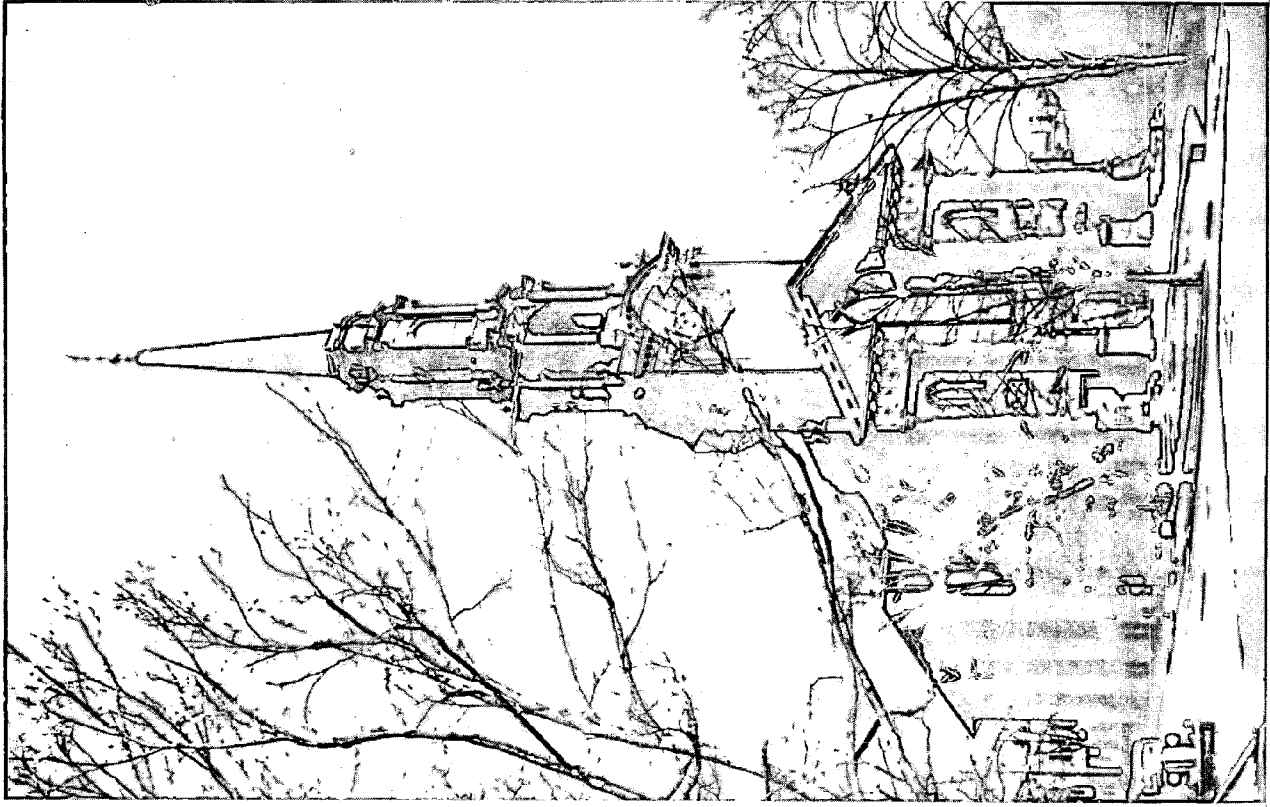
John Holden Greene's name is associated with several. The Canadace Allen house (1819) at 12 Benevolent Street, the Truman Beckwith house (1826) on College Hill and the Benoni Cooke and Rufus Greene twin houses were all similar. Built of red brick with stone trim, they were two stories high, set over high basements, and had monitor roofs, balustrades, and central porticoed balcony doors. The last three mentioned houses were planned with carriage houses and court yards to make complete design schemes. Greene also built a good many smaller monitor-roofed houses of wood.



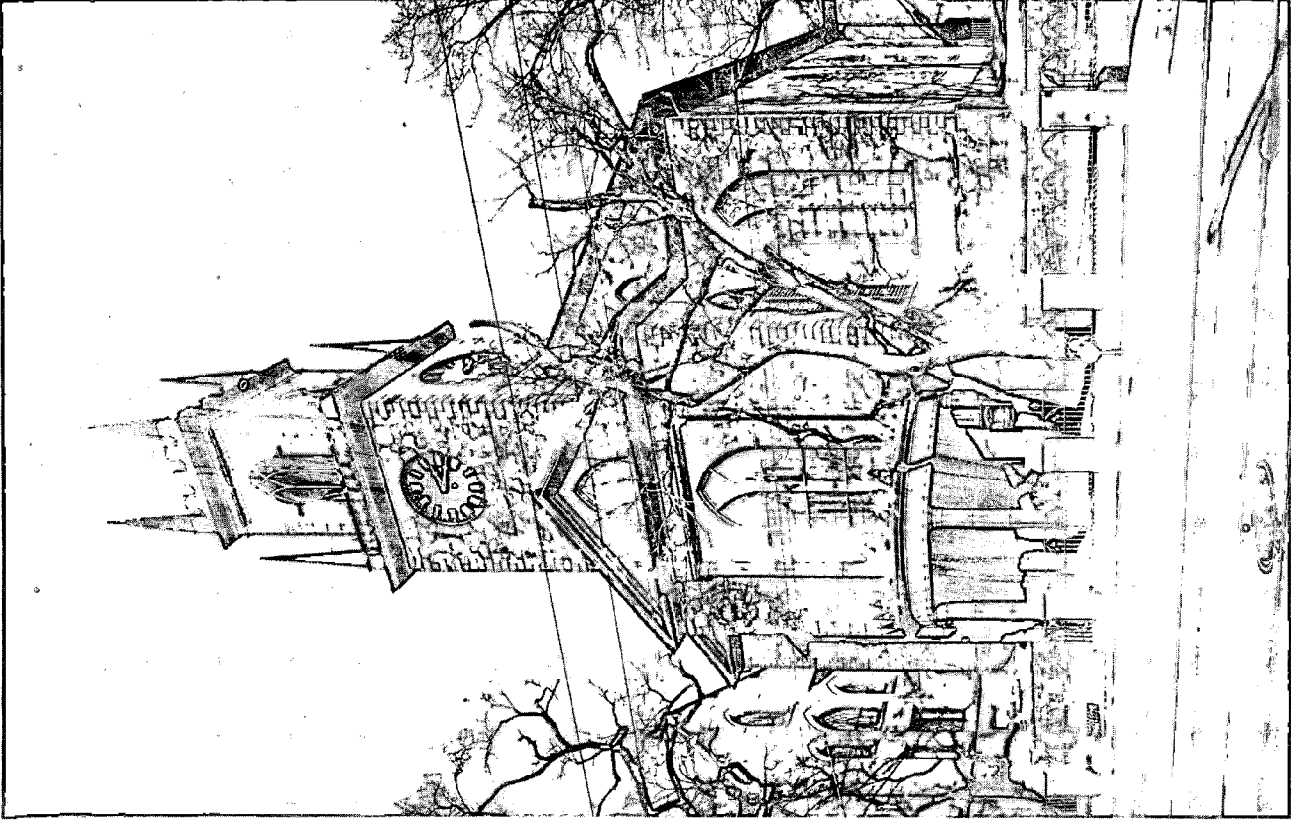
Windows, John Holden Greene buildings.

The new building for St. John's Cathedral, designed by Greene in 1810, was modelled on Bulfinch's Federal Street Church and it serves as an example of how the "Gothick Order" was applied to a typical Georgian church plan. The scheme of a square tower set on a forebuilding in front of the gable-roofed main body is essentially colonial and although the detail is Gothic, it is handled like classic Georgian detail.

The First Congregational Church, now Unitarian, on Benefit at Benevolent Street, built of stone by John Holden Greene in 1816, was also inspired by a Bulfinch building, New South Church in Boston. Again the building is of characteristic colonial plan. The bold spire suggests the work of James Gibbs, and the combination of Gothic, Adam, and Georgian motives is repeated.



First Congregational Church, now Unitarian, 1816. Benefit St., J. H. Greene.



St. John's Cathedral, 1810. North Main St., J. H. Greene.

GREEK REVIVAL (1825-1850)

Source of Style

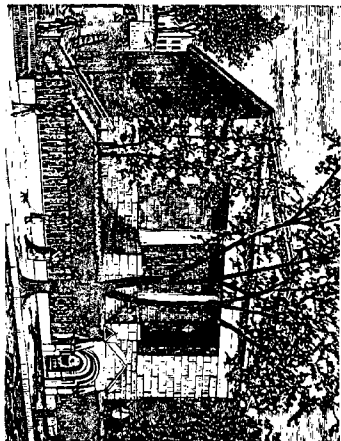
In the early years of the nineteenth century, fired by the Greek War for Independence of 1821 and impressed by Greek antiquities, published for the first time by Stuart and Revett, American builders fell under the spell of Classic Greek architecture. The subsequent building style marked the beginning of another phase in American architectural history. It was the first manifestation of a search for the picturesque which characterized the nineteenth century, and which found one expression in the eclectic building produced in the Victorian period.

Characteristics

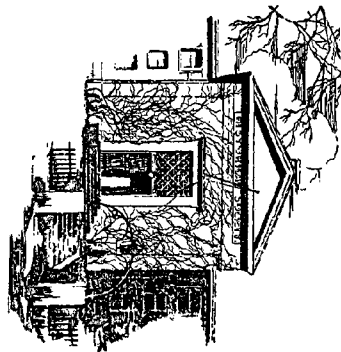
The Greek Revival also represents a major change in the concept of building. The Greek orders used in the eighteenth century were now replaced by the true Greek orders which were broader and simpler in form. The great columns became an integral part of the building, whereas in the eighteenth century buildings had been treated as flat box-like shapes to which applied decorative detail was added at central points.

Coronices, friezes, porticoes, columns and pilasters all reflected the influence of Greek proportion. Even the materials underwent a change. Stone or stucco finished in smooth light tones was preferred to the red brick with white trim which had been the favored building material in the recent past. Clapboards were still used for smaller wooden houses, but sometimes wood walls were laid smooth too, in the form of flat siding.

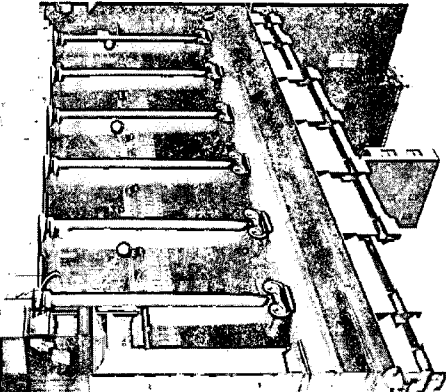
At first, the classic temple form was adopted with little or no variation. The Arcade (1828) on Westminster Street, one of the earliest Providence buildings in the Greek manner, affords a sharp contrast with the red brick monitor-roofed Franklin House of 1823 or Hope College of 1822. A type of business building popular at this time, it was designed by James Bucklin and Russell Warren of smooth stone with colossal pillared porticoes and finished on the Westminster Street facade with a low pediment and on the Weybosset front with an attic or parapet, a form employed for several important houses.



Athenaeum.



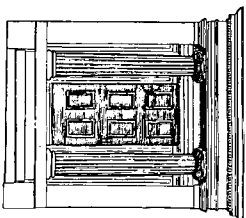
Historical Society Cabinet.



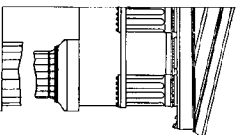
Arcade, Weybosset Street Facade. HABS.



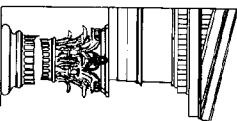
Manning Hall. HABS.



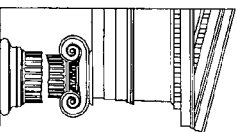
Door Type



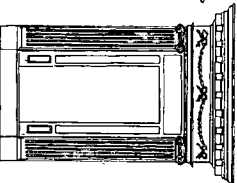
Doric Order.



Ionic Order.



Corinthian Order.



Door Type

GREEK REVIVAL PUBLIC BUILDINGS, DOORWAYS AND THE GREEK ORDERS

Manning Hall, a stuccoed building designed in 1833 by James Bucklin to serve as a chapel and library for Brown University, is a true classic temple of the Doric order. The Providence Athenaeum, built of granite by William Strickland of Philadelphia in 1838, has a pedimented and recessed portico reached by steps rising between two Doric columns.

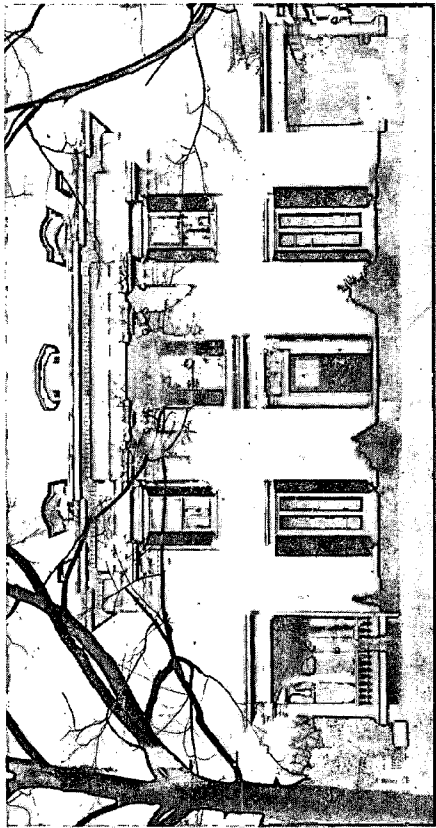
Variants of the temple form were adopted for schools, churches and houses. However, the scheme was inflexible and the portico cut off light. Modifications were soon developed which kept the scale of the Greek style but omitted the great porticoes. In 1840 when Russell Warren designed the Shepard House, formerly at 19 Charlesfield Street, he returned to the square house plan with central entry and a flat roof, but the Greek Revival character was evident in the broad proportions of the colossal pilasters which supported a wide entablature and the two columns which framed a slightly recessed portico.

The Rhode Island Historical Society Cabinet, a stuccoed building put up in 1844, has a facade framed by Doric pilasters and a tall central entry with a grilled transom. The walls of both Rhode Island Hall (1840), the third Brown University building, and the Moses B. Ives House (c.1850) at 10 Charlesfield Street are stuccoed and treated as plain shallow recessed panels.

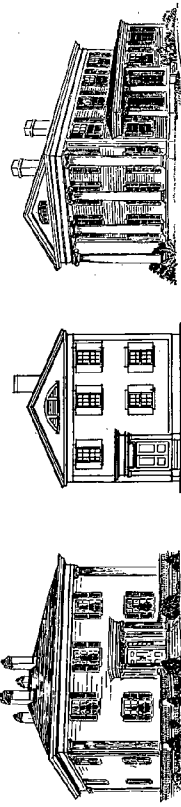
The most typical smaller Greek Revival houses were designed without the portico. Generally set end to the street, such houses were gable-roofed and the eaves cornice and entablature were carried across the gable ends to simulate a pediment. The corners were finished with panelled pilaster strips. Doorways, usually placed at the side front, were handled in several almost standardized ways including a small unpedimented columned portico and a slightly recessed entry framed with paneled pilaster strips and topped with an entablature.

Plans

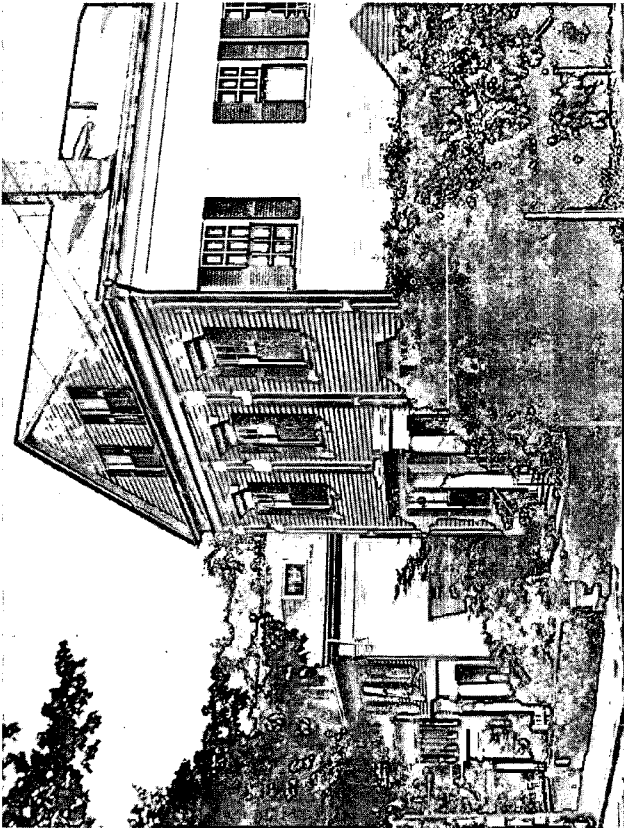
House plans were usually based on the side entry and stairhall, thus allowing for the double parlors which were becoming increasingly popular even for smaller houses. These were thrown together by wide openings which were sometimes framed with columns or pilasters supporting an entablature or cornice, sometimes by moldings used for the window and other door frames. However, the central entry colonial plan, with a coating of Greek detail continued in use.



Shepard House, formerly on Charles Field Street



Greek Revival House Types.

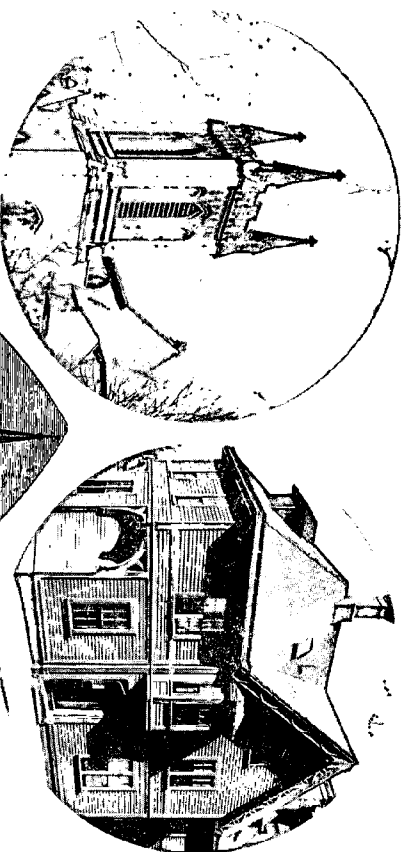


Power Street Houses. HABS.

## VICTORIAN BUILDING (1835-1900)

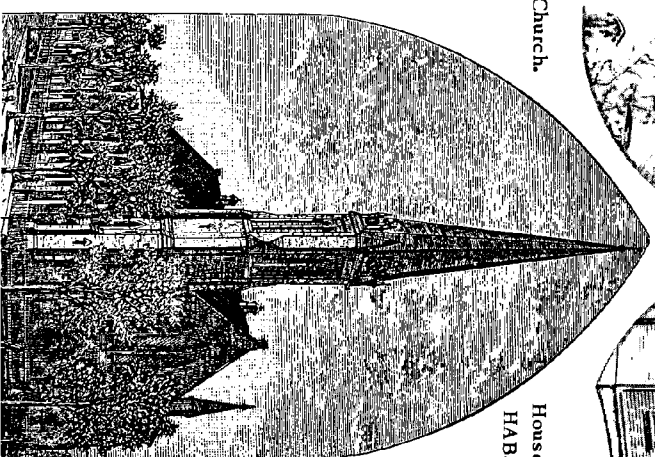
### Sources and Characteristics

The popularity of the Greek Revival style was dissipated in the mid-nineteenth century by changing concepts of the needs a building had to fulfill, and by a sense for the picturesque expressed in a widening interest in other European styles. The resultant building character showed a break with the past, both in spirit and in scale.

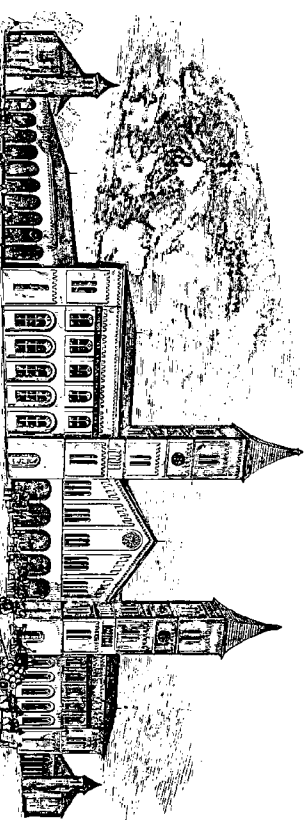


St. Stephen's Church.  
HABS.

House at 336 Benefit St.,  
HABS.



Grace Church.



Old Railroad Station.  
RIHS

### EARLY VICTORIAN ROMANESQUE AND GOTHIC REVIVAL BUILDINGS

As builders sought romantic models for their new houses, American architecture took on an eclectic aspect which in time became strongly diversified. Inspiration for the new structures was derived from Italian Renaissance palaces, from which came expanded scale; Romanesque and Gothic buildings, from which came a concern for irregular plans, jagged outlines, and verticality; Swiss chalets, which introduced shadowed overhanging roof lines; and mansard buildings of the French Second Empire. Early Republican tradition was continued in many plain brick gable, hip or monitor-roofed warehouses with granite post and lintel first stories and stone window caps and sills.

### Gothic Revival

In Providence, Gothic revival buildings began to go up in about 1840. In that year, Richard Upjohn built Grace Church on Westminster Street on an asymmetrical plan with a single tower set at one corner of the buttressed main building. The design reflects Pugin's English Gothic revival. Pre-Civil War Gothic buildings on College Hill are St. Joseph's Church, 1853, designed by P. C. Keeley; St. Stephen's Church, 1860, by Richard Upjohn; and Rogers Hall, 1862, by Alpheus Morse. The Marine Corps Arsenal on Benefit Street (1840) is a symmetrical building with Gothic detail. The house at 336 Benefit Street is an example of domestic Gothic.

### Romanesque Revival

Thomas A. Telft was responsible for a brief Romanesque Revival. His most picturesque building was the old Providence Railroad Station, 1848. Built of brick trimmed with Lombard Romanesque plaster strips and corbel tables, it was composed of a central gable section flanked by tall thin towers and extended by a curving facade and arcades which ended in octagonal pavilions.

Italian Renaissance

Architecture of the Italian Renaissance was a dominating influence on early Victorian building, and in Providence, an outstanding group of structures was built in this style.

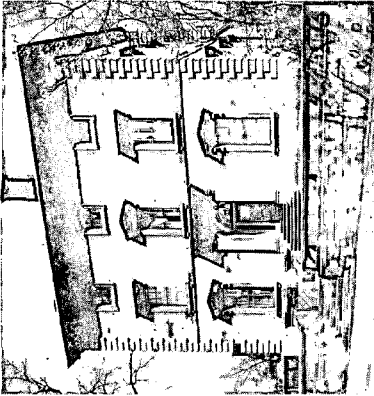
In downtown Providence two tall brownstone buildings, the Merchants Bank built in 1855 by Morse and Hall and the Bank of North America by Telft, had Italian Renaissance detail which included arched first stories, high heavily pedimented windows with closed balustraded bases, molded belt courses, and classic cornices. The old Federal building, a massive square granite block with a dome, built on Weybosset Street in 1856 by Ammi D. Young, has Italian detail.

Early Victorian Providence houses were distinguished by their sober reserve and a combination of Italian Renaissance elements and academic, almost colonial, plans and elevations. The Tully Bowen house built of brownstone by Telft in 1853 is typical. The Edward Pierce house (1850) built by Telft of brick with brownstone trim is constructed on the same lines. The Governor Henry Lippitt House built about 1860 by Henry Childs is another example. Its porte cochere, a one story arcaded and balustraded carriage entry, became standard for important Victorian houses. The Hoppin House (1853) by Alpheus Morse, at 383 Benefit Street is Italian in detail but its projecting end block plan is an English scheme.

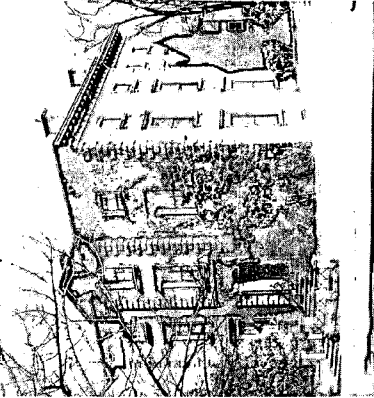
Many houses built at this time had wide overhanging bracketed cornices, low hipped roofs, hooded dormers, Italian doorways and windows. The house at 200 Hope Street, owned by Governor Lippitt in 1857, is an example. The houses at 12 and 32 Keene Street, although smaller, are similar. Houses like the one at 40 Bowen Street (1857) were type houses repeated almost without change.

Second Empire

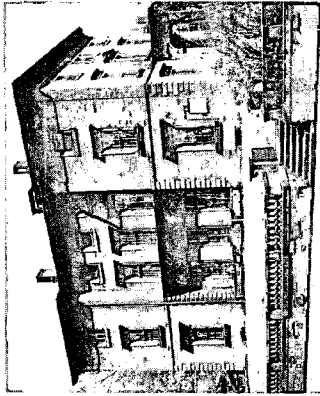
The mansard roof, the chief mark of the Paris Second Empire, made its appearance in the fifties and reached full popularity in the seventies. Its appeal lay in the fact that it provided, when cut with dormer windows, a high attic story without raising the cornice line. The mansard roof together with the heavy decorative detail and the increased scale completed the break with the past. French roofed houses built before the Civil War were still academic in plan and detail. In general, they had simple classic detail confined to modillion or modillion and dentil cornices, bold corner quoins, or Greek Revival pilaster strips, and columned porticoes and entries.



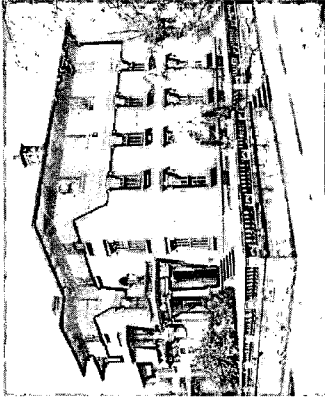
Tully Bowen House. HABS.



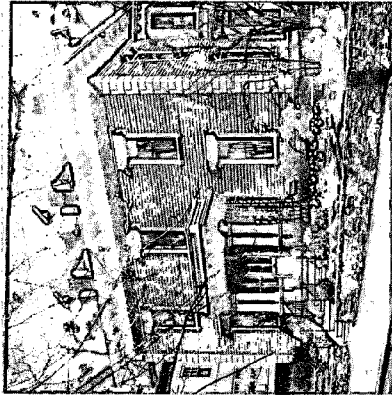
Edward Pierce House. HABS.



Hoppin House. HABS



Governor Henry Lippitt House, 200 Hope Street. HABS



32 Keene Street. HABS.

Mansard roofed house, 367 Benefit Street. HABS.



## POST-CIVIL WAR (c. 1865-1900)

### Sources and Characteristics

The interest in the picturesque which had been expressed in the eclectic buildings of the mid-century continued after the Civil War. Varieties of Gothic, Romanesque, Italian Renaissance and French Second Empire mansard, developed along their own lines. They also began to merge and high, turreted, towered, irregularly planned, buildings became common. Some were gabled with Gothic or Romanesque ornament; others had high mansard roofs and exuberant dormers. Carved classic and rococo or heavy turned and cut detail, wide bracketed cornices, hooded doorways and surrounding piazzas, cast iron railings, and roof edgings appeared in profusion.

College Hill building, however, was conservative, and while most phases of Victorian style appeared, the more flamboyant elements were rejected for a massive, often symmetrical sobriety of character.

### French Second Empire, continued

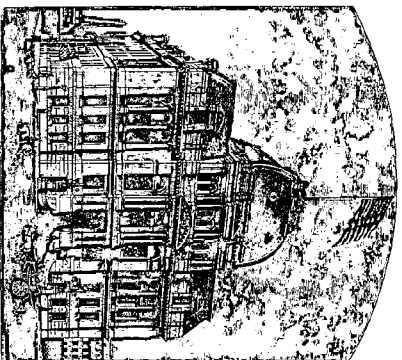
The effects of French Second Empire building were still strong. The Butler Exchange built on Westminster Street in 1872 (demolished in 1928) is an impressive example. It was a large square block with a high mansard roof and at the four corners it had towers ending in squared dormers suggestive of the Louvre. The wall of the principal facade was composed of cast iron columns and entablatures.

The new City Hall (1875), built by Samuel Thayer of Boston in an Italian baroque manner continued the mansard tradition. Its raised central tower covered by a high squared dome and flanked by mansard-roofed wings gave the structure a vertical thrust rather than the horizontal accent which came to be preferred later.

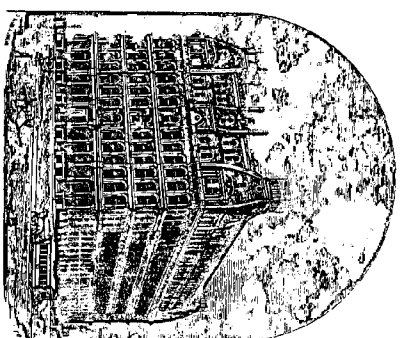
### Gothic and Romanesque, continued

In sharp contrast to the City Hall and other mansard buildings the old Court House (1875-1930), built of brick and limestone in a French Gothic manner, was a vertical mass of high hipped roofs, steep gables, round turrets, and grouped pointed windows.

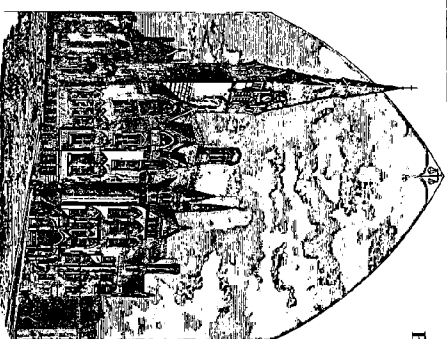
The old Brown Library, by Walker and Gould, is a red brick building of the type known as polychromed Victorian Gothic. Of cruciform plan, it is surmounted by an octagonal dome and lantern and the narrow pointed grouped windows are picked out against the brick walls by voussoirs of alternating light and dark stone.



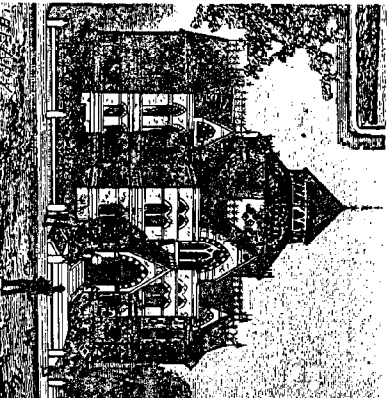
City Hall.



Butler Exchange



Old Court House



Robinson Hall, Brown University.



Sayles Hall, Brown University.



Slater Hall, built in 1879 of hard unrelieved red brick laid with the thin tinted mortar joins which were a mark of Victorian brick work, was of French Romanesque inspiration. Its elongated scale, vertical thrust, and gable-cut roof lines represent another phase of Victorian building.

Gothic and Romanesque buildings continued to go up into the twentieth century. A heavy Romanesque style in the tradition of H. H. Richardson was employed at Brown for Sayles Hall (1881), a center towered building with high hip roof and walls of rockface granite and brownstone.

### Beginning of Steel Construction

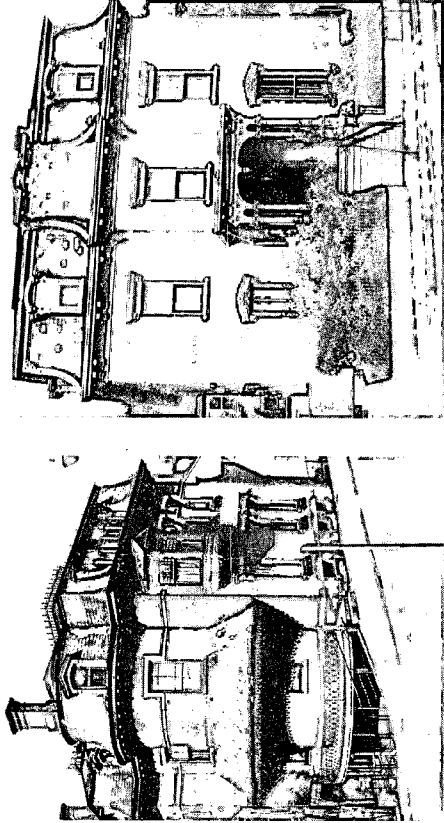
By 1865 builders had begun to experiment with metal construction. Like the Butler exchange, the Frances Carpenter Memorial Building on North Main Street, a four story mansard structure put up about 1865, had a cast iron front, while the Hoppin Building, built by J. C. Bucklin in 1875, had a steel frame as well as a cast iron and glass facade.

### Domestic Building

The George Corliss house (1875) at 45 Prospect Street is one of the best examples in Providence of the bold nature of Victorian asymmetrical planning for picturesque effect. Inspired by the villas of Tuscany its soaring four story corner tower, hooded by a wide classic balustraded cornice, juts upward above the flat-roofed main block. The Francis Goddard House at 71 George Street is another picturesque corner towered building. Both houses are marked by a basic severity.

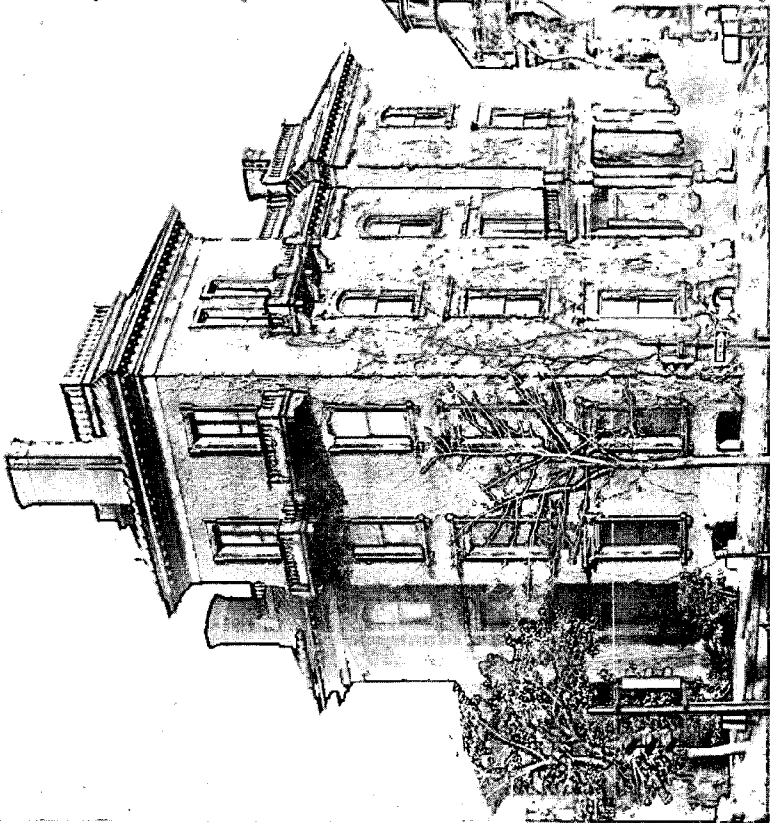
Mansard-roofed houses, although less academic than pre-Civil War examples, were built until the eighties when they went out of fashion. The William Huston House (1865) and the Ambrose Burnside House (1866) are typical. The almost lace-like-carved detail of the Huston House is concentrated on a central pavilion and a one story arched Corinthian porch. The curved mansard roof with mansarded tower adds to the exuberant air. The Burnside House is irregular in plan, with projecting bays, a rounded corner tower, and curving porch. The cast iron railings and detail which edge balconies, bays, and eaves also create a lacy effect.

Detail used for the later mansard houses was mixed. The proportions and most of the detail, especially the window enframements, were derived from Italian sources, but classic, French, jigsaw, Queen Anne, and coarse turned and cut motives all appeared.

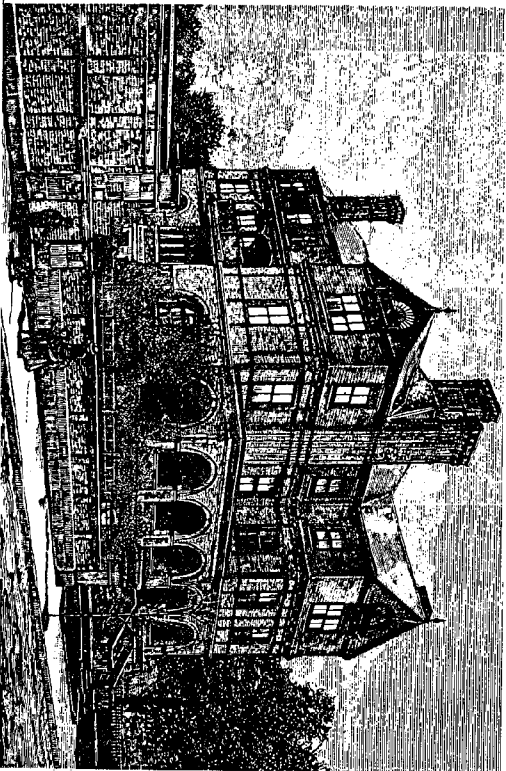


General Ambrose Burnside House  
HABS

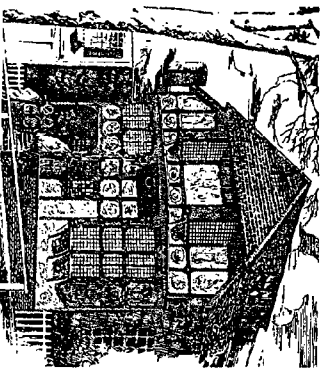
Huston House, HABS.



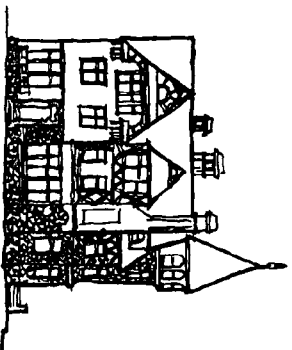
George Corliss House, HABS



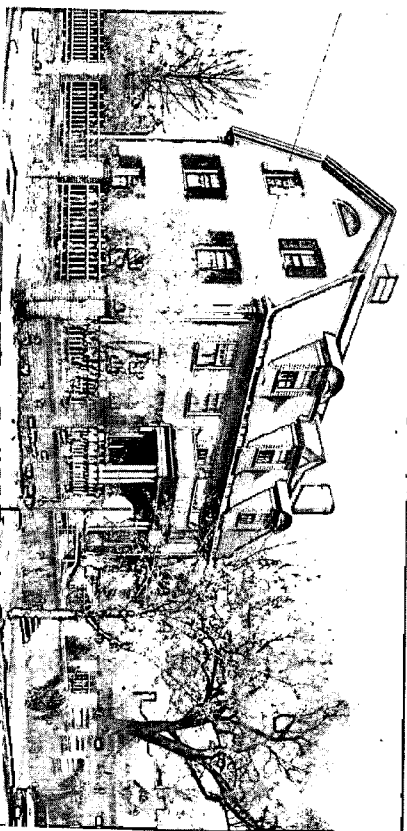
Goddard House, formerly on Hope Street.



Fleur-de-Lys Building, 1885,  
Thomas Street.



George Carr House.



Mercalf House, 132 Bowen Street. HABS

### "Queen Anne" influence

In the seventies, the "Queen Anne" or Tudor manor houses designed by the English architect, Norman Shaw, influenced American architecture. They were open in plan and had cross gables, overhanging second stories, steep roofs, and tall pilastered chimneys. A horizontal effect was enhanced by combinations of such materials as stone for foundations, brick for the first story, shingles, clapboards, tiles, or slate for the second, and paneling or half timbering in the gables. The R. H. I. Goddard House (1885) formerly on Hope Street and the Carr House at Benefit and Waterman Streets were typical Providence examples.

### Colonial Revival

The revival of interest in American Colonial architecture made itself felt in the 1880's. Providence architects had always kept a feeling for the past and Providence Colonial Revival building is strong and inventive. As elsewhere it was the early phase of Colonial style which first caught the interest of local builders. In the eighties high gable, gambrel and hip-roofed houses came into fashion. These revival structures were characterized by a high scale which was related more to Victorian concepts than to the compact scale of the Colonial period but the detail used was correct in character, well executed, and included such early elements as twisted balusters, ramped railings, broken scroll pediments, modillion and dentil cornices, classic pilasters, and Palladian windows, mixed in with broad versions of nineteenth century detail such as Adam elliptical fanlight doorways, urns, garlands, swags, fans, and sunbursts. The house at 132 Bowen Street built about 1890 by Andrews, Jacques and Rantoul of Boston is a good example. It has a gambrel roof and a central entrance portico which is finished with a balustrade of twisted balusters, ramped railings, and flame topped posts of the kind McKim used in the rooms he "colonized" in Newport in the '80's.

Evidently inspired by such Colonial houses as the Longfellow House in Cambridge or the Edward Dexter house on Waterman Street, several Providence houses built about this time had facades designed with a pedimented central section defined by colossal pilasters.

## TWENTIETH CENTURY (1900 to date)

### Sources of Style

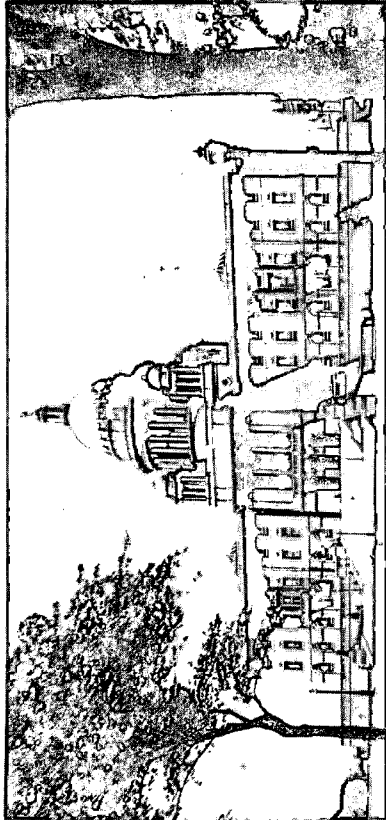
Twentieth century building style in Providence has continued in an eclectic path with two main currents of influence responsible for most of the character of recent buildings. By 1900 the classic Renaissance designs of the type developed on the drawing boards of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in Paris and popularized in America by the buildings of the Chicago World's Fair were beginning to appear in Providence. A strong interest in the red brick buildings of the Early Republican period also began to develop in the last decade of the nineteenth century and has dominated twentieth century Providence building.

### CHARACTERISTICS AND EXAMPLES

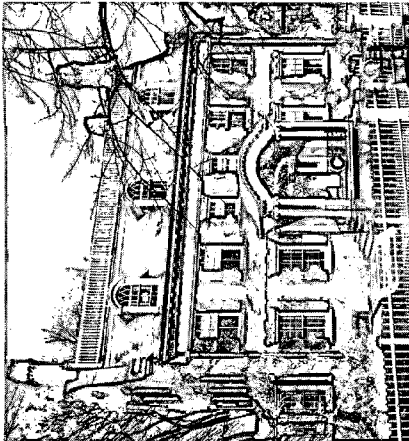
**The Beaux-Arts, World's Fair inspired buildings**  
The State Capitol of Rhode Island was built in 1900 of white marble by McKim, Mead and White. Of square plan, the main block is surmounted by a classic dome flanked by four corner domes in the Baroque-Renaissance manner of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts*. In the College Hill area, the John Carter Brown Library, of 1904 and the John Hay Library of 1910, both by Shepley, Coolidge and Rutan, reflect the influence of the *Ecole des Beaux Arts* in the respective Greek Revival and Renaissance Baroque character of their designs.

### Early Republican Influence

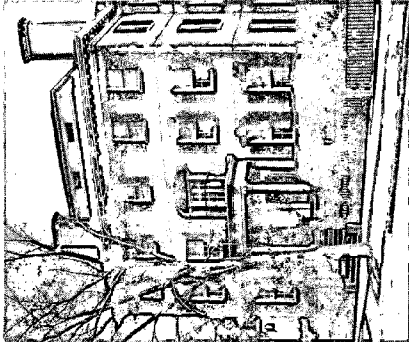
By 1895 many new houses, built of red brick with white trim, reflected mid-Georgian and Early Republican building style. The Taft house at 150 Hope Street (1895) by Stone, Carpenter and Wilson, was designed with the ogee gable line seen in the Joseph Brown House on South Main Street. Hip-roofed houses with more or less correct late Georgian detail were built from this time on until well into the 1930's. The Smith House at 112 Benevolent Street also by Stone, Carpenter and Wilson, has a monitor roof, and is suggestive of John Holden Greene's work. The Huntoon House (1925) of 55 Cooke Street repeats the general scheme.



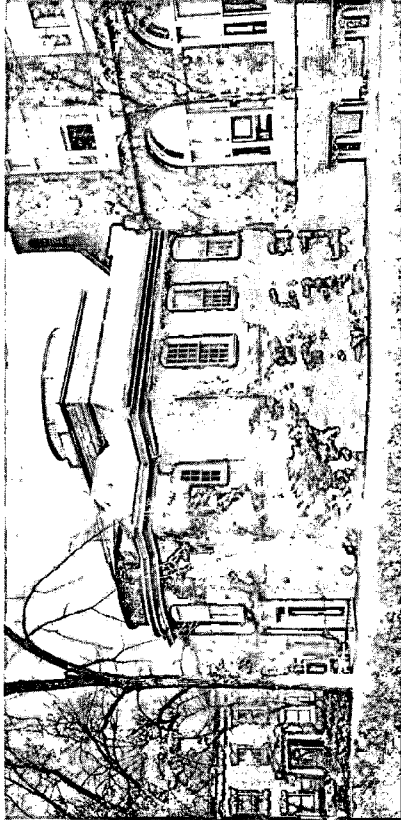
State House. RIHS



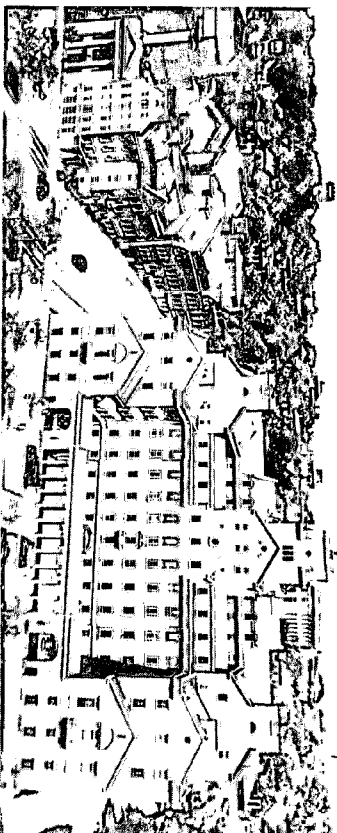
Taft House. HABS



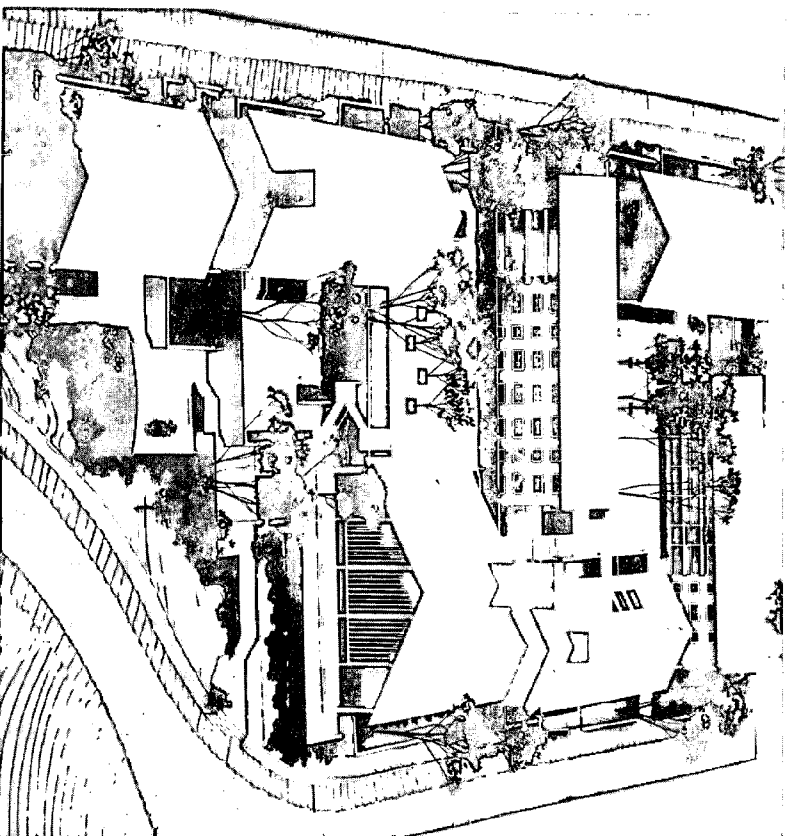
Smith House. HABS.



Chemistry Laboratory, Brown University. Paul Cret 1925.



Court House



Rhode Island School of Design Dormitories.

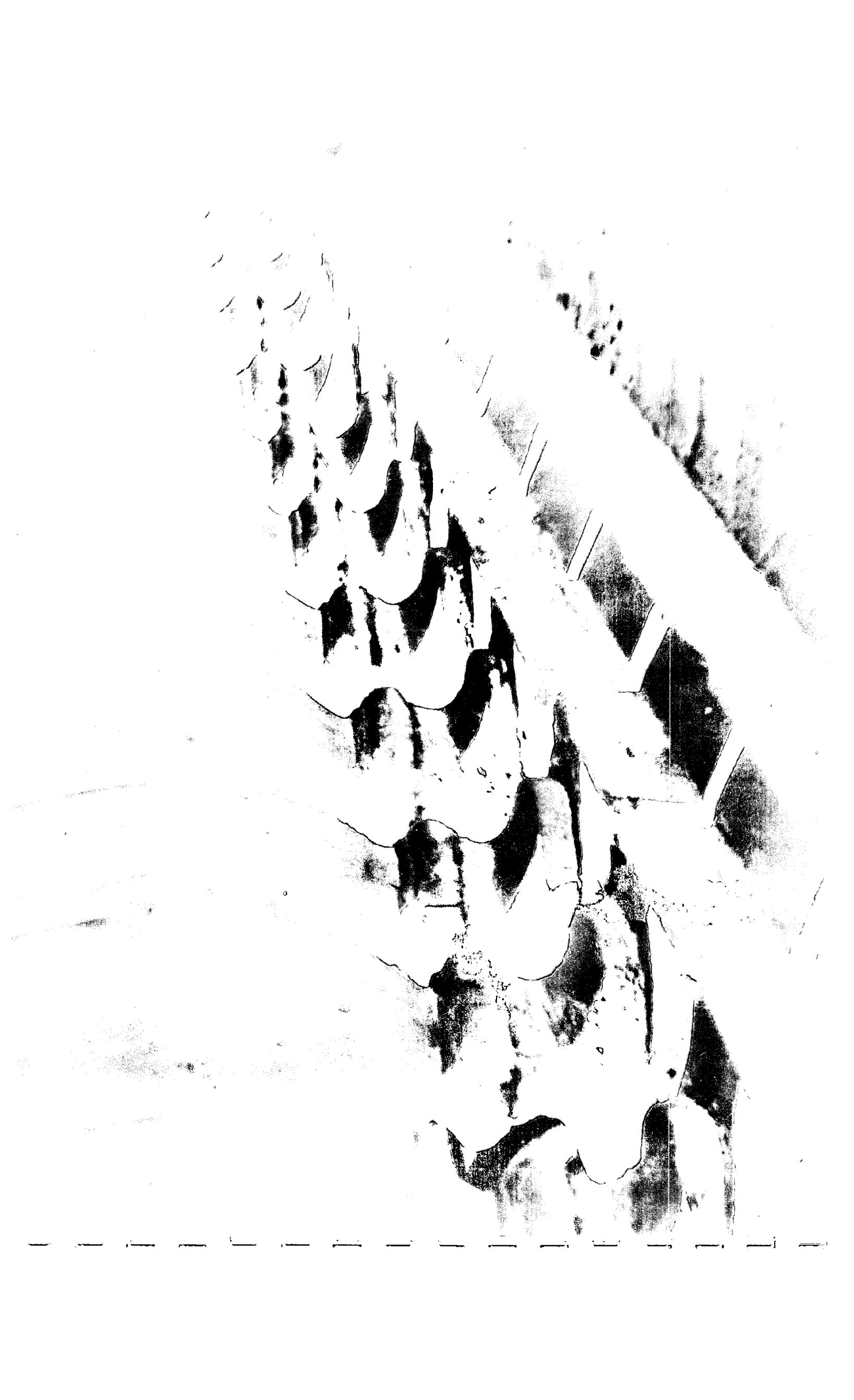
Public buildings soon reflected the same trend. Caswell Hall (1903) and Rockefeller Hall (1904) at Brown and at Pembroke, Miller (1910) and Metcalf (1919) Halls were inspired by Early Republican building.

By 1930, the taste for red brick with light colored stone trim dominated Providence building. The new Court House, built at this time by Jackson, Robertson and Adams, has since had an outstanding influence on Providence architecture. Built of red brick, with light stone, Adam inspired and attenuated detail, it is a block square and is composed as a series of graduated steps up the steep hillside. The School of Design buildings built in 1940 on College Hill opposite the Court House repeated the stepped composition. The Brown dormitories of 1952 were built of red brick trimmed with an earlier type of Georgian detail and Andrews Hall, the West Quadrangle, the new Brown Psychology Building, and the new buildings for the Providence Washington and the Firemen's Mutual Insurance companies, have also followed Georgian revival precedents.

#### The Contemporary Idiom

There has been little building in the contemporary manner in the area of this study. Outside it, the Industrial Trust building (1928) by Walker and Gillette, was built according to modern skyscraper techniques. The Rhode Island School of Design dormitories designed in separate units, by Cull, Robinson, and Green between Angell and Waterman Streets are of red brick but they have avoided the use of colonial detail. A new Computing Laboratory at Brown is currently being designed by Philip Johnson. It will be the first Brown University building to reflect today's approach to architectural concepts.

Twentieth century Providence taste has been marked by its conservatism, and by a constant loyalty to eighteenth century traditions and more especially to its own nineteenth century past. The eclectic domestic architecture, however, has maintained on the whole a more effective sense for detail and scale than have the problematically large public buildings. Because of this conservatism, the building of the twentieth century in Providence is not representative of the general pattern of architectural development to be found elsewhere in America.



# II C-CRITERIA FOR JUDGING

In the course of the College Hill study, an attempt has been made to set up criteria for judging architectural and historic worth, both to be used as a guide for developing the local program for preservation of historic buildings and to serve in developing similar programs elsewhere. There is presented here a review of the criteria used by the National Trust for Historic Preservation; a discussion of the concepts developed in the current study; and a list of guides to help in making judgments of the architectural and historic merit of buildings and areas. The application of these guides in collecting, scoring, and mapping data on the buildings in the study area is taken up in a subsequent section.

## NATIONAL TRUST CRITERIA

Of primary importance is the "Criteria for Evaluating Historic Sites and Buildings" developed by the National Park Service, and adopted in general by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to serve as a guide for groups concerned with the "protection, restoration, maintenance and the interpretation of sites, buildings and objects significant in American history and culture." The most important concepts of the "Criteria" are summarized here:

### Historical and Cultural Significance:

- Broad historical values representing the "cultural, political, economic or social history of the nation, state or community..."
- Identification with historic personages.
- Identification with historic events.

■ Architectural or landscape values, emphasizing the value of "an architectural type-specimen, inherently valuable for a study of a period-style or method of construction; or a notable work of a master builder, designer, or architect whose individual genius influenced his age." Mere antiquity is not considered a sufficient reason for preservation except where other more significant examples have disappeared or when the structure forms a part of an especially characteristic section of a given community. Smaller structures, such as the first squared-log cabins or the sod houses

of the pioneers are recognized as having as much importance as the mansions of the past.

- Identification with aboriginal man.

### Suitability:

■ Extent of surviving original material. The "Criteria" suggests that structures or sites considered for preservation should have a preponderance of original material or other physical remains which have retained their integrity. Integrity is defined as a composite quality derived from original workmanship, original location and intangible elements of feeling and association. The report adds that "repair or restoration of original elements or reconstruction of a building long destroyed demands high professional standards of historical and scientific techniques" and states as a principle of procedure that "it is better to preserve than repair, . . . better to restore than reconstruct."

- Adequacy of property boundaries, accessibility and several other similarly practical concepts are also listed under this heading.

### Educational Values:

- Capacity for public use and enjoyment.
- Place in other preservation programs.
- Cooperation with other agencies.

### Other Factors:

Such matters as cost of restoration and of maintenance, as well as finding suitable sponsorship, are also listed by the National Trust for consideration.

## COLLEGE HILL STUDY CONCEPTS

It is recognized that the criteria set up by the National Park Service and the National Trust form a basic guide for the designation of buildings and sites which fall into a category of first importance nationally, covering those monuments which no matter where they are located, should receive a high priority rating and as much protection as possible.

An additional concept of this study has been based on the recognition that cities are the product of continuing development and that the resultant architectural evolution is important. An attempt has therefore been made to develop an approach to the evaluation of buildings which respects the integrity and the salient qualities of each architectural style, and to recommend a program which assures the perpetuation of important building of the various periods and encourages a visual integration of the past and the present.

A second concept has been developed which holds that, while museum buildings serve an important purpose and that isolated outstanding monuments should be preserved, groups of surviving related buildings in their original setting can explain the characteristics of other eras and can give an added cultural and historic dimension to the modern city in ways that single monuments cannot. A conscious effort, therefore, has been made to place emphasis on the early neighborhoods and to aim at retaining most of the early structures in such areas, keeping them in active use and paying attention to their original appearance and the elements of their setting such as yards, trees, shrubs, pavements, outbuildings, and their placement in relation to sidewalks and streets. In turn, neighborhoods have been considered from the point of view of their unified or consistent character.

In essence, while the framework of the study has been designed to make possible the evaluation of each building on its own merit, it has also been planned to evaluate each building as 1) an example of its architectural period, and 2) a part of its neighborhood.

WORKING GUIDES

Based on the thinking outlined above, which represents a combination of the concepts set forth in the National Trust Criteria and the concepts developed in the College Hill Study, the following guides have been used for evaluating the historic architecture of the College Hill area:

- Examples of styles and buildings by important master builders or architects, or of buildings which were deemed outstanding when they were constructed, have a special significance and should be marked for particular consideration.

- Continued loss of old buildings has given surviving structures added significance. Their preservation becomes important since they are tangible evidence in explanation of the past. Sole survivors of a style or era are of utmost importance in terms of architectural history and its reflection of the corresponding social and cultural history.

- A successive development of architectural styles is interesting, and the preservation of such developments is important in giving the time dimension to the total character of our old cities.

- Typical buildings are important. Where numbers of typical buildings of related periods have survived, consideration should be given to methods of preserving them which will explain their historic aspects in relation to their neighborhood setting.

- Buildings associated with historic events have both historic and academic importance.

ARCHITECTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

Additional factors need to be considered in making judgments of architectural worth. Some of these go well beyond the matters of historical association or mere age. A summary of the thinking developed during the field inspection of over 1,350 structures of varied architecture is presented here as essential background for a full understanding of the survey methods applied in College Hill.

Style

A building should be judged as much as possible in terms of the ideals and intent of its builder. This means that it is necessary to understand the aims as well as the characteristics of any one building period in order to judge the worth of its products.

This objective approach is sometimes difficult to achieve since it requires a knowledge of the styles of building and a recognition of good design and workmanship in terms of the style in question. In a previous section of this report, the development of Colonial and American architectural style as found in the College Hill area has been discussed in detail.



## Scale

Scale is an all-important consideration in any architectural evaluation, and must be kept in mind not only as a factor of each individual building, but for the relationships of one building to other buildings in a neighborhood.

In buildings of the same style span, unity has generally occurred automatically due to a common concept of building and a common understanding of scale. This was particularly true in American building of the Colonial and early post-Colonial periods, because all during this time carpenters and architects were building by a series of rule-of-thumb proportions drawn from English tradition, and later from English carpenter handbooks. The result was a kind of scale common to all building in this long era. It meant that relationships of building to building were apt to be satisfying since all buildings were part of the same tradition and of a commonly held, clear-cut understanding of design.

The same principles hold true for judging scale in building of the Greek revival period as for the Colonial. The ideals of proportion of this era were based on a return to classical Greek building with its sense for broad simple forms in which the adornment is an inseparable part of the building mass. They, therefore, deviate from the Colonial concepts, but since Colonial building stemmed from the classical tradition, enough of the same approach obtains so that Greek revival building merged satisfactorily with its predecessors. However, it is in this period that buildings are sometimes found that are too high and narrow for their neighbors. But such buildings are the exception, and the rows of houses with Greek detail keep a scale which is somewhat related to that of the building of the past, as well as satisfactory in its own right.

The first major break in scale and style occurred in the Victorian period when builders turned to a variety of sources for models in the search for the picturesque which characterized the latter half of the nineteenth century. The resultant successions of eclectic styles broke the old Colonial and post-Colonial sense for spatial relationships and scale. Gothic and Romanesque revival buildings emphasized jagged, asymmetrical vertical height. Italian villa inspired structures stemmed from classical tradition, but they were expanded and heightened and their detail was designed to be bolder, higher and more overhanging. The mansard-roofed buildings of the eighteen-sixties, to the eighties, gave a new plastic appearance to

the buildings. When taste turned toward Queen Anne and Georgian revivals, the scale of the new buildings was related to Victorian rather than to Colonial models.

When these radically different buildings were inserted into earlier neighborhoods, the relationships of scale were often disturbed. In cases where the neighborhood has had a long and continuing building history, the result can be confusing. But as has been shown in the discussion of Victorian styles, Victorian building has important architectural qualities and a concept of scale of its own.

It requires an understanding of what has happened in the past to judge contemporary building with perceptiveness. The eclectic approach to design inherited by the twentieth century resulted in a confusion of scale and spatial relationships. The *Beaux Arts* training in vogue at the end of the century also had its influence. More than ever before, buildings were conceived on the drawing board "in the Gothic style", "the Renaissance style" or "the Georgian style". In many instances the requirement of the project was for a building of huge size but since the designer was committed to a "style" he applied traditional ornament conceived originally for smaller buildings. The result has generally been meaningless, scaleless and dry, and twentieth century architects have tended to omit eclectic detail and to explore the possibilities inherent in new forms, methods, and materials. This experimental approach has resulted in many buildings of excellent scale and spatial relationships. It has also produced its crop of poor buildings. Moreover, modern utility buildings are often mass-produced and watered-down versions of earlier styles. The flat-topped, one-story rows of stores, or the three-decker tenements, are, in contrast to the common buildings of earlier periods, poor both in scale and in appearance.

The break of contemporary building with the past makes the problem of relationship to earlier architecture a delicate one. Sensitively felt relationships of scale can go far to set each building period off to best advantage. However, the responsibility for achieving this goal necessarily lies with the contemporary designer. He needs to conceive his new building in terms of relationships compatible with the surrounding structures from the first stages of design, and as an aid in accomplishing this, can find it useful to include scaled drawings of the adjacent buildings in all his design sketches as clues for height, bulk and placement of the new structure.

Workmanship and Materials

Modern practices of mass production and the use of new materials have altered basically the character of building construction, of finish and detail. Houses put up before 1840, and even as late as 1880 and 1890, were built by methods no longer feasible today. Therefore, the framed construction, the finish made with manual planes and tools, and the handmade nails and hardware, lend at least an academic importance even to Colonial barns and yard buildings. Structures employing such methods will not be built again. They were "meant to last", and their builders followed typical practices, and therefore, Colonial houses, or for that matter, most buildings put up before 1850, can be considered interesting structurally. Beyond the matter of solid construction, the importance of an early structure should be judged by the elaboration and execution of the exterior and interior finish and by such other factors as size, although even wealthy men built comparatively small houses in New England because of the severe winters and dependence on fireplaces for heat.

In Providence, workmanship rather than the building material used should serve as the criterion of quality in early building. Wood was the common building material throughout the Colonial period. The American carpenter's flexible use of wood is of great interest and Providence was no exception to this evidence of his skill. Brick houses were occasionally built in Providence after 1730. After the Revolution, this material was in constant use for public buildings and for some of the wealthy merchants' mansions which were built in numbers on the slope of the hill and on the Weybosset side. Nonetheless, wood continued to be used for houses of all degrees of importance.

Use of a solid framed construction, although lighter than that common in the Colonial period, continued throughout the Greek revival period. Divergences in importance and quality of the buildings became increasingly pronounced and it was during this period that a great number of type houses, similar and often identical to one another, were produced. Stucco and stone were considered important building materials, but here again, wood never went out of favor and some of the best houses of this period were of wood.

The same principles of construction continued to be applied to early Victorian buildings, but it was at this time that new methods

were introduced which changed the practices of building. In wood buildings, the balloon frame replaced the old framed and pegged construction. It suggested in this medium the skeleton construction which has been the basis of modern steel structure. Iron was also used, chiefly at first for facades of business buildings.

Wide differences in the quality of materials used and of workmanship first became evident in the Victorian period. Most of the small Victorian "cottages", Gothic revival houses, board and batten houses, and the one story box-like mansard-roofed houses, although unpretentious, were solidly built. Builders of the great houses of the Victorian period were lavish in the use of fine materials and expected outstanding workmanship as a matter of course.

However, at this time, large blocks of houses and some row houses appeared, which violated rules of space, scale and crowding. Just before 1900, the flimsy three-decker tenements which mar the appearance of Providence today began to go up in numbers.

In the twentieth century, the differences between the well-built and cheaply-built houses have become increasingly sharp. As a result, the quality of workmanship must be particularly considered in evaluating present day building. Modern builders have made use of a great variety of materials. The traditional materials of brick, stone, stucco and wood are used in conventional and unconventional ways. Added to these materials are steel for framework, concrete, and a variety of artificial and of new materials. The use of any of these materials must be evaluated in terms of the successful total result of the finished building, both of itself and in relation to its surroundings.

The success of a guide for the evaluation of historic and architectural merit will be shown by the help it can give planners and citizens to make wise decisions about the selection of monuments and areas which should be guaranteed care and protection. The following section describes how the broad considerations of 1) historic significance, 2) architectural quality, and 3) importance of various buildings to community and neighborhood discussed above have been used to form a yardstick reference and data sheet. It also explains how this data sheet has been used in the process of collecting, charting and scoring information about the buildings and neighborhoods in the study area.

HISTORIC BUILDING DATA SHEET		COLLEGE HILL STUDY PROVIDENCE CITY PLAN COMMISSION		
STREET AND NUMBER	PLAT	LOT	ZONE	
38 1/2 North Court Street	10	84	3	
PRESENT OWNER	ORIGINAL OWNER			
Francis Hornell (1954)	Benjamin Cushing Sr.			
ORIGINAL USE	ARCHITECT OR BUILDER			
Private Dwelling and Hatters Shop	Unknown, probably none			
PRESENT USE		EVALUATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> ONE FAMILY <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TWO FAMILY <input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC <input type="checkbox"/> SEMI PUBLIC <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS		HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE NATIONAL ..... STATE ..... COMMUNITY .....  ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE AS AN EXAMPLE OF ITS STYLE EXCEPTIONAL..... EXCELLENT..... GOOD..... FAIR..... POOR.....		
MATERIAL wood		IMPORTANCE TO NEIGHBORHOOD GREAT..... MODERATE..... MINOR.....  DESECRATION OF ORIGINAL DESIGN NON OR LITTLE..... MODERATE AMOUNT..... CONSIDERABLE.....		
YEAR BUILT 1737		15		
STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE COLONIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BEFORE 1775 ..... POST COLONIAL <input type="checkbox"/> 1775 - 1800 ..... FEDERAL <input type="checkbox"/> 1800 - 1830 ..... REVIVAL <input type="checkbox"/> 1825 - 1850 ..... VICTORIAN <input type="checkbox"/> 1835 - 1900 ..... TWENTIETH CENTURY <input type="checkbox"/>		PHYSICAL CONDITIONS  STRUCTURES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 GROUNDS <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 0 NEIGHBORHOOD <input type="checkbox"/> 8 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 0		
IS THIS BUILDING AN INTRUSION ON THE NEIGHBORHOOD?		TOTAL SCORE  81		
2 1/2 story 5 window front, gable, new 6 room plan, probably, 2 room plan originally, end overhang at gable, huge central chimney centered door, early type with left up back stand in freye. Pillasters set on large pedestals. Steel detail in first over pilasters. Good interior wood work. Shell and wood in color. John Perkins Brown restored house for family member in 1947. 1st floor beams in room at right. Opened up the large early kitchen. In place in this room and moved paneled section from this room to westward left front room. Very fine shell and wood finished in natural stained mark. House was moved to this side from North Main Street.				
DATE COMPLETED 11/7/73	BY N.D.	CHECKED BY	MAPPED AS TO STYLE 2	
		MAPPED AS TO SCORE 2		

II D-SCORING AND MAPPING

The first step in acquiring the information needed to designate and evaluate the architectural character of the structures in the College Hill area was to devise a system for collecting, recording, and charting information pertaining to the historic and architectural features of each structure. In addition, a method of scoring has been developed to give a comparative rating to each structure which could then be readily shown on a map.

DATA SHEET

After a review of many types of housing evaluation forms, a new data sheet was worked up and tested in the field. The form shown on this page is the result of many revisions based on house-to-house field work. It has been planned so as to record historic data, architectural data, and value of the building historically, architecturally, and as part of the neighborhood. An attempt was made to maintain an objective approach. Nevertheless, valuations of the sort called for must, to a certain extent, be subjective. This evaluation sheet is intended for use by someone relatively conversant with the development of American architectural style. Any group planning to make such an evaluation would do well to call in students of American architecture and local history to help set up the data sheets to fit local needs.

In the case of the College Hill Study, one person was made responsible for completing the forms for the entire area. This prolonged the data collecting period, but guaranteed that a consistent point of view for evaluations would be maintained.

It was found that the person charged with scoring buildings ought not work too long at one time or his judgments tended to become blurred; two hours at a stretch seemed to be a maximum. This much could be done daily and then the information could be checked and mapped on the same day in the office.

It was also found to be helpful to have another qualified person, particularly the planner charged with the designs for the area, go through the area too, in order to make his own evaluations and then to check the two sets of results against each other for analysis and correction. This double check has helped to crystallize standards and an understanding of local characteristics.

SCORING SYSTEM

A scoring system was devised and applied to each sheet in order to rate each building with a quantitative measure of its overall significance. Each building's score is the sum of separate judgments as to its historic value, architectural worth, importance to the neighborhood, and structural and neighborhood conditions. The weights for various factors are indicated on the data sheet shown here, although in actual practice they were not printed on the forms used in the field. In the interest of added objectivity, the scoring was done in the office using a perforated card placed over each form, with cut-out spaces for entering the scoring figures based on the location of field checkmarks made in the various boxes. Several systems of weighting were studied before evolving the final formula, which places about half of the total possible score in terms of architectural factors. Almost one-third of a perfect score is dependent on historic aspects, while less than one-quarter reflects physical conditions. This proportionate division of scores is of considerable importance in relation to the categorizing of scored buildings in a later step in the evaluation process.

Historical Significance

A maximum of 30 points was allowed for a nationally significant building, and no credit at all for a structure which had no notable relationship with a historic personage or event.

Architectural Significance

Three factors here were taken into account, with the greatest weight going to the exemplariness of architectural style. An outstanding specimen of a particular style could rate as much as 25 points. Next in rank is consideration of the building in relation to its environment; a house which greatly strengthens the design composition of its immediate neighborhood could rate up to 15 points. The third architectural factor is in a sense a negative one. It is the extent to which the original architectural concept has been modified with aesthetic harm, and assumes a worthwhile original design. No points were added where a poor original design had been allowed to remain poor.

Physical and Environmental Conditions

This section consists of three relatively simple field observations, each of which does not carry a great deal of weight, but which cumulatively represent an important and practical factor which needs to be taken into account.

CATEGORIZING OF SCORED BUILDINGS

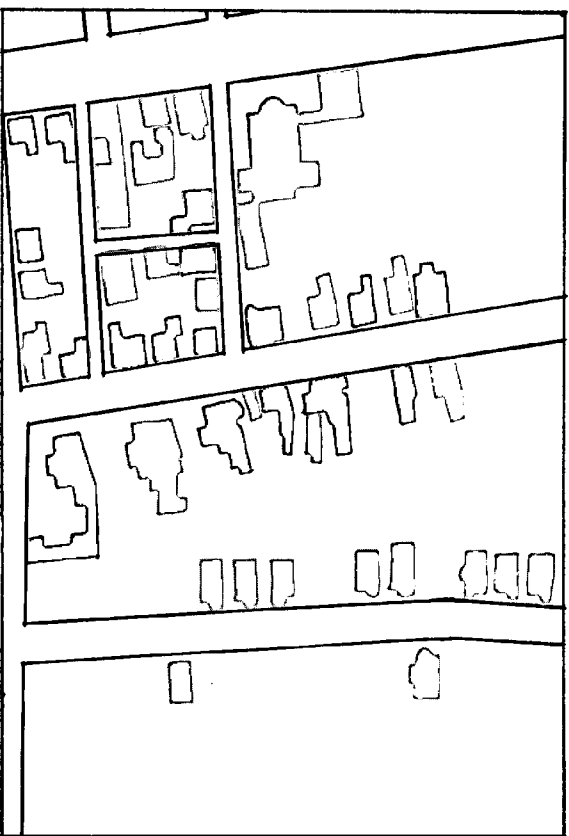
After the buildings were scored, they were grouped into several broad categories, reflecting their relative historic and architectural evaluation, as follows:

100-70 points	exceptional
69-60 points	excellent
59-40 points	good
39-20 points	fair
19- 0 points	poor

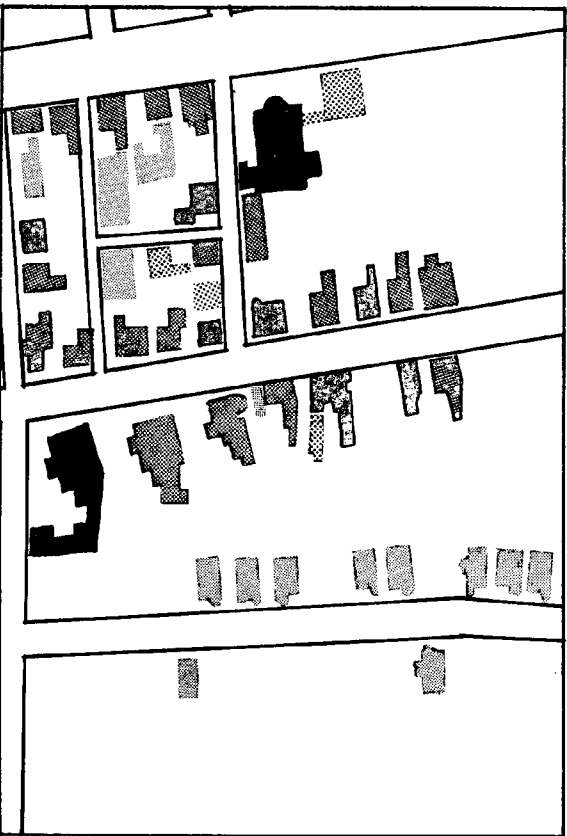
It is important to note that no structure which did not rate some score in regard to historic significance would fall in the "exceptional" category.

1,350 of the approximately 1,700 buildings in the College Hill area have been individually surveyed and scored. In the entire area 275 were built before 1830. Based on the above method of scoring, 29 of the pre-1830 buildings rank as exceptional architecturally and historically, 116 as excellent, 100 as good, 20 as fair, and 10 as poor. Seven post-1830 buildings score as exceptional, 52 as excellent, 230 as good, 400 as fair and 386 as poor.

Of the total 1,350 buildings scored, 36 rank as exceptional, 168 as excellent, 330 as good, 420 as fair and some 396 scored poor. The 350 remaining buildings not scored separately belong in a settled residential neighborhood built up almost entirely after 1875 and are shown on the map which dates the building in the area.



DATE OF BUILDING



ARCHITECTURAL MERIT

# MAPPING

The data collected during the structure-by-structure survey was transferred to a series of study maps which showed various factors about the area. One of the more revealing of these is the map showing the year in which each structure was built, a sample portion of which is shown on this page. The buildings are mapped by five major periods, thus:

- Colonial (before 1775) . . . . .
- Post-Colonial or Federal (1775-1830) . . . . .
- Greek Revival (1825-1850) . . . . .
- Victorian (1835-1900) . . . . .
- Modern (1900 to date) . . . . .

Such chronological mapping has given a clear picture of 1) the location of all the older structures in the area, 2) what neighborhoods have retained a unified building period, 3) where intrusive additions have been made, and 4) the pattern of growth for the area in point of view of time. All of these are important factors in the analysis of the area and determination of practical steps for action to protect concentrations of older building. This type of map, however, is limited in that it shows nothing in regard to the condition or the relative significance of various structures. For this reason, other study maps were prepared.

The simplest picture of historic and architectural worth is shown in the accompanying portion of a comprehensive map of College Hill, plotting individual buildings by their total score earned on the Historic Building Data Sheets. These are shown in color for the five categories, thus:

- exceptional . . . . .
- excellent . . . . .
- good . . . . .
- fair . . . . .
- poor . . . . .

Although this map gives a broad overall picture which was very useful in public presentation of the study findings, it was also found helpful for purposes of analysis to prepare two other types of maps which presented more detailed considerations, all drawn from the Data Sheets.

## Architectural Merit

This study map showed only the quality of architecture, with buildings rated in the five categories listed above. For it, the color system selected put all buildings in the categories of exceptional,

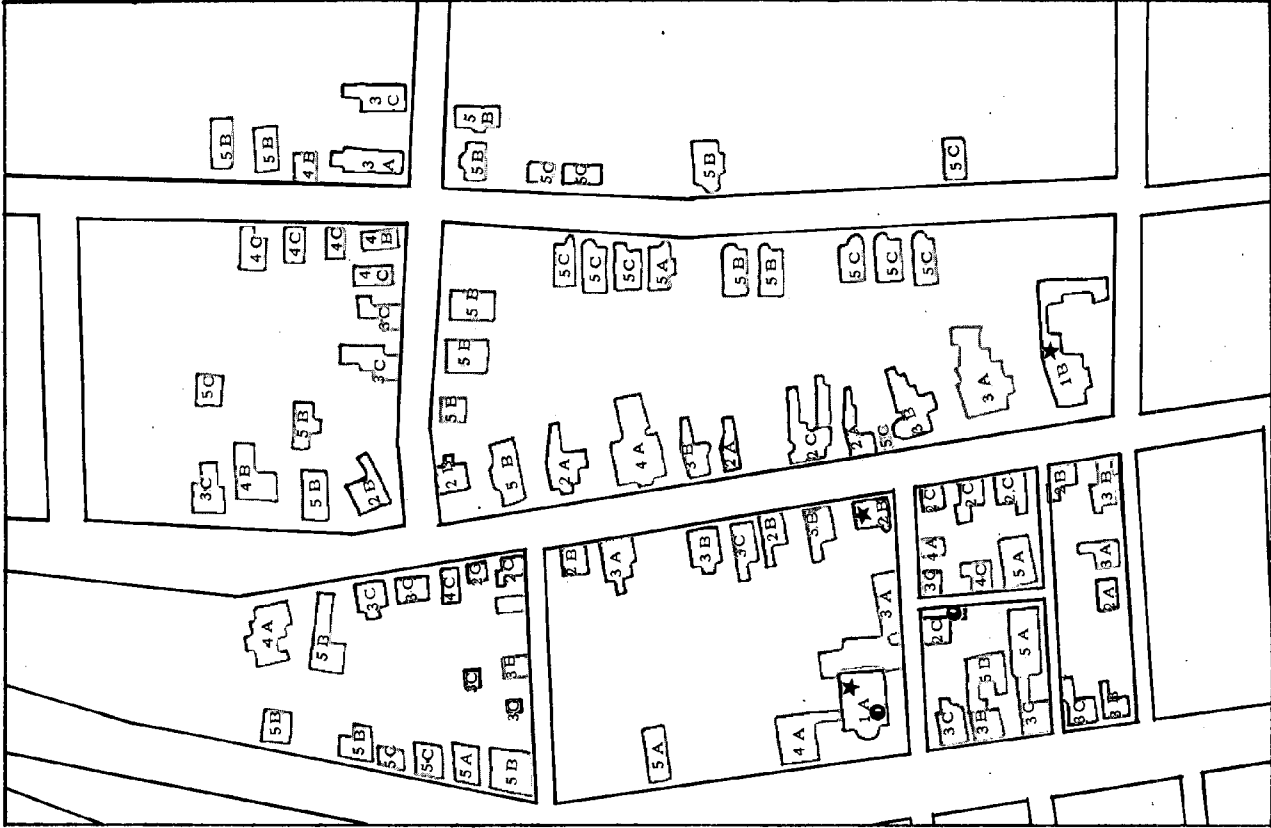
excellent, and good in one color group and the buildings in the fair and poor classifications in a different one. Because one intent of the mapping has been to indicate which buildings could be written off as expendable examples of architectural style, the group of buildings designated as fair has been studied particularly carefully. In some cases, buildings in this category add to the total picture of the neighborhood because they belong in date, or represent another aspect in the cross section of the neighborhood development. When this is true, their importance to the neighborhood has been the deciding factor and the score for architectural significance has been raised to good.

### Master Study Map

This map was developed from the basic date map, first described above, and showing in color the five major periods in which the buildings were built. To this map were added four other classes of data, using different sets of symbols as follows:

- ARCHITECTURAL MERIT represented by a number:
  1. exceptional
  2. excellent
  3. good
  4. fair
  5. poor
- PHYSICAL CONDITION represented by a letter:
  - A. good
  - B. fair
  - C. poor
- AMOUNT OF ALTERATION represented by a circle:
  - fully blacked in; considerable alteration
  - partially blacked in; a moderate amount of alteration
- HISTORIC IMPORTANCE represented by a star:
  - black, for national significance
  - red, for state-wide significance
  - blue, for community significance

A section from this map is shown on this page. This map containing, as it does, separated information, gives a clear picture of the location of buildings by date and the growth of the neighborhoods. At the same time, it gives complete information about the architectural worth of the building and its physical condition. This information together with the historic significance of the buildings gives a fully-detailed picture of the several factors that need to be considered jointly in any historic area survey, and which have been summarized in the map of scores described earlier.



MASTER MAP





**FOR PRIVATE INVESTMENT**

The study results will help point out where private capital and individuals interested in preservation can invest with a view toward protecting the historic architecture, improving the older neighborhoods, and capitalizing on structures of tourist interest. Substantial activity in this direction has already been started in College Hill as a result of interest generated by the demonstration grant study.

**FOR LEGAL PROTECTION OF HISTORIC AREAS**

The results of this study have been used to form the basis of a historic area zoning recommendation, since the mapping presents the definitive picture of the concentrations of historic and important building in the area. From this data lines can be drawn for a historic zone including structures deemed important enough to warrant some form of legal protection. The areas recommended for such protection can be made as restricted as possible and their selection can be based on the concentrations of buildings rated as exceptional, excellent, and in some instances good, as shown on the maps. The maps also pinpoint exceptional buildings which fall outside the areas of concentration of valuable structures but which should be recommended for special protection through means other than historic area zoning.

**FOR OTHER PURPOSES**

- As an aid in attracting visitors. Historic structures have a potential for development as tourist attractions. The study of maps of historic architecture has, in the case of Providence, highlighted the fact that a historic trail could be developed along Benefit Street and that such a trail could be made the major element in a program of great interest to tourists as well as to students of architecture and history.
- To guide institutional expansion. The data now available about the historic character of College Hill provides statistical evidence and makes it possible for the various major educational institutions in the area to take into account the location of historic structures as they develop plans for

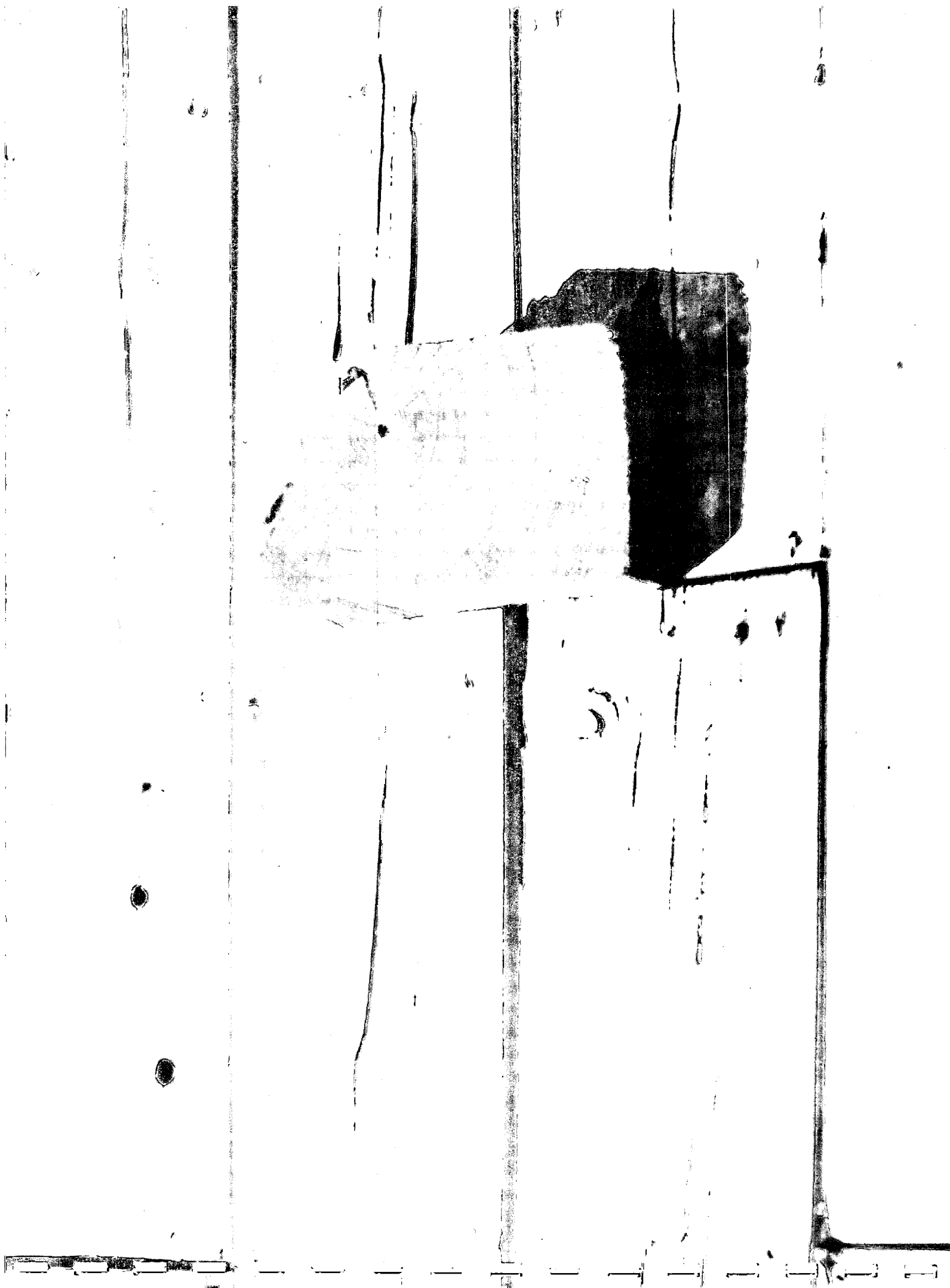
future expansion. It is anticipated that the institutions will use the material now available to them when any future plan for expansion is considered.

- For guiding public works projects. Again, the ready availability of information as to the location of important historic buildings and concentrations of buildings makes it possible for the Redevelopment Agency, the Plan Commission, the Public Works Department and other public agencies to avoid jeopardizing the historic buildings as they develop plans for parks, roads, public buildings, and other new public works.
- For developing the Master Plan. The city's master plan can be drawn for historic areas with greater recognition of individual valuable structures, which are too often ignored in the master planning process. As a legal document, the master plan can have far-reaching effect on the future of a historic area and the availability of the body of information gathered by this survey can provide greater validity to the master plan.
- For arousing general community interest.

The facts brought forth by the study in the form of usable information are already helping to change the climate of public opinion from one of indifference and apathy to one of active concern for the city's architectural heritage.

The fact that the study has been made, maps drawn and plans developed has given an impetus to individual efforts on College Hill; development of a comprehensive picture of the area has encouraged people to take part in the several programs active during the course of the demonstration grant study.

This report will be brought to the attention, not only of people interested in preservation, but of the real estate board, business associations, banks, insurance companies, churches, architects, and others, with the hope that each group can find ways to share in the rehabilitation and maintenance of historic building. As a result, any individual or group of individuals interested in the area can feel that, when he restores a building, helps with plans to establish a historic trail, or gives favorable mortgage terms, he is participating in a large program developed with the intent to improve the entire area as well as to preserve an important body of architecture which will give historic dimension to the entire city.



# PART III--RENEWAL OF COLLEGE HILL

## INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE

The College Hill Study, as an intensive city planning effort, considers the broad range of community problems which beset any old residential section of a city. In this part of the report, **Renewal of College Hill**, the lessons and techniques for historic analysis and preservation developed in the previous parts are incorporated into planning and urban renewal programs. Part Three is organized as follows:

**3-A. . . Description of College Hill**, which presents the physical, social and economic characteristics;

**3-B. . . General Plan**, which contains recommendations on overall matters such as zoning, land use, traffic, schools, and recreation;

**3-C. . . Detailed Proposals**, which present in detail the specific projects both in text and drawing form; and

**3-D. . . Recommended Program**, which contains a slate of actions linking the specific proposals to private and public groups and individuals. The principal recommendations proposed in this section are listed below:

- **An urban renewal project**, which will include much of the historic area and will combine three areas which were recommended for redevelopment study in 1951. The proposed project would employ three types of renewal action; clearance, rehabilitation (particularly of historic structures) and conservation.
- **The development of a historic trail** along Benefit Street, recommended to act as a stimulant to home owners to maintain their properties, as well as to provide a unique attraction for local residents and out of state visitors. In conjunction with the trail, it is

proposed that national historic park status be given to the Roger Williams' Spring site, accommodations for visitors be provided, and various museum type facilities be introduced.

- **A long-range plan** for the growth of major educational institutions in College Hill, which takes into consideration the needs of the institutions and the community. It recommends areas for expansion based on growth predictions and reserves space for certain land uses according to projected demands for space.

- **Recommendations for community facilities**, which include a 550 pupil elementary school to be located in the northern part of the area, 5 acres of park space, and 2.7 acres of play space.

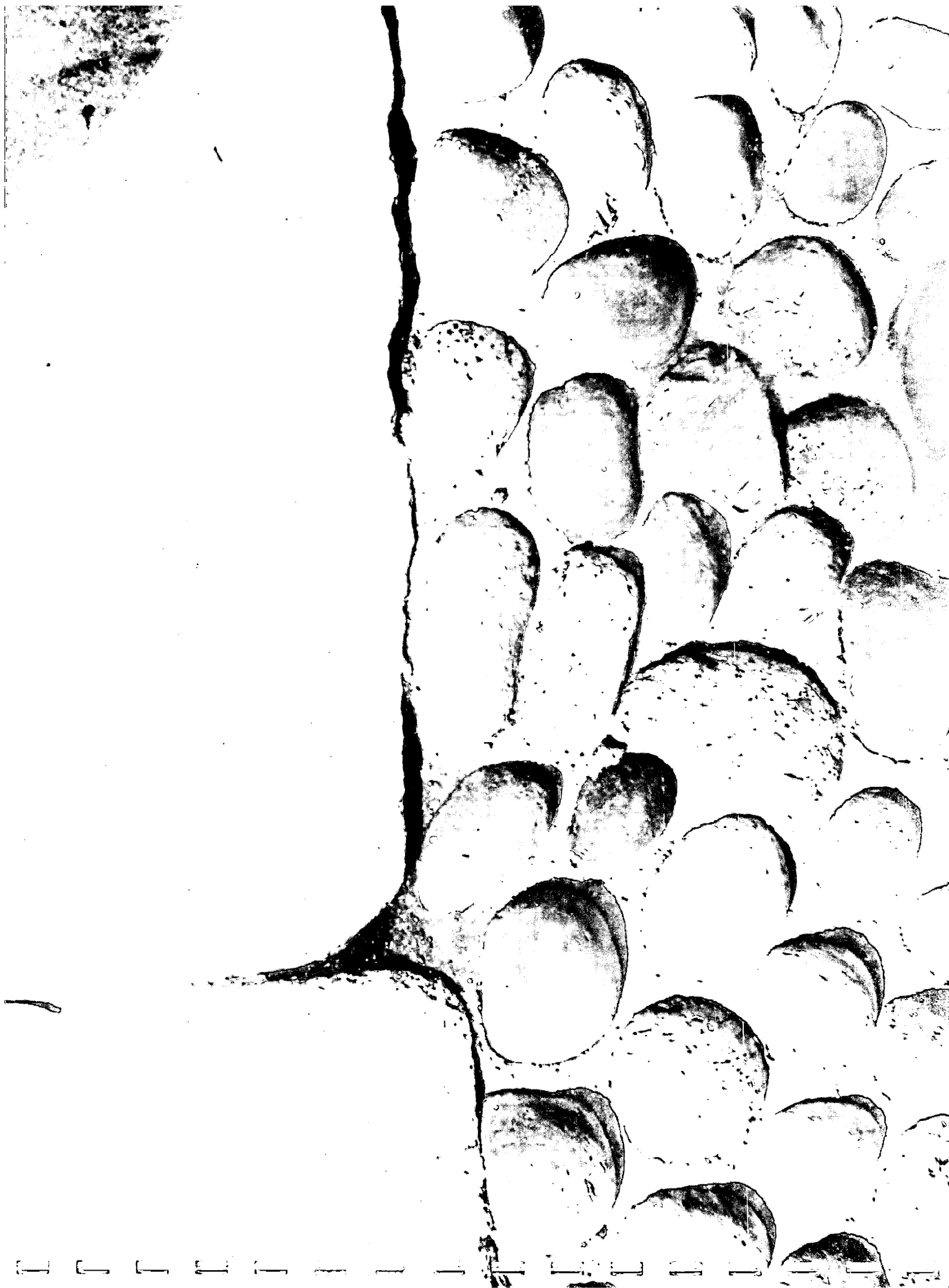
- **A special zoning ordinance** to protect the area of historic architecture.

- **Changes in the existing zoning ordinance** to be made both for the zoning map and for the zoning regulations.

- **Traffic proposals** intended to reduce traffic on Benefit Street, improve intersection conditions along George M. Cohan Boulevard, and at Smith Street. A program for increasing off-street parking to meet the present demand of 725 cars which will grow to 1,155 by 1968 and 1,825 by 1983.

- **Plans for two major sections of the study area** are suggested. The study area naturally divides into a section lending itself to the urban renewal program and an institutional section. Separate plans are set forth for each.

- **Detailed proposals** for private projects made as part of an urban renewal program, including new single family and multi-family housing, new commercial buildings, an inn and motel, and various other developments.





### III A.-DESCRIPTION OF COLLEGE HILL


#### SUMMARY

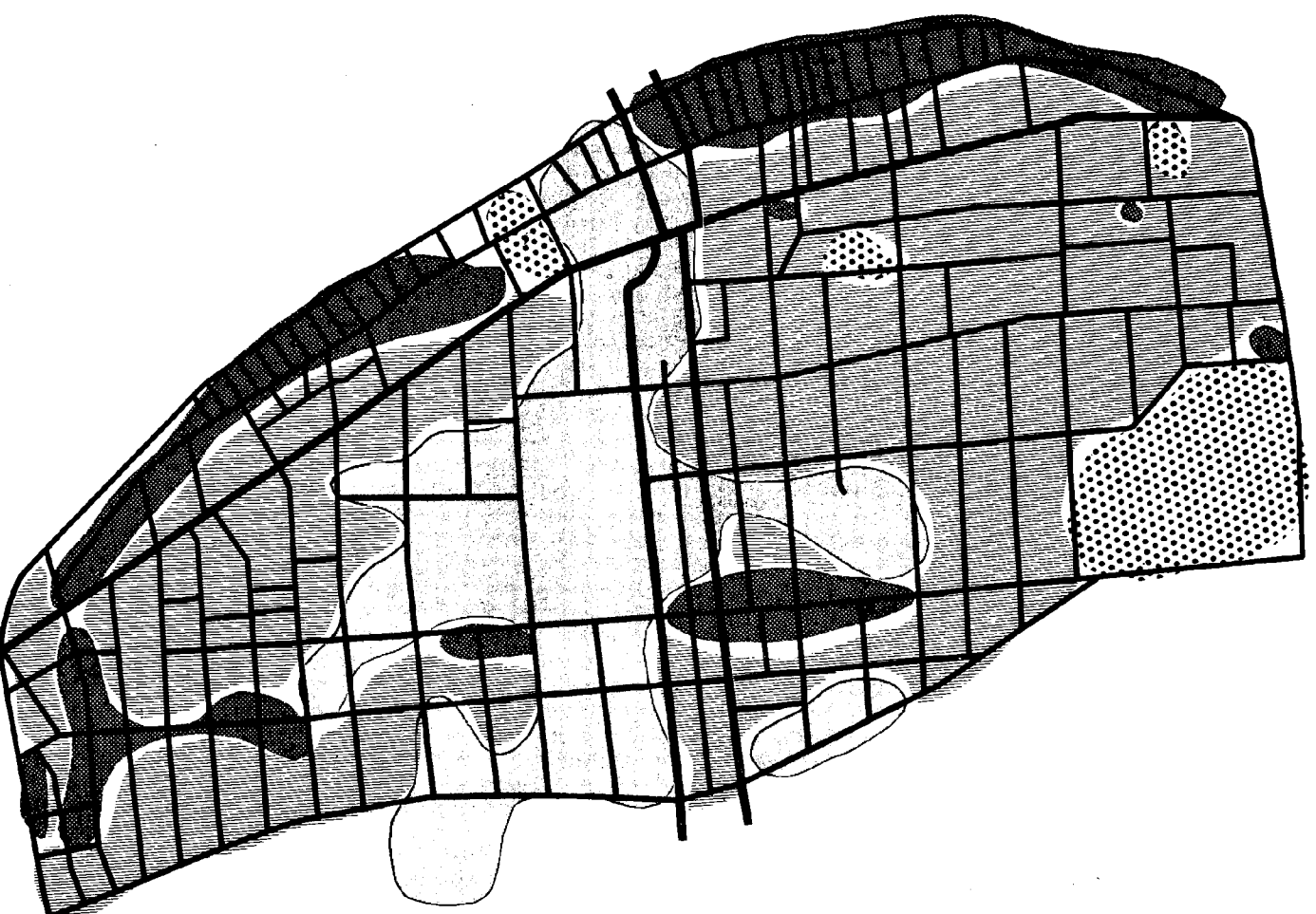
The 381 acres included in the College Hill study area comprise most of the original seventeenth century settlement. The area is located on the east side of the city of Providence; it is surrounded by traffic arteries and is bounded on the east and north by residential sections, on the south by a small industrial area, and across an open expanse on the west, by the central business district. It is situated on a steep hillside which rises abruptly from a flat strip of land skirting rivers leading into the head waters of Narragansett Bay. This steep hill has helped the area to retain some of its early character.

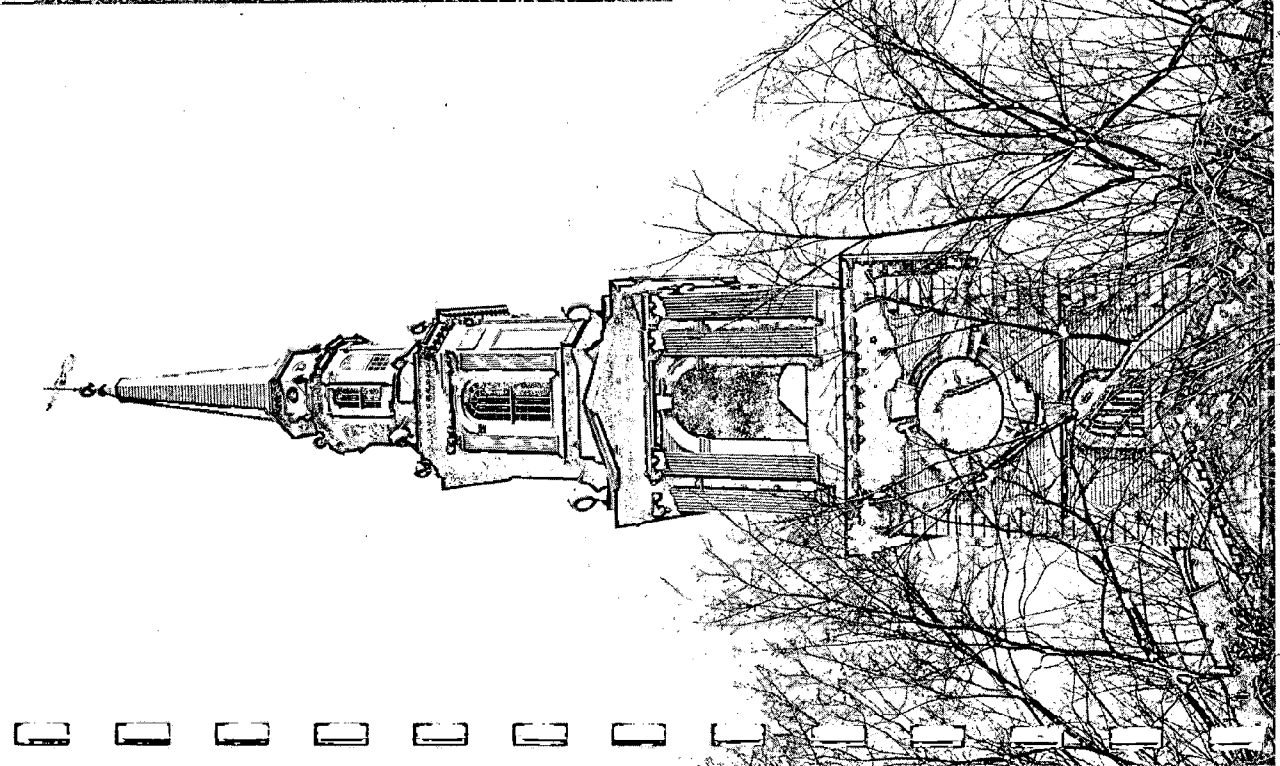
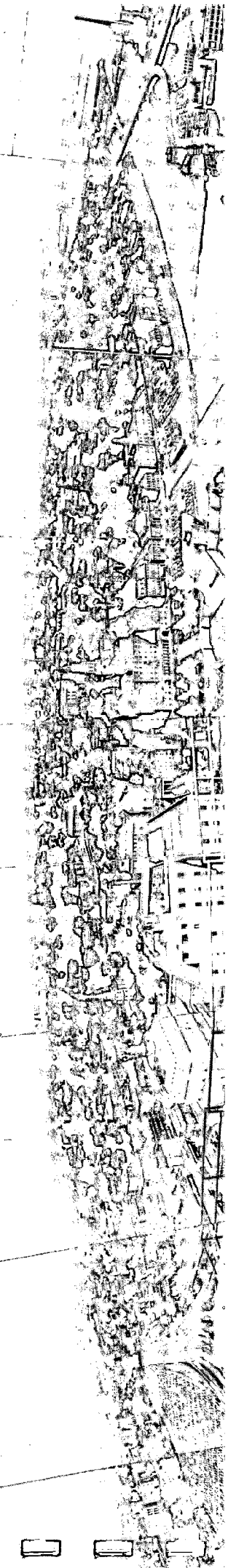
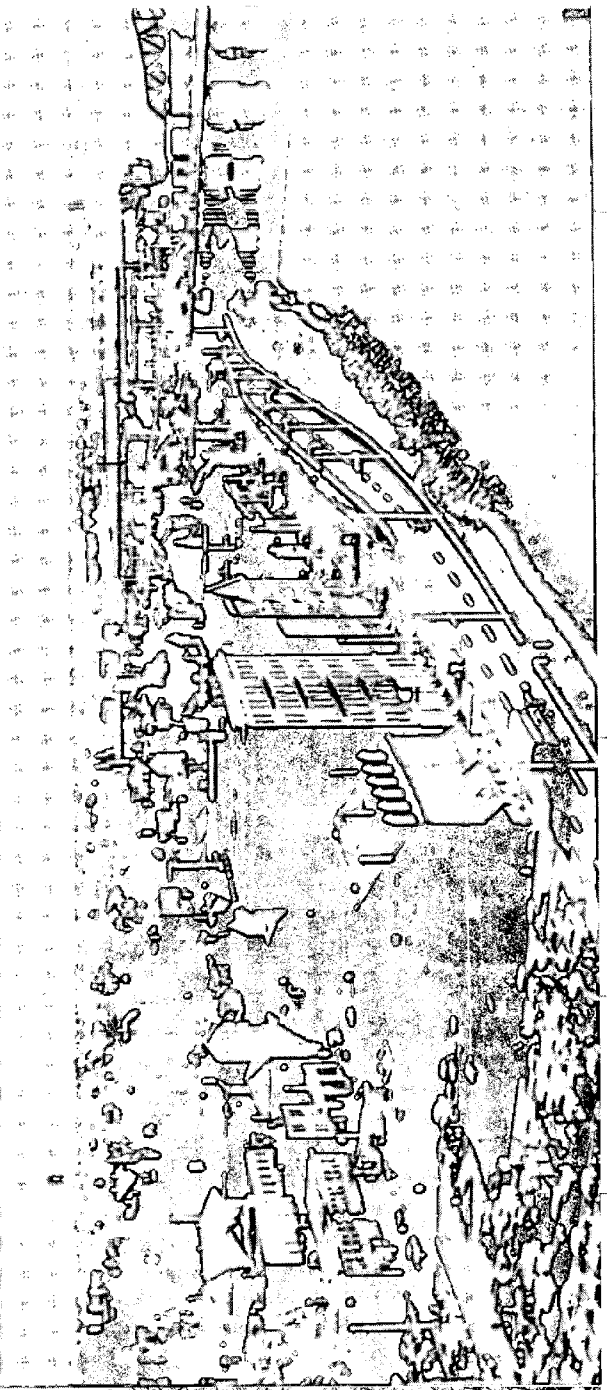
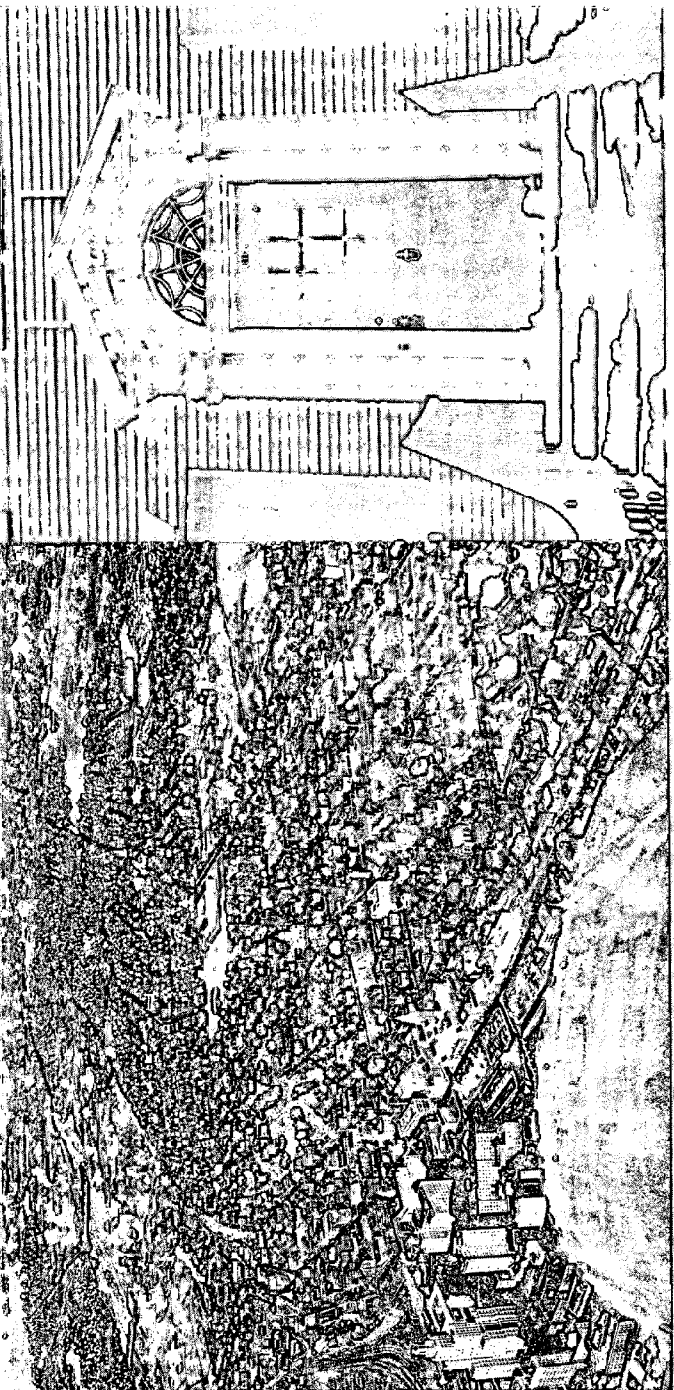
Population studies show that 13,000 people live in College Hill, of whom over 3,000 are students and about 2,000 are non-white. The studies also show that, while population is decreasing in other parts of the city, the College Hill population is increasing.

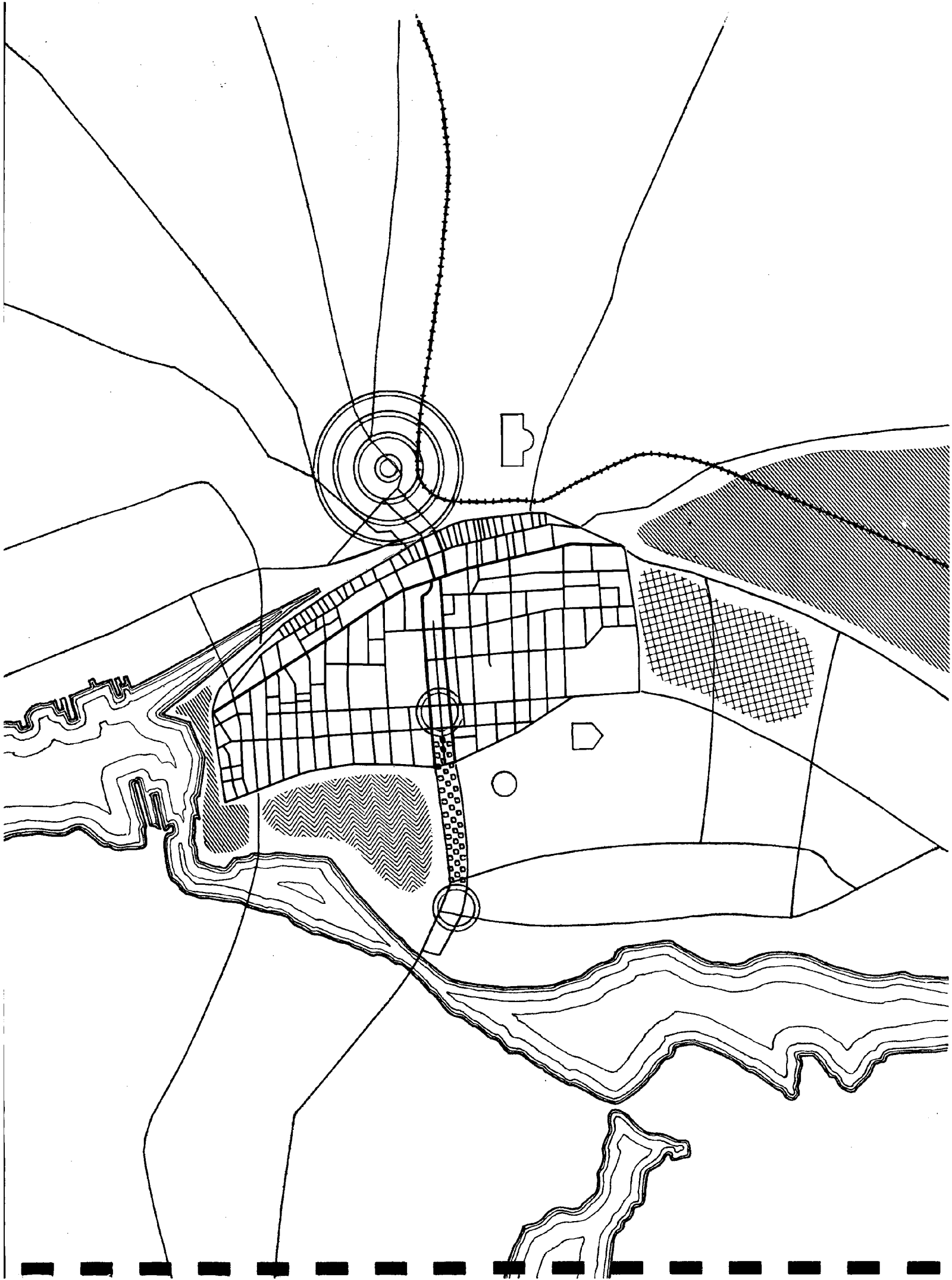
There are approximately 1,700 structures in the area, 300 of which are eighteenth or early nineteenth century buildings. Housing conditions in the residential area vary greatly, ranging from slum to mansion. Concentrations of low rent, tenant-occupied houses are located in the northern and southwestern parts of the area, where conditions of overcrowding and building deterioration are also prevalent.

Public  and institutional uses  account for one-quarter of the land in the area. Major educational institutions, including Brown University, Pembroke College, and the Rhode Island School of Design, are situated in the middle of the area and tend to split the residential sections into northern and southern parts. Hope High School, occupying the largest parcel of public land, is located in the northeast corner of the area. Assessment data indicate an abnormally high amount of tax exempt property in the area.

Commercial uses  are limited, and are primarily related to the neighborhood except for a strip of warehouses, wholesale outlets and parking lots adjacent to the central business district. A shopping center north of Waterman Street serves the colleges and the residents of College Hill. A smaller shopping district has developed along Wickenden Street for the Fox Point neighborhood.









PERIPHERAL AREAS

College Hill is primarily an institutional and residential area situated within walking distance of the Providence central business district which lies just to the west. It is bounded on the north by Olney Street, on the east by Hope Street, on the south by George M. Cohan Boulevard, and on the west by the Providence and Mo-shassuck Rivers.

North of Olney Street lies a blighted residential section known as Lippitt Hill. Under the city's urban renewal program, final planning is nearing completion for the renewal of this area. Northwest of College Hill is one of the city's three major industrial areas, part of which, West River, has recently been cleared for another urban renewal project. It is separated from the study area by the railroad and U. S. Route 1, the city's principal links to points north. On the northeast, extending from Hope Street to the Seekonk River, lies a good residential section.

The area east of Hope Street is divided into a northern and southern part by a strip of doctors' offices and apartment buildings two blocks wide which terminates in local shopping centers at either end. On the north side of the strip, and just to the east of the College Hill area, lie two large institutional tracts: one, the grounds of Moses Brown School, a private school for boys; and the other, the former Dexter Asylum grounds recently purchased by Brown University to be developed for athletic facilities, parking, and other institutional uses. South of this strip extends a good residential area which shows signs of blight at its southern extremity.

George M. Cohan Boulevard, which skirts the southern edge of College Hill is the main route into the city from southeastern Massa-

chusetts. Beyond the barrier of the heavily-traveled boulevard lies a narrow strip of land containing a few isolated houses, vacant land, a variety of industrial buildings, a scrap iron depot, and a railroad spur. It is here, from Fox Point, that boats depart on trips to Newport and Block Island. Occasional inundation, when hurricanes come up Narragansett Bay, has been a detriment to a more substantial kind of development in this area.

Downtown Providence lies immediately to the west of College Hill. Part of the financial district is on the edge of the downtown area and overlaps the western part of the study area for a few blocks. The area known as Market Square bridges the Providence River and provides the principal link between College Hill and downtown for motorists and the many pedestrians who walk to work or shopping from their homes on College Hill. North of Market Square, the main line of the New Haven Railroad separates College Hill from the State House grounds and a vast parking lot serving downtown Providence. South of Market Square, the Providence River cuts off College Hill from the city except for two bridges; the old Point Street Bridge which handles traffic coming from south of the city, and the new Providence River Bridge, a part of the freeway system which will eventually form a traffic loop around the central business district.

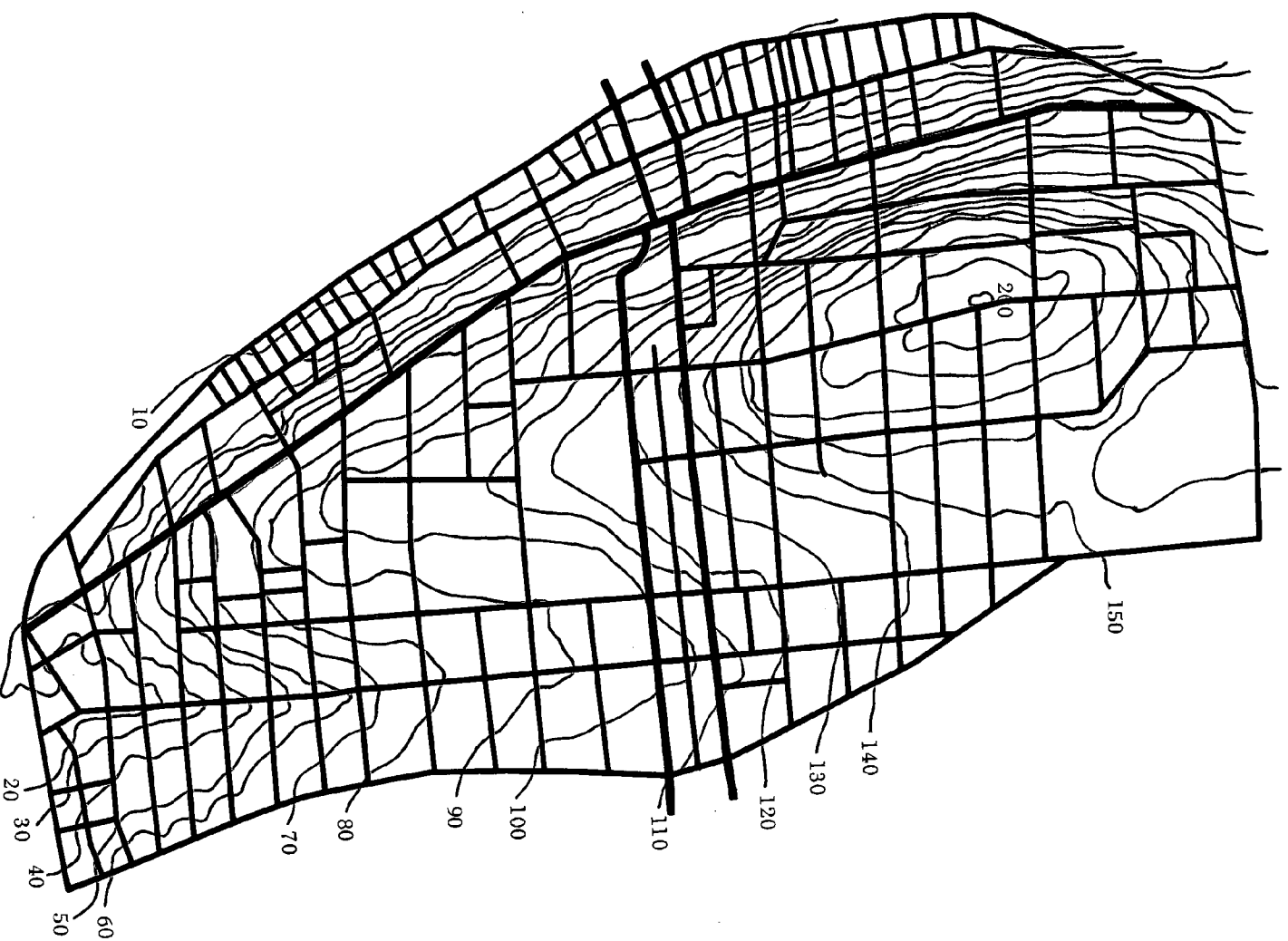
It can be seen, then, that College Hill is strongly related to its peripheral areas and any planning proposals must take this relationship into account. To the north and east, the neighborhoods are residential in character. They are contiguous with those in College Hill and will influence decisions concerning recreation, schools, and shopping facilities. To the west and south, definite physical boundaries exist, and planning relationships with adjoining areas will be concerned primarily with traffic problems.

## TOPOGRAPHY






From the time of the first settlement, the steep topography of College Hill has influenced its architectural growth and street layout. Skirting the western boundary between the rivers and North and South Main Streets is a strip of flat land one-block wide on which most of the commercial uses are found. The hill rises abruptly to the east of this strip and reaches an elevation of 200 feet in just three blocks. This uniformly steep grade exists along the entire west side of College Hill and has discouraged the expansion of the commercial area. Consequently, a large collection of old residential building has remained relatively untouched. The steep grade has made east-west circulation difficult and there are only two through streets in this direction: Angell and Waterman Streets carry the bulk of the traffic through the center of College Hill.

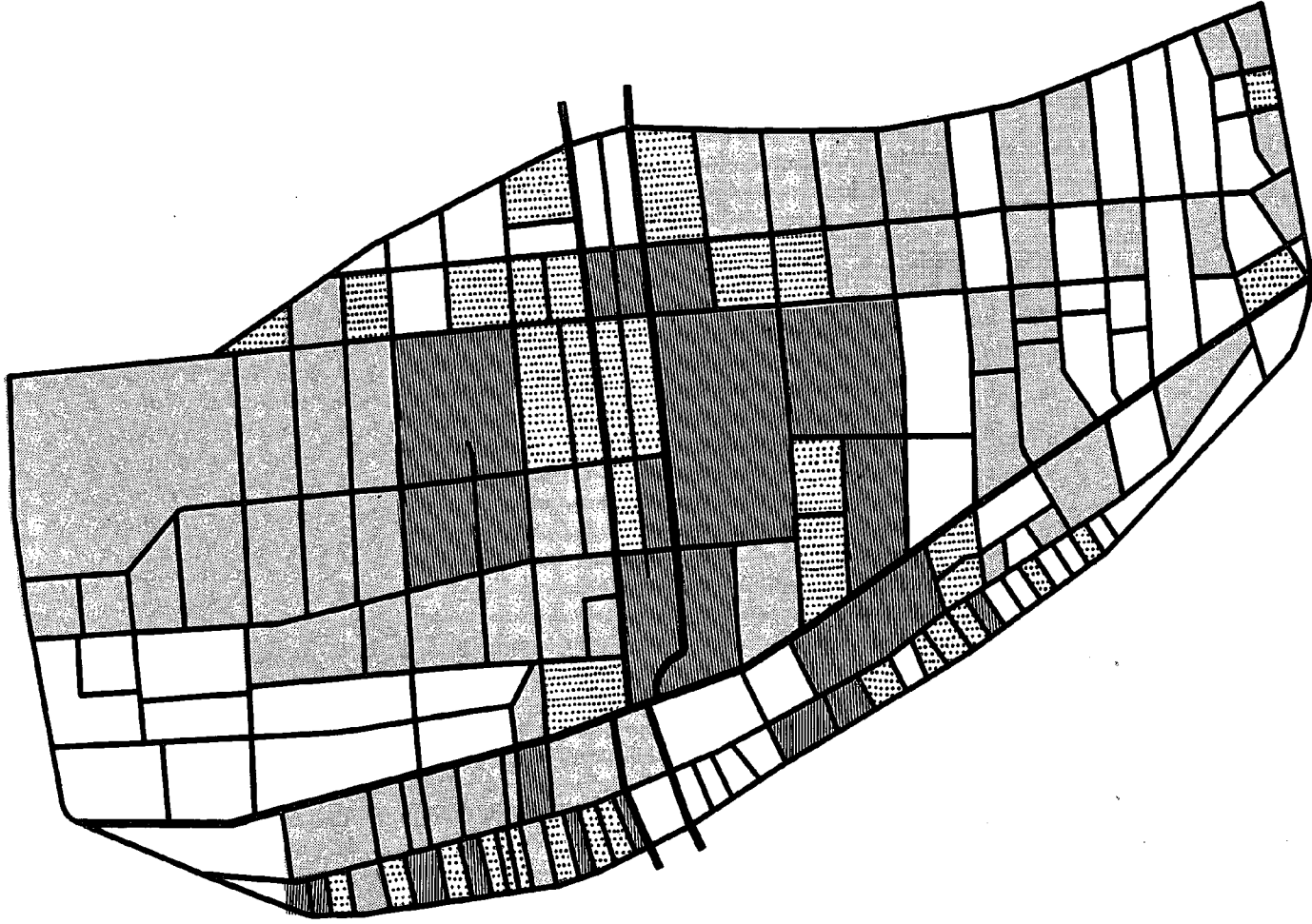
Although the steep slope presents difficulties in building construction, it affords some excellent sites with a view of the entire city for residential development. Some of the low land along the Providence River and at the head of the bay has not been completely suitable for development because of periodic inundation from hurricane waters, a situation which will, however, be corrected within a few years with construction of a barrier dam at Fox Point, now being designed by the army engineers.

The topological map shows contours at intervals of 10 feet starting at elevation 10 feet along Canal and South Water Streets which run parallel to the Moshassuck and Providence Rivers lying just to the west.



## ASSESSED VALUATION

The accompanying map shows the total assessed valuation, including land and buildings, in College Hill. The areas of low valuation,  under \$1.50 per square foot, coincide, in general, with blighted residential districts, although a small group of merchant mansions with large grounds also falls within this category. A similarly low level of assessment occurs in the shopping district on Wickenden Street, an indication that it is not a prime commercial area. Areas assessed at \$1.50 to \$3.00  include most of the low density residential neighborhoods and a large part of the commercial strip along North and South Main Streets. This comparatively low level of valuation for the commercial areas underlines the fact that they are at present marginal in nature. The areas assessed at \$3.00 to \$5.00 per square foot  are located along the fringes of the institutional areas, in the shopping and professional center along Thayer and Waterman Streets, and in the commercial district along North and South Main Streets. Properties assessed at from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per square foot  are contained largely in the tax exempt institutional area. Assessments of over \$10.00  and in some cases over \$70.00 per square foot exist in the Market Square area where some high value commercial uses associated with the financial district located just across the square are found. Since 24 per cent of the land in College Hill is given over to tax exempt uses as compared with 18 per cent for the rest of the city, it would be advisable to consider increasing the tax base in the redevelopment areas where possible, and to attempt to limit further conversions of taxpaying properties into tax-exempt properties.



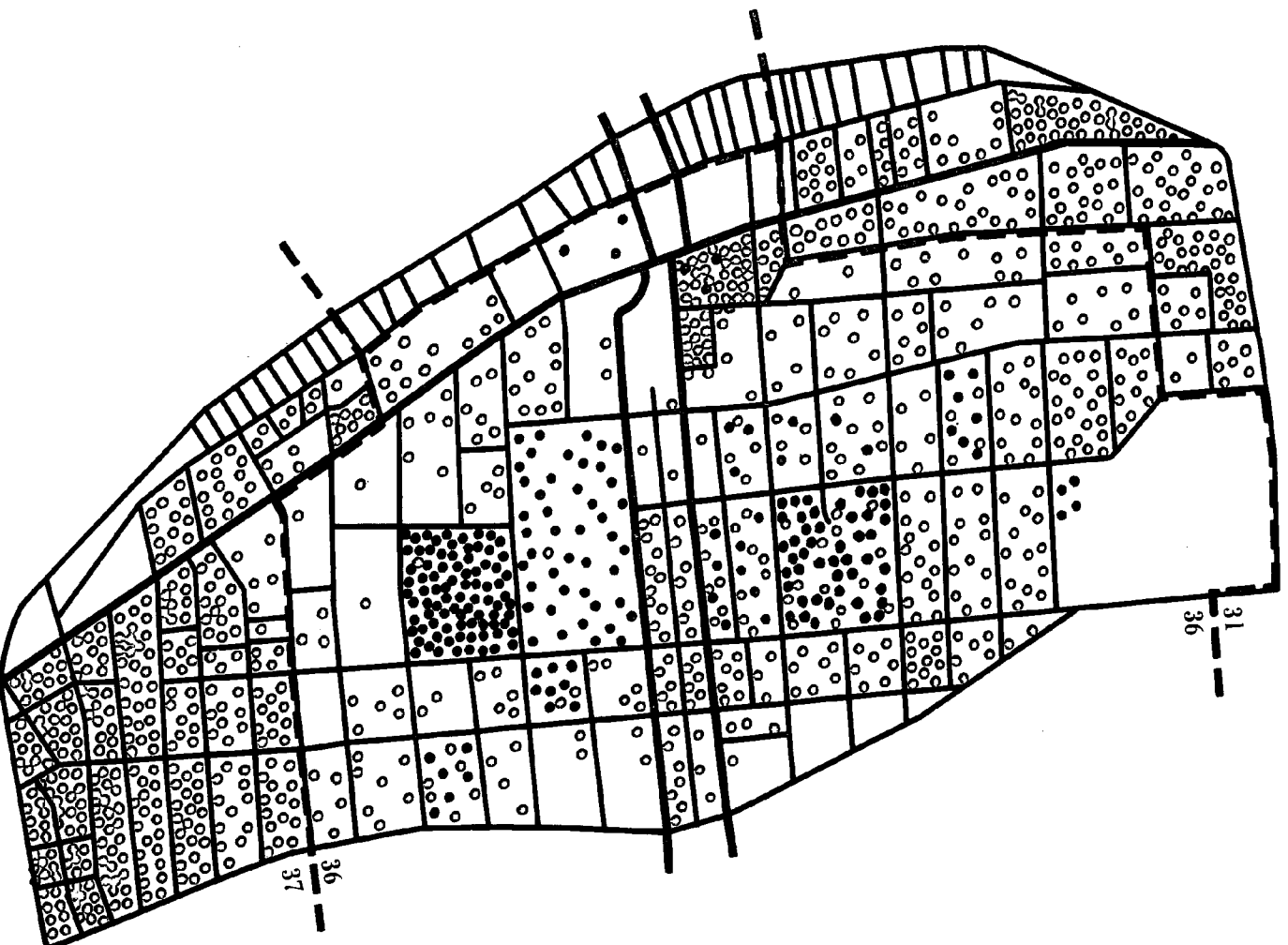
## POPULATION

A knowledge of the number and characteristics of the people in the study area is basic for the preparation of plans and for the development of action programs for improvement of College Hill. Population totals are given below for the years 1950, 1958, and projected for 1975. They are based on the United States Census of 1950 which contains the most recent accurate figures for the area. Following is a summary of the more significant findings of a detailed population report previously made for the study:

The 1950 population of College Hill was 11,950, approximately 2,000 of whom were students living on campus. These students, plus a significant number of others living in the area but not on campus, constitute an important planning factor because they are for the most part not year-round residents.

The 1958 population of College Hill is estimated at approximately 13,000, of whom about 3,000 are students living on campus. This increase in resident student population is due to construction by Brown University of dormitory facilities for more than 1,000 students. An estimated increase of 200 other persons is accounted for by the fact that many large single-family houses have been converted to multiple dwelling structures. While the total population of Providence has decreased over the past eight years, that of College Hill has increased by about ten per cent. This growth will probably continue as the colleges expand and as both older people and young married couples find the area well situated for their needs and attractive because of the cultural resources of the colleges. The map shows the distribution of the estimated population in 1958. Each ● represents 10 college students while each ○ represents 10 non-collegiate residents.

It is estimated that the 1975 population of College Hill will be 15,000, of whom over 4,000 will be resident students. This population increase will be caused by three factors: growing student enrollments, residential construction in the urban renewal areas by private and public action at higher population densities, and continued structural conversions and new construction activity to



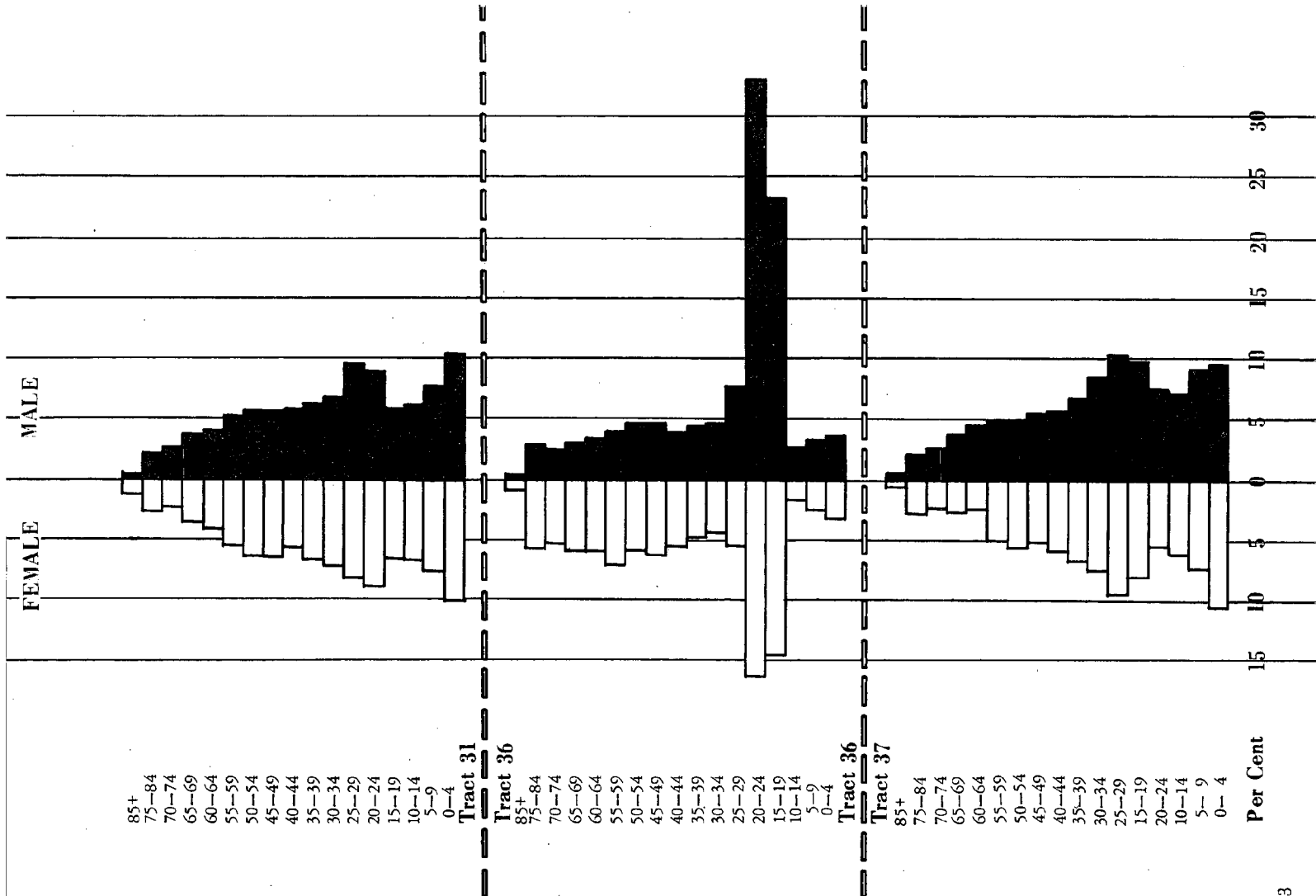
meet the rising demand for apartments near the central area of the city.

The student enrollment in four institutions of higher learning, (Brown University, Pembroke College, Rhode Island School of Design and Bryant College) is currently around 5,800. In addition to 3,000 living on campuses situated in the study area, 600 more students live in the area but not on campus. It is difficult to predict enrollment growth for the colleges in the face of pressure on the colleges to increase the number of students. However, Brown University has stated recently that it hopes to limit its student increase to 10% per decade. In making estimates for this report, that rate has been applied to the other institutions as well.

One of the larger communities of nonwhites in Providence is located in College Hill. In general, there are two localized groupings of nonwhites in the area: one in the northwest corner numbering about 700 and one in the southern part numbering about 1,000. The group in the north is composed chiefly of American Negroes and is part of a larger nonwhite community in Lippitt Hill located to the north of the project area. The group in the south is part of the Fox Point neighborhood is made up predominantly of Portuguese Bravas (the generic term applied to Cape Verde islanders who came to America as seamen in the late 18th and early 19th centuries) intermingled with some American Negroes.

Three Providence census tracts, numbers 31, 36 and 37, have importance for the College Hill area. The distribution of age groups in census tract 31 at the northern end of College Hill and in census tract 37 at the southern end is very similar to the pattern for the entire city; but that in tract 36, the central part of the area, is unusual in several respects. Within it the census figures show that there is little need for playspace but the needs of an increasing elderly population should be met. In the northern and southern areas the number of children is expected to remain at such a level as to warrant consideration for more playspace and better school facilities.

There are other differences between tracts 31 and 37 and tract 36. Characteristics of the central tract indicate a considerably higher rate of income, less mobility, and a higher level of education.



## INSTITUTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

College Hill is a major center in the city for civic organizations partly because it is the oldest residential section in the city and partly because three of the city's institutions of higher learning are established here. They make an incalculable contribution to the intellectual, cultural, economic and social character of College Hill as well as to the city and state. Most of the organizations are located along or within a few blocks of Benefit Street.

### BROWN UNIVERSITY

Brown University is an institution primarily devoted to the teaching of liberal arts and is composed of three principal units: The College, for men; Pembroke College, for women; and the Graduate School. The university, founded in 1764, is the third oldest in New England. Originally located in Warren as Rhode Island College, it was moved to Providence in 1770 and became known as Brown University in 1804. Pembroke College was organized as The Women's College in Brown University in 1891. Its campus is located north of the University Campus proper. The two colleges offer programs leading to the same University degrees, and make joint use of library and laboratory facilities.

The physical plant of Brown University has been expanded rapidly during the last five years to meet the needs of a growing enrollment. Recently dormitory facilities for 1,300 students have been constructed in the heart of College Hill; and forty acres of land to the east have been acquired for future expansion. The enrollment for 1957-1958 was 3,742, made up of 2,425 students in The College, 902 in Pembroke College, and 415 in the Graduate School.

### BRYANT COLLEGE

Bryant College of Business Administration, founded in 1863, is located just to the east of the study area. The college has three major divisions: the School of Business Administration, the School of Secretarial Science, and the School of Business Teacher-Education. Through an accelerated academic program this business college enables students to earn certain bachelor's degrees in as little as two years. Facilities for the 1,200 students are located in twenty-two buildings in the East Side with some dormitories within the College Hill study area boundaries. In recent years, Bryant has converted many former private residences into dormitories for the use of its 320 students.

### SCHOOL OF DESIGN

The Rhode Island School of Design, founded in 1877, is a coeducational institution granting degrees in Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Fine Arts in thirteen fields of study. The five major divisions of instruction include architecture, fine arts, industrial production, textiles, and teacher education. Annual enrollment is about 800 students, and an evening adult education program with slightly higher enrollment is offered each session. In addition, Junior School classes provide training for some 400 young people between the ages of six and eighteen.

### CHURCHES

Many of the churches located in College Hill, although serving a larger area, are also engaged in activities concerning the community around them. To mention a few, the Cathedral of St. John is the mother church of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island and works both on the local and state levels. The Diocese is currently considering expanding its program for housing the elderly. The Roman Catholic Holy Rosary Church serves the Portuguese-American community in Fox Point. It also conducts recreational and social events in a building on Wickenden Street. The First Baptist Church, the oldest in America, is considering sponsoring a neighborhood nursery school.

### COMMUNITY SERVICE GROUPS

Several welfare organizations are quartered in an office building at 100 North Main Street. Among these is the United Fund, Inc., which raises and distributes funds to other voluntary groups throughout much of Rhode Island. Another important organization is the Fox Point branch of the Providence Boys' Club, on South Main Street, which is a center for recreation, training, crafts and guidance for young boys in the area.

### OTHERS

Of the organizations oriented toward community betterment, one of the more active is the Providence Preservation Society formed in 1956. Together with the City of Providence and the federal government it has sponsored the College Hill Demonstration Study.

Noteworthy in the cultural field is the Museum of Fine Arts of the Rhode Island School of Design, which houses the city's largest collection of art, stages temporary exhibitions and sponsors series of programs of lectures and of music. The Barker Players, an amateur theatrical group, presents five plays each season. The Providence Art Club holds lectures and exhibits.

## CHURCHES

- 1 Church of God in Christ
- 2 Mt. Carmel Righteous Church of God
- 3 Cathedral of St. John
- 4 First Baptist Church of Providence
- 5 Congdon Street Baptist Church
- 6 First Church of Christ, Scientist
- 7 Bethel A. M. E. Church
- 8 Hillel Foundation
- 9 First Unitarian Church
- 10 St. Stephen's Church
- 11 Holy Rosary Church
- 12 Sheldon Street Congregational Church
- 13 United Church of the First Born
- 14 St. Joseph's Church

## EDUCATIONAL

- 15 Angell League (gallery and studios)
- 16 Rhode Island School of Design Museum of Art
- 17 Providence Athenaeum

## SERVICE

- 18 American Association of University Women
- 19 Benefit Street Recreation Center
- 20 Providence Tuberculosis League
- Jewish Family and Children's Service, Inc.
- Legal Aid Society of Rhode Island
- Family Service, Inc.
- United Fund, Inc.
- Campfire Girls

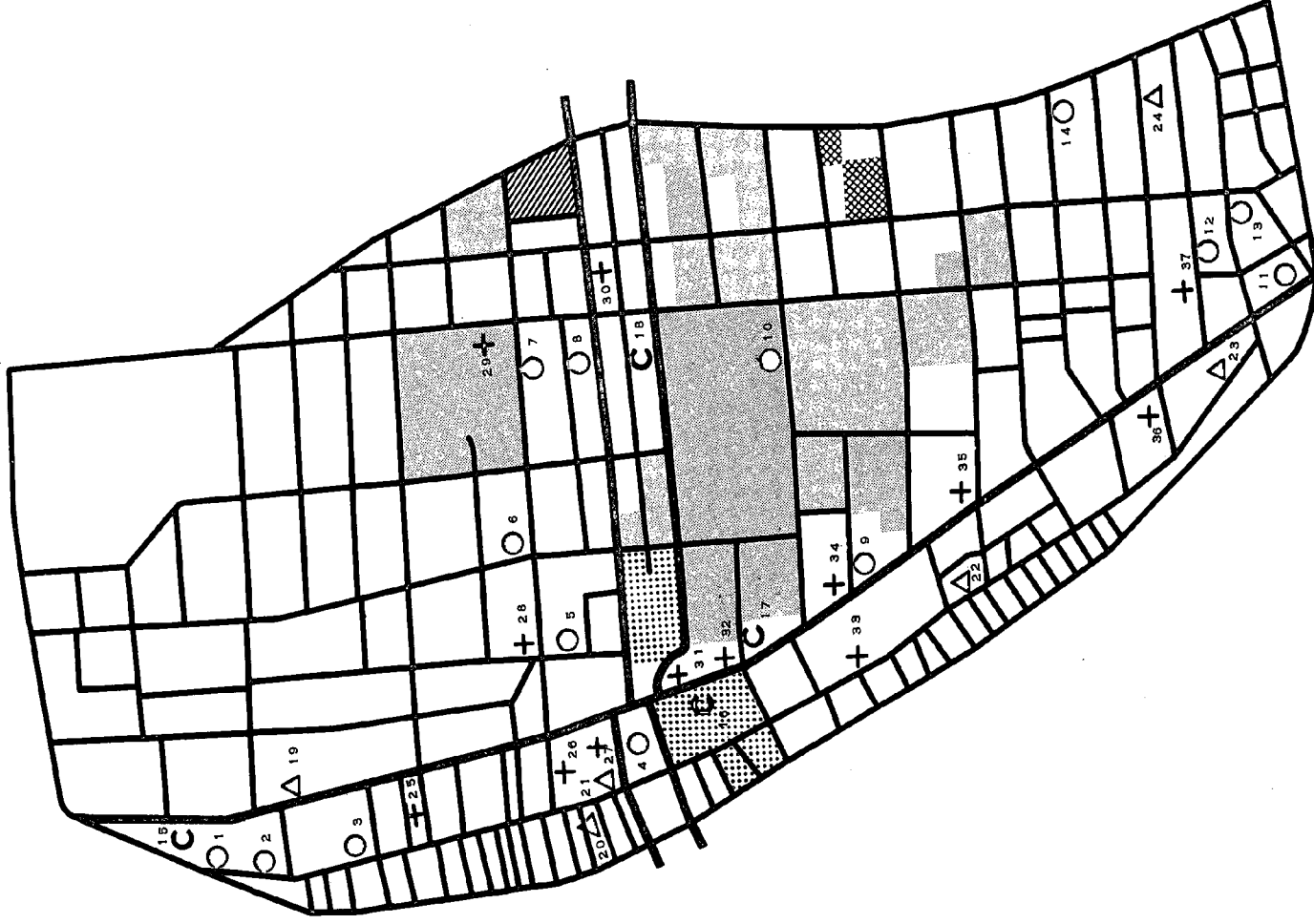
## ORGANIZATIONS

- 21 Community Workshops of Rhode Island, Inc.
- 22 Providence Boys' Club
- 23 Volunteers of America
- 24 Salvation Army Day Nursery
- 25 Audubon Society of Rhode Island
- 26 Shakespeare's Head Association
- Junior League of Providence, Inc.
- Meeting Place Art Galleries
- Providence-Cranston Council, Girl Scouts, Inc.
- Providence Art Club

## OTHERS

- 27 Music Mansion
- 28 Thayer Street Associates
- 29 Providence Engineering Society
- 30 University Club
- 31 Handicraft Club
- 32 Providence Preservation Society
- 33 Hope Club
- 34 Rhode Island Historical Society
- 35 Barker PlayHouse
- 36 Portuguese American Social Club

- 37 Brown University and Pembroke College
- Rhode Island School of Design
- Mary C. Wheeler School
- Bryant College of Business Administration





HOUSING CONDITIONS

OWNERSHIP AND RENTAL

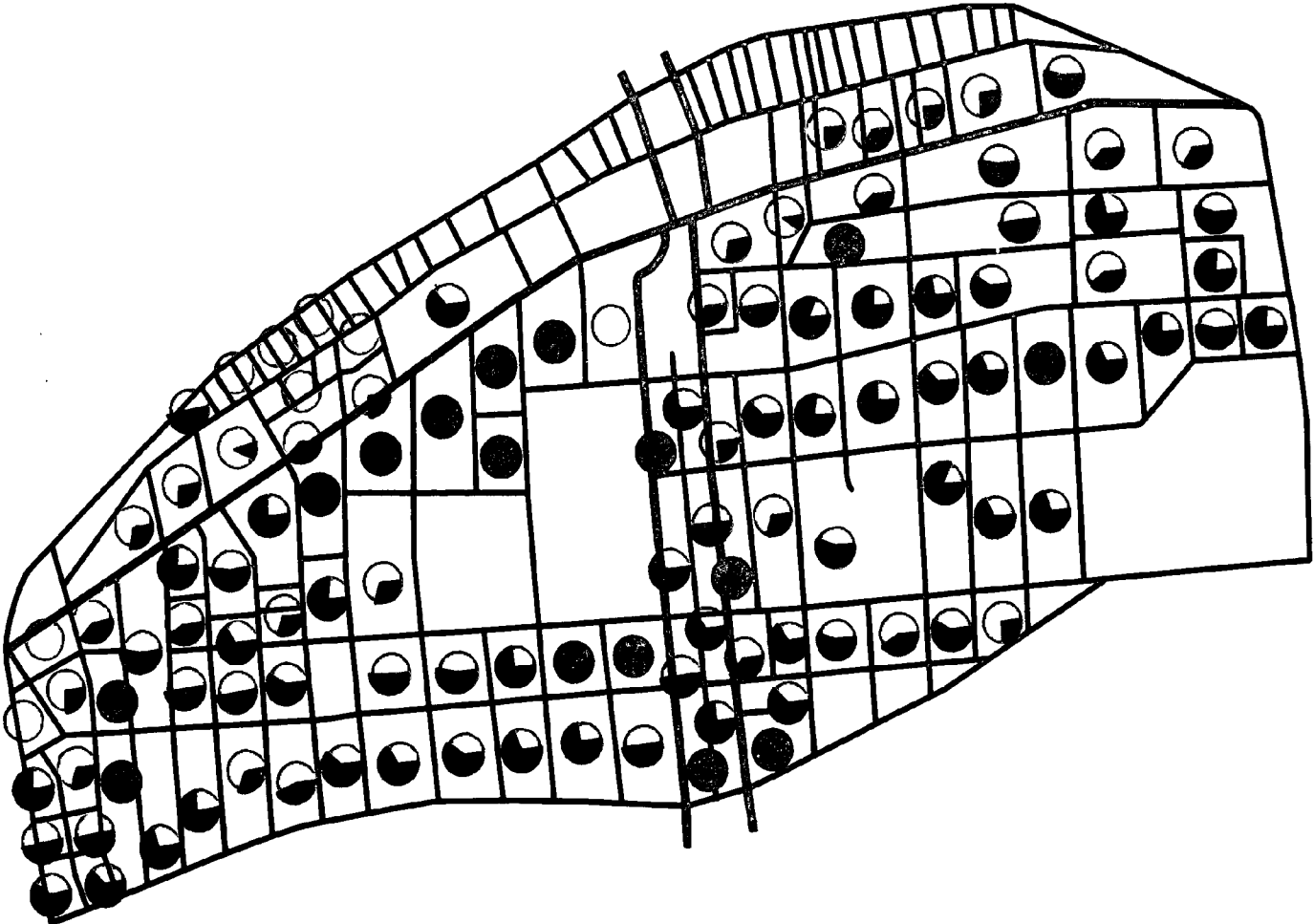
The map on the left of the page shows the pattern of home ownership and rental throughout the College Hill area, according to the 1950 Census of Housing. These figures show a large concentration of renter-occupied dwelling units ○ along the western border, particularly in the northwestern (Constitution Hill) and southwestern (South Main and Wickenden) sections.





As a general rule, owner-occupied properties ● tend to be in better condition than renter-occupied units. This was evident in a special housing survey of the northwestern section of College Hill made in the summer of 1958 by the Urban League of Rhode Island. Samplings taken by interviewers indicated that out of 239 families interviewed, 84 per cent rented their dwellings. Approximately 65 per cent of all Providence families rent their dwellings; thus this percentage is high when compared to the city as a whole.

The sampling showed that 39 per cent of the owner-occupied units were reported to be in "good" condition, as compared to 27 per cent of the renter-occupied units. In addition 51 per cent of the owner-occupied compared to 41 per cent of the renter-occupied units were in "fair" condition, and 10 per cent of the owner-occupied as against 37 per cent of the renter-occupied units were reported to be in "poor" condition.

AVERAGE MONTHLY RENT

The map on the right showing the rent structure clearly points up the low rents in large sections of College Hill. The rents are

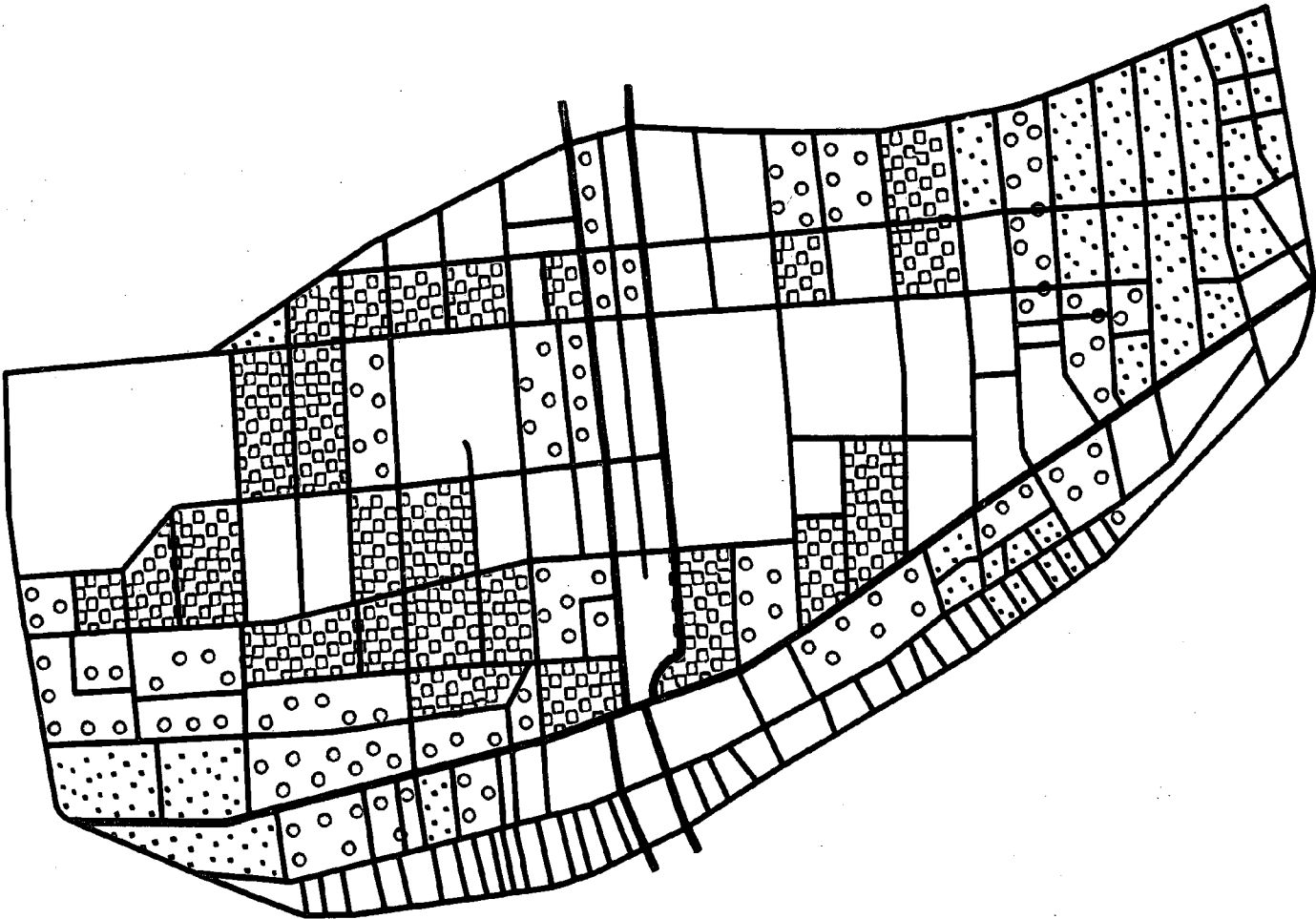


shown in the following categories:  = less than \$25.00 per month,  = from \$25.00 to \$50.00 per month,  = between \$50.00 and \$75.00 per month, and  = over \$75.00 per month. The 1950 Census figures showed that many blocks in the southern section around Wickenden Street and South Main Street and in the northwestern section, Constitution Hill, contain dwellings the average rent of which is less than twenty-five dollars per month. In addition, many other blocks average between twenty-five and fifty dollars per month. These census figures also show some high rentals in the area, an example of the extremes which are characteristic of College Hill. Certain blocks in the central section have rentals above seventy-five dollars a month and many apartments rent for a considerably higher figure.

The 1958 survey made by the Urban League in the northern section of the area indicates that 68 per cent of the families in that area now pay a rent averaging less than forty dollars per month. 41 per cent of the families pay a rent which is in the range of thirty to forty dollars per month. These figures indicate a slight upward trend from the eight year old rental figures contained in the 1950 census.

The following chart, developed from the Urban League's survey, gives a breakdown of rents in the limited area reviewed by the survey group. It is probably typical of the rental structure in the extreme northern and southern portions of College Hill which have the most serious housing problems.

Monthly Rent	Number of		Number of rooms in unit				
	Dwelling	Units	2	3	4	5	more
\$ 10.00-19.99	7	.....	2	1	2	2	
20.00-29.99	40	.....	2	1	19	18	
30.00-39.99	71	.....	5	2	4	19	39
40.00-49.99	27	.....	4	.....	1	5	17
50.00-59.99	11	.....	.....	1	1	1	9
60.00-69.99	10	.....	.....	5	2	3	
70.00-79.99	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	
80.00-89.99	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	
90.00-99.99	1	.....	.....	.....	.....	1	
100.00 or more	2	.....	.....	.....	.....	2	



## CONDITION OF STRUCTURES

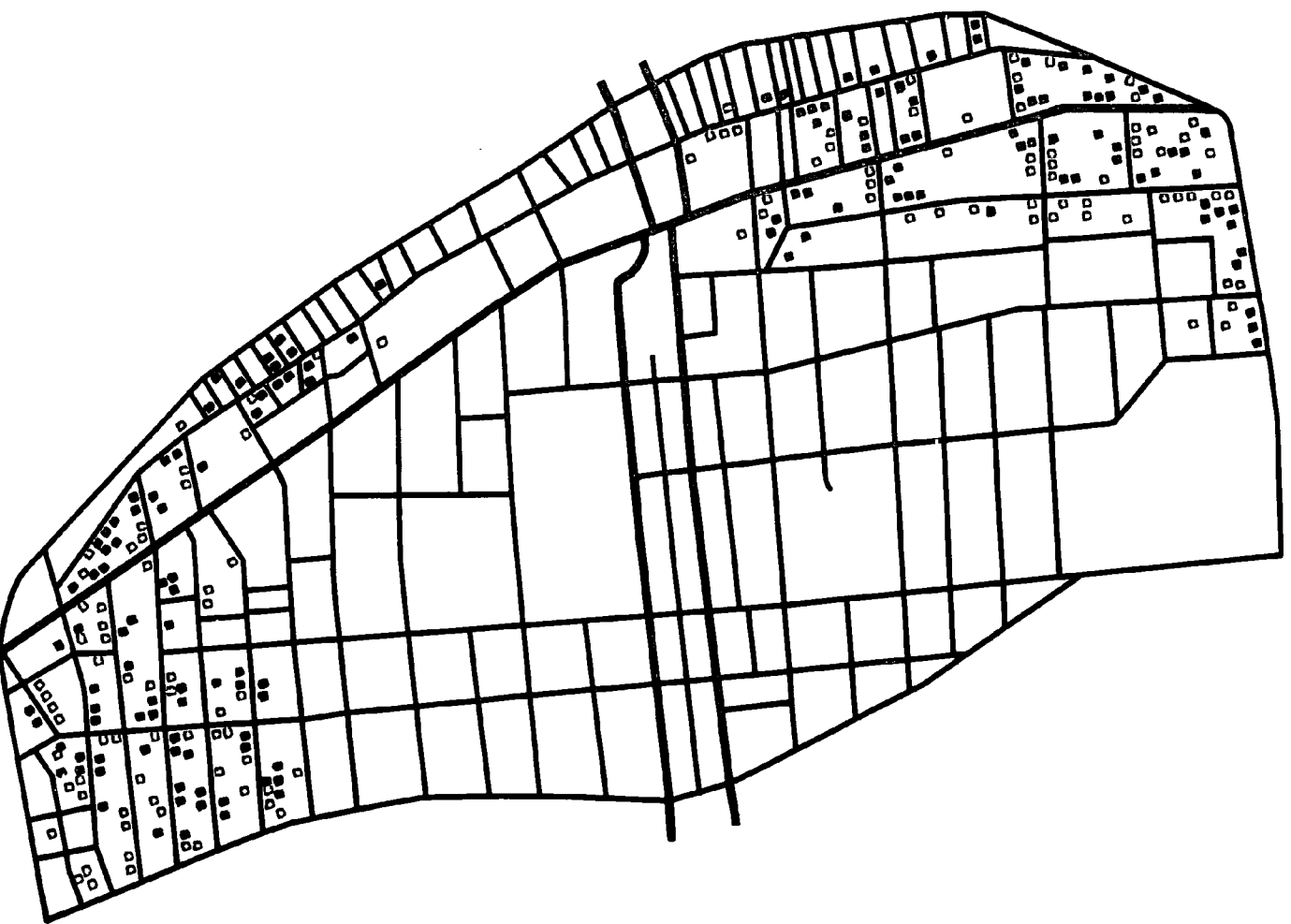
The map on the left shows the condition of housing by structures in the College Hill area. Over a period of years, surveys were made by the Providence Redevelopment Agency using American Public Health Association procedures, in sample portions of the area. These figures have been supplemented by a current house-to-house examination in critical areas. The map shows the location of structures considered to be in "slum" ■ and "sub-standard" □ categories. The majority of these structures are located in the extreme northern and southern portions of the College Hill area where other indices of housing conditions spotlighted factors contributing to housing blight.

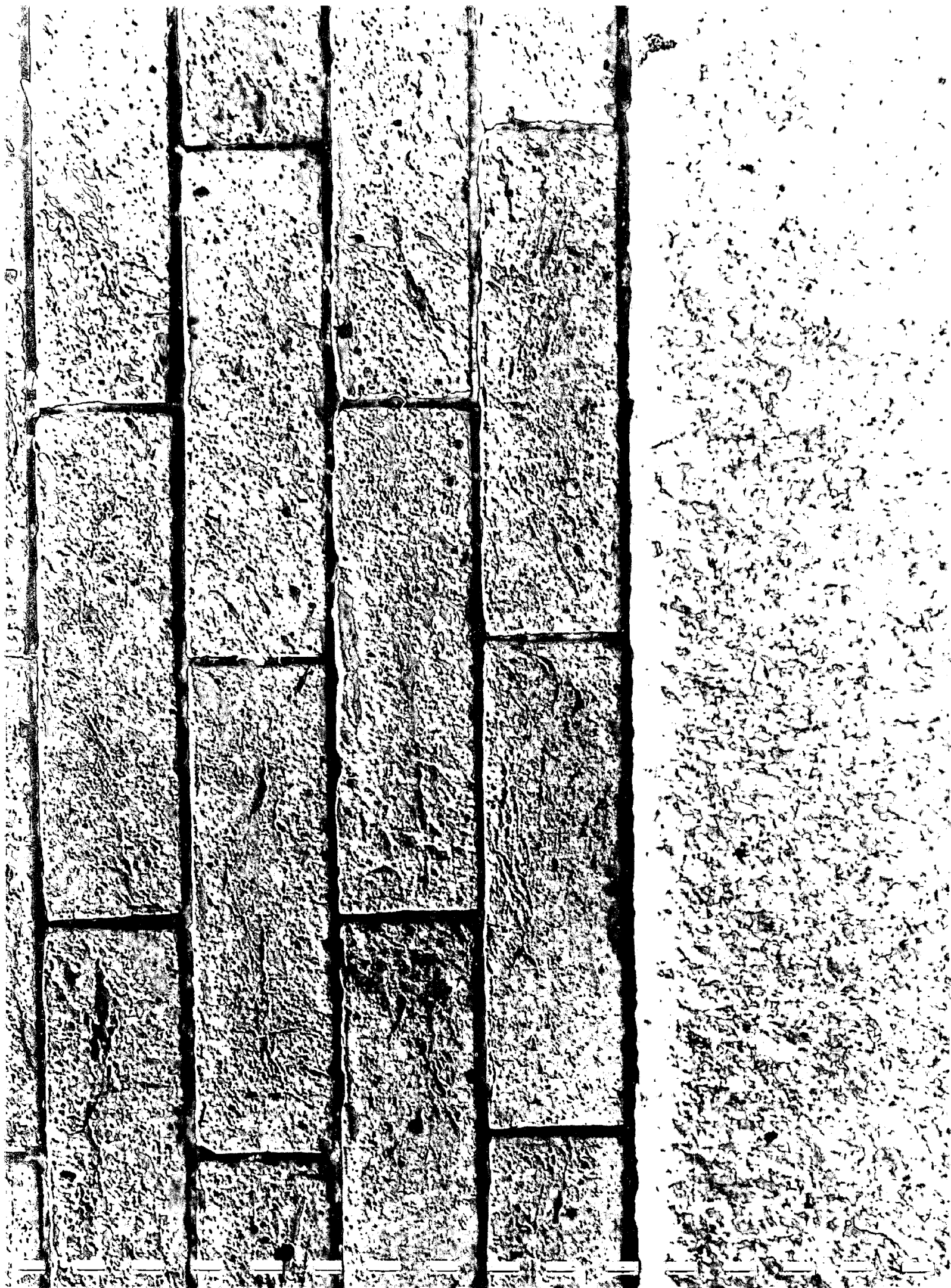
## OVERCROWDING

There is a considerable amount of overcrowding in the College Hill Area according to information based on the 1950 census standard in which overcrowding is defined as an average of more than 1.5 persons per room in a dwelling unit. Conditions of overcrowding are most prevalent in the southern and northwestern portions of the hill where other poor housing conditions are also found.

## DENSITY OF HOUSING

The average amount of land for each dwelling unit (density of housing) is an indication in some cases, of quality of housing. Quite often, when dwellings are crowded on the land, poorer housing conditions result. According to census information, the densest areas again coincide with other evidence of poor housing conditions in the extreme northern and southern sections of the area.
















### III B--GENERAL PLAN

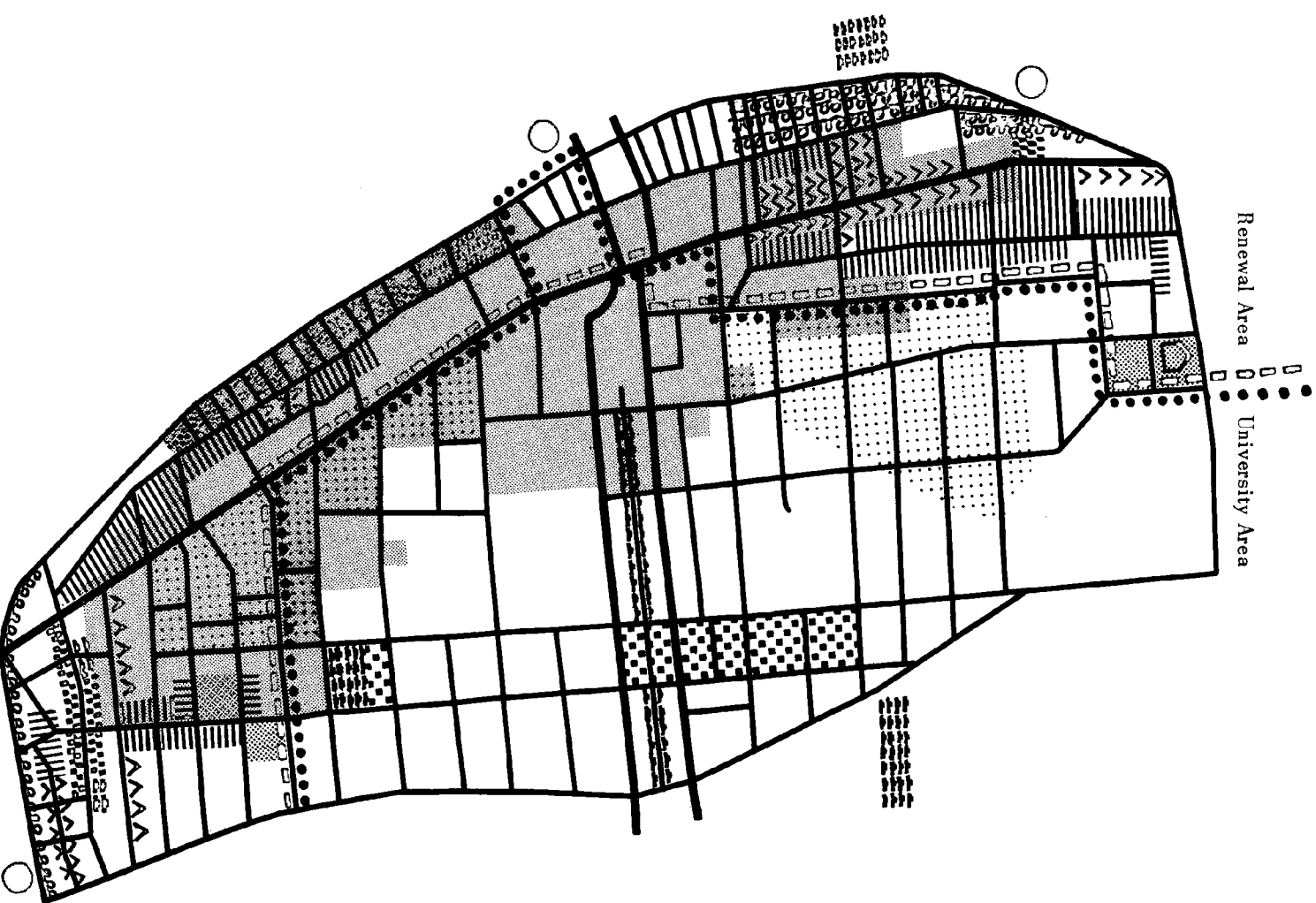
#### SUMMARY

The general plan for College Hill, presented in this section, is concerned with over-all recommendations including zoning, land use, traffic, schools and recreation. It represents the contribution of the College Hill Study to the City of Providence's Master Plan for the area. The "sketch" master plan shown here summarizes these recommendations and relates them to a comprehensive plan. In it College Hill is divided into two areas; 1) an urban renewal area and 2) the university area. Each has its own planning problems which require different planning proposals and different methods of implementation.

In the urban renewal area  sites are indicated  for clearance areas for residential and other types of development;  areas for rehabilitation of blighted residences; and  areas of good housing slated for "conservation" measures. Proposals are made for  some clearance for parks and landscaped buffer strips along the main streets;  much needed playgrounds in the north and south;  a new school in the north and allocation of limited areas  for new and rehabilitated business use. Recommendations for major street improvements  are concerned chiefly with the principal traffic arteries to the west and south. Where possible, proposals for parking facilities  have been co-ordinated with the College Hill urban renewal program.

The historic area extends into both of the above mentioned planning areas. It has been delineated as a historic zone  with particular implications within the urban renewal project areas where the historic buildings would be excepted from clearance and project designs would be reviewed by the proposed Historic District Commission. It is hoped that the urban renewal plan can be executed within the next 10 years.

In the university area, zoning proposals are made 1) to encourage orderly growth of the business center in the midst of campus expansion and 2) to discourage new private construction within the confines of an institutional area. Parking needs in the area are projected into the future and a program for parking facilities is presented. A staged master plan for the university area is presented following this section. It is intended as a suggestion to serve as a basis for future joint planning between the institutions and the City Plan Commission.



PREVIOUS PLANNING STUDIES

RECENT OFFICIAL PLANS

Since its reorganization in 1945, the Providence City Plan Commission has published a series of thirteen reports, many of which have been formally adopted by the Commission as elements of the official Master Plan. Although the Master Plan is primarily advisory in character, it does have an official status and warrants consideration as background against which to judge any proposed physical development within the city. It stands as a formally adopted document and any changes in it must follow legal procedures. For this reason, a major factor in making fresh plans for College Hill had to be a review of the existing official plans. The following reports and studies have been drawn upon for background in the current planning effort in College Hill:

- **Master Plan for Land Use:** In a report on a "Master Plan for Land Use and Population Distribution" adopted by the City Plan Commission in 1946, the broad patterns for the city of the future were proposed.
- **Master Plan for Thorofares:** In 1946 the City Plan Commission adopted its "Master Plan for Thorofares" which recommended systems of expressways and major city streets.
- **Thorofare Plan Revision:** Engineering studies by state agencies led to a number of serious modifications in the 1946 proposals. As a result of these and related studies for possible redevelopment projects in the South Main Street area, the City Plan Commission in 1950 formally revised its "Master Plan for Thorofares" to show changes in the central freeway loop. The basic thorofare pattern adopted then has been followed in the proposals made in this report for the College Hill section.
- **Central Area Studies:** Using funds made available by the United States Housing and Home Finance Agency, a group of intensive planning studies of in-town neighborhoods was made in 1950 and 1951. The Plan Commission staff made detailed investigations of potential redevelopment project areas within larger plan-

ning districts, including the Fox Point and Camp Street sections. The plans suggested at that time were not concerned with historic aspects.

- **Other Master Plans:** In addition to the Land Use and Thorofare plans described above, the City Plan Commission has from time to time adopted other Master Plan elements. Some of the recommendations in these Master Plans have included proposals in the College Hill Study area. Among these are the "Master Plan for Public School Sites" (1950) and the "Master Plan for Playgrounds and Playfields" (1953).

URBAN RENEWAL PROPOSALS

The concentration of poor housing at the northern and southern edges of College Hill has been the subject of official concern for a quarter century or more. In 1935, the Rhode Island State Planning Board proposed two slum clearance housing projects for consideration by the federal Public Works Administration. One of these dealt with the "South Main and Wickenden Street District", and a second project with the "North End District" north of Randall Square.

Of greater significance to the problems of College Hill today are more recent efforts of the City Plan Commission and the Providence Redevelopment Agency, which have resulted in official actions. Redevelopment was one of the subjects included in the series of Master Plan studies issued by the City Plan Commission in 1946. The "Master Plan for Redevelopment of Residential Areas" defined substantial parts of the city as deteriorated or arrested on the basis of statistics for housing, health and environmental conditions, each of which points to some degree of housing blight. Approximately 140 acres, or 35% of the College Hill study area, is included within two of the 17 Redevelopment Areas designated by City Council action in July, 1948, based on the Master Plan report.

In 1951, several projects were proposed in the report. "*Redevelopment Proposals for Central Areas*" and others were added to this list of projects in the past few years. In the College Hill area, there have been, among others, three project proposals made which have been the subject of serious review: (1) South Main, (2) Cohan Boulevard, and (3) Constitution Hill. None of these are currently active.

# TRAFFIC

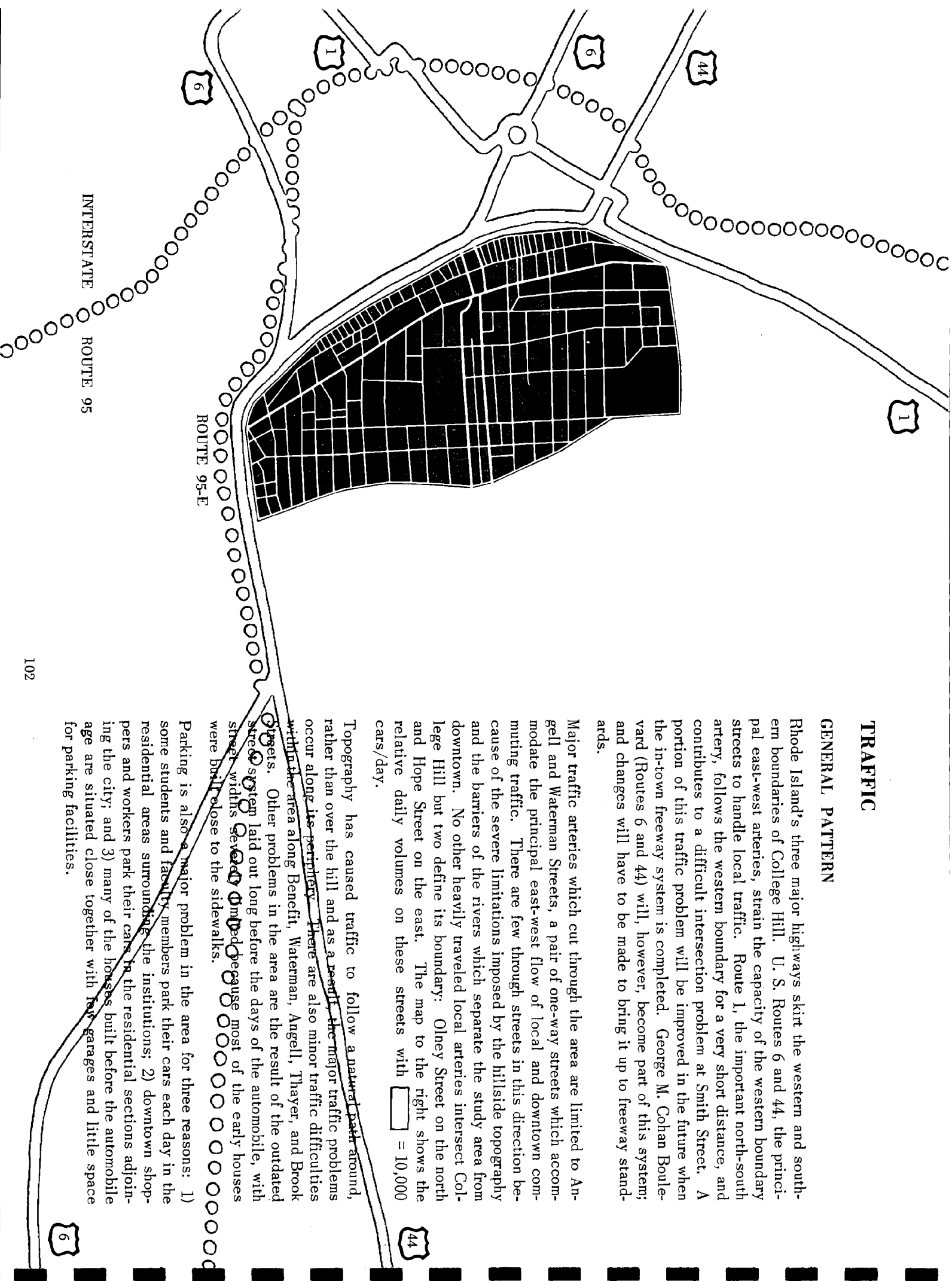
## GENERAL PATTERN

Rhode Island's three major highways skirt the western and southern boundaries of College Hill. U. S. Routes 6 and 44, the principal east-west arteries, strain the capacity of the western boundary streets to handle local traffic. Route 1, the important north-south artery, follows the western boundary for a very short distance, and contributes to a difficult intersection problem at Smith Street. A portion of this traffic problem will be improved in the future when the in-town freeway system is completed. George M. Cohan Boulevard (Routes 6 and 44) will, however, become part of this system; and changes will have to be made to bring it up to freeway standards.

Major traffic arteries which cut through the area are limited to Angell and Waterman Streets, a pair of one-way streets which accommodate the principal east-west flow of local and downtown commuting traffic. There are few through streets in this direction because of the severe limitations imposed by the hillside topography and the barriers of the rivers which separate the study area from downtown. No other heavily traveled local arteries intersect College Hill but two define its boundary: Olney Street on the north and Hope Street on the east. The map to the right shows the relative daily volumes on these streets with   = 10,000 cars/day.





Topography has caused traffic to follow a natural path around, rather than over the hill and as a result, the major traffic problems occur along its periphery. There are also minor traffic difficulties within the area along Benefit, Waterman, Angell, Thayer, and Brook Streets. Other problems in the area are the result of the outdated street system laid out long before the days of the automobile, with street widths severely limited because most of the early houses were built close to the sidewalks.

Parking is also a major problem in the area for three reasons: 1) some students and faculty members park their cars each day in the residential areas surrounding the institutions; 2) downtown shoppers and workers park their cars in the residential sections adjoining the city; and 3) many of the houses built before the automobile age are situated close together with no garages and little space for parking facilities.





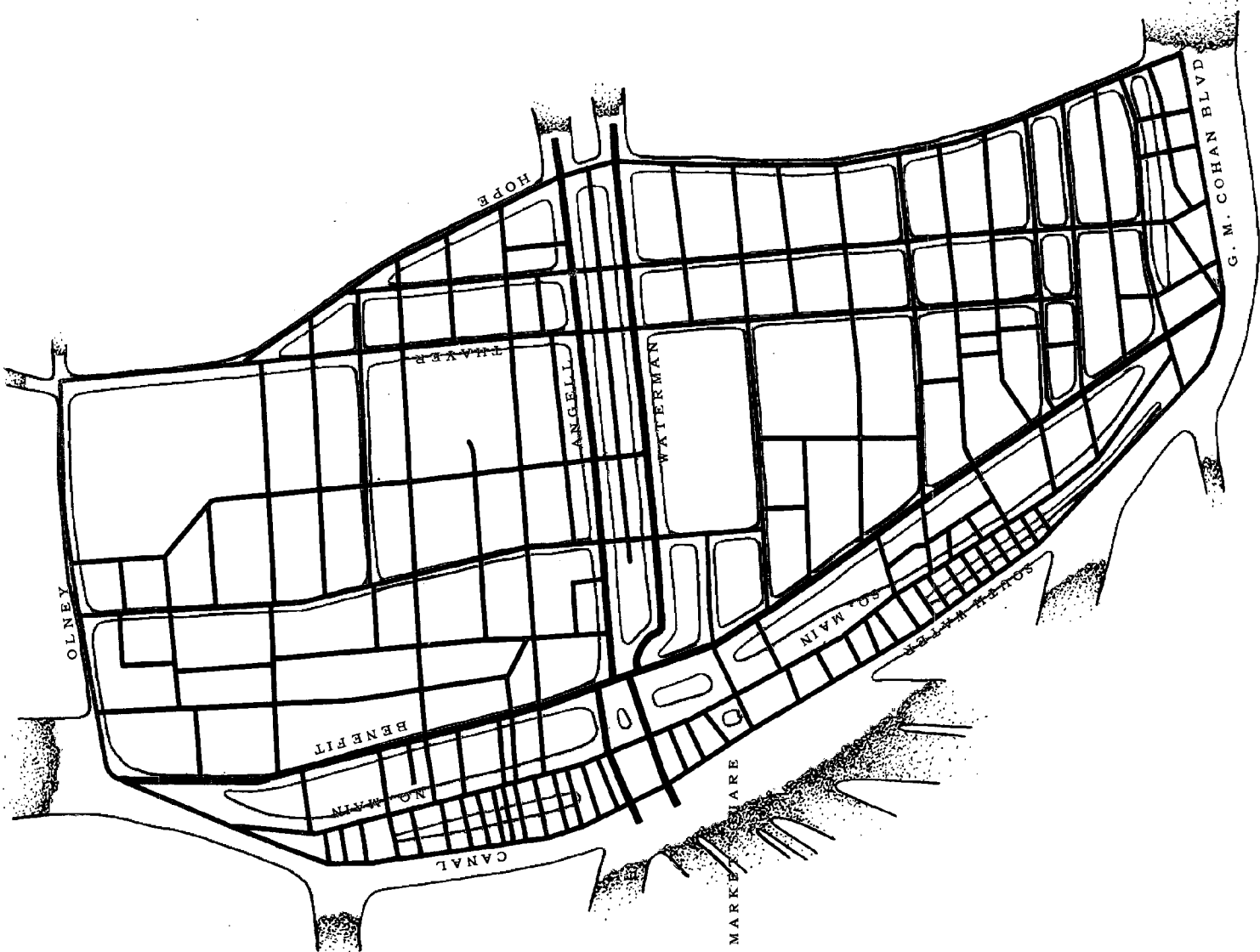
## MAJOR PROBLEMS

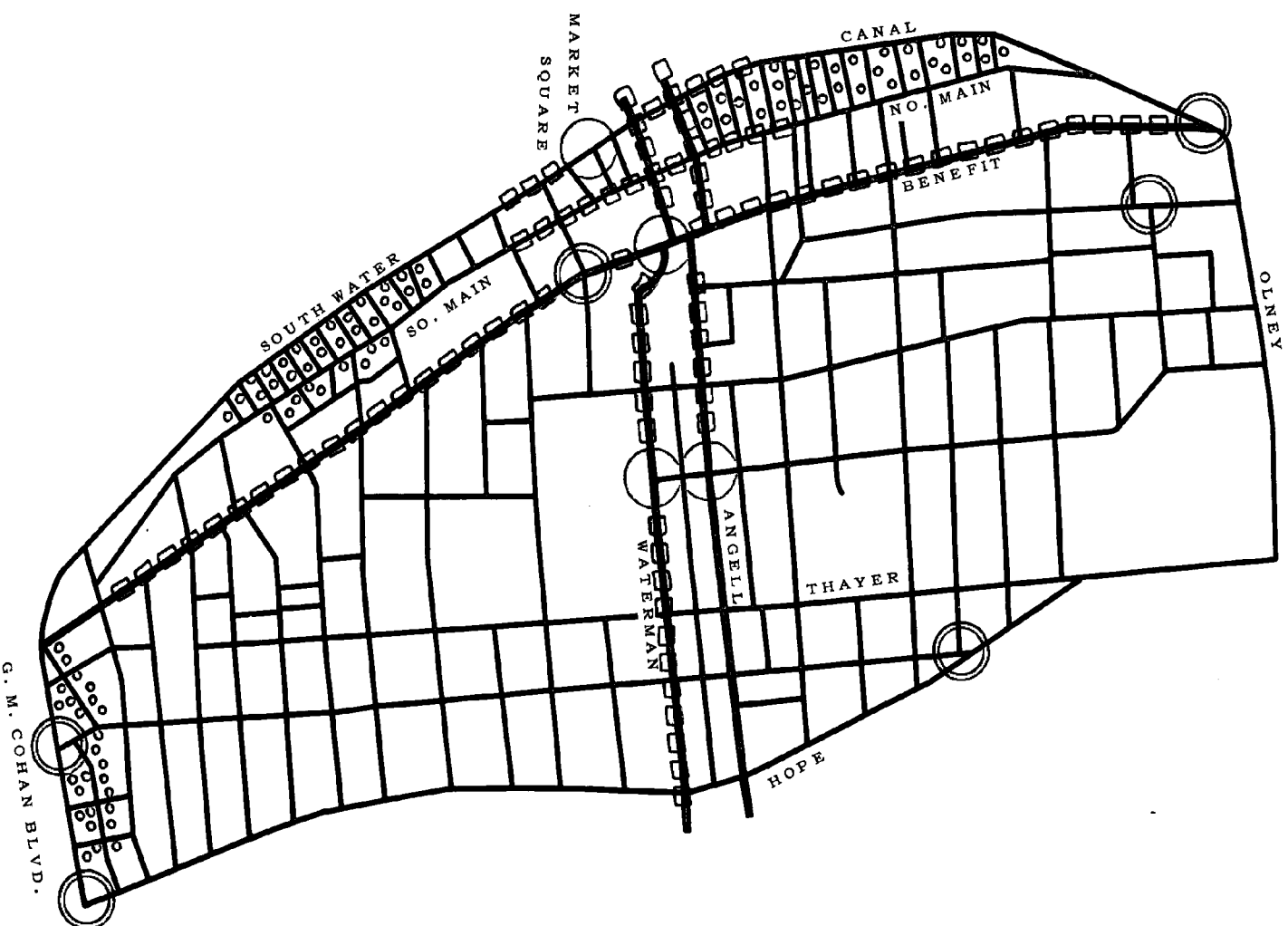
Major traffic problems are described below and illustrated on the map on page 104. Streets experiencing traffic congestion are shown , areas with poorly arranged and an excess of streets are indicated , heavily used pedestrian crossings are shown by , and difficult street intersections by .

**North and South Main Streets** on the west side of College Hill is the northbound mate of a pair of streets constituting a major north-south artery. Traffic jams occur along it in the vicinity of Market Square where traffic from the west and southwest joins it. Canal Square and South Water Streets form the south-bound side of the pair and these, too, are choked with traffic through Market and Memorial Squares. The flow of traffic along Canal Street is impeded by trucks lining the curb backed up to a string of wholesale outlets. These two arteries are separated by a commercial area; connecting alleys cut through every 100 feet causing further trouble because of their narrowness and wasteful use of land area. The intersection of North Main, Canal, and Smith Streets is a point of congestion.

**George M. Cohan Boulevard** is a six-lane divided highway bounding the area on the south. It connects Washington Bridge spanning the Seekonk River with the newly constructed Providence River Bridge. When the boulevard was built several years ago, it was constructed at an angle to the grid of the old streets and consequently, several odd shaped blocks and a high percentage of unnecessary street segments have been left. This highway, when incorporated into the freeway system, will not be able to tolerate, as it now does, the turning movements of cars using local streets and the problems of access will have to be solved by a grade separation in the future.

**Angell and Waterman Streets**, the only important east-west traffic arteries through the study area, intersect the primary north-south movement of cars in the vicinity of Market and Memorial Squares where, during rush hours, traffic may back up the hill for a dis-










tance of two or three blocks. Working in unison as a pair of one-way streets, they function easily under loads of 10,000 cars per day, except that parking along their curbs often forces traffic into two lanes and creates points of congestion. This situation has been alleviated by "all rolling" regulations applied during rush hours; but a few violators can impair the use of full street widths for appreciable distances. Another problem along these two streets is caused by the crossing of large numbers of students at Brown and Thayer Streets and in the vicinity of Benefit Street. These two streets cut Pembroke College off from Brown University and, consequently, solution of the problems of pedestrian crossings and of developing a unified campus will be difficult.

Waterman Street also cuts the Rhode Island School of Design's dormitory units off from their classroom block and a similar student crossing problem results.

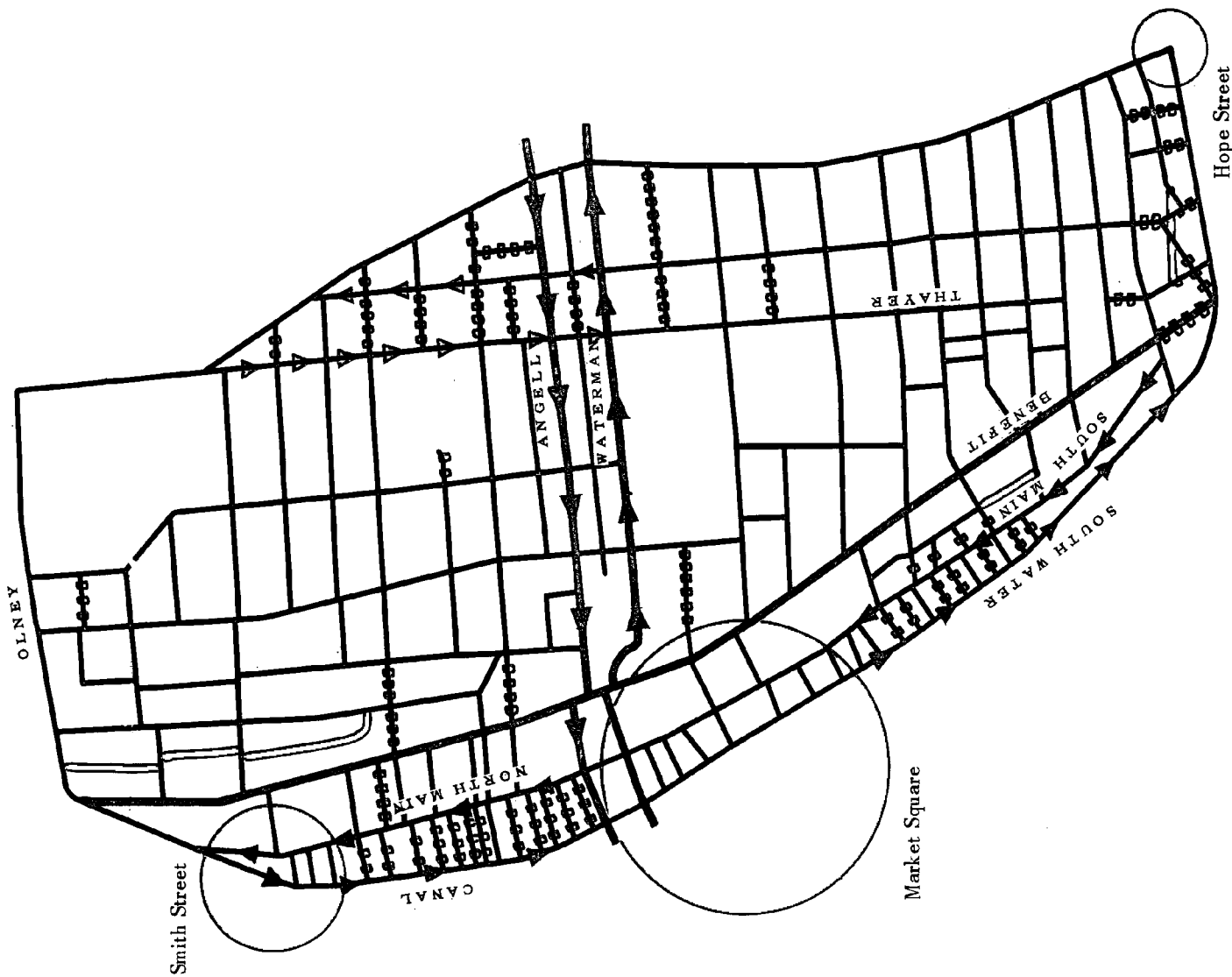
**Benefit Street** is the second heavily travelled through street within College Hill. It parallels the primary north-south arteries and, with entry available at both the Olney and Wickenden Street ends, offers the motorist a means of avoiding the rush hour congestion at Market-Memorial Square. Benefit Street, a key historic street in the study area, is too narrow to permit more than two lanes of traffic and parking on one side. The heavy traffic has been instrumental in separating the area between Benefit and Main Streets from the rest of the hill and has hastened the deterioration of the houses along its route.

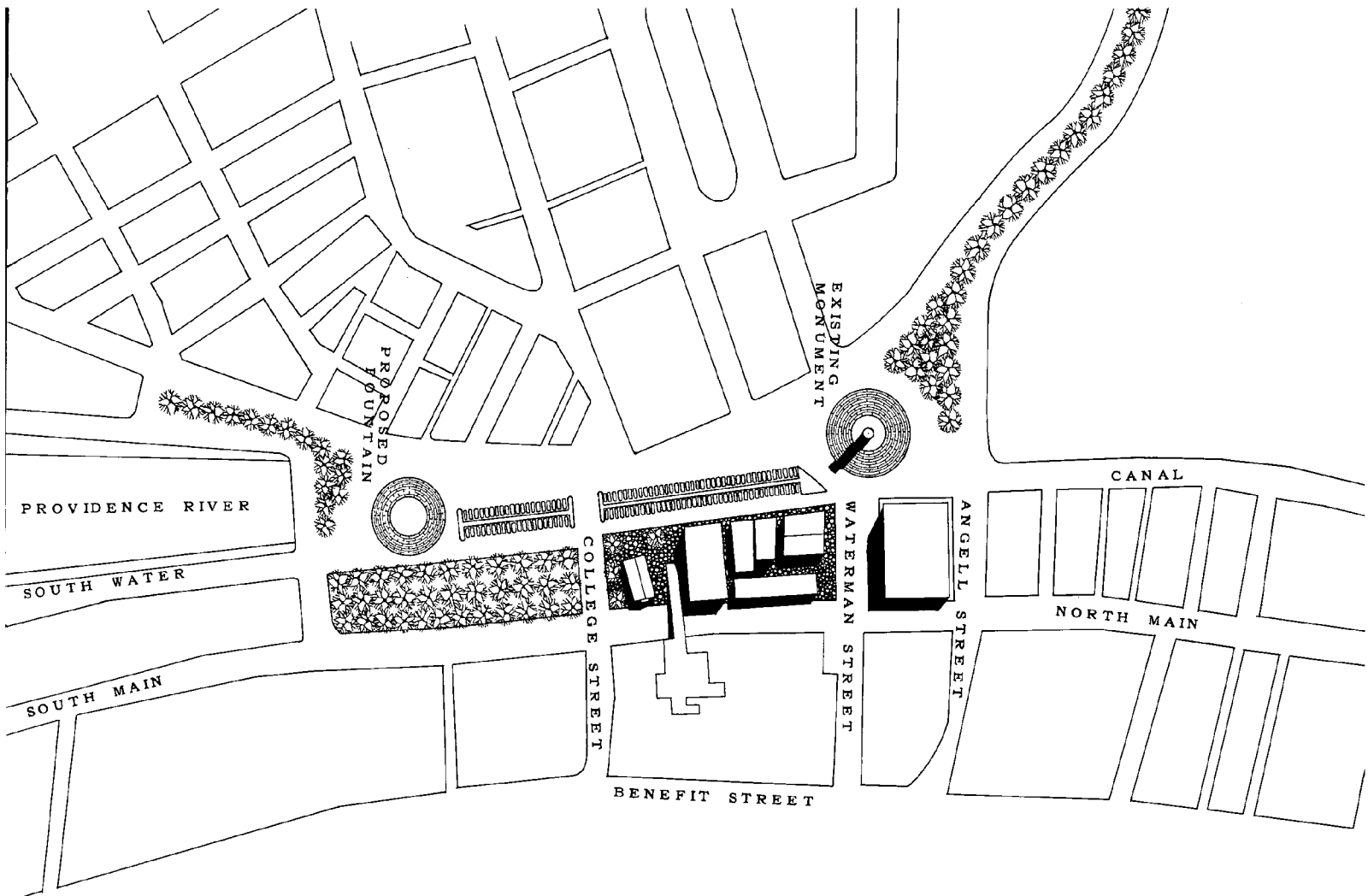
**Thayer Street** for a few blocks immediately north of Waterman Street is lined with stores and constitutes the major shopping center for residents and students in the central and northern portions of College Hill. The street could easily handle the two-way traffic now flowing along it if it did not also have to provide parking along both curbs. This arrangement under ideal conditions can function, but when cars leave or enter a parking space, or when wider vehicles such as buses or trucks use the street, it usually becomes blocked and traffic is prevented from flowing easily.

## CHANGES RECOMMENDED

The major changes recommended for traffic improvements are located on the map to the right showing existing one-way streets , proposed one-way streets , major intersection changes , streets to be abandoned  and streets to be constructed  during development of renewal and other projects. The proposals are specifically listed below:

- Continue the landscaped dividing strip along North Main Street south to the Smith Street intersection and permit two-way access only at Olney Street, thus reducing the accessibility to Benefit Street.
- Introduce a grade separation interchange at North Main and Smith Streets in such a way that it will least interfere with the proposed Roger Williams Spring Park to the south.
- The proposed park will necessitate relocation of present wholesale establishments along Canal Street and will eliminate the congestion which their loading operations presently cause.
- The traffic pattern where North and South Main Streets join in Market Square should be adjusted.
- Signals and signs should be arranged in such a way as to encourage Wickenden Street traffic to use South Main Street rather than Benefit Street.
- Proposals along George M. Cohan Boulevard include closing the minor streets intersecting it and clearing structures fronting on it for a landscaped buffer between it and the residential neighborhood to the north.
- Hope Street should have a grade-separated connection with Cohan Boulevard.
- It is expected that the completion of the east-west link of the freeway system and the extension of the River Drive along the Seekonk will, in the foreseeable future, keep the traffic on Angell and Waterman Streets within limits of its capacity.
- A foot bridge across Waterman Street connecting the School of Design's new dormitory group with the main classroom block seems





advisable. Brown University also has a crossing problem on Waterman Street in the vicinity of Brown Street which could be reduced either by means of a foot bridge or by signals.

- Thayer and Brook Streets are suggested as one-way south and north respectively.

- Traffic converges from five directions at the corner of Brook and Hope Streets and warrants a traffic signal.

- As a long-range proposal, various streets are shown closed between Hope and Brook Streets above Angell Street to accommodate growth and consolidation of the shopping center over the years.

### MARKET AND MEMORIAL SQUARES

This is a most important area for two reasons: 1) it is one of the busiest intersections in the city, fed by sixteen different traffic approaches and serving as the principal link between downtown and points east; 2) it is a fine urban space walled in between the crest of College Hill on the east and a high mass of the city's buildings on the west, overlooked by the State House to the north and opening out towards Narragansett Bay at the southern end. All major interstate traffic goes through the area or skirts it. Any recommendations for solving traffic problems here should respect the visual quality of the area and they should be designed to prevent the city's most important gateway from becoming a maze of curving overpasses, concrete islands, and sign posts. In this study, various schemes incorporating a depressed north-south roadway were developed but were rejected. The surface scheme shown here has been recommended both for reasons of economy and because the freeway system now under construction is expected to take part of the traffic load from the area.

The accompanying proposal is intended to accomplish the following: 1) adjust College Hill traffic patterns to new ones being currently proposed in the Downtown Master Plan Demonstration Grant Study; 2) make pedestrian circulation in the area safer and more direct; 3) provide parking which does not interfere with traffic flow; and 4) make the space pleasant to be in or to look out on.

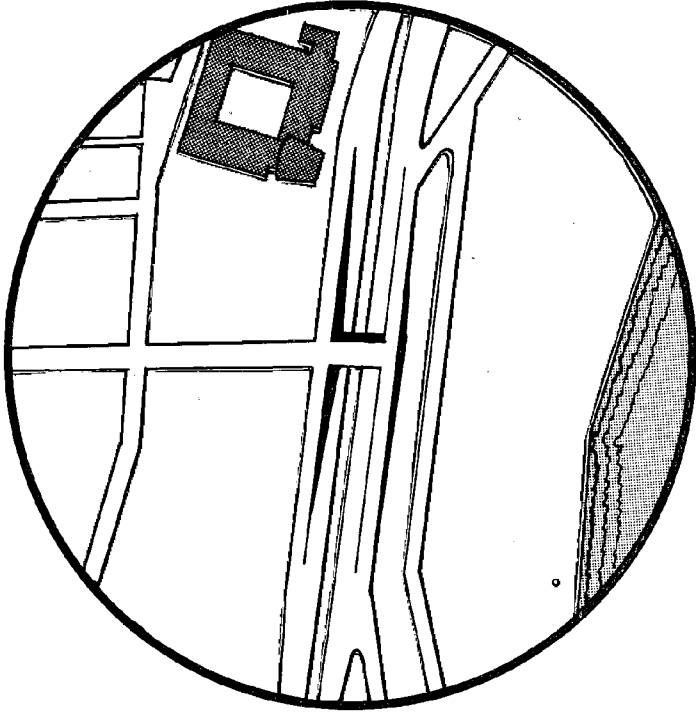
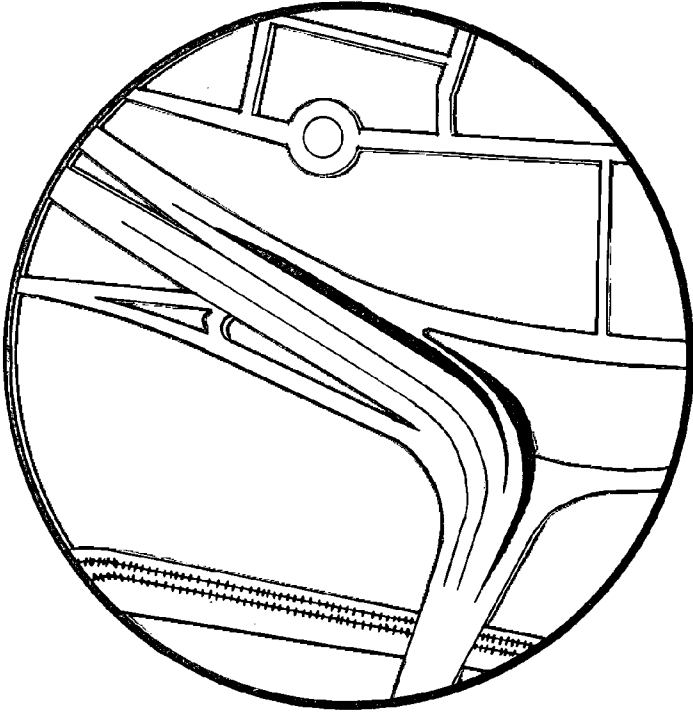
The proposed traffic pattern makes the following changes: South Water Street is eliminated north of Crawford Street, putting all north-bound traffic into South Main Street. West-bound traffic is limited to Steeple Street; it no longer enters the city at Exchange Place but is deflected to the northwest along Promenade. Other design features include enlarging the base of the monument to serve better as a rotary; a large fountain to serve as a rotary in the lower end; extending the Court House park south to Crawford Street; and paving the entire square including the parking area with different types of materials more in character with the hill than the asphalt surface now used.

SMITH AND NORTH MAIN STREETS

The accompanying design at the top of the page is based on two considerations: 1) topography, which suggests that it is reasonable to have an elevated connection over Schley Square from the Smith Street bridge to North Main Street with North Main Street at grade as it descends from Olney Street; 2) land use, which is an important consideration in the urban renewal projects planned for either side of this artery. This proposal would keep such construction to the north of Smith Street and thus not interfere with the projected development of the Roger Williams Spring Park to the South.

COHAN BOULEVARD AND HOPE STREET

When the Boulevard is incorporated into the freeway system, local streets will probably be sealed off with the exception of Hope Street which will require a grade-separated intersection. The intersection proposed here is planned so that 1) it will not intrude upon the residential area north of Cohan Boulevard and destroy potentially prime development land, and 2) it will avoid cutting off any of the Fox Point neighborhood from the elementary school. It takes advantage of topographic conditions by cutting the crown off the Boulevard and thus eliminates the need for ramps in the north direction.



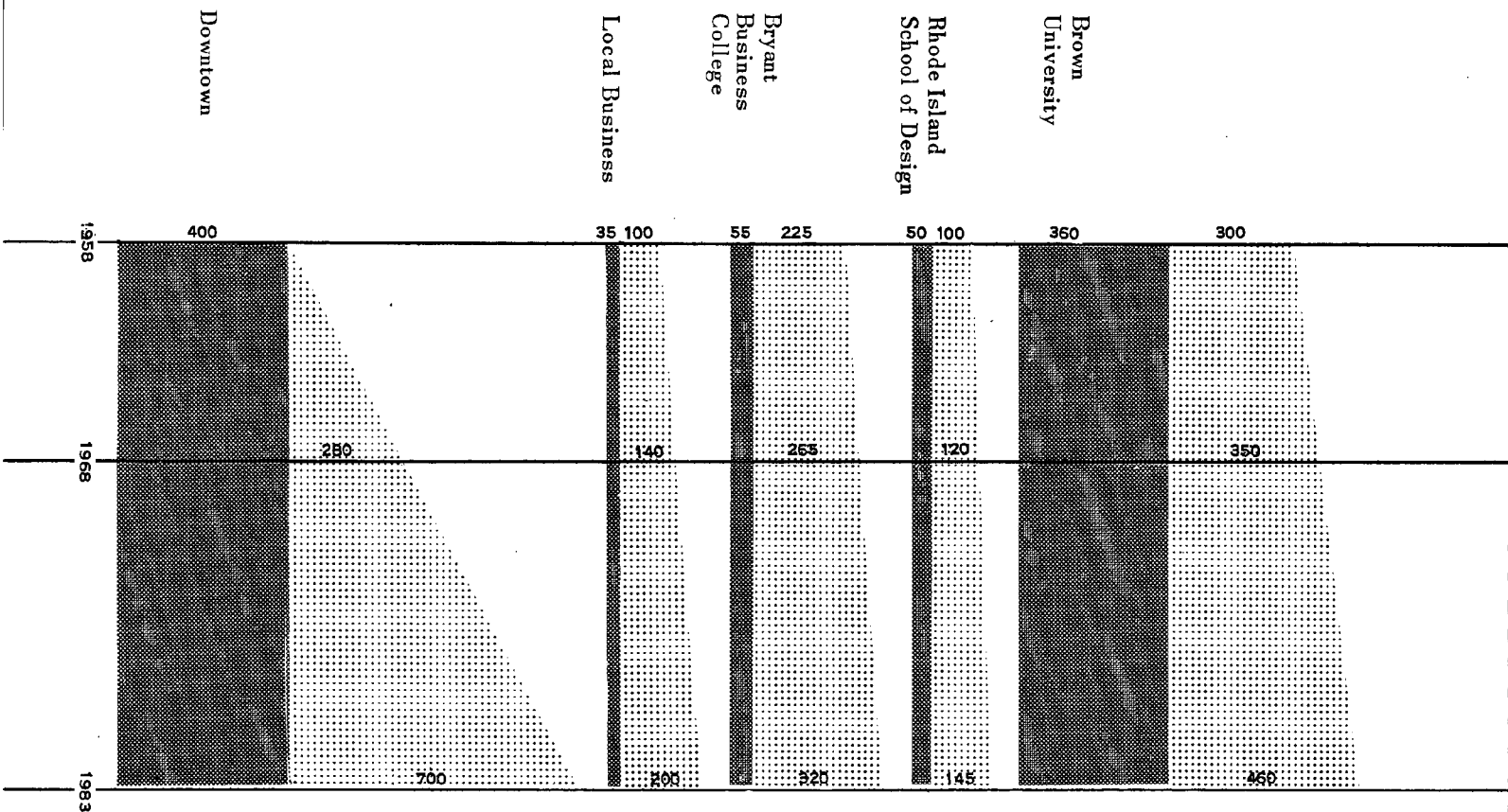
PARKING

The parking problem in College Hill, particularly on the western slope, is complicated because of steep topography, narrow streets and densely built up areas containing old structures. The problem is most acute for the following groups: 1) personnel of the educational institutions; 2) shoppers and workers from downtown and clientele from the two local commercial centers along Thayer and Wickenden Streets; 3) local residents whose cars are often parked in makeshift, unsightly lots; and 4) visitors and attendants at churches and other meeting places..

Specific problems occur in the residential areas around the institutions where students monopolize the available curb spaces to the inconvenience of residents. At present the educational institutions need additional off-street parking spaces for about 435 cars, a need which will probably increase to 930 in twenty-five years. A conflict between students and shoppers also exists for parking space along Thayer Street. Parkers from downtown use the streets as far up the hill as Congdon Street which is lined with cars for most of the day. Patients visiting the doctors' offices along Waterman and Angell Streets have difficulty in finding parking spaces. The General Baking Company crowds the Brook Street section with as many as fourteen large trucks as well as with their employees' cars which line the curbs of an otherwise residential area for most of the day. Moreover, trucks negotiating these narrow streets constitute a potential hazard to the children using the playground on Arnold Street. Lack of parking facilities plays a part in the declining economic status of the shops along Wickenden Street.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PARKING PROBLEM

The chart on the left compares the present parking needs with existing facilities for the major categories of parking demand, and projects the demand for 10 years and 25 years into the future. The map to the right shows which facilities should remain ; which should be replaced because of their poor location, visual aspects, or interference with proposed projects; and which should be added to satisfy future demand. These predictions are based on the assumption that the growth of enrollment in the institutions will be 10% per decade. In devising a ratio of probable car spaces required it was assumed that 1 out of 20 dormitory students, 1 out of 4 commuting



students, and 4 out of 10 staff members would require a parking space.

**Brown University** now has off-street parking for 360 cars which takes care of its staff members but does not accommodate the 300 cars estimated as belonging to commuting and resident students. The former Dexter Asylum property now owned by Brown will be used in part for student parking, but its distance from the campus will probably make it little used by commuters and will leave curb parking more attractive. The existing parking lots for staff use are scattered over the area and many are not attractive in appearance. Moreover, some are located in the path of probable new construction in Brown's development program. As such construction occurs, it is suggested that new staff parking facilities be developed in two areas: 1) A central parking zone planned to accommodate 150 cars should be developed along Fones Alley where it would be hidden from view. Such facilities would be convenient to Pembroke College, the main campus, and the administration buildings. 2) The other area suggested is the block bounded by Charlesfield, Brook, Power, and Thayer Streets presently occupied by a service station and garage, several houses, and a University parking lot. In the long range picture this would be an ideal spot for Brown to build a parking structure for 300 cars. It is also recommended that the University consider landscaping some of its less attractive lots.

The Rhode Island School of Design has a parking lot in the central block of approximately 50 car spaces which accommodates the staff but is not sufficient for the estimated ninety commuting students in need of parking. Students who commute have an increasingly difficult time finding space since curb parking in the area is restricted and the downtown parker competes for available space in this area. Because of the density of building and the high price of real estate in the locality, it seems unlikely that additional parking facilities can be developed here in the near future. However, the steep hill on which the central block is located would make it possible to deck over the existing parking lot thus adding spaces for approximately 40 more cars. In the more distant future when the school acquires more land for building expansion, provision of facilities for an estimated student demand of 100 cars should be considered. A location in the proposed clearance area at the corner of Benefit and Meeting Streets would be a good place for such a parking lot.

**Bryant College** is faced with a difficult parking problem since 65





per cent of its nearly 1,400 students commute. It presently has off-street space for about 55 cars which satisfies only the needs of the faculty and staff. To provide parking facilities for the estimated 200 cars currently in use at peak demand by the students would require one and one-half acres of land carved out of a residential neighborhood. Land within College Hill and adjacent to Bryant is densely developed for residential or institutional use, whereas outside the study area to the southeast are some areas of blighted housing which possibly could be acquired for parking through the urban renewal program or by independent acquisition.

The Thayer Street shopping and professional center, which is virtually surrounded by educational institutions with heavy parking requirements and few facilities, strongly feels the need for more parking space. Parking is allowed on both sides of Thayer Street but at the cost of creating considerable traffic congestion. The local merchants' association has set the need for off-street parking facilities in the area at approximately 100 cars. It would be possible to meet the parking needs for at least the next 10 years, by closing one of the cross streets such as Euclid Avenue and developing a parking lot in the interior of the block. As the shopping center grows in the future, additional parking can be provided according to plan in either of two ways: 1) the shopowners could buy and develop the land collectively as was done in the nearby Wayland Square shopping center or 2) the city could condemn and develop the land for metered parking within the framework of a city-wide off-street parking program. Prohibition of parking on one side of Angell and Waterman Streets has resulted in the use by the doctors in the area of the interior of the blocks for parking. It is hoped that this kind of activity will continue in the professional area between these two streets.

**Wickenden Street**, where the second major College Hill shopping district is located, is a rather busy street with parking permitted on only one side of the street. Its declining economic position can be partially relieved by providing it with off-street parking. It is proposed that two lots be developed at each end of the shopping area to provide space for 50 cars. The land could be acquired through the urban renewal program and developed in a manner similar to that described above for Thayer Street.

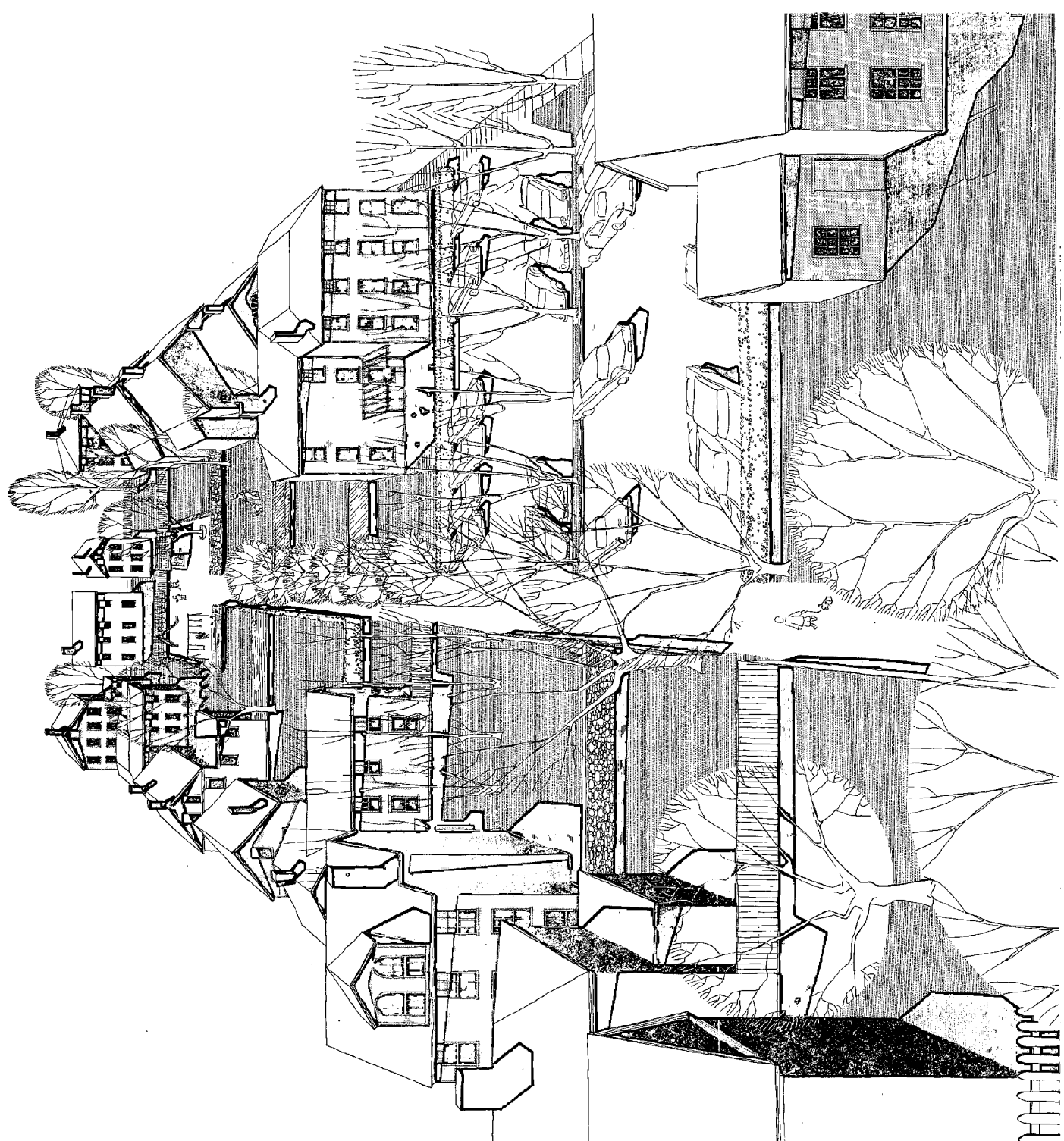
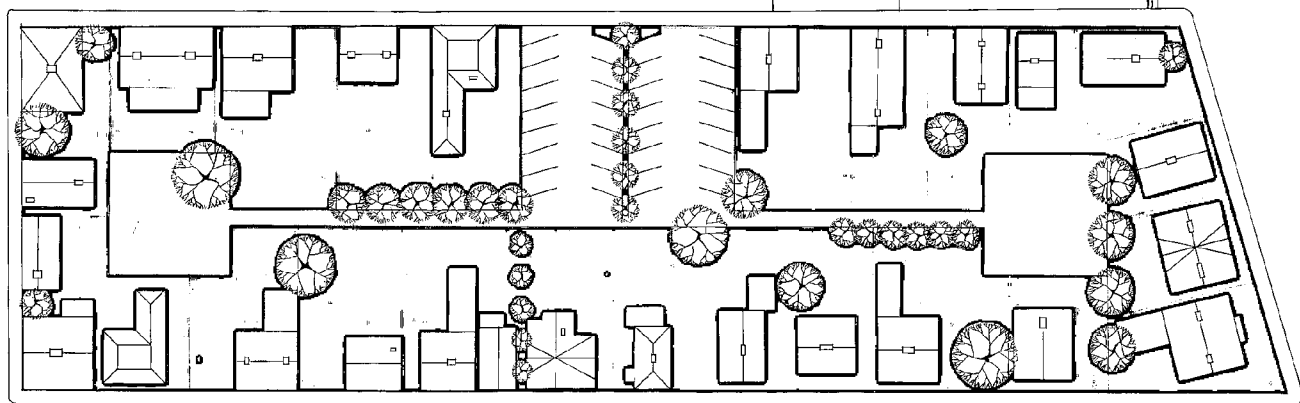
**Downtown parkers** are at present provided with approximately 400 off-street parking spaces located in Market Square and along the commercial strip lining North and South Main Streets. It is proposed that these facilities be rearranged and coordinated with redevelopment projects to provide for a new total of 1,100 spaces to

serve downtown and adjacent parking needs. The proposed 600 car lot along Canal Street will in part be scheduled for use by visitors to the proposed Benefit Street Historic Trail and Roger Williams Spring Park. This lot should be operated by the city and developed by it in conjunction with the urban renewal program. The 200 car lot proposed for Market Square should be developed by the city. The three proposed lots for a total of 300 car spaces along South Water Street would be constructed by private developers in conjunction with the projected urban renewal activity in that area.

**Residential parking** is prohibited on the streets during the night. As a result of this prohibition, two undesirable situations have developed: Some of the typically small house lots, already inadequate and crowded with building have been almost wholly devoted to parking. Larger properties have also been carved up into ugly parking lots. It is recommended that tighter design restrictions be required in the construction of such lots. Also recommended for areas with small lots are cooperative block parking schemes which have advantages of using less land for parking and in freeing more land for private and common use. Such a plan could be successful only if all of the residents of the block are convinced of the advantages and are willing to work hard to implement it. Ownership and maintenance could be effected on either a cooperative basis or privately on a rental basis. Lots can be acquired outright or through the urban renewal program where standard housing can be condemned and land reused for parking. One example of such a scheme is shown to the right.

#### **Parking Regulations**

The parking regulation picture in College Hill is a complex one. In the residential areas in the extreme north and southeast sections, no special regulations exist. On at least one side of all the important streets and on all east-west streets west of Benefit Street no parking is permitted. In residential areas just to the east of Benefit Street no parking is allowed before 10:00 a.m. in an effort to discourage parkers who want to go downtown from parking on the streets of College Hill. Two-hour parking zones surround the colleges. Suggested changes in parking regulations include: 1) eliminating parking on one side of Thayer Street north of Angell Street, 2) increasing the time limit from 1 to 3 hours on curbs fronting college property and 3) decreasing the limit in the residential areas adjoining the institutions. It is recommended that the parking regulations currently in existence be strictly enforced.



LAND USE

Land in the 381 acre study area is predominantly residential and institutional in use. The residential area is separated from the central business district by a strip of warehouses, wholesale outlets and parking lots, and is divided by the institutional area running east and west. The land use map also shows commercial areas, mixed residential and commercial uses, areas of public use, and industrial and warehouse-use activity. Commercial uses in residential areas are neighborhood oriented with a few important exceptions. Present and proposed land use is summarized in the following table:

Category of use	1958	1958	1983	1983
	%	acres	%	acres
Residential	34	130	25	97
Institutional	16	60	25	97
Public	8	31	11	41
Commercial	9	36	11	41
Industrial and Warehouses	1	5	0	0
Vacant land	4	14	0	0
Streets	28	105	28	105
Total	100%	381	100%	381

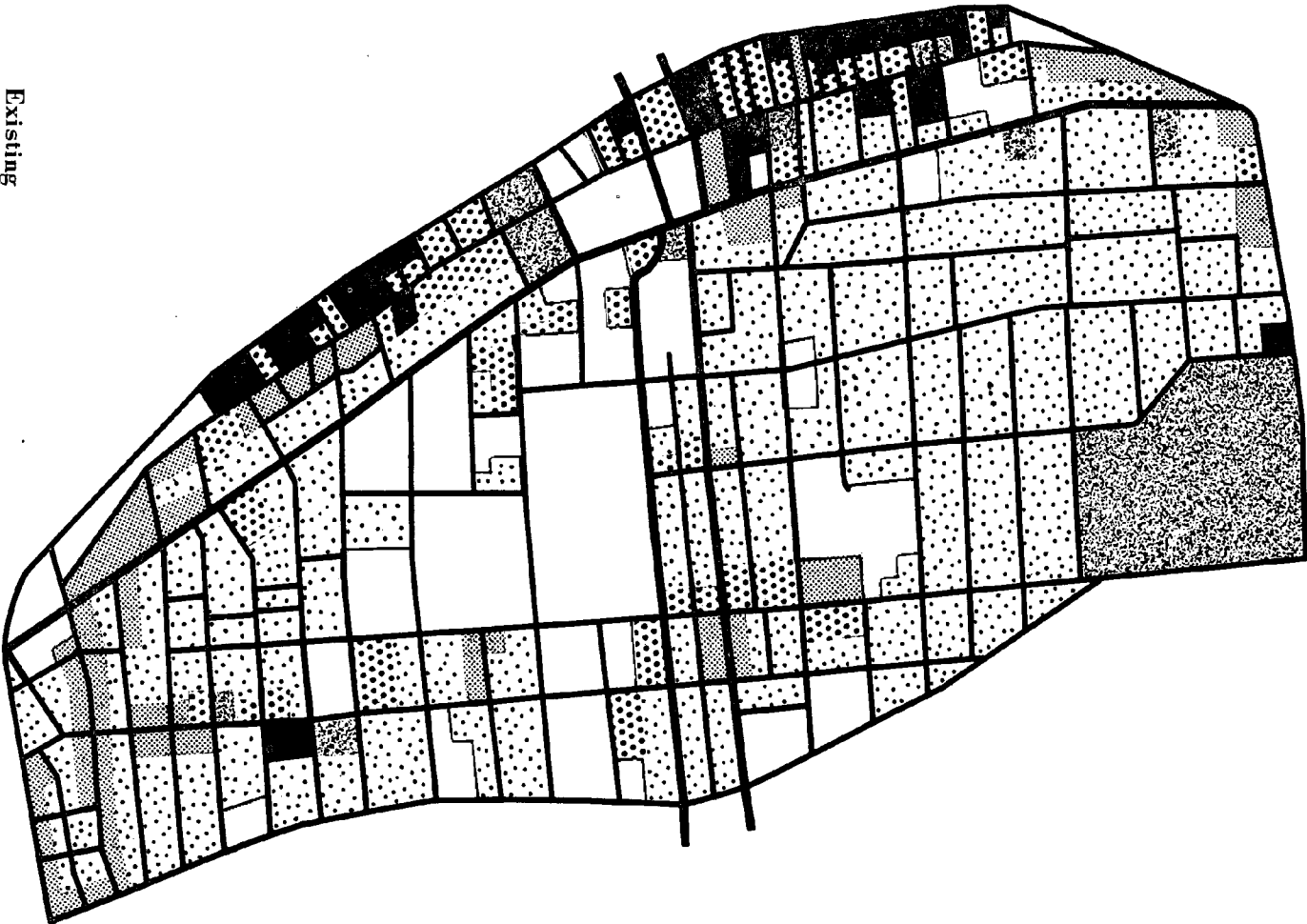
RESIDENTIAL LAND USE

The predominant type of residential structure on College Hill is the detached wood frame building accommodating one, two, or three families. The existing densities of these structures on the land are in many instances too great. Overcrowding of structures is particularly acute in the extreme northern and southern parts of the study area. The proposed 25-year land use plan shows a decrease in residential acreage. Coupled with an increase in population, the residential densities will be greater. This increase in density, however, will not cause worse living conditions as design of the structures on the land will be more efficient.

COMMERCIAL LAND USE

The continuous strip of commercial land running north and south between the river and North and South Main Streets varies considerably in character. At its center, where Market Square connects College Hill and downtown Providence, are located some of the city's finest commercial and institutional buildings, including

Existing



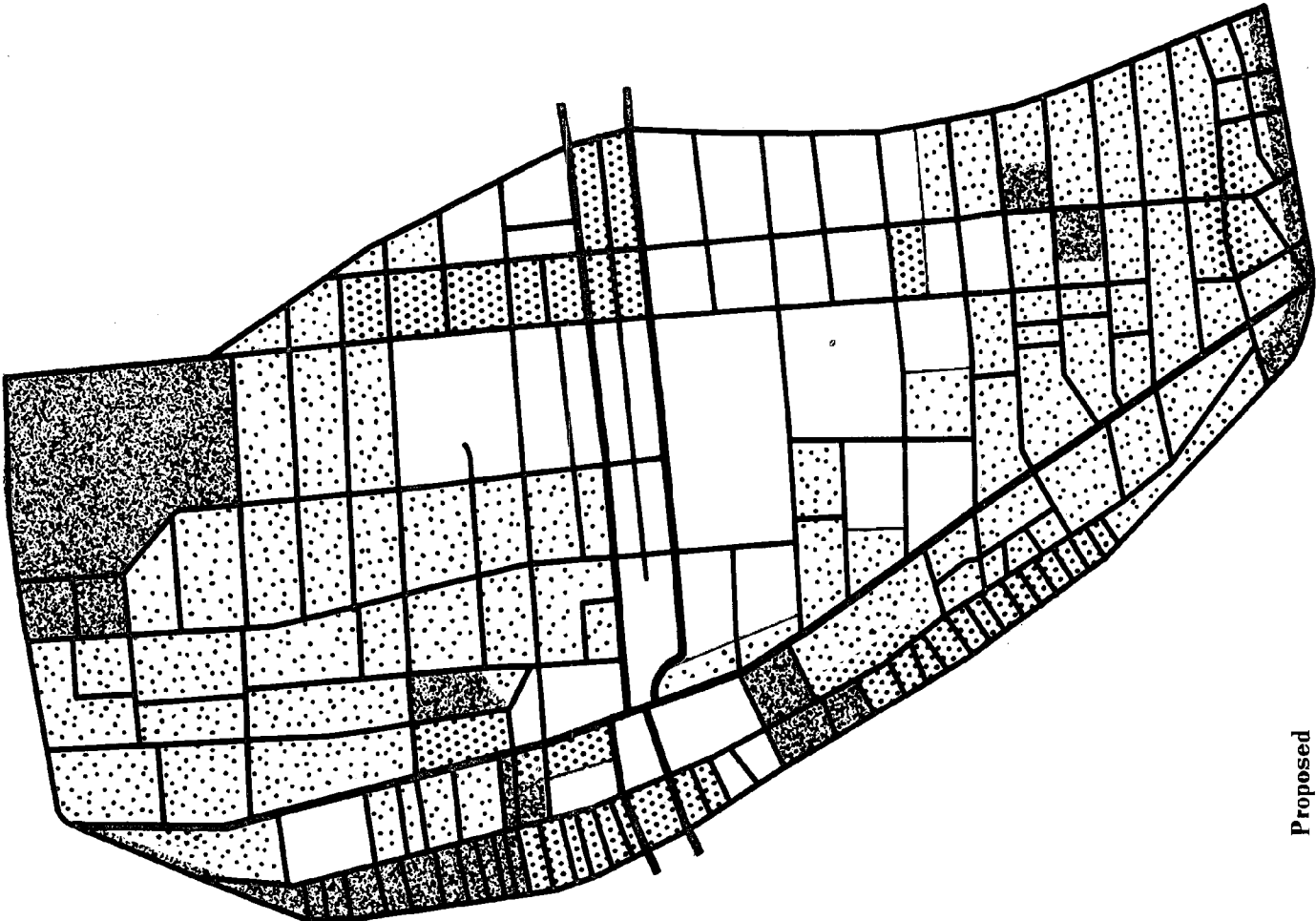
the Providence County Court House, banks, insurance buildings, and the Rhode Island School of Design. To the north and south, however, is an assortment of wholesale outlets, warehouses, and some second-hand shops, many of which are housed in substandard structures. These "fringe-type" uses have had a blighting influence on the residential area of the entire hillside, and their removal or rehabilitation is noted in the proposed land use plan. Another important commercial area is located on the northern end of Thayer Street. To the south along Wickenden Street is another shopping area serving the residents of Fox Point. The majority of these shops are located in the first floor of older residential structures. This center is strung out, has practically no off-street parking facilities, and is plagued by vacancies.

There are several non-conforming commercial uses of the single store or shop variety scattered throughout the area. Three major instances are particularly important. A large bakery with considerable truck traffic is located in a residential area and across the street from a playground. On another side of the same playground is a four-story laundry, also with considerable traffic in trucking. In the northern section is a casket factory which though relatively quiet in its operation is out of character with the surrounding residential neighborhood. The long-range plan contemplates the ultimate removal of these non-conforming uses.

INSTITUTIONAL AND PUBLIC LAND USE

The proportion of land used by institutions is particularly high in College Hill, due to the location within the area of Brown University, Pembroke College, the Rhode Island School of Design and Bryant College. It is anticipated that these institutions will grow considerably, but more slowly over the next 25 years than in the past ten years, as much expansion has already occurred. It is not expected that other institutions will expand appreciably in the foreseeable future with the possible exception of the central building group of the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island which is considering a program of housing the elderly and increasing other facilities.

Public land includes a few small parks, the Providence County Court House, the Sixth District Court, the Hope Street High School and Benefit Street Elementary School. The elements of this group slated for expansion are the parks and a new elementary school to replace the Benefit Street School.






Proposed




**ZONING FOR USE**

The present zoning ordinance of the City of Providence provides for four residential zone classes, three of which occur within the College Hill study area. Some changes in the present zoning district boundaries are recommended, based on observable trends in land use, as well as on proposals made in the master plan for the area.

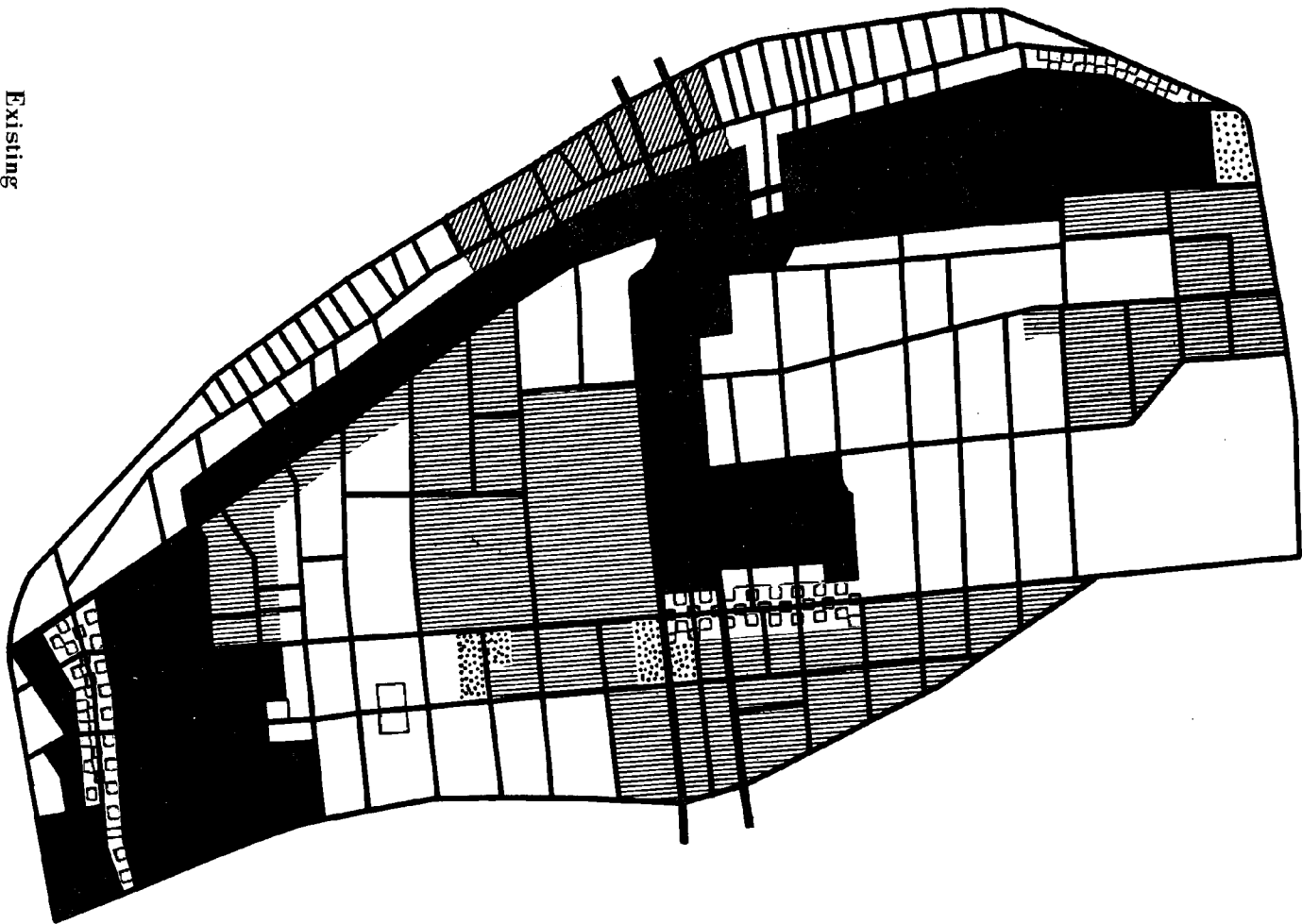
**RESIDENTIAL ZONES**

In most of the present One-Family or R-1 zones  in College Hill, there has been sufficient conversion of existing structures into apartment type use to warrant some reduction of the area devoted to this zone. Two-Family or R-2 zones do not occur in College Hill. There has been exhibited a definite tendency for types of uses permitted in the General Residence or R-3 zones  to expand into the R-1 zone from the north and from the southeast. However, rather than change portions of R-1 zones to R-3 and accelerate the intrusion into the area of new structures which would be out of scale with existing buildings, it is suggested that conversion of buildings in an R-1 zone to multiple dwellings be allowed at the discretion of the Zoning Board of Review. Land now in the Multiple Dwelling or R-4 Zone  is proposed to be reduced considerably so as to be limited principally to areas skirting the hill.

**COMMERCIAL ZONES**

The master plan developed in this report for College Hill implies several changes in regard to the zoning of commercial areas. The present scattered array of stores along Benefit Street would be concentrated in three C-1 (Neighborhood Commercial) areas  , two at either end which would be for the convenience of high density dwellings proposed there, and another in the middle which would serve the student population. Other commercial frontage on the east side of Main Street has been drastically curtailed to three areas: 1) one in the north; 2) the area in the center which is ideal for C-3 (Downtown Commercial)  ; and 3) a strip along the east side of South Main Street, C-4 (Heavy Commercial)  has

Existing



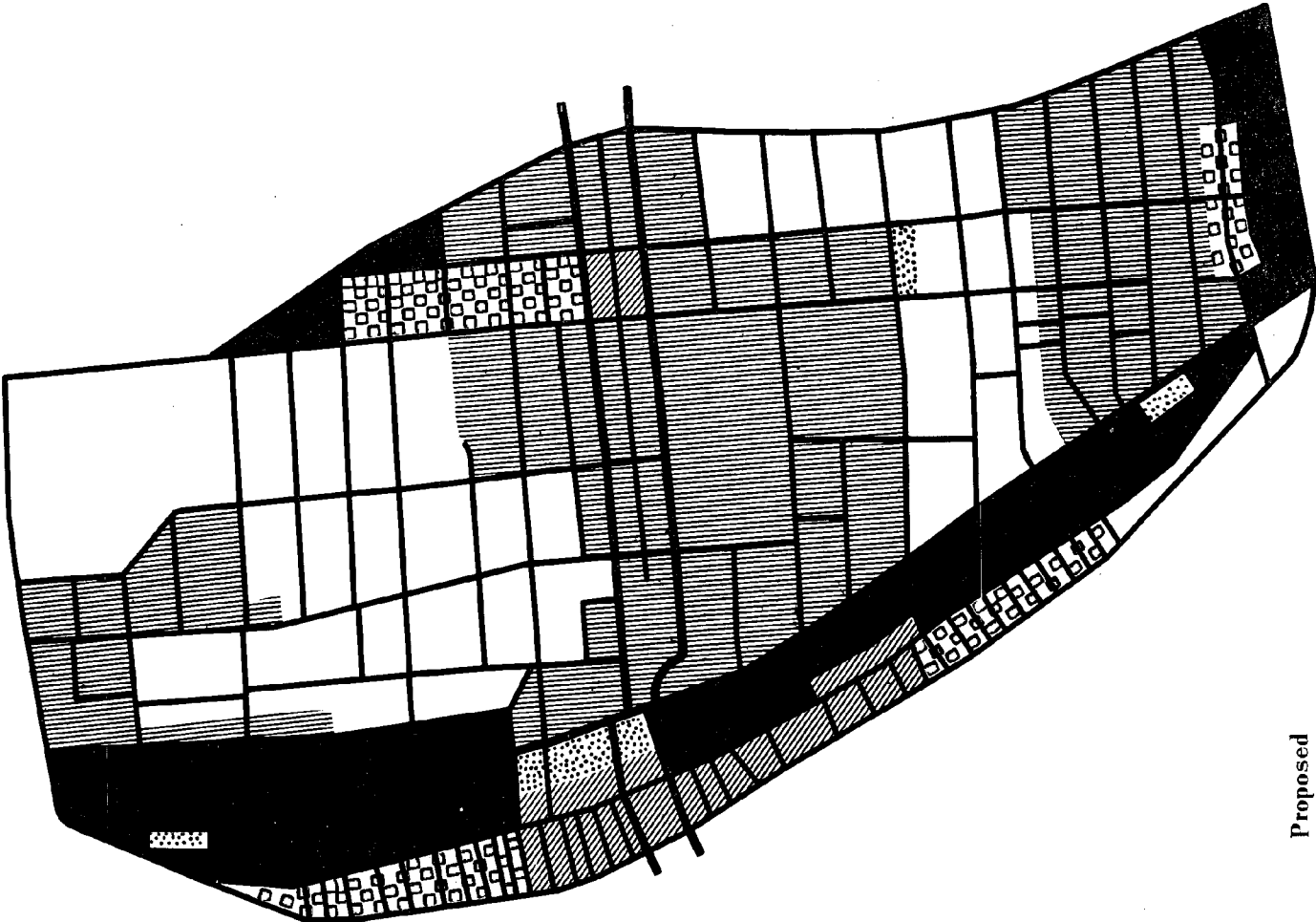
been deleted entirely from the area. The central C-3 zone is shown extended north to the area reserved for the proposed Roger Williams Spring Park and south to the projected rehabilitated commercial area zoned C-2

It is suggested that the Fox Point neighborhood retain two shopping districts: one within the study area and the other in the vicinity of Ives and Wickenden Streets. While this is different from the 1946 Master Plan, it is based on the concept that rehabilitation type renewal is projected for the area, and improving the existing center would be more in keeping with the program than the construction of one large center.

It is suggested that the Thayer Street shopping zone be increased from the present seven acres to ten acres. The long range plan reflects this rate of growth which was indicated by the studies made of the area. It is also suggested that the center grow to the east so that it will be eventually contained entirely between Brook and Thayer Streets. This will then permit the Pembroke Campus to extend to Thayer Street.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Other miscellaneous recommendations concerning zoning include increasing the height limit and density limit of apartments in R-4 districts for certain sites, particularly in renewal areas, where shape of sites or land costs warrant more intense use of the land. The regulations regarding the use of row houses seem unreasonably restrictive and it is suggested that these be relaxed in view of the considerably improved designs of this type of structure over the past few years.




Proposed





HISTORIC ZONING

Twenty-one cities in the United States have attempted to preserve historic areas through the use of some form of historic zoning or architectural control. In most cases, the purpose of such action has been to keep intact a body of buildings considered historically and architecturally important to the community and of interest on a broader, often national, scale. It has usually been a further purpose to prevent developments incongruous with the historic aspect of the surroundings.

After study of the ordinances in effect elsewhere, a historic zoning ordinance has been drafted for application to a portion of the College Hill area. This ordinance is presented in the program at the end of this report.

The problem of defining the area recommended for the historic zone has received careful thought. For the purposes of defining historic building and delineating historic areas, it was first necessary to develop an objective system for judging historic and architectural merit. As described in Part II of this report, the factors considered important in judgments of worth have been the following: historic interest, date of building, architectural merit, and character of the neighborhood of which the buildings form a part. Judgment of architectural merit has been based on considerations of style, scale, material and workmanship. On the basis of these criteria, a data sheet was filled in for each building in the area; and a scoring system applied to rate the buildings for historic interest, architectural merit, importance to the neighborhood and physical condition. The buildings have then been mapped according to period and architectural rating.

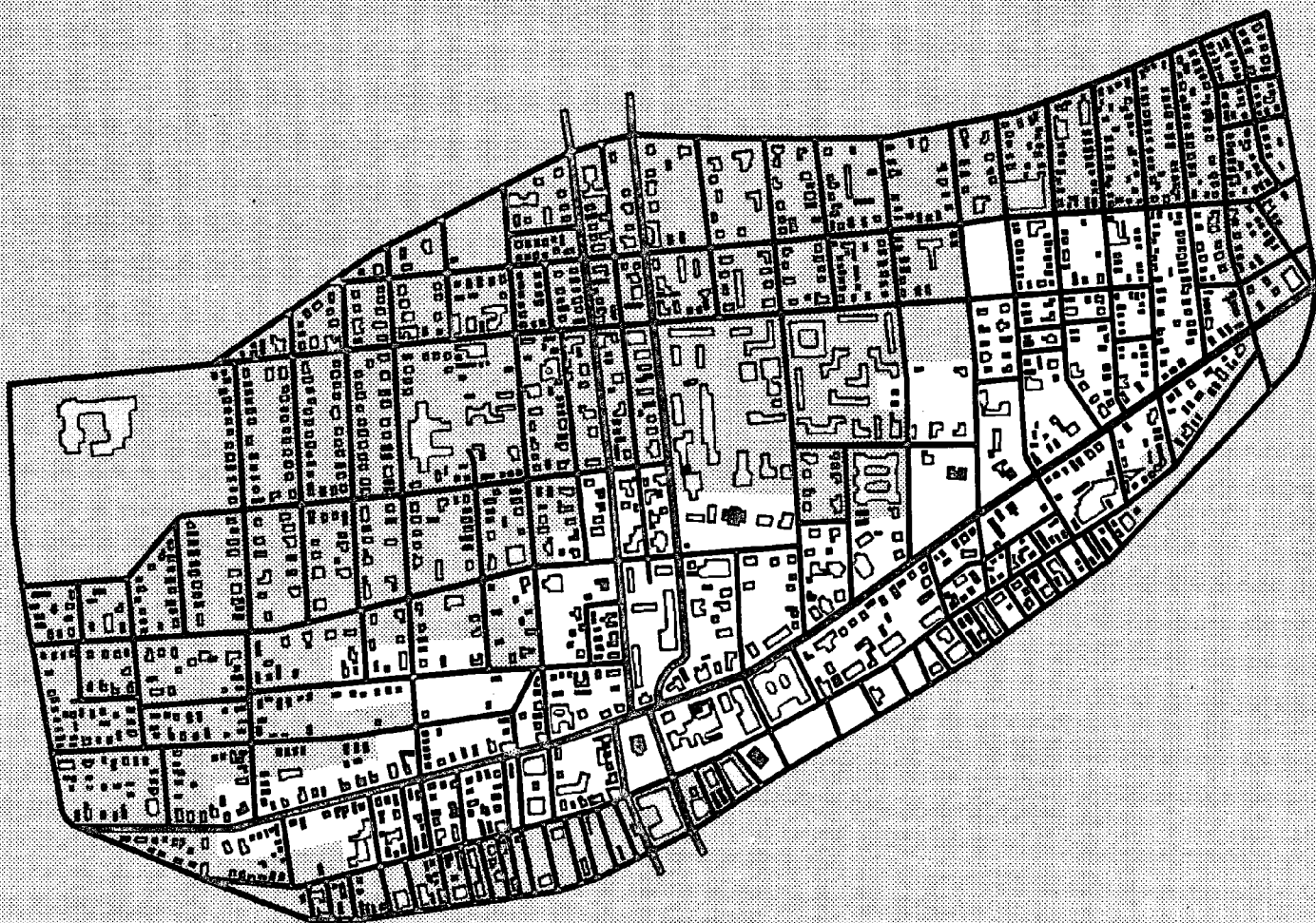
The accompanying map indicates all buildings according to period, and in effect, results in a description of the growth in time of the College Hill area. As may be seen, the few remaining buildings put up before 1775 and represented as  on the map are to be found near the line of the Old Town Street (now North and South Main Streets) where Providence was first settled. The buildings

shown as  on the map were put up between 1775 and 1830. They represent about two hundred and seventy-five structures and form the bulk of the early building left on College Hill; they are to be found in the same area as the earlier structures, as well as along Benefit Street and as far east as Hope Street on the streets south of George Street. Buildings of the Greek Revival period dating from 1830 to about 1845 and shown as  on the map also appear in this same area. In the early Victorian period, new houses went up along southern Benefit, Prospect, Angell, Waterman and Hope Streets. After the Civil War the section north of Angell Street and east of Prospect Street was gradually settled. Buildings of the Victorian period are shown on the map as . Structures built after 1900, designated as , include many large public or semi-public buildings, among them the new buildings for Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design, the Providence County Court House and two insurance buildings. As the larger area of most of these buildings indicates, they represent a major break with the domestic scale and character of the earlier structures.

The delineation of the historic zone (unshaded portion of map) recommended herein has been based on the concept that compact groupings of important and early architecture constitute neighborhoods worthy of protection. A study of the color pattern shown by the map indicates that the area where buildings put up prior to 1830 exist has fairly clearly defined limits and the area recommended for inclusion in the historic area zone has closely followed the limits of concentration of early buildings as shown on the map.

It is intended that the historic zoning ordinance drafted for this report should serve as a model for use for other areas of the city. Since important buildings fall outside the area recommended for historic zoning, and important groups of buildings fall outside the limits of this study, the ordinance has also been designed so that, upon application to the City Council, other historic districts in the city can be attached to the ordinance on the same basis as the originally designated area.








URBAN RENEWAL

An extensive urban renewal project is recommended for the College Hill area. Housing, environmental and other planning considerations were taken into account in the delineation of the boundaries for this project, but significantly, the grouping of valuable historic structures played a most important part in molding the urban renewal program.

Recognition of the historic value of a structure was found to give added value to it and special treatment was called for. Historic structures are often in the poorest sections of a city because of the age of the neighborhood. Standard surveys frequently place valuable historic structures in a slum category marked for demolition. Recognition of the historic worth of a structure, particularly if it is in an area where there are many other historic structures, raises its status in the consideration of a renewal program for the neighborhood. In College Hill, the value of retaining neighborhoods of such unusual character was recognized and areas which might otherwise be marked for demolition were placed in the rehabilitation category wherever possible. The delineation of clearance, rehabilitation and conservation areas in College Hill reflects this effort.

As will be seen in the previous section of this report, the recommended historic zoning overlaps much of the proposed renewal area. This would mean that the Historic District Commission, set up under the terms of the proposed ordinance, would have the power to review plans for new construction in those areas falling within the zone, and can to some degree prevent the removal of valuable structures. The ordinance does not, however, prevent absolutely the destruction of significant structures and some may have to be cleared to make way for worthwhile projects. But, in general, the ordinance will encourage a developer to make an effort to incorporate historic structures within the project plan, and only if it is not feasible to do so, should the Historic District Commission allow the structures to be destroyed.

In the recommended project, there are three types of renewal areas

proposed: clearance , rehabilitation , and conservation . Each area is to receive different types of treatment under Urban Renewal procedures. It is hoped that private enterprise can do most of the job and the program has been designed to that end, but public housing may be necessary in certain areas as indicated in a later section of this report. Clearance has been kept to a minimum, and only those structures are recommended for demolition that are felt to be beyond economic repair and which, as a group, serve to depress property values and would cause private enterprise to shun the blighted areas.

Structures in suggested clearance areas are proposed to be demolished to open the land for new building. In the suggested rehabilitation areas most buildings would be saved, although there may be some spot-clearance of poor structures. Special attention would be given to rehabilitation areas in the form of strengthening city ordinances and stepping up city services. Unusual mortgage financing can be made available with federal support in these areas and community group participation in fix-up efforts would be encouraged. The suggested conservation areas are earmarked so that the city and the residents can be alerted to signs of blight. Here, too, community group efforts are to be encouraged, special financing made available, and city services stepped up.

As is described in a later section of this report, two sets of plans for the Constitution Hill neighborhood (northern section) are presented: a minimum renewal scheme and a maximum. The minimum plan recommends the clearance only of those structures beyond hope of repair, the introduction of neighborhood facilities, and the enforcement of the minimum standards housing code. The second plan recommends more extensive clearance, the introduction of neighborhood facilities, the construction of a considerable number new residential structures, and a higher degree of rehabilitation than is required by the minimum housing code. The map showing the entire renewal area includes the maximum plan for the Constitution Hill neighborhood. Cost estimates in the following table also are for the entire area including the maximum scheme for Constitution Hill. If the minimum scheme were used, the estimate of cost of prepared land for the entire project would be \$850,000 less than the costs anticipated for the maximum scheme.

PROPOSED COLLEGE HILL URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

Total Area:	120 acres
Clearance:	57 acres
Total number of Dwelling Structures:	740
Sub-standard or Slum Structures:	290
Percent sub-standard or slum:	39
Total residential land use:	89 acres
Percent of project area in residential land use	74
Families displaced by clearance:	650

Clearance Areas

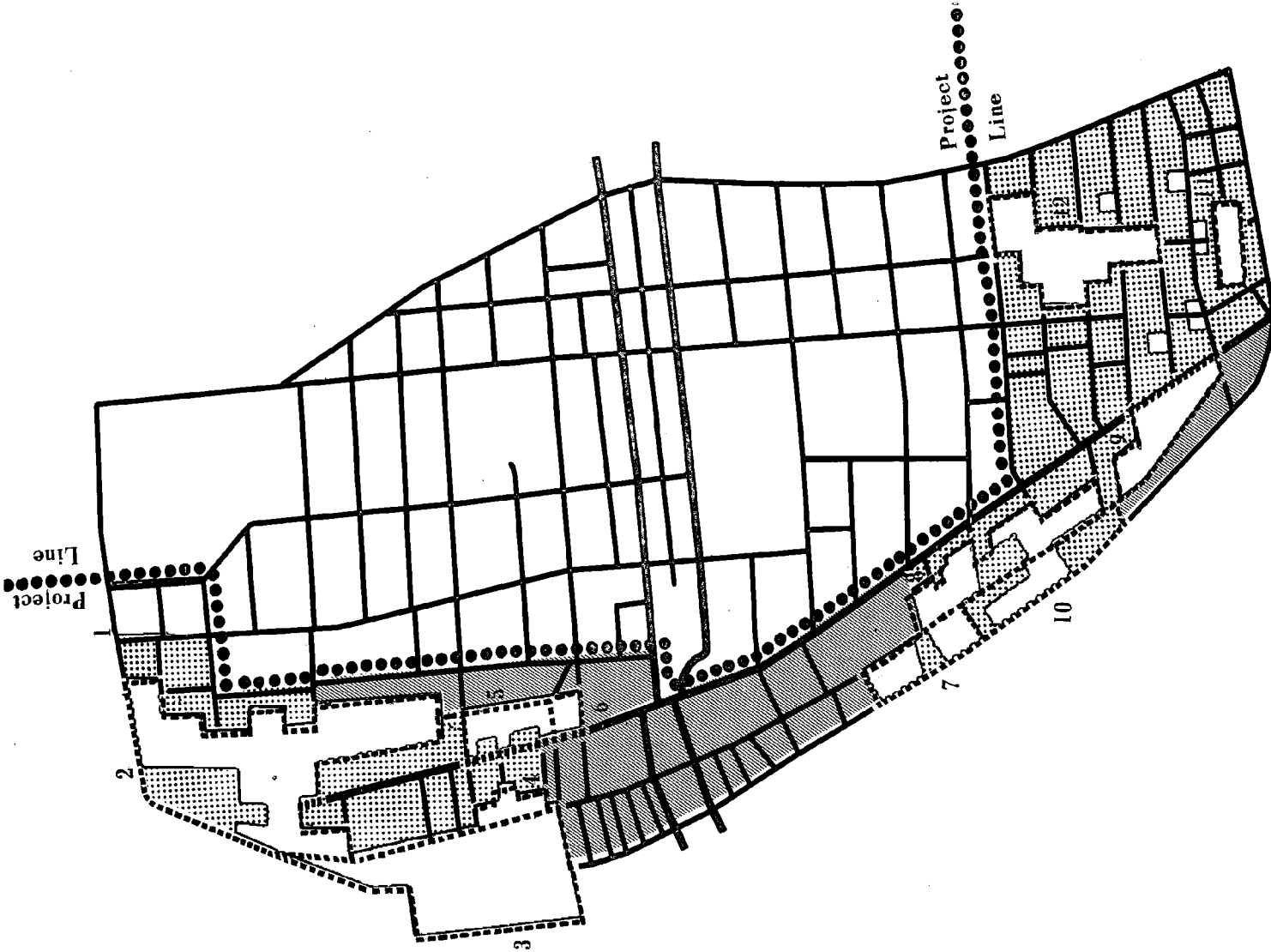
Area No.	Proposed Re-use (2)	Gross area in Acres (1)	Assessed Valuation
1	elementary school	2.8	\$188,560
2	housing	18.4	602,740
3	Roger Williams Spring Park	11.6	953,340
4	housing and parking	1.0	153,370
5	commercial	3.1	138,040
6	parking	0.7	48,880
7	commercial	1.8	201,160
8	housing	4.6	340,980
9	housing	3.4	211,480
10	commercial	2.3	193,040
11	housing	2.3	67,770
12	recreation and housing	5.4	401,680
		57.4	\$3,501,040

(1) includes streets

(2) details of proposed developments are included in next section of this report


Cost Estimates For Renewal Project

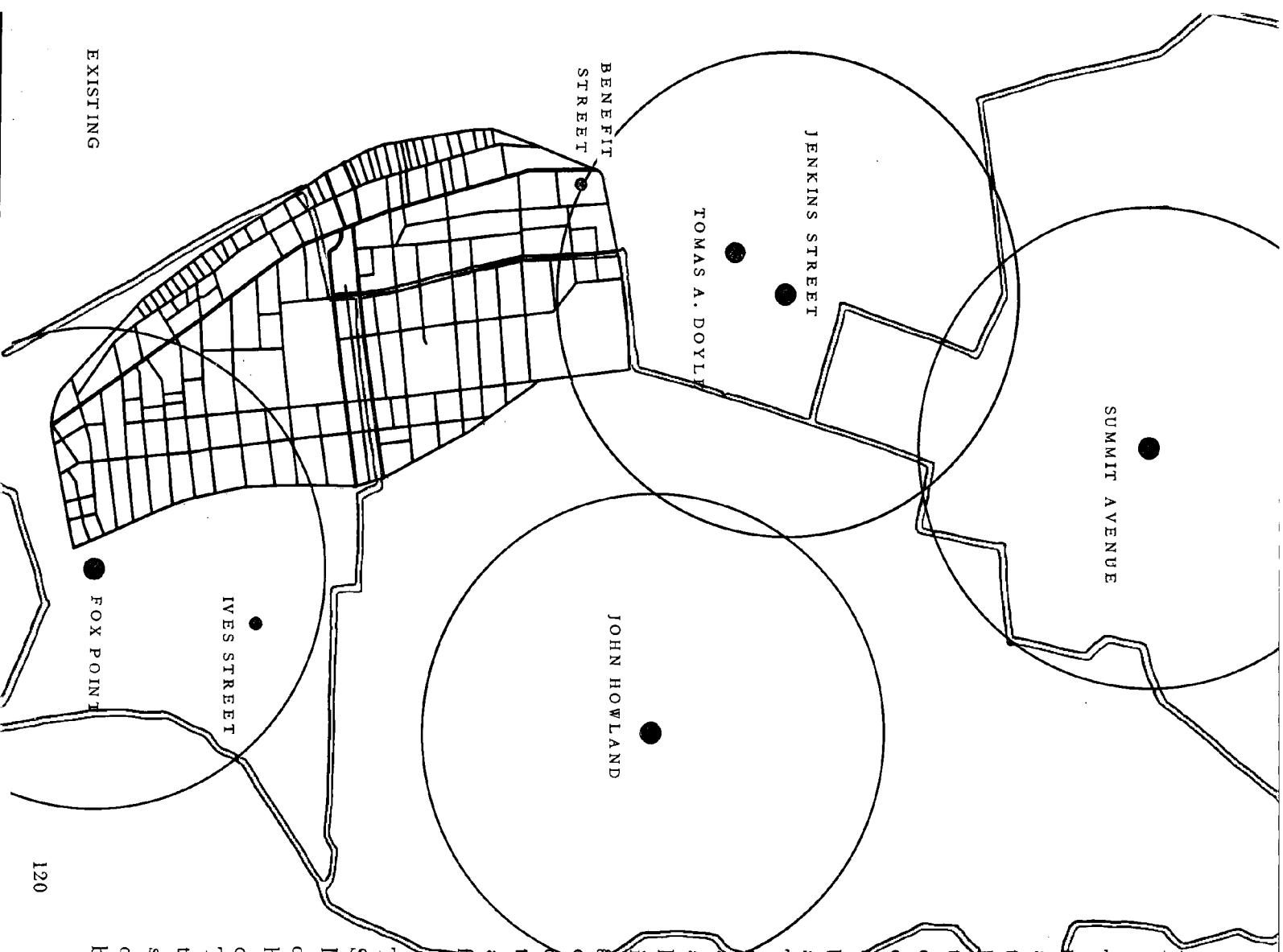
Real Estate Purchases	\$ 9,000,000
Site Improvements	500,000
Planning and Administration	+ 1,000,000
Gross Project Cost	\$10,500,000
Resale of Land	- 2,100,000
Net Project Cost	\$ 8,400,000
▪ city share (1/3)	2,800,000
▪ federal share (2/3)	5,600,000



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The children of College Hill are served by public, private, and parochial schools within and adjacent to the area. Over the years a school districting pattern has developed which seems unsatisfactory in several respects. Some of the areas in College Hill served by the John Howland elementary school outside the area are more than a mile away from the school. Benefit Street School, the only elementary school in the area, is districted in such a way that its enrollment is almost all nonwhite. Population over time has shifted, leaving some of the old schools only partly used. The poor condition of some of the schools and the lack of recreation space and facilities create other serious problems in this area. The Benefit Street School was built 118 years ago and is the oldest still in use as a school in the city. It is in poor condition, has no auditorium or gymnasium, and has an inadequate quarter-acre play area. The Thomas A. Doyle School, just to the north of College Hill and serving children in the northwest corner of the study area is in poor condition, is lacking in facilities, and has no playground. The John Howland School which serves the children in the center of College Hill is in good condition but is located at an inconvenient distance. The new Fox Point elementary school serves the southern half of College Hill. This school is provided with an auditorium and gymnasium and it functions as a community center for the neighborhood.

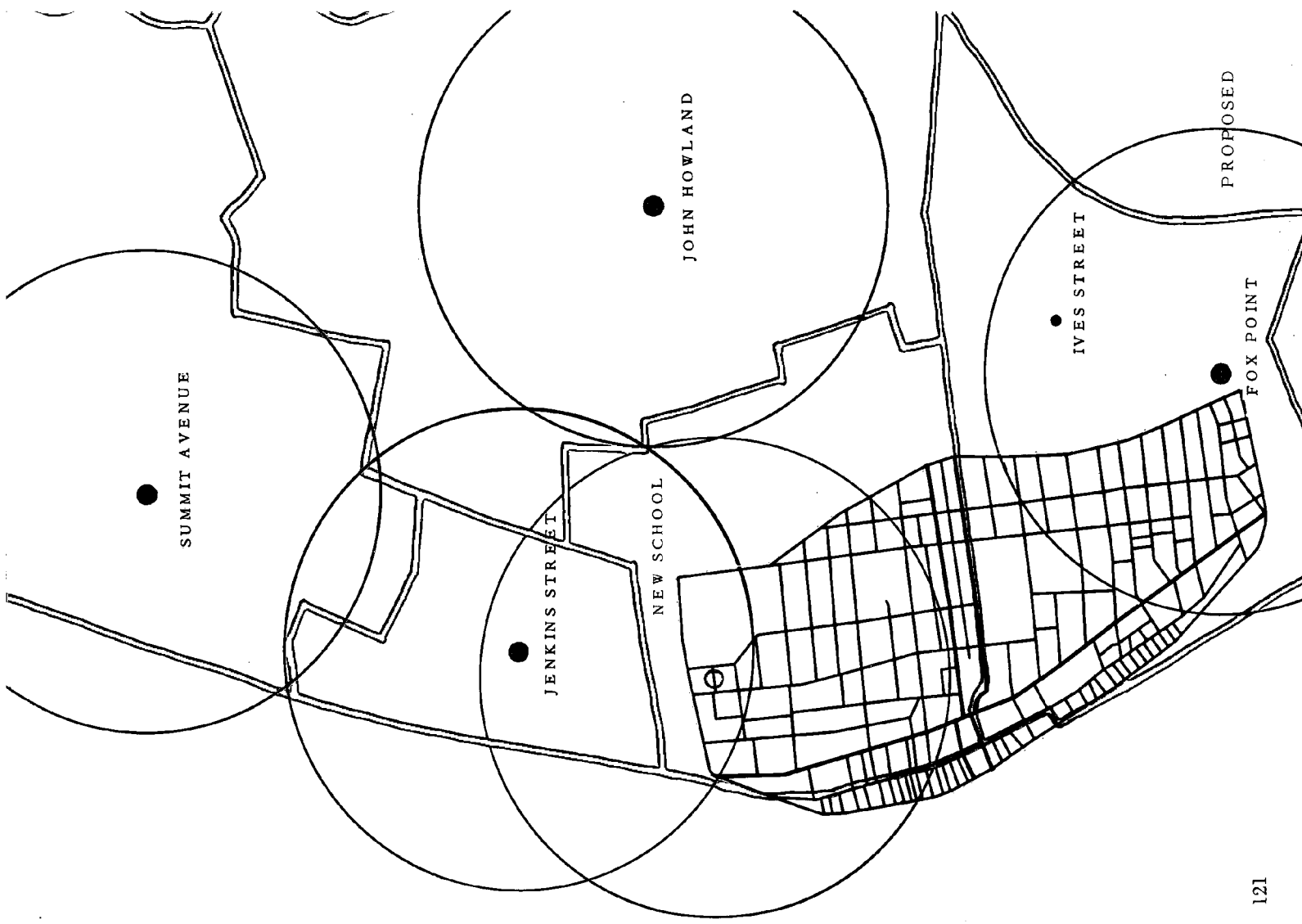
The City Plan Commission's 1950 "Master Plan for Public School Sites" recommended that both the Benefit Street and Thomas A. Doyle Schools be replaced with a new school to be located in the old Dexter Asylum property along Hope Street and gave such action high priority. It is now recommended that a site be chosen adjacent to the Hope High School grounds for the following reasons: The Dexter property has since been acquired by Brown University; the proposed location is more central to the population being served; and the site would be located within a renewal area. In conjunction with a new school is the proposal to realign district boundaries . North Main Street and the grounds of the Moses





Brown School and Dexter Asylum properties form physical boundaries to the west and east respectively. Brown University and Waterman Street define the southern limits, while the line at the north should run somewhere through the Lippitt Hill redevelopment area depending on population and street layout. With the adoption of this plan, all elementary schools on the east side would include kindergarten through the sixth grade with the exception of Ives Street School which accommodates children in the Fox Point neighborhood through the second grade.

The proposed new school should be designed to function as a community center. It is suggested that the activities now housed in the Benefit Street Recreation Center be accommodated in the new school as is done in the Fox Point School. The size of school needed is estimated at this time at 550 pupils; however, this figure should be re-examined when it can be accurately determined how many elementary school aged children will be living in the proposed Lippitt Hill and College Hill renewal projects. The current estimate is based on an interpolation of the annual school census taken by the school department. Taken into account in the estimate is the fact that an unusually high proportion of children in College Hill attend private schools; however, it is probable that some of these would attend public school with the advent of a new school plant in the area.

The proposed school site located just west of Hope High School playground measures two and three-quarters acres. Of four possible sites in the general area, it was chosen because of its favorable topography, because it would fit in with urban renewal requirements, and because its location is tied in well with the general plan developed for College Hill. Two and three-quarters acres is considerably below suburban standards for elementary school sites; however, it would be larger than all but two of the city's existing elementary schools and would have the advantage of sharing part of Hope High School's grounds.

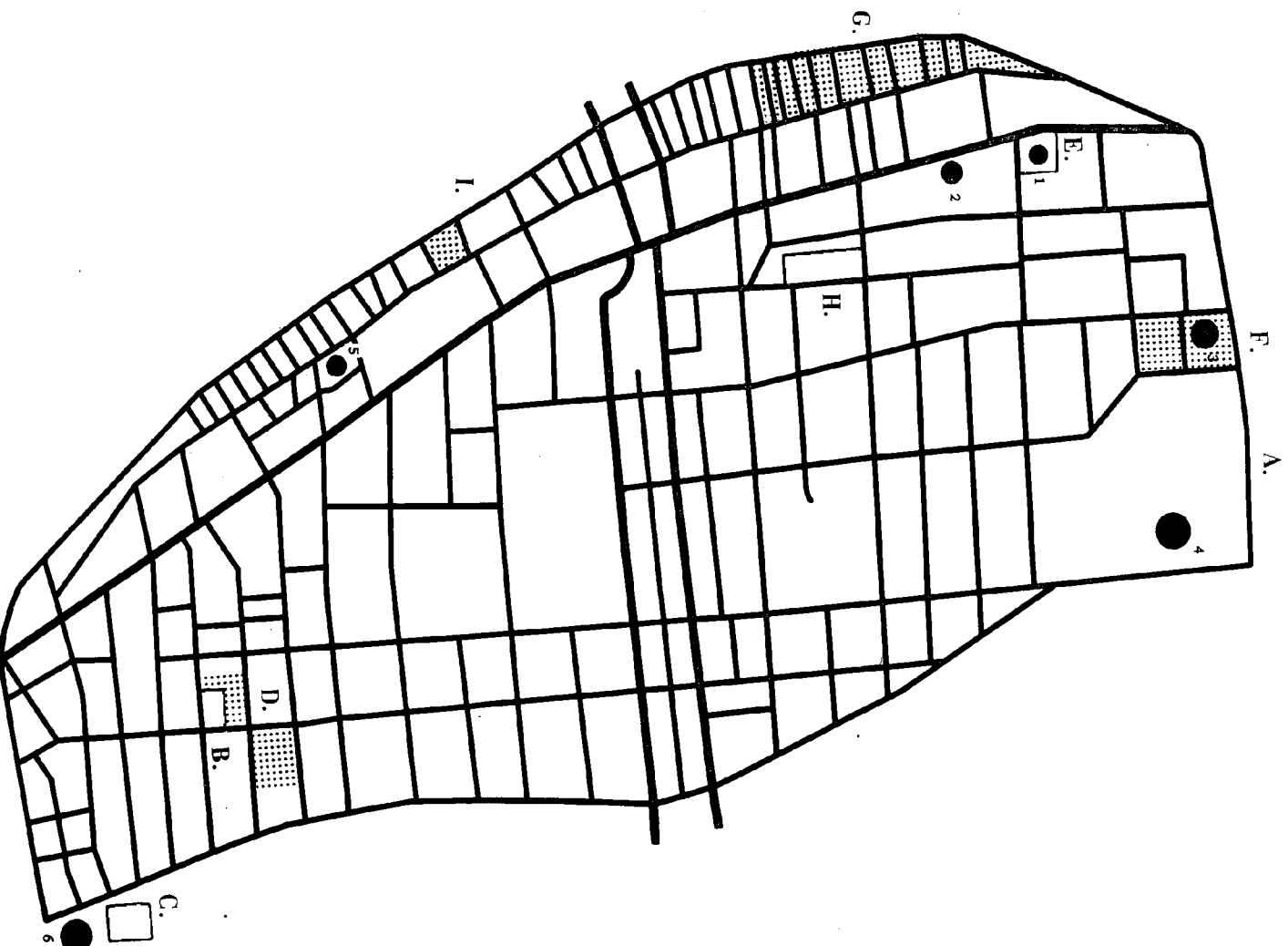


## RECREATION

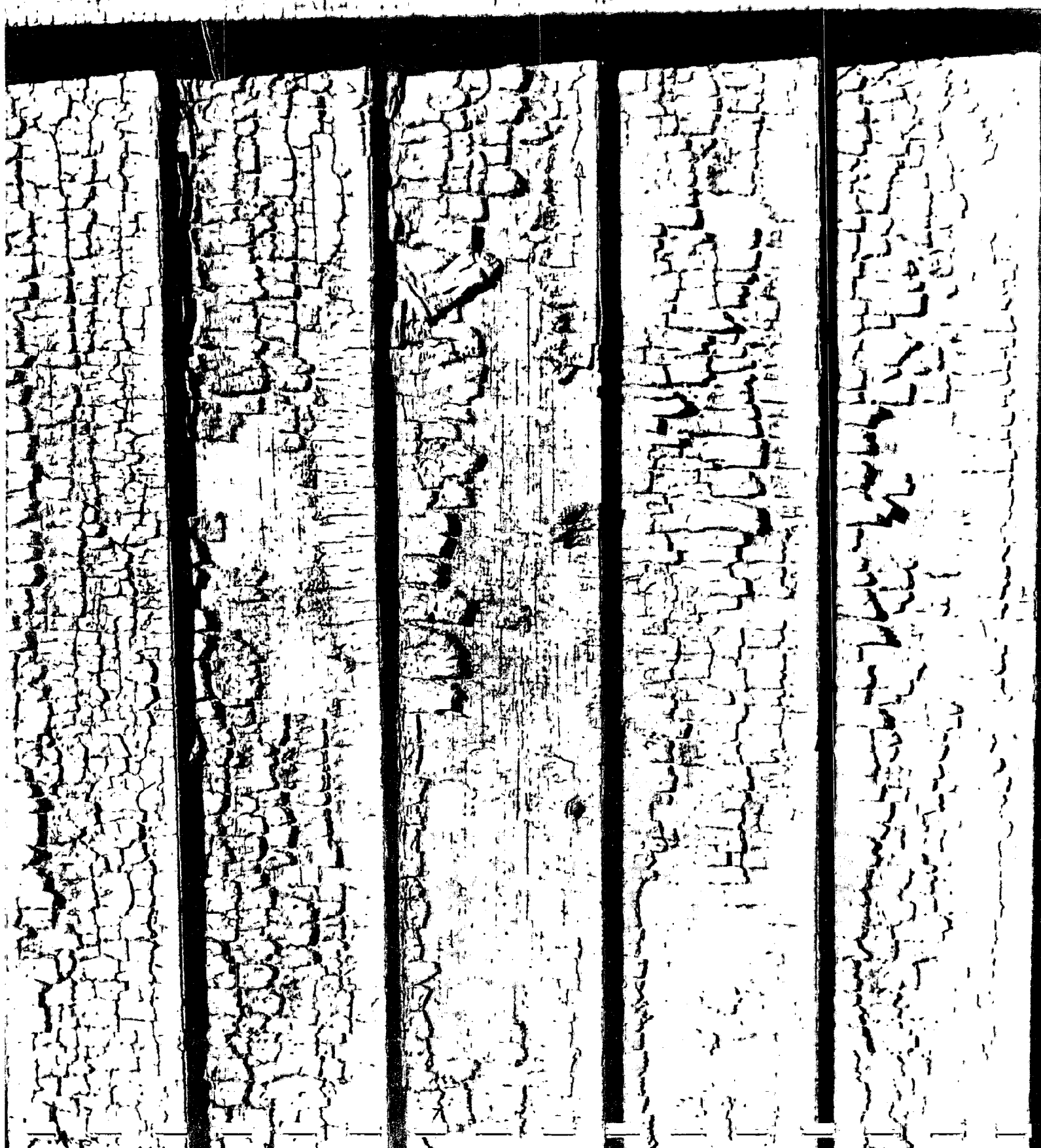
In 1953, a *Master Plan for Playgrounds and Playfields* was published by the Providence City Plan Commission. The College Hill study follows that Master Plan except where changes in conditions have occurred or where new planning proposals have changed requirements. The accompanying map shows the location of the existing  and proposed  recreation facilities which are described below:

- A. Hope High School Playfield, adequate in size and facilities, serves children in the northern two-thirds of College Hill.
- B. Veterans Memorial Park playfield, situated one-half mile to the east of Hope Street, serves the older children in Fox Point to the south, but is not ideally located.
- C. Tockwotton Park to the east of College Hill, is a well-equipped playground adjacent to and serving the Fox Point School, but its area of 1.6 acres is not sufficient for the Fox Point population.
- D. The Arnold Street Playground, only four-tenths of an acre in size, bordered by streets carrying heavy truck traffic, has almost no equipment. It should be possible to increase its area to a total of 1.9 acres through urban renewal by acquiring some blighted dwellings and a factory across the street.
- E.. The one-quarter acre Benefit Street Elementary School playground is the only play area for the children of elementary school age in the Constitution Hill area.
- F. Benefit Street Playground would be replaced with a 1.4 acre playground when the proposed new school for the area is built.
- G. Roger Williams Spring is located in a small park just west of North Main Street. Its enlargement to a four acre national historic park is proposed.
- H. Prospect Terrace, made into a park in the nineteenth century, is used as a place to relax and to view the city spread out below it.
- I. The Court House Plaza, a small park of seven tenths of an acre, is not used for active recreation. Its expansion south to Crawford Street is proposed.

Also located on the map are the following centers for community use and recreation: 1. Benefit Street School, 2. Benefit Street Recreation Center, 3. New Elementary School, 4. Hope High School, 5. Providence Boys Club, 6. Fox Point Elementary School.









### III C.-DETAILED PROPOSALS

#### SUMMARY

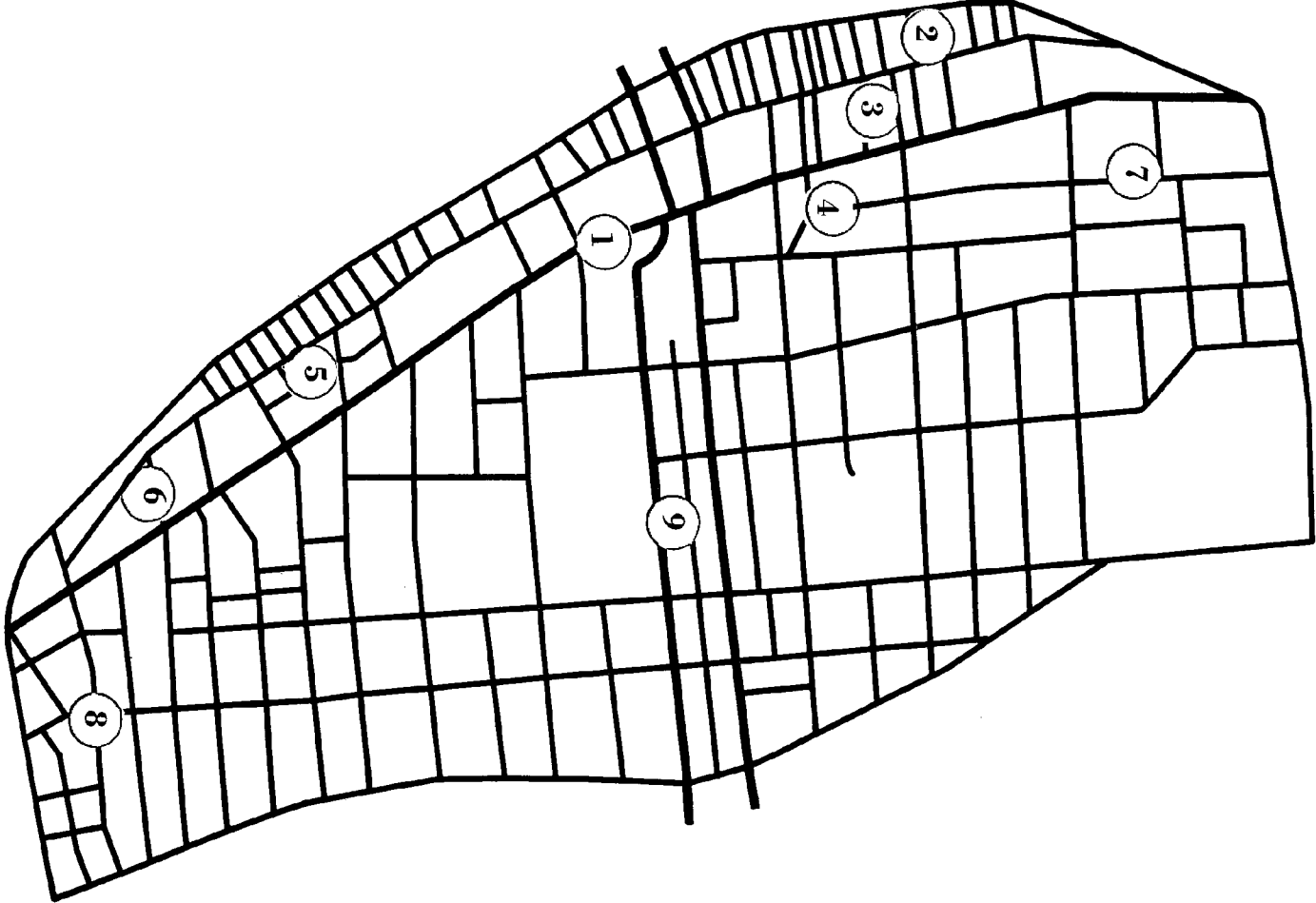
This section is concerned with detailing the specific proposals contained within the general planning program presented in the previous section. It should be noted at the outset that the choice of types of development stems from the policy of relating each development opportunity to the needs and programs of the entire College Hill area. Each proposal has been checked with various advisory committees for the study.

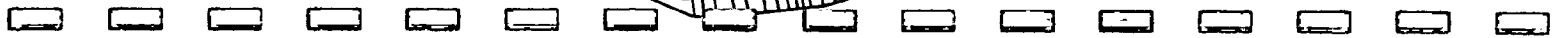
Architectural solutions for the various development proposals are presented here for several reasons: 1) to show how practical use can be made of historic structures by incorporating them into actual designs; 2) to suggest ways that the integrity of the existing historic and other structures can be retained where such structures are included as an integral part of a development of new building; 3) to show that new structures do not need to be designed in an eclectic style in order to be compatible with historic architecture.

The majority of the proposals made here occur within the urban renewal area. The most inclusive of these is the proposal for the Benefit Street Trail (1) which outlines a comprehensive program for preservation of historic architecture, and also recommends the development of facilities necessary to make it a successful tourist attraction. These recommendations include the development of the Roger Williams Spring and house site as a National Historic Park (2); a Pilot Rehabilitation area (3) in the north Benefit Street section near the Spring site; to be overlooked by the proposed Golden Ball Inn II (4) designed to accommodate both transients and residents.

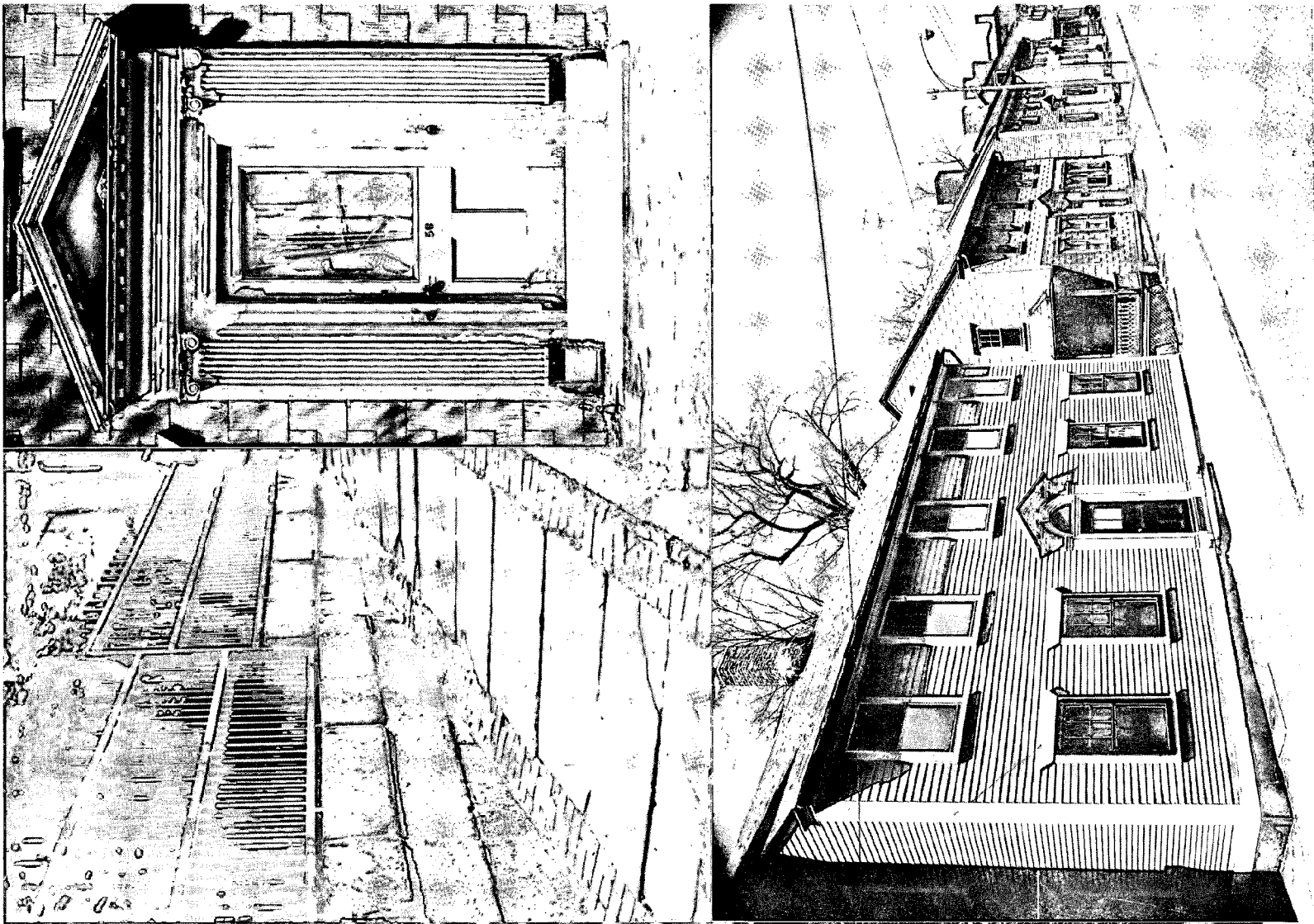
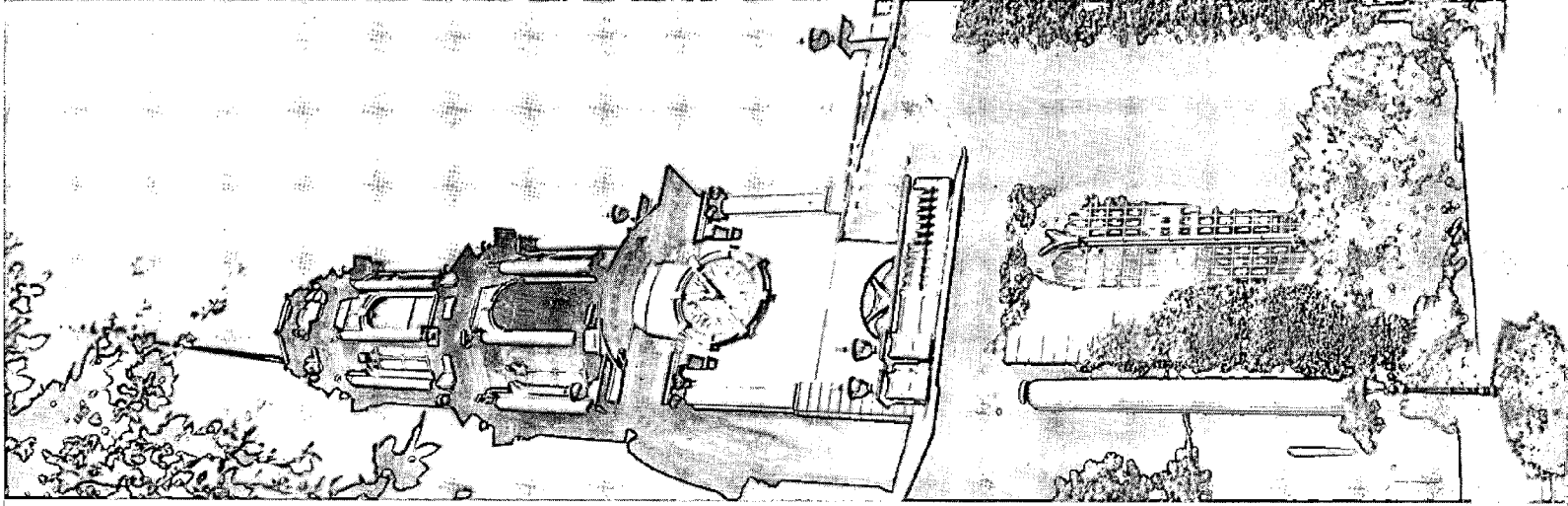
The blighted area along the river in the South Main Street area (5) is suggested for commercial and residential redevelopment. It is also proposed that a tower (6) be built to mark the south terminus of Benefit Street. In the extreme northern section, the blighted area of Constitution Hill (7) will be renewed; so also will the Wickenden area (8) in the south, particularly in the vicinity of the shopping area and the Arnold Street playground.

In the University area, not so much attention is given to specific proposals as is given to an analysis of, and a plan for, the whole area (9). The plan presented here should be considered as a suggestion only.





**BENEFIT STREET  
TRAIL**



# BENEFIT STREET TRAIL

Benefit Street is the backbone of the historic College Hill area of Providence. It is one of the oldest streets in the city, and is lined with many structures important for the era they represent and significant for the events that took place within them.

Renewal of much of College Hill will depend on rehabilitation and redevelopment in the Benefit Street area. As one means to foster renewal, it is proposed that a historic trail be developed along and off of Benefit Street. Such a trail would stimulate the public to restore and make proper use of the older structures, and would attract national attention to the architecture and history of College Hill. Similar trails exist in other cities and appear to be successful in attracting visitors. One of the factors in favor of the development of a historic trail is that much can be done at relatively little expense by installing plaques, landscaping and painting. The more costly projects can be developed in time as the program becomes accepted. The accompanying map shows the trail with existing points of interest and proposed features. Some of these are more fully described below:

■ **ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK** – The site where Roger Williams founded a new colony based on freedom of religious worship. According to the proposals made here, the present park around Roger Williams Spring would be enlarged and would include a small museum to present a graphic history of the city. This new park would serve as the northern terminus of the historic trail and as such would contain information facilities.

■ **A RESTAURANT AND INN** – Situated adjacent to Prospect Terrace and along the hillside would be an ideal location for an inn and restaurant to serve visitors to the historic area. The proximity to the points of historic and cultural interest, as well as the view of the city from the hillside, should make this a mecca for visitors to Providence.

■ **A CENTER FOR PROFESSIONAL OR OTHER CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS** – The area along Benefit Street and immediately west of it is a favorable place for the location of various organizations, and the eventual use of a small area as an organizational center is contemplated in current plans. At present the area has several rundown structures of unusual character which, if they were rehabilitated, could make attractive homes for small organizations.

■ **AN ANTIQUE CENTER** – At the southern end of South Main Street between South Main and South Water Streets, is currently contemplated the development of an antique center. This center would include the Tillinghast House and the Sheldon Storehouse around which new structures might be built.

■ **A MUSEUM SHIP** – Plans for the historic trail include acquisition of a historic ship which would be located in the Providence River adjacent to the antique center. Other cities have refurbished old sailing vessels to serve as museums with great success. It is quite appropriate for Providence to consider such a ship since the city's early economic vitality came from the sea.

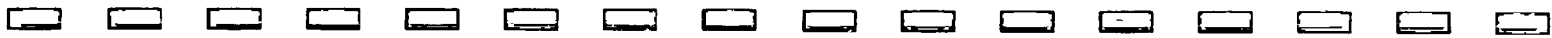
■ **AN ARTS AND CRAFTS CENTER** – In conjunction with the antique center, a small center for arts and crafts is contemplated. The city is an established center for the training of craftsmen and the production of arts and crafts work.

■ **PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION** – While the trail is only a mile long and can best be viewed on foot, it is probable that many people will not want to walk its entire length. Most will use their automobiles and convenient parking or stopping places must be provided along its length. It is desirable to reduce through traffic on Benefit Street so that people can pause by the curb to view a house without interrupting a steady stream of traffic. It is also desirable to have off-street parking places in the vicinity of the more popular points of interest. After a period of time, as the trail becomes more popular, it may be reasonable to provide transportation for the visitors, either for a fee or without charge. As in other cities, carriages could be used to carry passengers along Benefit Street.

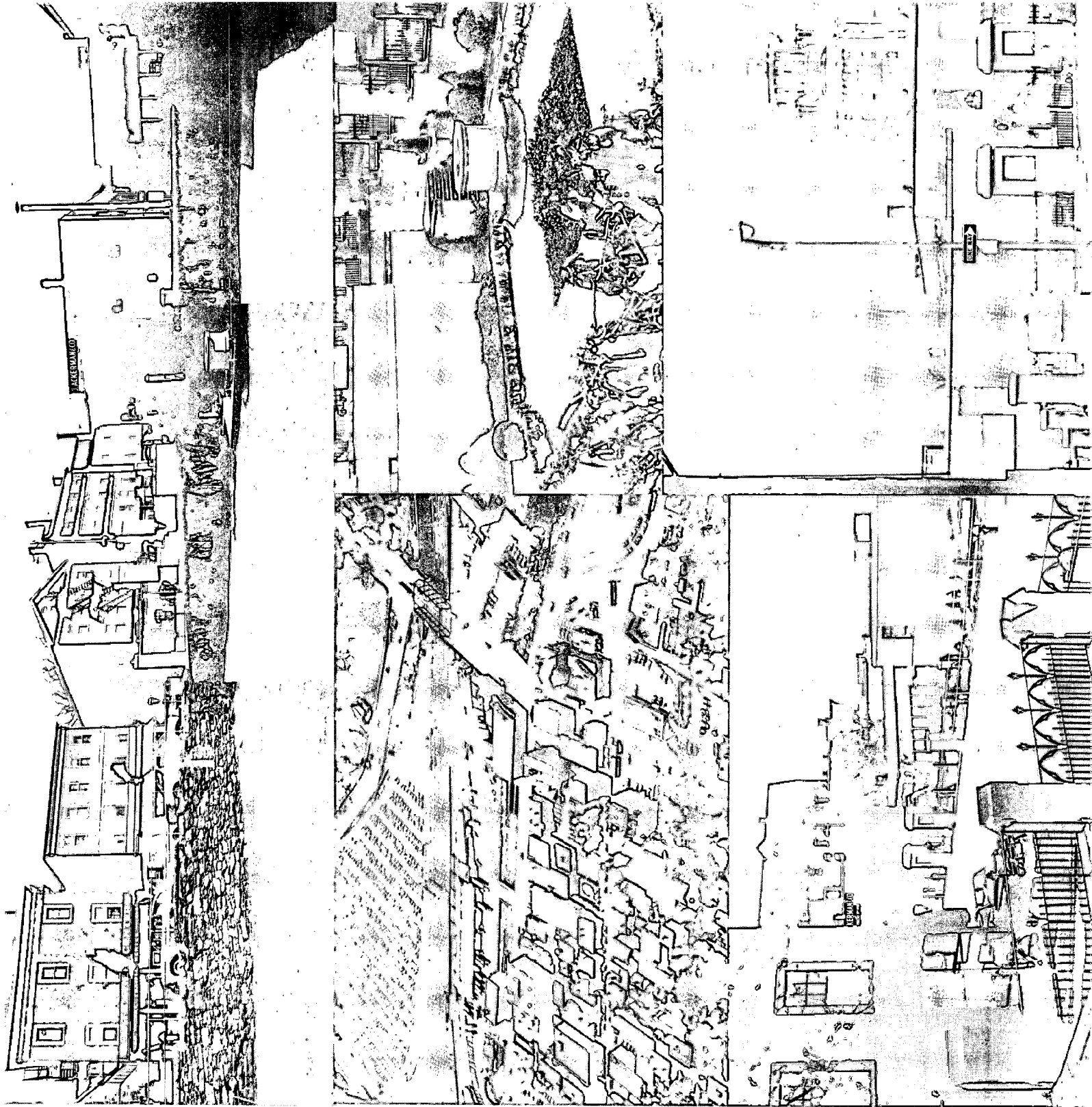
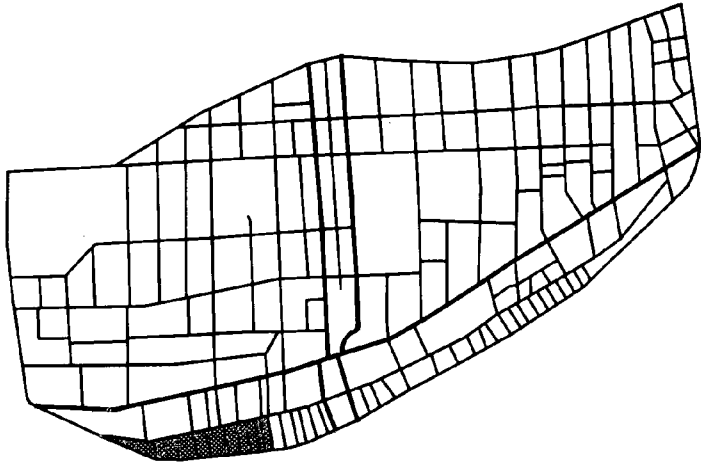
■ **STREET DESIGN** – The plan should unify all the elements of street design such as landscaping, pavements, colors and street "furniture" (lights, poles, signs, etc.) all of which have an important bearing on the total visual effect of the trail.

■ **RHODE ISLAND PRODUCTS HALL** – This would be located along South Main Street at the end of the trail. Though this function is not historic, it would make use of a large early 19th century building for the display of the products made in Rhode Island.

BENEFIT STREET HISTORIC TRAIL



ROGER WILLIAMS  
SPRING PARK



ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING PARK

The historic center of Providence is marked by Roger Williams Spring, from which point the city has spread in all directions. Here Roger Williams made his settlement. He dedicated it from the first to the principle of religious liberty and made it a haven for those "distressed for conscience". Williams built and lived in a one room stone-end house a little to the southeast of the Spring; its site is now partially covered by the structure at 233 North Main Street and is marked by a tablet on the front of this house. Williams' house, together with most of the town's other houses, was burned in 1675 by the Indians in King Philip's War. Williams died in 1683 and was buried on his own land east of his house, near the junction of Pratt and Bowen Streets, later part of Sullivan Dorr's orchard. His grave was opened in 1860 and his remains were transferred at that time to the North Burial Ground; but the base of a broken column marks the site of the original burial place.

In 1930, the spring site was given to the city for a park; at this time a wall, steps and well-curb were built and an evergreen garden was laid out by the Park Department. The accompanying photograph shows the spring as it exists today, surrounded by a miniature landscaped area and closely hemmed-in by the backs of commercial buildings on two sides, heavy traffic on another, and a parking area and lawn on the fourth.

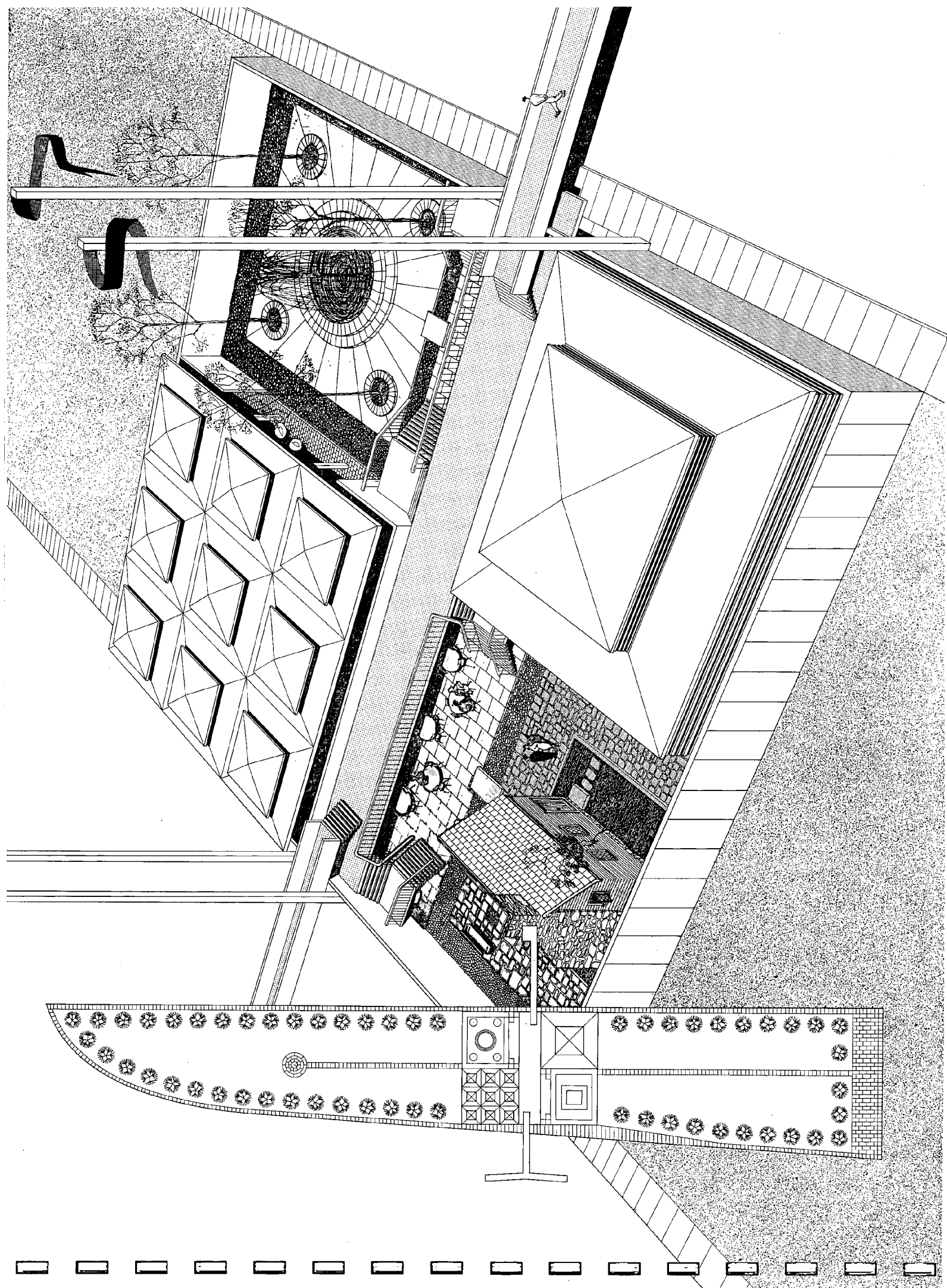
As the northern anchor for the Benefit Street Trail, it is proposed that the site of Roger Williams' original settlement of the City of Providence and the State of Rhode Island be enlarged and developed as a park site for the edification and inspiration of all the people of the United States. The purpose of the proposed museum and park is to memorialize more adequately Roger Williams as the founder of Providence, as well as the spot of the city's initial settlement, by building a museum and expanding the open space around the spring. The proposed site measures a little more than four acres bounded by Canal Street, North Main Street, Smith Street and Haymarket Street.

The principal elements of the scheme include:

- A three-acre landscaped park to give the spring and museum a setting and to provide a pleasant outlook from the rehabilitated historical section on the hill to the east.
- A one-acre area for the museum, spring, and plazas.
- An entrance court with the Roger Williams Spring as a focal point.
- A walled garden with a reconstructed 17th century house of the type in which Roger Williams and his fellow settlers would have lived. There is very little documented data available concerning the construction of his house, but documentation exists for similar houses of the period.
- A museum for a permanent exhibit telling the story of Roger Williams and the growth of the early settlement. Emphasis would be given to Roger Williams' contribution to our national heritage. The exhibit would also include documents, books, models of the settlement, relics and maps. Since historical displays have more value if they can be linked with the present and future, this museum could continue the story of the growth of the city by providing space for exhibits showing the present conditions of the city and plans for its future.
- A small slide-lecture hall where the visitor can get a visual introduction to the history surrounding Roger Williams and a pre-view of the Benefit Street Historic Trail which awaits the visitor.
- A small reading room where books and pamphlets are available for purchase or reading.
- A parking area across Canal Street large enough to meet the demands for parking anticipated for the park with enough extra capacity to serve nearby commercial properties.
- A pedestrian overpass connecting the parking area to the park and also leading to the Benefit Street Trail and to Roger Williams' house and burial sites on the hillside.

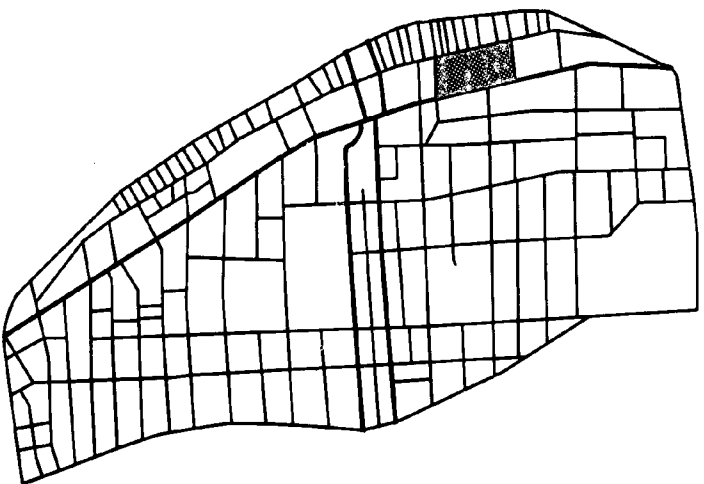
A plan and perspective of the proposed park development are shown on the following page.







# HISTORIC RENEWAL AREA



## HISTORIC RENEWAL AREA

On a four-block sloping site between North Main, Church, Benefit and North Court Streets stands a group of the city's earliest houses including the oldest, the Benjamin Cushing House built in 1737. On the south the area is flanked by the Colony House, now a district court, which served as the state house from the time of its construction in 1763 until 1900. To the north is the Cathedral of St. John built in 1810 on the site of the original King's Chapel. Across North Main Street to the west is Roger Williams Spring, site of the founding of Providence. Up the hill and across Benefit Street is the Sullivan Dorr house built in 1809, in the rear of which is located Roger Williams' burial site. Within the area at the corner of North Main Street and Howland Alley is the site of Roger Williams' house. Except for a row of five residential structures just south of the Cathedral, most of the houses which formerly stood along North Main Street have been replaced by commercial buildings.

The four blocks comprise over three and eight tenths acres of land on which stand thirty-nine residential and five commercial structures, and numerous garages and outbuildings most of which are in poor repair. There are one hundred and ten dwelling units in the area, contained in types ranging from one family frame houses to a thirty-five unit brick apartment house. Three of the residential structures are in mixed use with shops on the first floor, and three more have been completely converted to business use. Many of the businesses are wholesale yard-goods operations which front North Main Street and lack both parking and loading space. Need for storage facilities has caused their owners to build additions in the rear which have had a blighting effect on the houses farther up the hill. For the most part, these houses are in poor condition and many are without proper heating or adequate plumbing fixtures. Many structures are in various stages of deterioration and are in serious need of repair. Recently some of the buildings have been purchased and are being rehabilitated. There are indications that this trend will continue as more people become aware of the quality of the houses.

Yards are small, irregular in shape, and are often almost entirely given over to parking. The parking problem is further complicated by the practice of converting structures built for one family use into multi-family dwelling units. At present there are primarily three types of occupancy in the area: 1) young couples, who represent the smallest group, 2) college students, who usually rent for periods of eight or nine months only; and 3) single persons, many of whom are older and are either on relief or pension. This

last category probably accounts for the largest group. The student group will tend to diminish as the colleges complete their programs of dormitory building.

These blocks lined with historic buildings are in the center of the northern part of Benefit Street and their rehabilitation will serve as an example for the areas to the north and south. They, therefore, play a particularly important role in the renewal of College Hill. Several design objectives have been kept in mind as the comprehensive plan for the area has been developed: 1) the proposed park to the west would justify the renewal of the North Main Street frontage of these blocks for residential reuse to make a continuous renewed strip from the bottom to the top of the hill; 2) visitors will enter the Benefit Street Historic Trail through this area from the park and its effect as an entrance should be heightened as much as possible; 3) the three sites relating to Roger Williams should be connected by a pedestrian way through the area from the spring, past his house site and on up the hill to his grave site; 4) removal of some commercial structures and the rehabilitation of residential structures should be undertaken to eradicate blighted conditions in the area; 5) ways should be found to solve parking problems and to allot more land for private yard space.

In addition to the design objectives for this area, it has also been the intent to show how architecturally valuable houses which have been allowed to become slum dwellings can be rehabilitated in a renewal scheme and changed from neighborhood liabilities into important civic assets. This of course implies the existence of a market for them which can absorb the costs of expensive rehabilitation work.

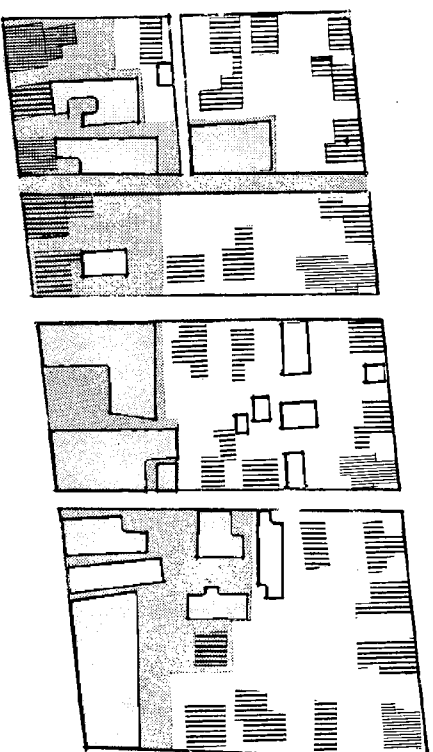
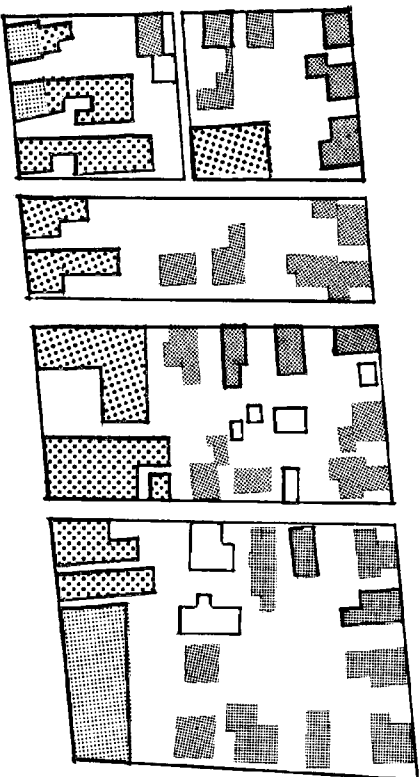
The work of this study and other activities on the part of the sponsoring organizations have already interested people in buying and rehabilitating property in the College Hill area. The part that a comprehensive plan plays in this venture is to assure investors that the neighborhood as a whole will improve and its deficiencies be corrected.

This study will serve as a pilot investigation not only in planning and architectural scope but in financial matters as well. The costs of rehabilitation have been investigated so that potential investors in the area can tell what costs are to be anticipated over and above purchase prices and what the scale of sale prices or rentals might be. In these particular blocks the type of rehabilitation which the historic architecture warrants will be much more extensive than that required by the minimum housing standards

code and will result in a change to owner-occupied dwellings or in a rental increase so high as to cause relocation of some of the present inhabitants. Where the houses are less important historically, a less extensive rehabilitation job is required and rent schedules can be gauged to keep within the price range of the present tenants.

Proposals for the area include: 1) clearance of commercial structures, outbuildings, and some houses which are beyond repair; 2) relocation of one house which is now poorly situated; 3) construction of new apartment and garage units in the cleared site fronting North Main Street; 4) provision of centrally located parking facilities which are more efficient and allow more yard space; 5) realignment of a few lot lines to correct the situation of inequitable distribution of yard space which has been the result of unwise subdivision; 6) rehabilitation of existing houses; 7) landscaping, paving, and street lighting.

Before examining the program in detail it will be helpful to look at two diagrammatic site plans, the first of which shows existing conditions and the second of which points out the renewal actions required. Historically and architecturally valuable houses are indicated by a cross-hatch pattern and these are only the ones in the "good" or better categories. Commercial buildings are shown by a dotted pattern and combined commercial and residential are indicated by a diagonal line pattern. Surveys on housing conditions determined which houses are in the "substandard" and "slum" categories and these are shown by a solid black pattern. The condition of the commercial properties in general is poor to



fair. Their existence in the neighborhood is a hindrance to satisfactory residential renewal because, among other factors, their storage facilities intrude and employees cars parked in the rear of these buildings crowd out private parking opportunities.

The proposed plan shows the various types of renewal activity contemplated. Houses to be rehabilitated are generally of two types: those of considerable architectural and historic importance as shown by a cross-hatch pattern which will probably be acquired privately and be prepared before the urban renewal program takes effect. This process will be expensive and will be undertaken by new owner-occupants or by investors interested in rental or sale to persons who will pay relatively high rents or prices because they want to live in an architecturally significant house and like the location near downtown and the colleges. Houses of less architectural merit as shown by a dotted pattern will be rehabilitated less extensively, aided by enforcement of the Minimum Housing Standards Code. Many of the buildings in this group are now cut up into small apartments for students or single people. These buildings will probably continue to be used in this same way, although the type of apartment offered might improve as the rentals in the neighborhood are upgraded. Areas to be acquired in a renewal program are shown by a diagonal line pattern and include all the commercial property and five residential structures, some of which have commercial space on the first floor. Buildings to be demolished are shown by a solid black pattern and occur for the most part along North Main Street where they will be replaced with apartment buildings having parking beneath at grade.

Five remaining structures along North Main Street are of interest architecturally and are suggested for rehabilitation and reuse as residences on the upper floors and shops or offices on the street level. One house now in the center of a block is slated for removal to front on Cady Street in order to give it the yard space it now lacks.

The new scheme would keep the present number of one hundred and ten dwelling units approximately the same. The present accommodations for cars would be increased from seventy-three (which now are provided for by unsightly lots and which are partly for commercial use) to one hundred cars distributed as follows: sixty at grade under the apartment structures, twenty-four between Church and Bowen hidden partly by a level change and by a lattice structure, sixteen more between Bowen and Cady Streets. Because of the shortage of yard space in this vicinity, advantage is taken of the sloping terrain to deck over the parking for use as added outdoor space for the houses above. Increased parking is considered necessary since it is anticipated that the higher income groups who will come into the area will need additional parking space. There are several ways the last two parking areas mentioned above can be managed: 1) portions can be owned by those whose property fronts on the parking area and spaces rented out by them, 2) lots can be cooperatively owned; 3) a single owner, possibly of the apartment building, could maintain and rent them.

A privately financed rehabilitation project is currently underway in the area which involves some fifteen or twenty pre-1820 structures located close together in an area rich in examples of fine early architecture. By undertaking a broad scale effort, it is hoped that an entirely new community can be created and that as a result current opinions of property values in that area will be altered. It is the plan of the investors to make structural repairs, and to restore the exteriors authentically but to make only limited interior changes. This procedure was decided upon in order to permit subsequent buyers freedom to refinish the interiors as they choose.

It is expected that exterior restoration will help to make the value of the historic structures apparent and as a result, many people will feel encouraged to carry on the rehabilitation process from the point where the contractor has left off. It is hoped that the developer, the inhabitants of the restored houses and the community will all profit in the process of bringing this project to fruition. This approach may be instrumental in saving many of the valuable structures in the city, and should therefore be watched with interest by other cities with a body of historic architecture in poor repair.

Costs for rehabilitation vary with the degree of dilapidation of any given structure, as well as according to the standard of repair to be achieved. To serve as an example, an itemized account is given on this page of the costs involved in the rehabilitation now in process of one dilapidated historic structure in the College Hill area. The contractor was able to supply the figures for repair of the structure and they are listed here for the information of anyone contemplating such an undertaking.

This example is considered to be typical of architecturally valuable structures in need of repair throughout the College Hill area:

**Description:** wood frame single family structure built before 1800 in poor condition.

**Purchase price:** \$3,500

**Repairs needed:**

	Estimated Costs
1. Strip the siding	\$ 150
2. Replace clapboards, cornerboards and exterior baseboards	150
3. Repair cornice	250
4. Replace gutters and downspouts	200
5. Strip roof	125
6. Replace roof boards	100
7. Apply new roof shingles	200
8. Rebuild chimney	200
9. Replace all window sash and repair frames	500
10. Repair doorway and replace door	100
11. Repair porch	100
12. Paint outside (2 coats)	600
13. Wash windows	25
14. Landscape	200
15. Clean interior	+ 100

Sub Total \$3,000  
Contractor's fee + 300

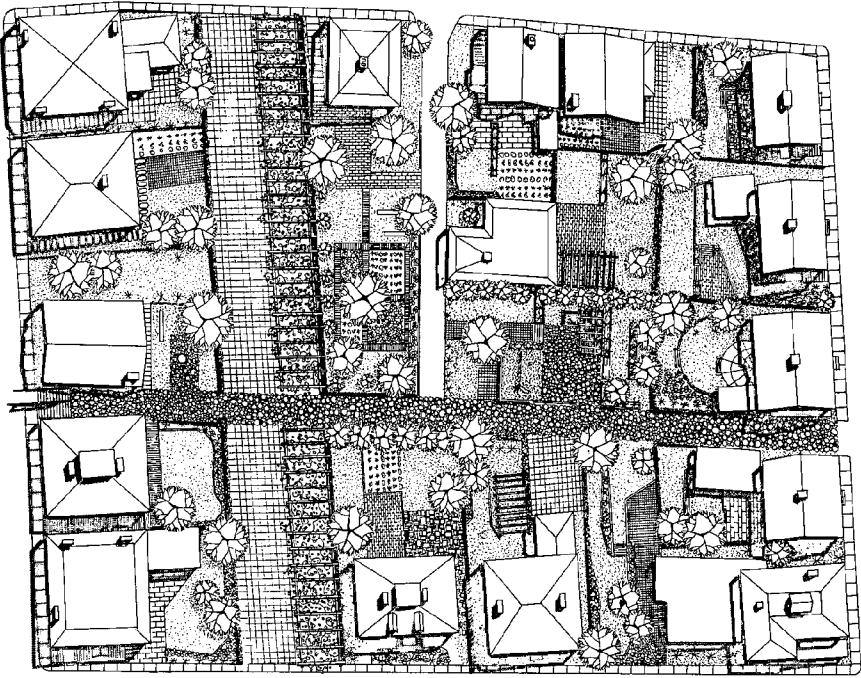
Total \$3,300

Initial Cost of House +3,500

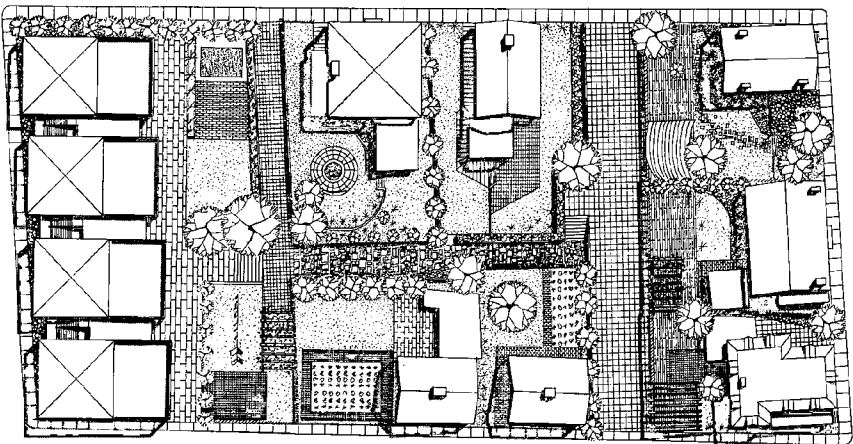
Total, Cost & Exterior Repairs \$6,800

It must be emphasized again that these figures are only for the rehabilitation of the exterior of the house and that work on the interior has been limited to cleaning up and some painting. Plan and perspectives of these four blocks as proposed are shown on the next two pages.

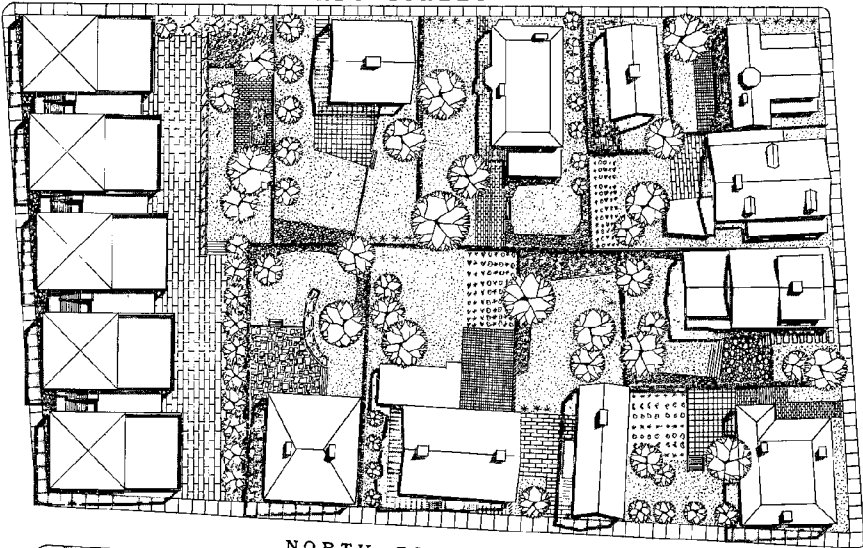
CHURCH STREET



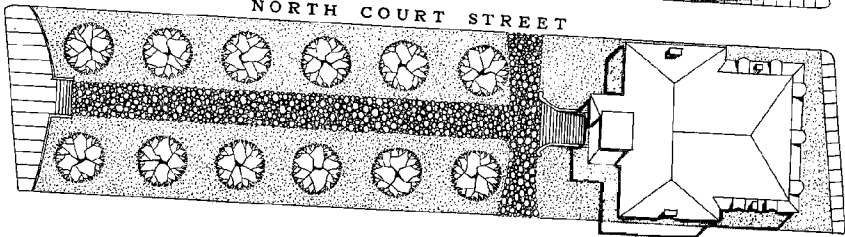
BOWEN STREET



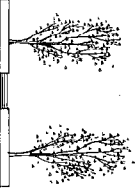
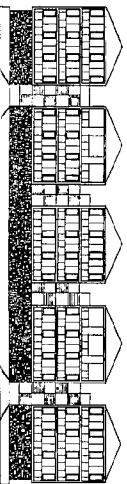
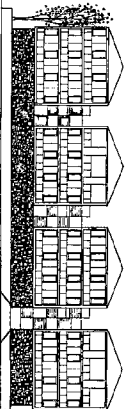
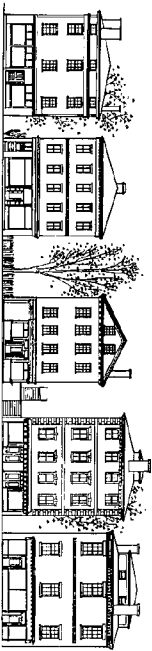
CADY STREET



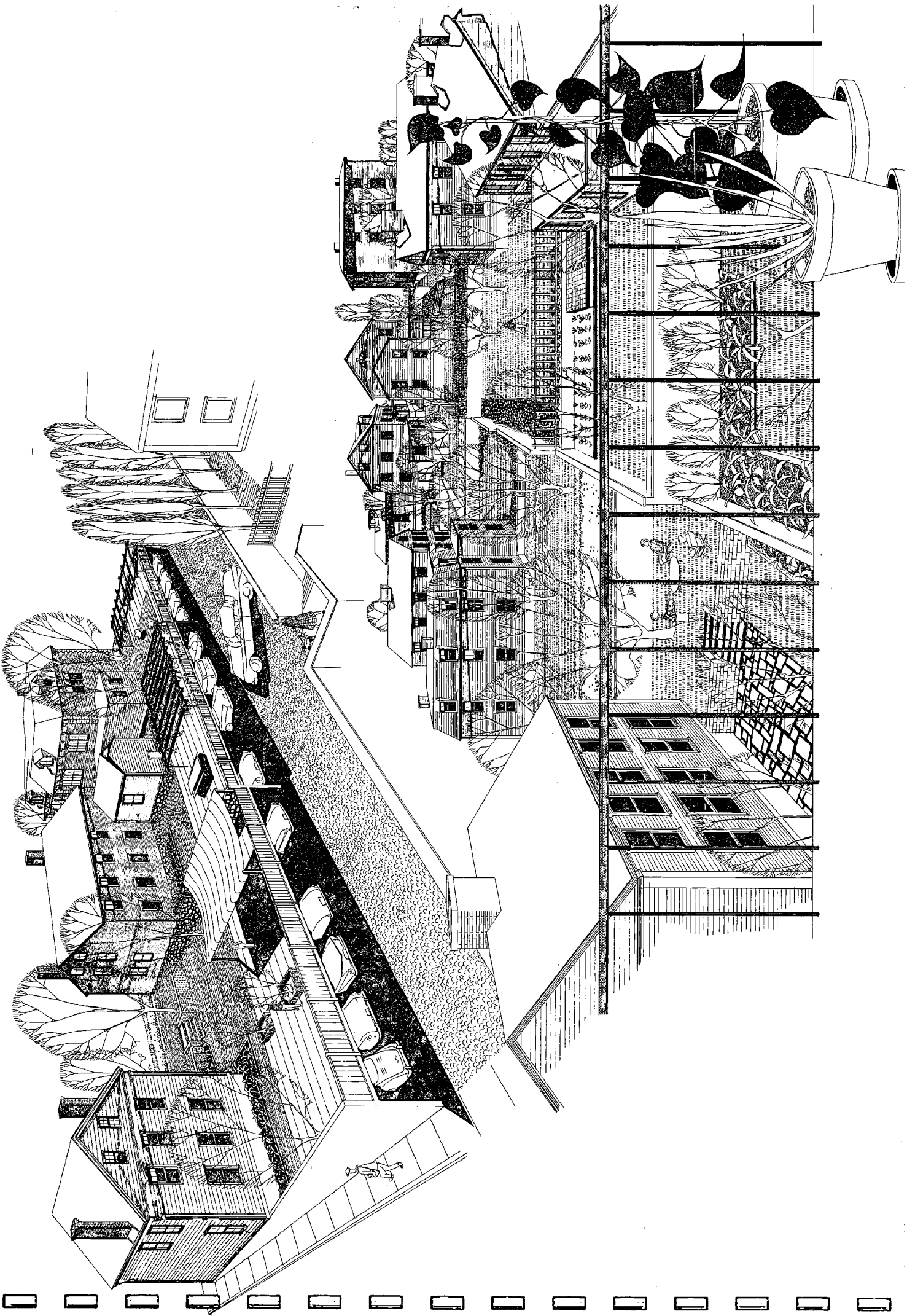
NORTH COURT STREET



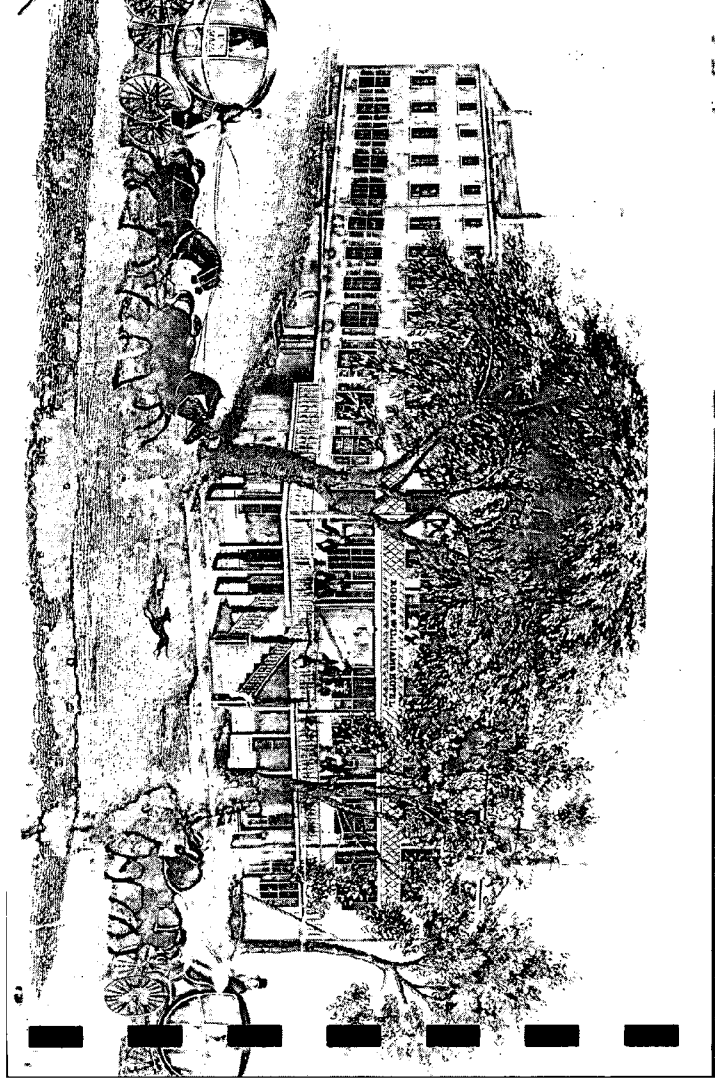
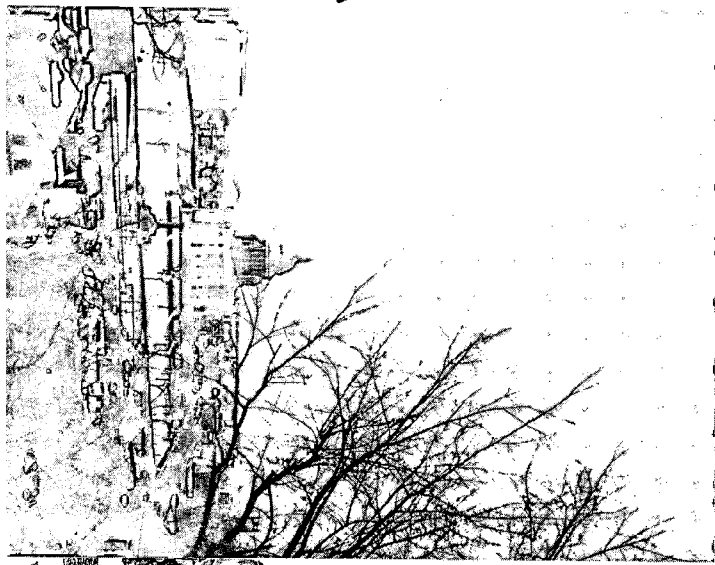
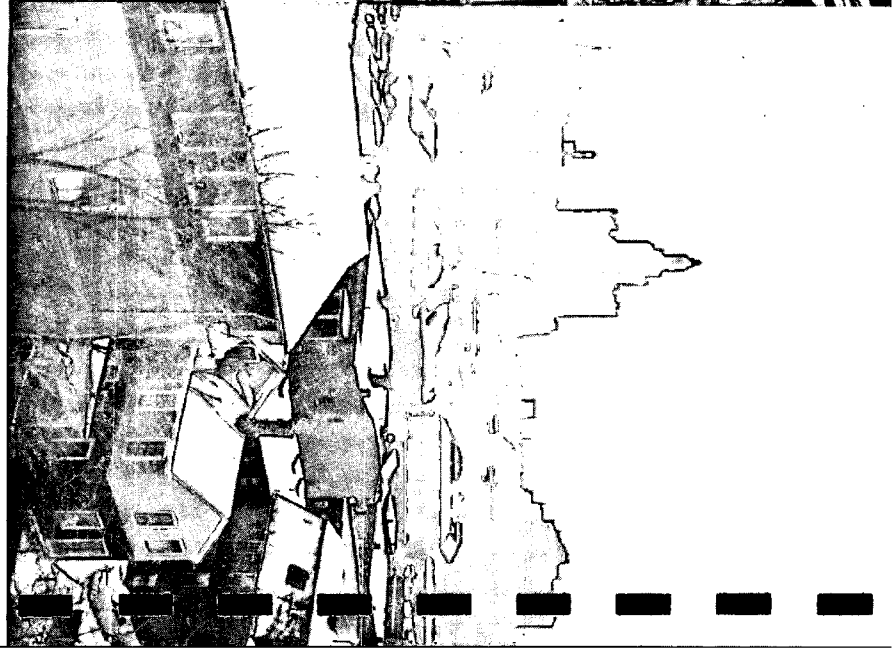
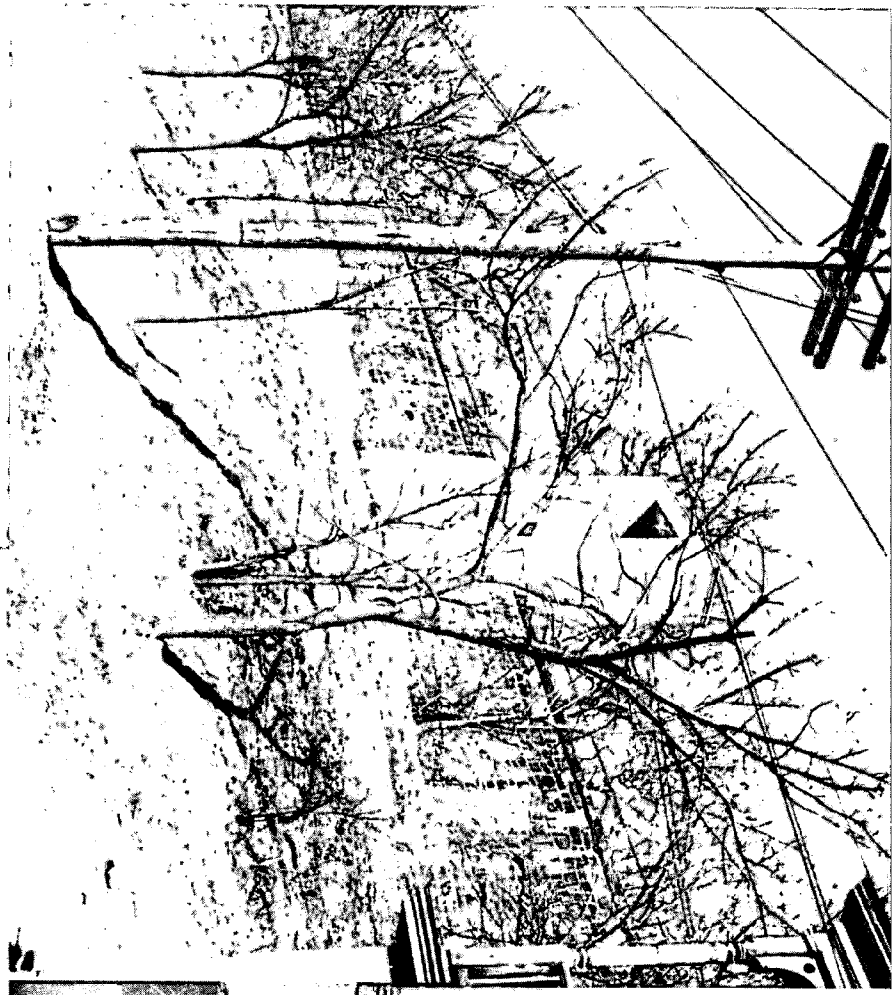
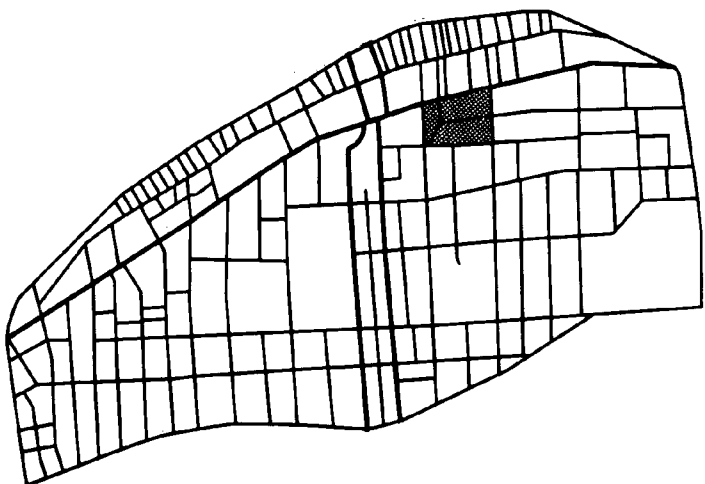
BENEFIT STREET







GOLDEN BALL INN II





## GOLDEN BALL INN II

In 1784 Henry Rice opened the Golden Ball Inn on the corner of Benefit and South Court Streets, just opposite the old Colony House. For many years, its location was central to much of the city's activity, and it served such distinguished guests as Lafayette, George Washington and Thomas Jefferson. In time, however, the focus of the city moved to the west, and the hotel's importance diminished. It changed hands as well as names several times and its long varied career came to a close with its demolition in the 1940's. However, the site again appears to have promise as a location for an inn. As the Benefit Street Historic Trail is developed and becomes better known, there should be an increase in the number of out-of-state visitors and a restaurant and inn situated in the center of the area would be justified. It would also be conveniently located for families and others visiting the colleges in this part of the city. It is within walking distance of the heart of the city and its attractive setting should appeal to some of the visitors to downtown Providence. Beside the anticipated demand for transient accommodations there is already an established demand for the type of residential hotel which caters to older persons. Judging from census data, older persons seem to be attracted to College Hill as a desirable place to settle. The proposed restaurant should also be successful. There are not many good restaurants in the city and one located here would have the advantage of a magnificent view of the entire city.

The primary visual objectives which have been guiding principles in the development of the accompanying design for the inn are:

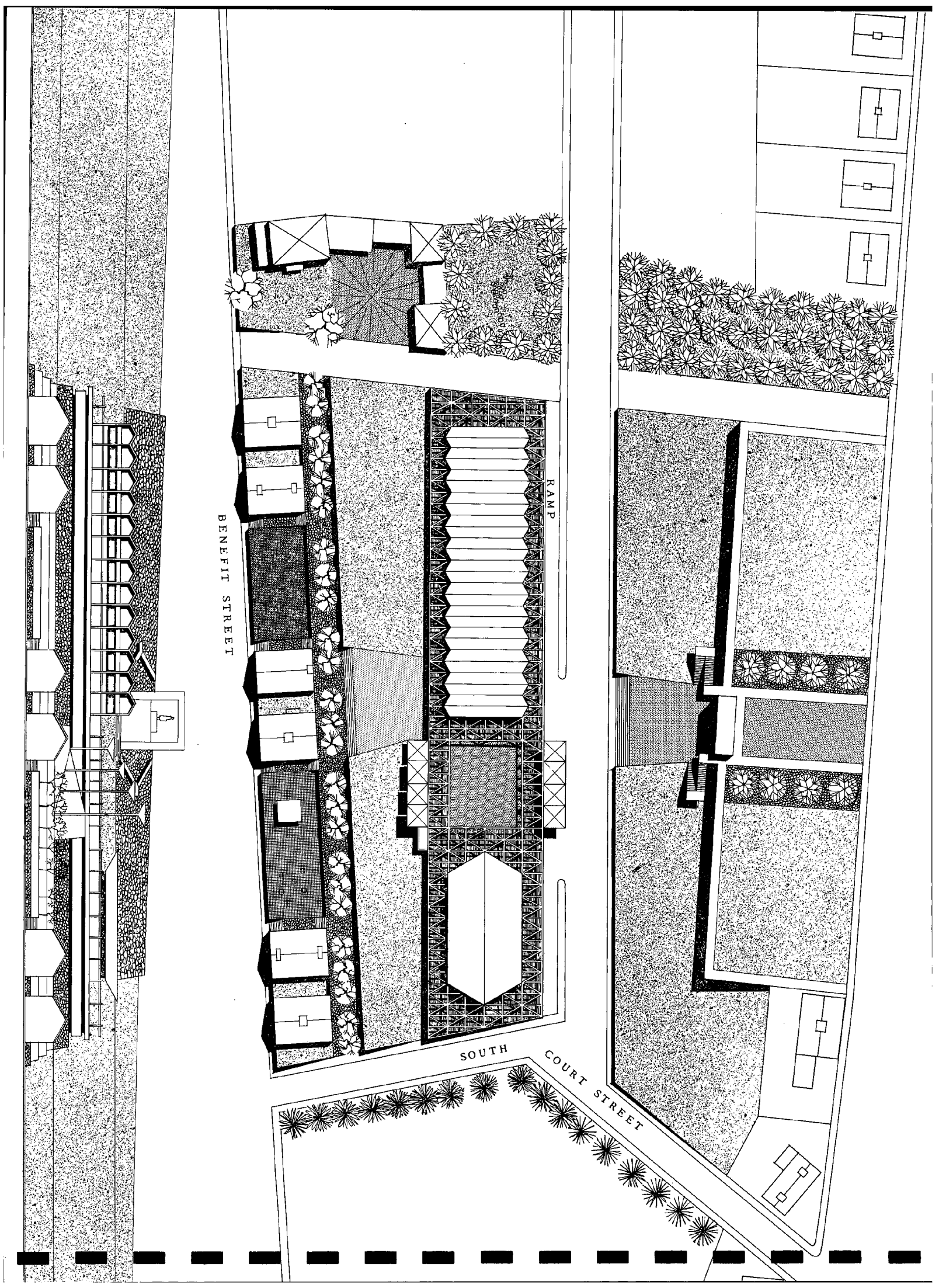
- 1) to complement the area as a whole and
- 2) to respect the character of the buildings adjacent to the proposed new construction.

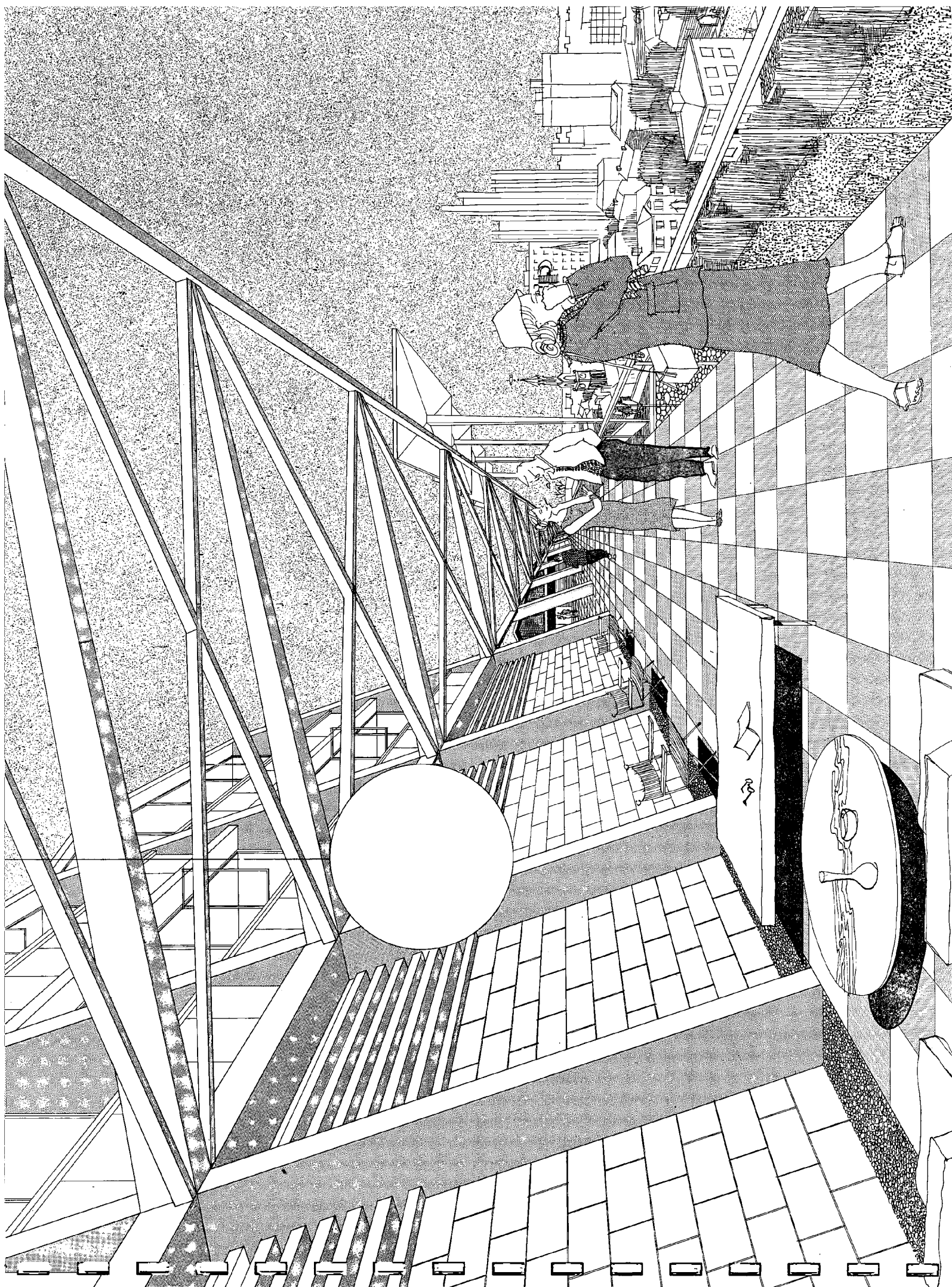
Particular attention has been given to the roof design, as it will

be overlooked from Prospect Terrace Park on the crest of College Hill. The plan shows the terrace connected with the proposed inn and Benefit Street by a series of plazas and steps. This scheme can be incorporated as part of an early design approved by the citizens group responsible for building Prospect Terrace many years ago.

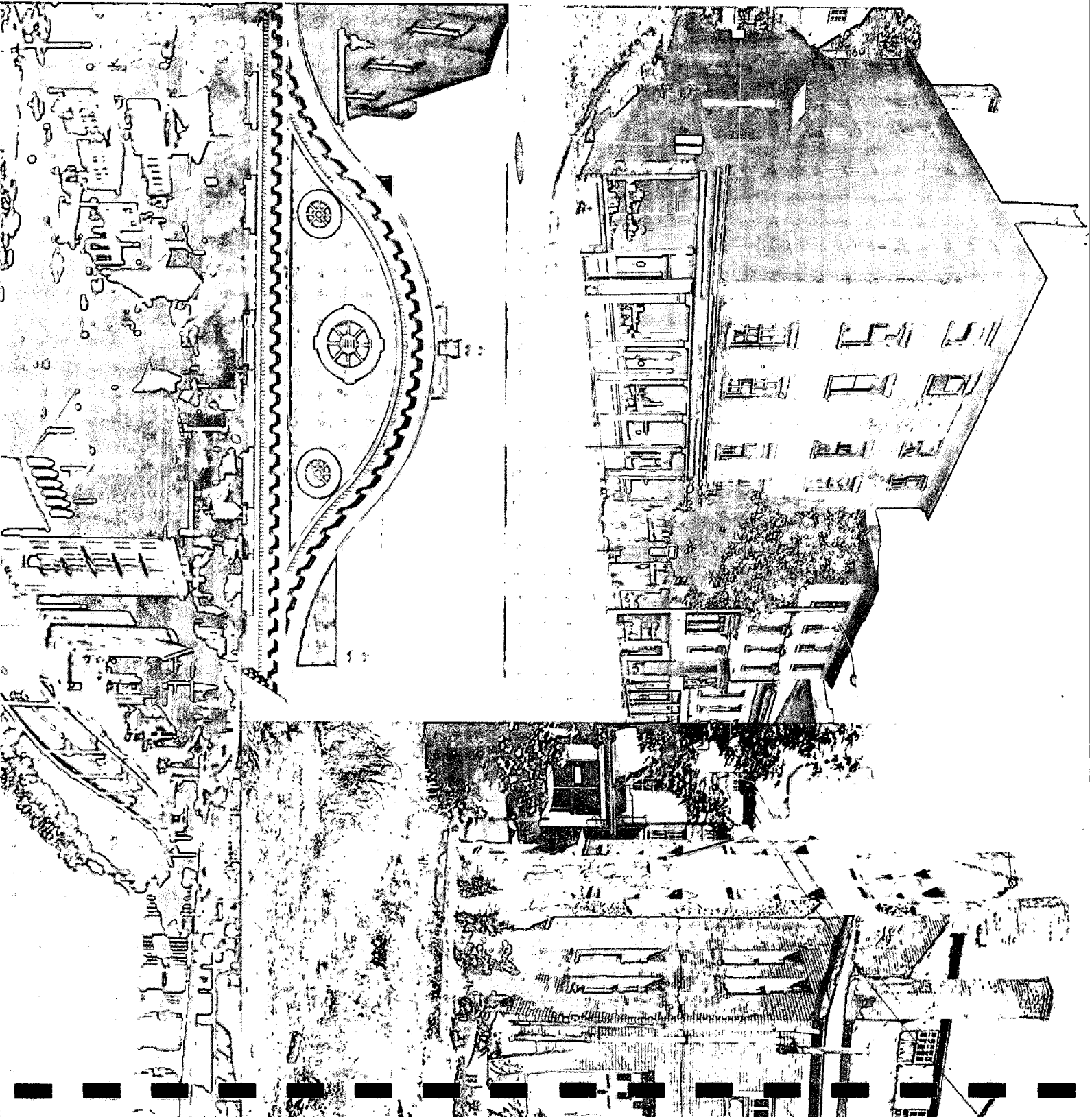
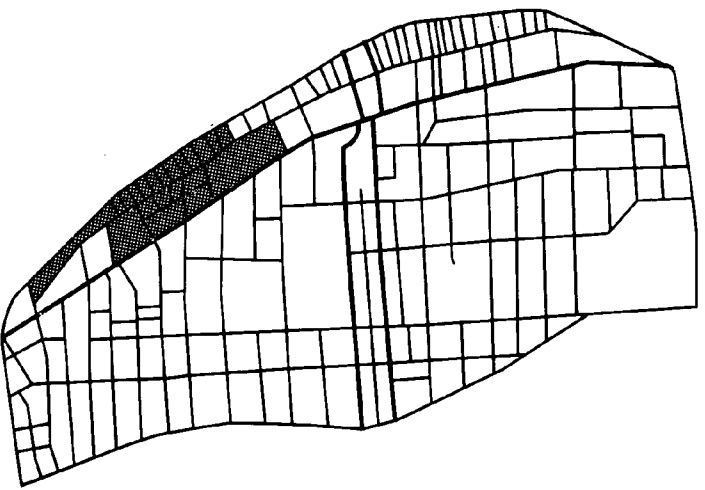
The proposed Golden Ball Inn II consists of a new structure housing the main dining room, guest rooms, and a lower level garage located up the slope from structures of historic note along Benefit Street. Some of the latter are already on the site and others shown have been moved from other sites, but in either case they are to serve as "cottages" in conjunction with the main buildings of the hotel. Rooms in the cottages would probably be used chiefly by the permanent residents of the inn. A small tea room would be located in one of the cottages just off the plaza of the main entrance to the inn. Nearby points of interest would be Roger Williams grave site and the Sullivan Dorr Mansion to the north; and on the west, just across Benefit Street, the row of historic houses which lies in the rehabilitation area and has already been discussed. An area slated for institutional use lies to the south of the inn.

The building program proposed here includes 120 guest rooms some of which are located in the "cottages", a large restaurant, a small tea room, bar and cocktail lounge, lobby, gift shop, parking for 180 cars, and the various required service rooms. The design conditions for the scheme are critical for several reasons; among others, it is essential that the view from the terrace should remain unobstructed. The plan, east elevation, and a perspective from the inn deck overlooking the city are shown on the following pages.





SOUTH MAIN STREET





## SOUTH MAIN STREET

The South Main Street area is a commercial section currently in a state of change. At present it contains a mixture of junk shops and other poor grade commercial establishments interspersed with an occasional substantial business. The construction of the Providence River Bridge with access routes going through the area has made it a much more desirable area for development.

The relatively few residential structures existing in the area are in extremely bad condition. According to studies made by the Providence Redevelopment Agency in 1951, this is one of the worst slum areas in the city. Although some structures have been torn down since the 1951 studies were made, conditions of the remaining dwelling units are still very bad.

Historically, the area is of interest, since it was formerly the heart of the 19th century sea-trade. The many little-used alleys leading to the water have kept their unusual names reminiscent of that era and a few structures of historic and architectural worth have survived. These distinctive elements should be studied for possible retention and incorporation into new plans for the area.

Three general objectives are to be achieved here: 1) to develop an architectural scheme which would make use of the existing examples of merchant warehouses and other old building of note in the area; 2) to guide the change which will inevitably take place in this unique and important section of the city; and 3) to remove the slums and other substandard structures.

The proposed program would take place during two stages: first, the urban renewal project stage in which most of the program would be effected; and later, the second stage to be executed under the aegis of the local and state governments. The part of the program to be carried out as an urban renewal project would be residential to the east of South Main Street and commercial to the west. The residential development would consist of a rehabilitated group of old buildings to be subdivided into apartments and offices with shops on the first floor. Flanking these structures to the north and south and set back from the street, the proposal calls for new three or four story apartment houses built into the hillside and designed to take advantage of the steep grade. Parking is located up the hill behind the apartments. This is shown in perspective on page 146 and in the plan on page 144.

Across the street to the west a commercial development is proposed. This development would be of a type which would not conflict with the downtown planning policy of concentrating business wherever possible in the heart of the city. By closing some of the alleys the area is divided into seven blocks which, starting from the south end, have been slated for the following uses:

1 One block from James to Doubloon Street, using as nucleus three existing brick and stone commercial buildings dating from the sailing days, one 18th century frame house moved from nearby, and six new structures designed to be in scale with the early buildings. This group of buildings would be near the southern end of the Benefit Street Trail, and could house antique and arts and crafts shops catering to visitors. The upper floors of the buildings could be used for studios and offices.

2 The block between Doubloon and Coin is to be developed for landscaped parking with shade trees between the rows of cars.

3 The block between Coin and Power Streets is slated for use as a motel with a combination of new and old buildings grouped as a whole unit with parking under the new unit at grade.

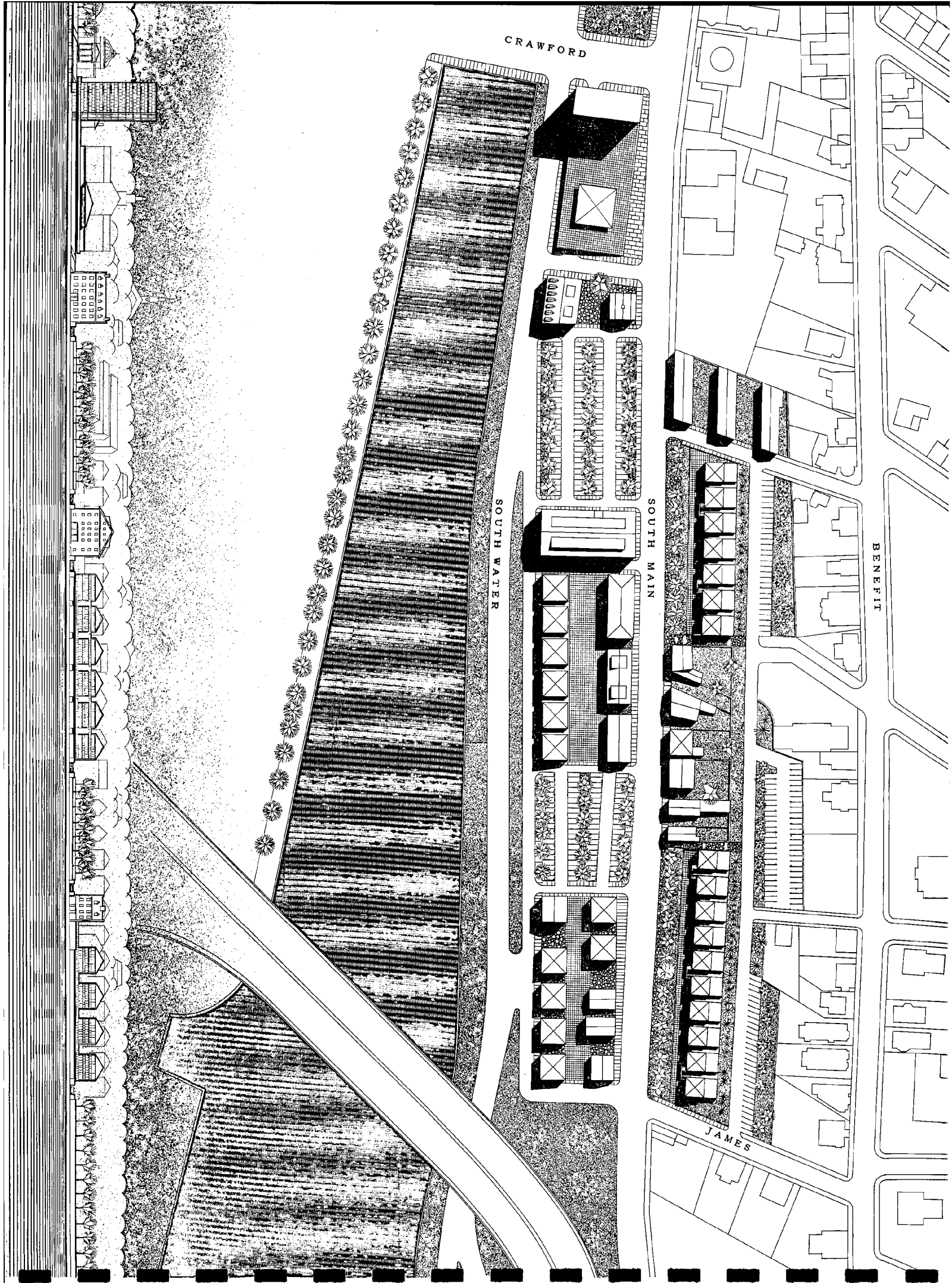
4 A large brick mill structure occupies the entire block just north of Power Street and it could serve as an exhibition building for products made in the State of Rhode Island.

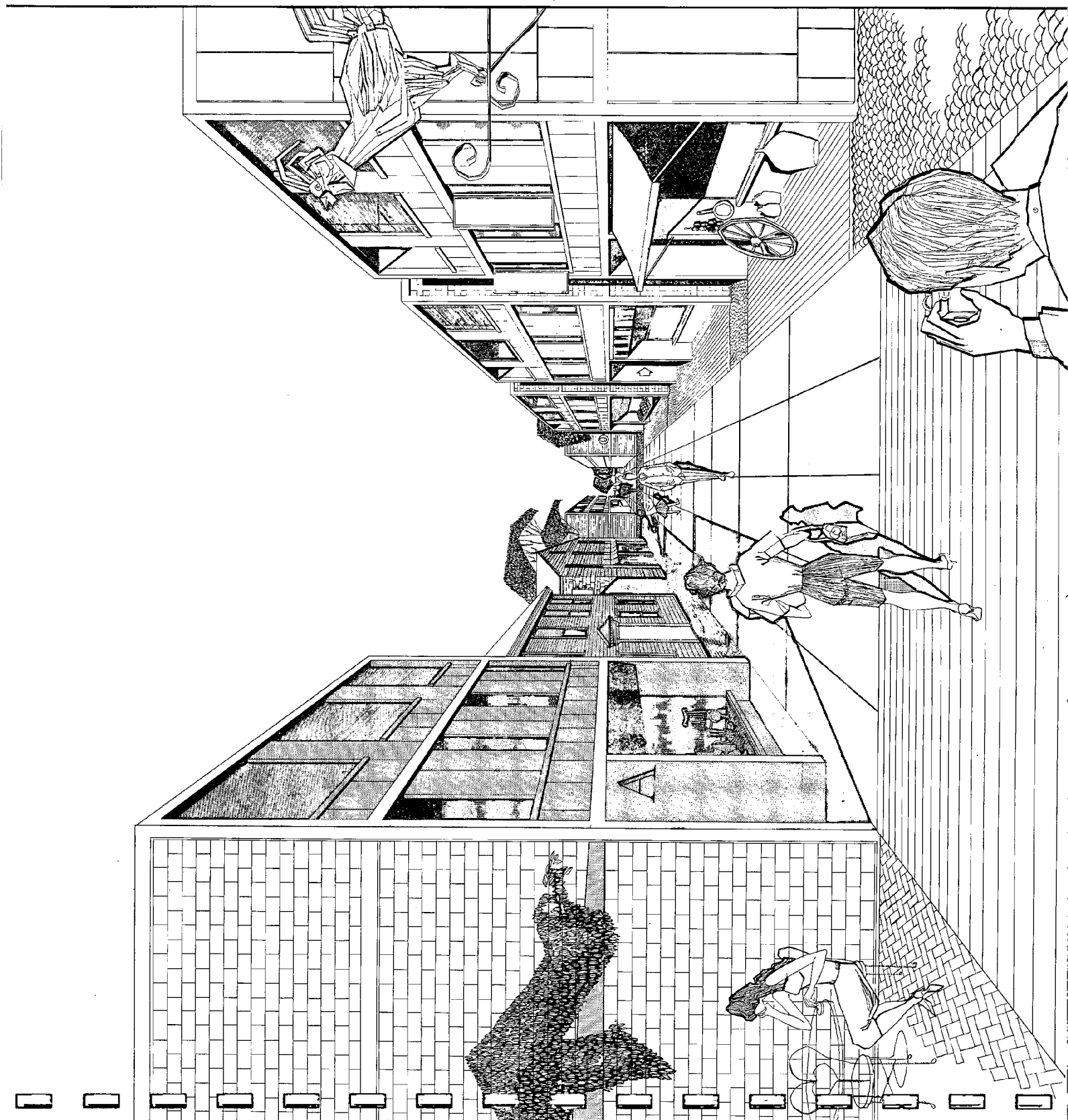
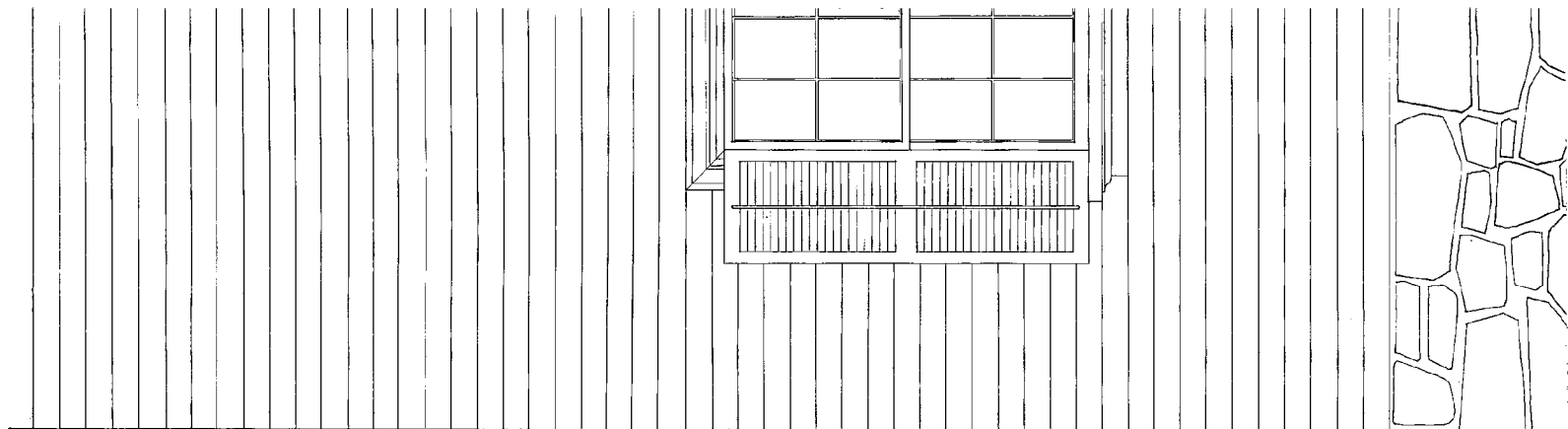
5 More parking space is proposed between Bullion and Packet Streets.

6 The next block is partly occupied by the Old Sullivan Dorr Warehouse building constructed on the site of John Brown's Counting House and the plan shows the Corliss House relocated within the same block. The two buildings would contain commercial space on the ground floors and office space above.

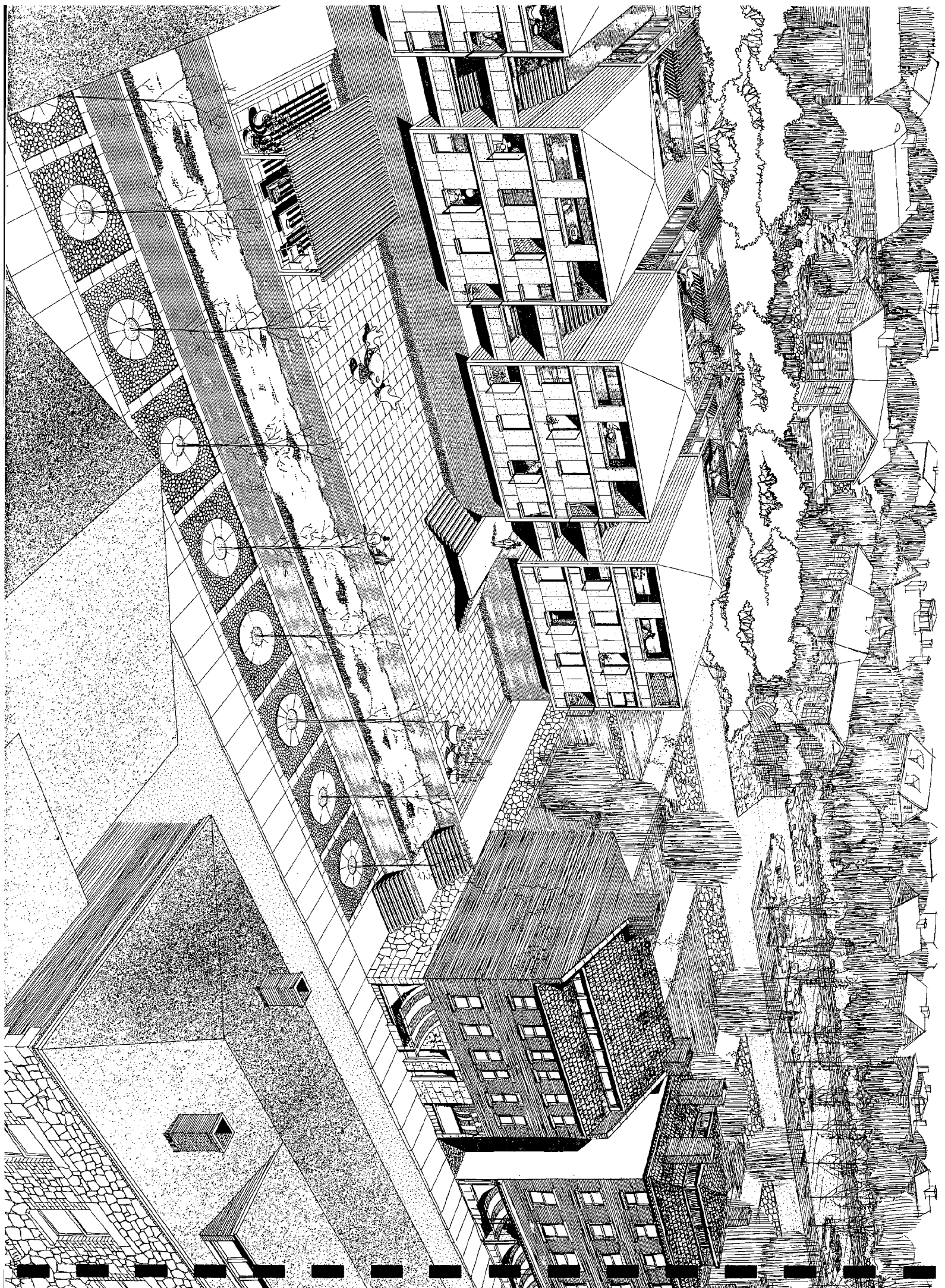
7 A small office building and parking deck is proposed for the last block between Ward and Crawford Streets. The office building architecturally would define the south end of the Court House Park as does the old Market building at the north. This is shown in perspective on page 145 and in plan on page 144.

In time it is anticipated that the city will require helicopter service to and from the airport located seven miles from the heart of Providence. One of the few practical sites available for helicopter landing is the river fronting this area. The location is favorable since it has an obstacle-free approach path, is convenient to parking, and is within walking distance of downtown. The 25-year plan on page 173 shows a long-range plan for a heliport, a restaurant, a museum ship and a landscaped promenade which follows the river from the heart of the city to Fox Point at the head of the Narragansett Bay.

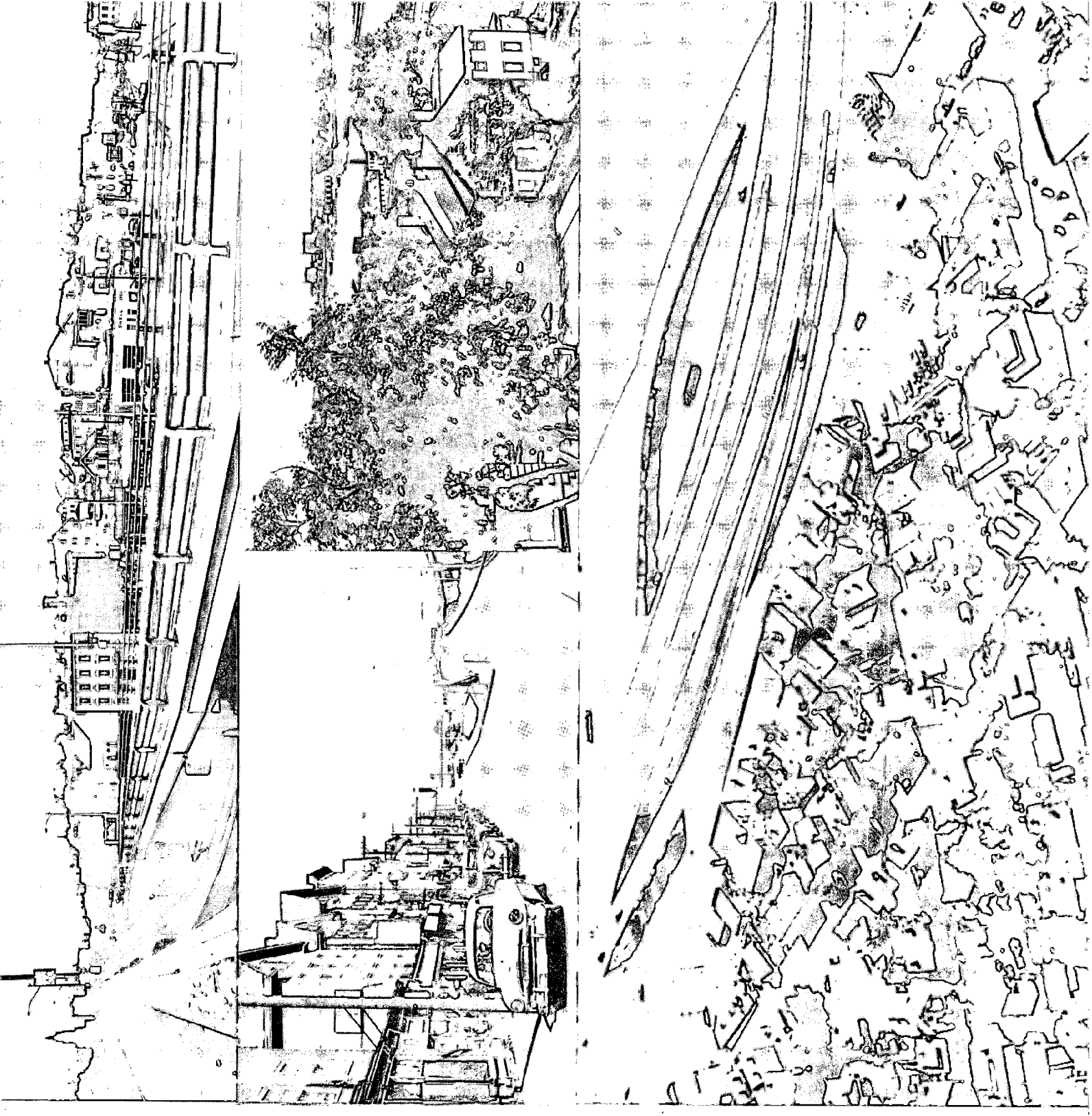
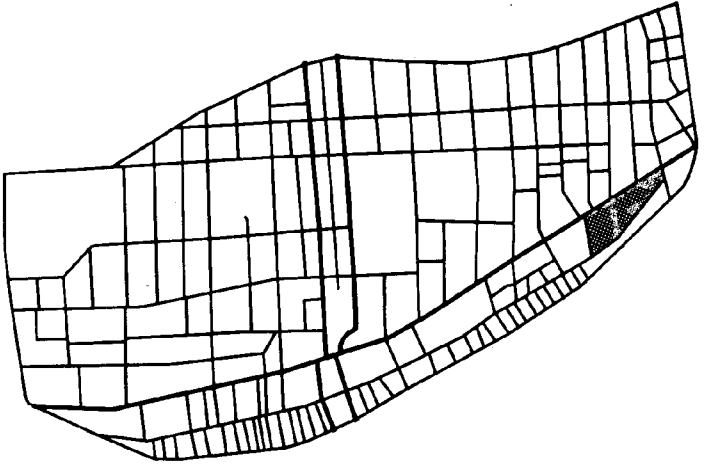








SOUTH TOWER



SOUTH TOWER

A six-acre wedge-shaped site is located between Benefit and South Main Streets where they terminate at Wickenden Street. The area is now primarily residential with some commercial use on the first floors of the buildings fronting South Main Street. Some of the buildings on James and Benefit Streets are among the finest architecturally and historically on the "Hill". Old St. Stephen's Church, now without a spire, is used as a theater by a local theatrical group known as the Providence Players. Some of the dwelling structures, almost all of which are of wood frame construction, are rated among the worst slums in the city. The site is attractive because of a steep grade rise of about forty feet from South Main Street to Benefit Street which affords a view not only of the city but of the harbor to the south as well.

Benefit Street is the main element in the renewal of College Hill and assumes added importance in its role as a comprehensively developed historic area. The terminals of such an important street should be carefully considered from a design point of view and types of buildings should be introduced which will help make the area a focus of human activity. It is proposed that the site be developed primarily for residential use with a church and theater included to give it the flavor of a social center. Four brick houses of the Federal period along James Street should be retained to give a historic atmosphere to this street which serves as a principal pedestrian way linking the Benefit Street Trail to the South Main Street development. These structures will need costly rehabilitation, particularly number 22 James Street.

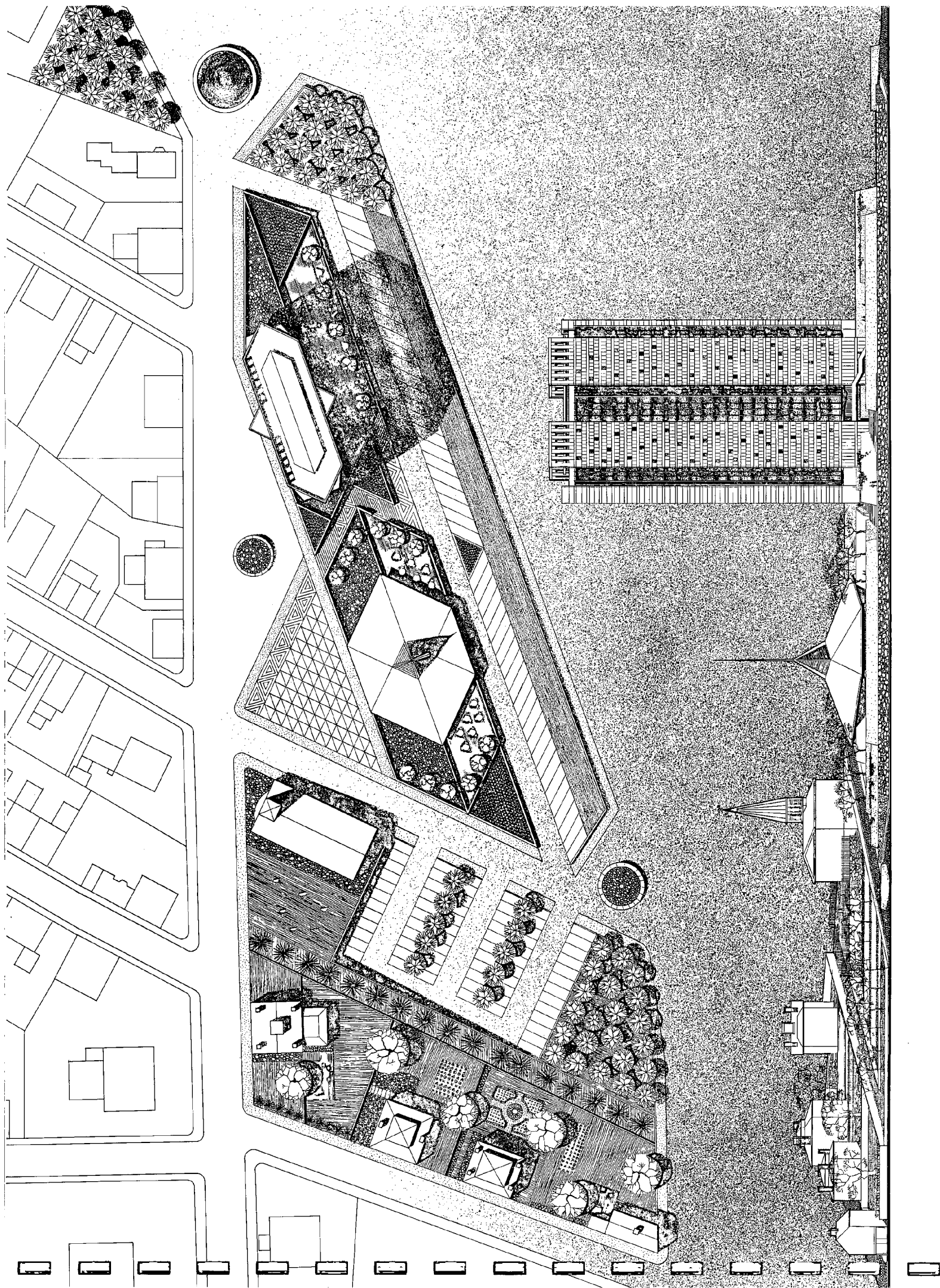
It is proposed that the old St. Stephen's Church be returned to its function as a church. It is a simple Greek Revival building of stucco-covered random rubble wall construction. Complete rehabilitation will involve rebuilding the spire. However, the church is located so that its spire will add an important element to the College Hill profile as seen from the city. There is at least one parish in the area which might be interested in the building. The Providence Players have found that the church is no longer large enough nor suited to their needs. The group might be relocated in a new structure just to the south of the present location on land acquired through the renewal program.

This land is separated from the rehabilitated area by an existing narrow street which has been retained to provide access to parking for the church, theater and apartments. It is triangular in shape and slopes sharply down to the approaches of the new Providence River Bridge. Its shape presents problems in site planning. It mitigates against rectangular land and building shapes and suggests the triangular and crystalline shapes. Two elements are selected for reuse of the land: a jewel shaped apartment tower rising and pointing its knife-edge to the sea and a tent-shaped theater hovering over the ground below. The playhouse is designed to take advantage of the slope by having its seating step down following the land contours. A main entrance plaza above branches to either side of the theater in a series of landscaped terraces which are accessible from the side exits of the building and serve as places to stroll and talk during intermission.

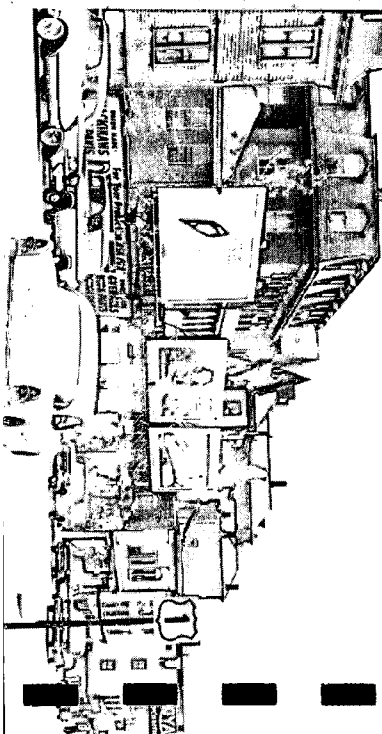
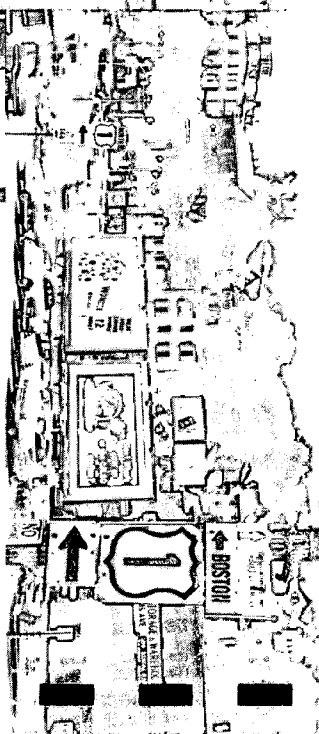
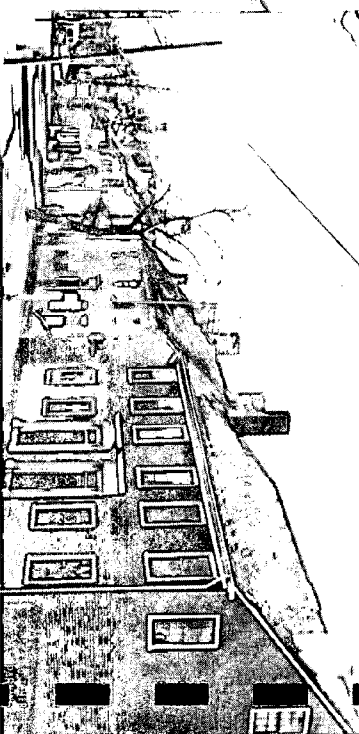
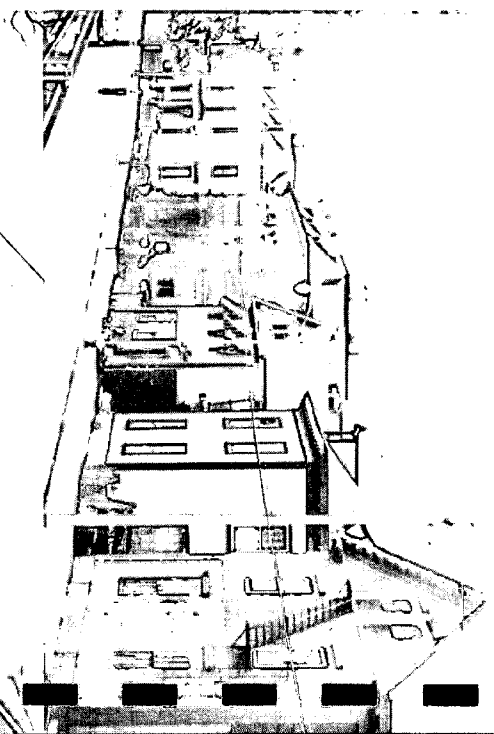
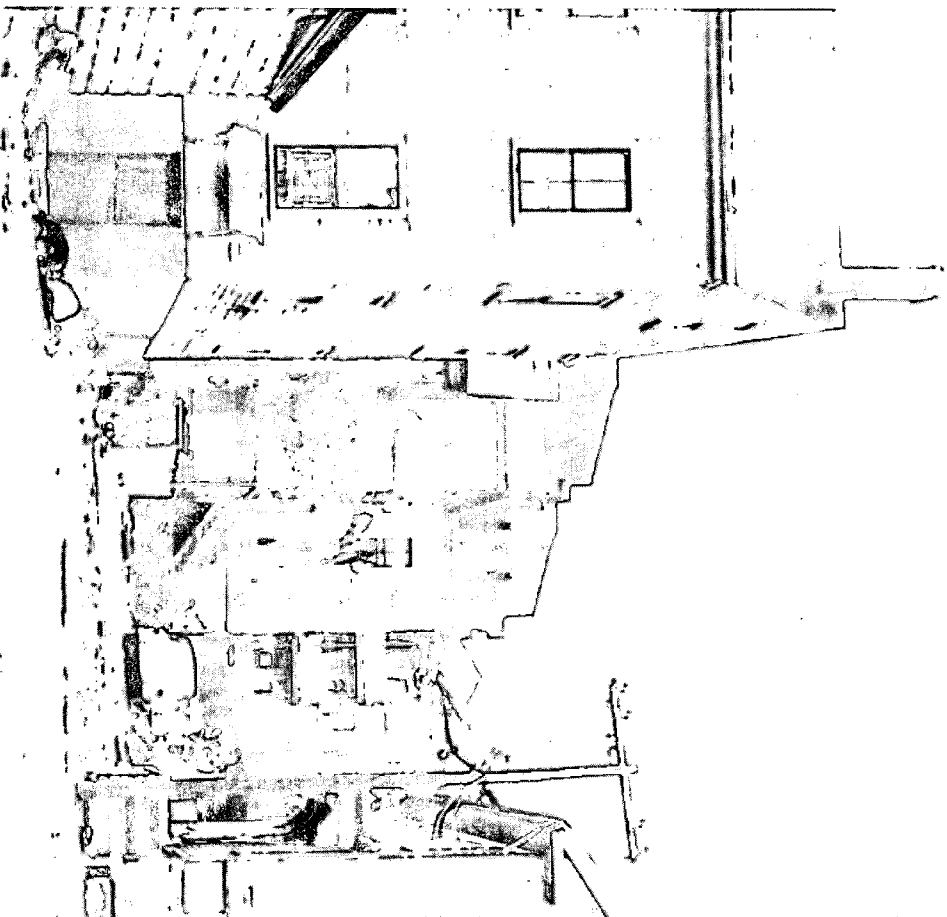
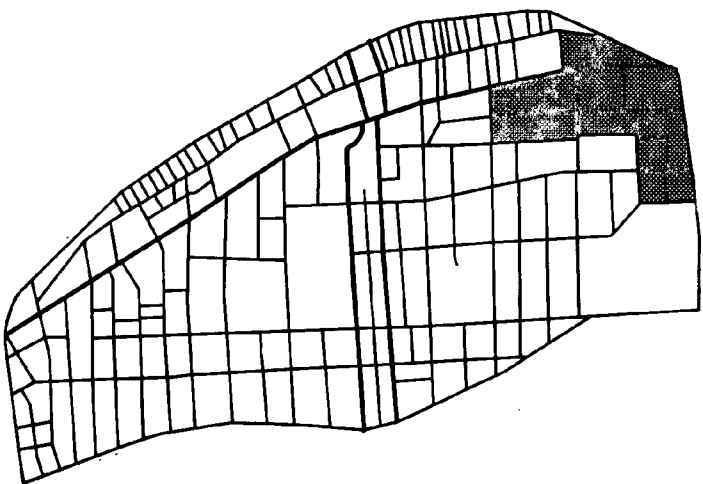
Immediately to the south would rise the proposed apartment tower marking the entrance to Benefit Street and commanding a view of the city and Narragansett Bay to the south. In the concept of this building, the project makes a break with the past in such a way that the structures of each era are clear expressions of individual integrity. Although present zoning regulations preclude construction of buildings more than six stories high, to make an exception in this instance seems warranted. The view not only makes increased density economically justifiable but is reason enough to build a tower up away from the freeway bridge, the noise of heavy traffic and completely separated from the finely scaled historic houses. Vertical planes of glass and masonry diminish the massive character of a single slab and give the appearance of several thin towering elements.

The structure accommodates 120 small apartments designed primarily for occupancy by single persons and couples. The lobby is in two levels and allows access from Benefit Street and from the parking level on the downhill side. Provision should be made for a delicatessen or drug store at this level. The entire site is stepped in a series of landscaped terraces to a service road and parking strip. It is proposed that two small stands of trees be planted on either side of the entrance of Benefit Street. The beginning of Benefit Street is to be widened and to give the entrance a distinctive emphasis, a circular pool and fountain in the center of the street is suggested. The plan and elevation are shown on the next page.





# CONSTITUTION HILL



## CONSTITUTION HILL

For several reasons, this area has been chosen for particularly detailed study. In 1951 the Providence Redevelopment Agency designated it as one of several areas in urgent need of renewal. It includes all of the blighted area in the northern part of College Hill with the exception of the "Historic Renewal" pilot study area described previously. Similar deteriorated sections extend north of the study area to include much of Lippitt Hill which is now in the final planning stages in the process leading to urban renewal. A physically rebuilt neighborhood to the north will have considerable effect on the future of Constitution Hill. The residential area has observable boundaries on three sides: North Main Street, the railroad, and industrial uses lie to the west; to the north is Olney Street, an important local traffic artery; and to the east are the grounds of Hope High School and the sharply rising crest of College Hill running parallel to Prospect and Congdon Streets.

The dwelling structures are nearly all of wood frame construction with the exception of a few made of brick. The type of dwelling ranges from single-family to a few large 12 to 15 unit wood frame structures. The average building accommodates between two and three families. The worst housing conditions exist along North Main, Benefit, and Olney Streets and in three blocks between Pratt and Benefit Streets. The map of historic architecture shows that, unfortunately, the areas of extreme blight coincide with those containing some of the earlier specimens of architecture on the Hill. This is particularly true along the northern end of Benefit Street, where there is an almost uninterrupted row of late 18th century and early 19th century houses. The other houses in the area are either Greek Revival style built in the nineteenth century or so-called "three-decker" tenements built during the first part of the twentieth century. There is no demand for commercial structures in the area, since the principal shopping centers are to the north and east; nevertheless, the first floors of a few houses have been converted to stores and a few businesses not related to the neighborhood exist in the area. Community facilities consist of an old public school, with inadequate play area, and the city-run Benefit Street Recreation Center.

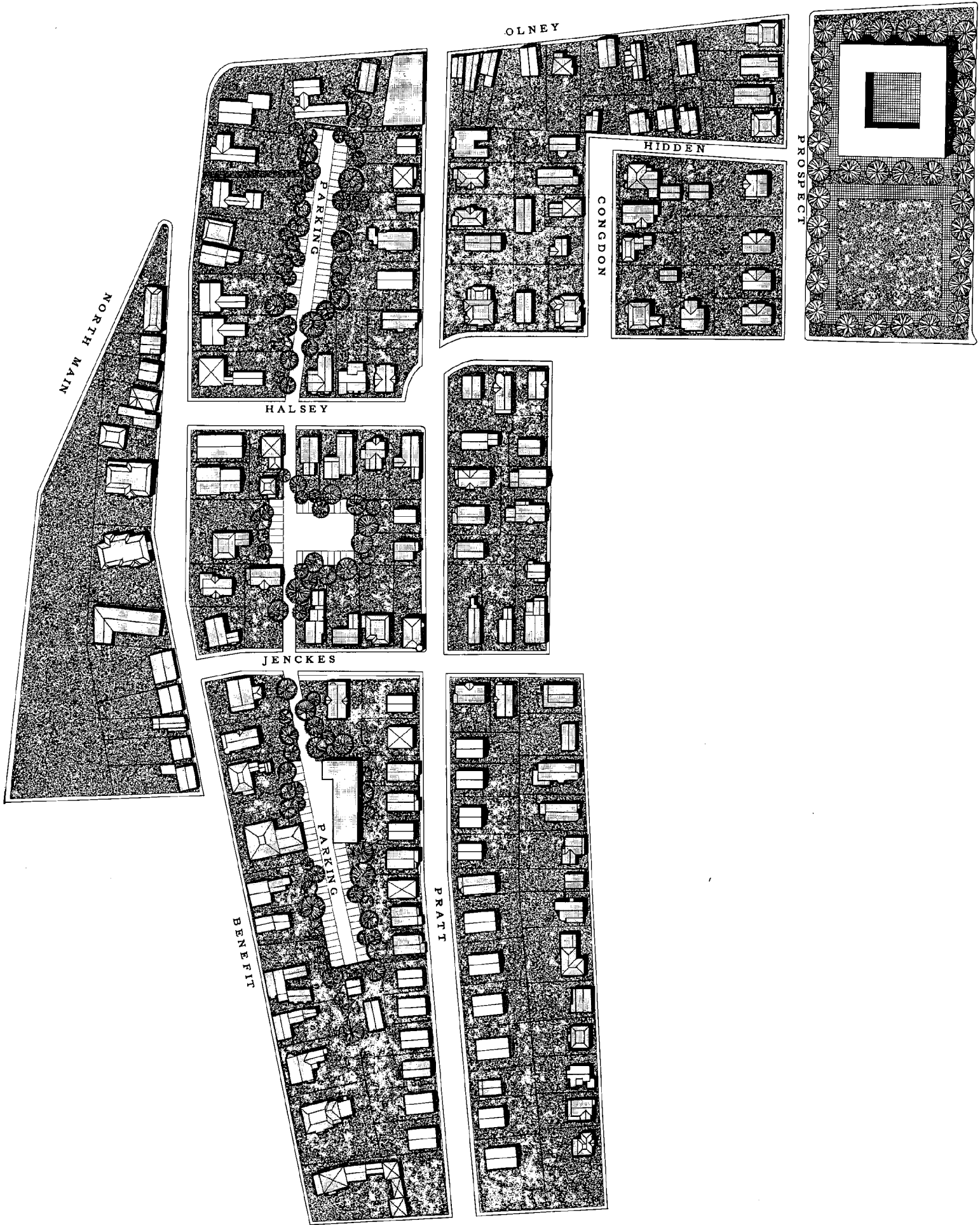
About half the population in this area is nonwhite, related to the larger nonwhite community in Lippitt Hill to the north. In general, this group has a low income level and consequently occupies low rent properties. Rent paying ability will be a strong consideration

in the decision regarding the extent of rehabilitation economically feasible in the area. This is particularly true here since there exists a low percentage of owner-occupied structures and any improvements would be reflected in increased rentals.

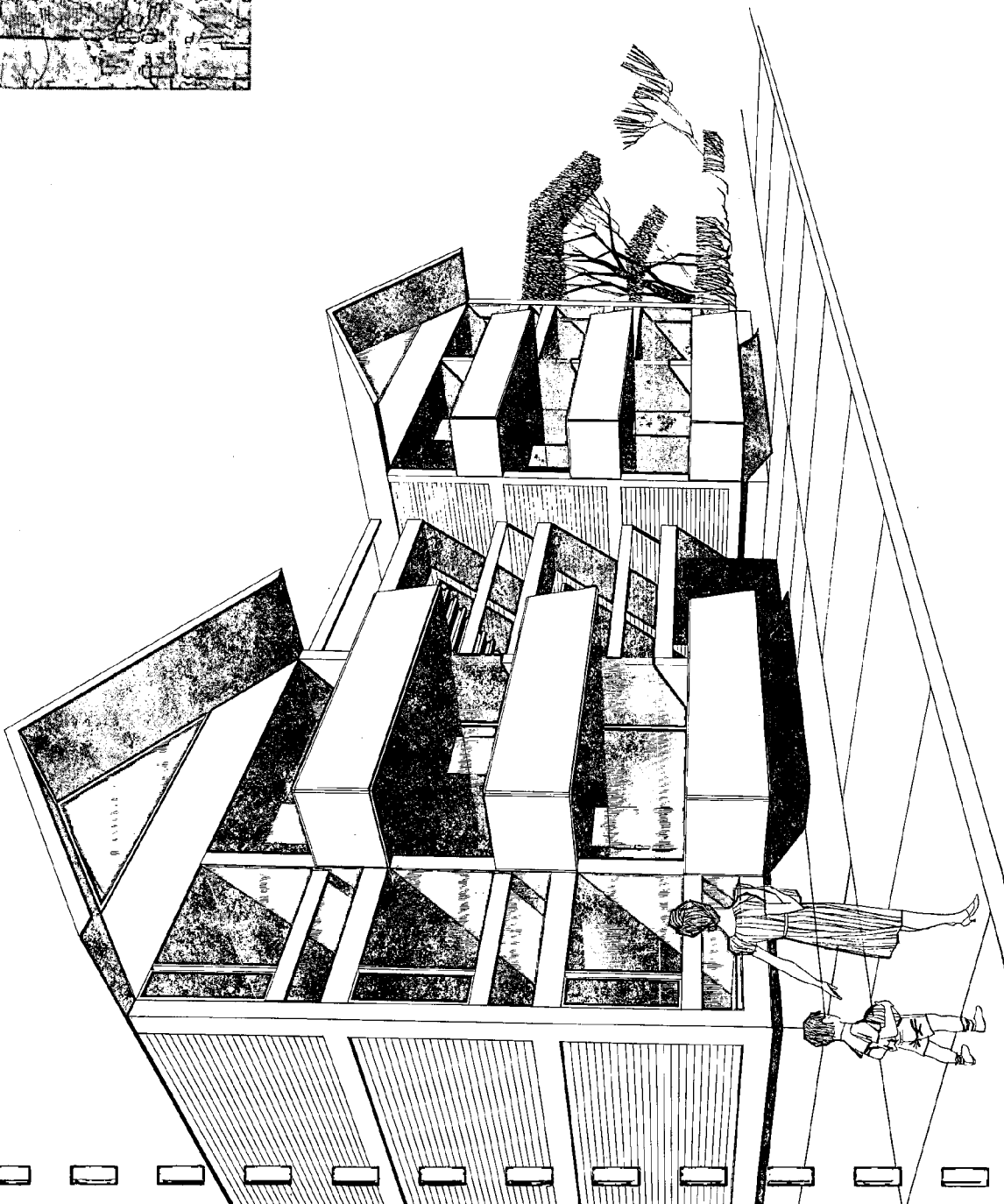
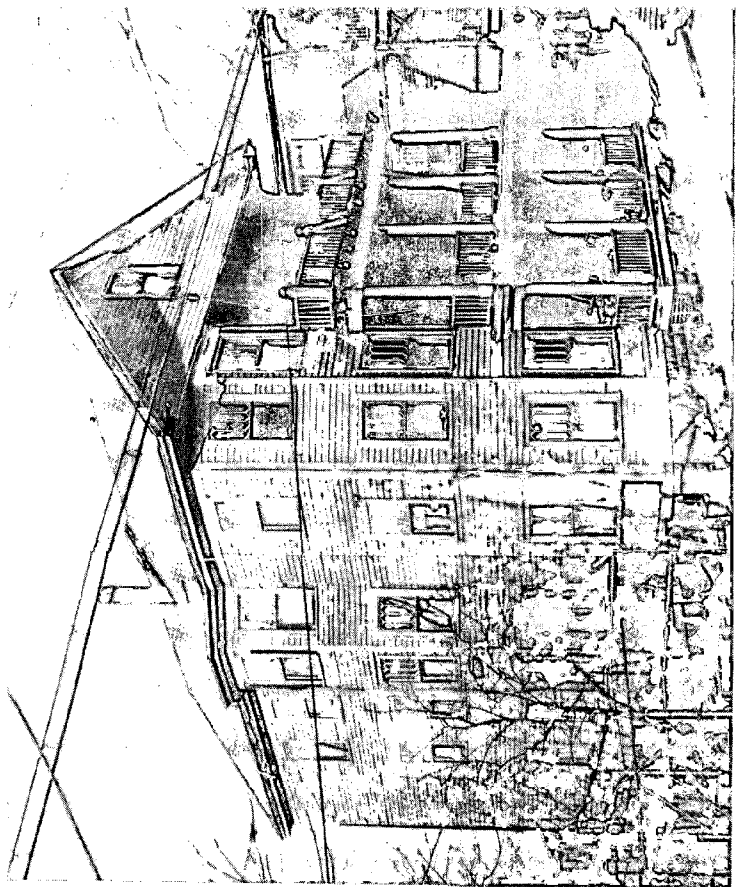
Problems in the area are varied. Deficiencies in housing include structural deterioration, lack of yard space due to overbuilding, interior house lots with no street access, and rooms without proper lighting or ventilation. Many houses also lack plumbing, kitchens, or central heat. Overcrowding of persons related to the number of rooms in dwelling units does not at this time appear to be a problem. But the exodus of families from nearby Lippitt Hill in the face of redevelopment there will produce pressures for overcrowding in this area.

Traffic is a serious problem on Benefit Street where the old houses are built right up to the sidewalk line and are subjected to the noise, vibration, and lights from the steady stream of passing vehicles. Automobiles and trucks often use Benefit Street as a means to by-pass the congestion they would otherwise encounter in Market and Memorial Squares. There is a decided lack of play-space for children under high school age, which is serious in this area with its high number of children and general lack of private yard space. As mentioned elsewhere, the city's oldest school serves this section and is in poor condition. There are several vacant lots which are unkempt, and because of their location between out-of-date structures, stand a poor chance of attracting new development. A string of rundown shops fronts on North Main Street, one of the busiest streets in the city. The lack of opportunity for automobiles to stop at stores in this location has in recent years accelerated the decline of shopping in this area. Other stores are spotted throughout the area, but these are only marginal operations. To be particularly emphasized is the dilapidated condition of the historic structures which, unlike other types of dwellings, cannot be replaced once they are lost.

The job of defining the planning program is made difficult by a combination of social and economic factors which in turn are directly related to the problem of relocation. The question is raised: how much relocation should be considered when drawing plans to renew the neighborhood so that deterioration is eliminated and the advancement of housing blight is stopped? During the study, the local consensus of opinion was sought by holding a public meeting







and through several advisory committee sessions. It soon became apparent that two points of view prevailed: 1) that a plan evolving a minimum of clearance be advanced, in which case the structures beyond any hope of repair would be eliminated, neighborhood facilities be introduced, and the minimum housing code be enforced to bring the rest of the neighborhood up to par; or 2) that a more extensive clearance program be recommended, neighborhood facilities be introduced, considerable new residential construction be undertaken and a higher degree of rehabilitation be advocated than that provided for in the minimum housing code.

There are points for and against both points of view and to decide would take considerably more detailed study than is warranted by the scope of this project. A series of meetings should be held with the owners and tenants; a market analysis should be conducted to determine the need for new housing in the area; and a detailed study should be made to find out how costly rehabilitation will be for various degrees of dilapidation and standards of repair; and finally, how these costs will affect rent increases. Because of this, it was decided to present both schemes with the purpose of considering Scheme One a short-term proposal which can, as demand grows for more intensive residential use of College Hill, be superseded by development as envisaged in Scheme Two. Another reason for offering this choice is to provide room for a decision by the Redevelopment Agency when it enters into the actual programming and planning of an urban renewal project in this area.

There are, however, design objectives which are common to both schemes. A site must be found for the Proposed 500 pupil elementary school which is to replace the Benefit Street and the Thomas A. Doyle schools. Constitution Hill is an ideal location for a school since the center of the proposed school district lies within it, and its inclusion within the proposed urban renewal project area offers advantages in land acquisition and financing. As in the recently constructed Fox Point elementary school to the south, it is proposed that this school serve the community as a center for education, recreation, and social functions. This would involve abandoning the two Benefit Street Recreation Center buildings.

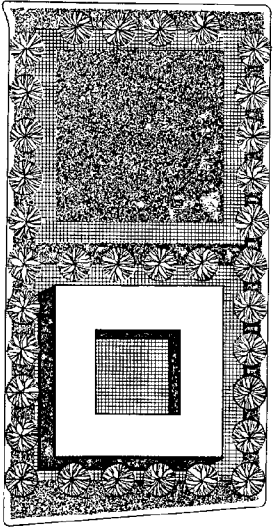
Uses are to be found for the buildings of historic importance to help insure their future. Residential use seems appropriate for the majority with the few remaining larger structures more suitably developed as a convenience type shopping center. There is a possibility that the social services program of the Episcopal Diocese

of Rhode Island can be located on Benefit Street and expanded to include housing for persons over sixty years old. Use of the houses along Benefit Street for this purpose is appropriate for several reasons: much of the cultural life of the city occurs along Benefit Street or just off it, the proportion of older people in College Hill is considerably higher than in other areas of the city, and finally the historic architecture often holds a particular attraction for older people. The physical design of the end of Benefit Street is of the utmost importance and, as with the southern end, should be treated as a kind of gateway to the historic east side and be provided with some kind of focus for social activity.

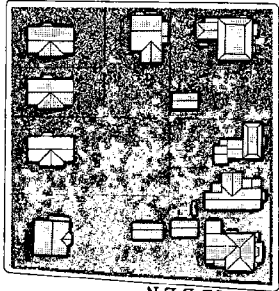
#### SCHEME ONE

Factors in favor of this plan are: 1) a minimum number of families will need to be relocated to other parts of the city, 2) public expenditure will be lower, and 3) there would be an opportunity for the people of the neighborhood to work together for the improvement of their own area. There are some uncertainties regarding the success of the approach in this particular area of the city. Families probably cannot afford rent increases beyond those resulting from repairs required from the application of minimum housing code. Between these houses will be groups of lots resulting from the clearance of the most dilapidated structures. New structures would have to be built on most of these to bring the population of the area up to proper levels. This raises the serious question of whether an investor will finance new housing requiring rents of upwards of \$70 a month on a lot next to rehabilitated structures renting at approximately \$40 a month. The difference in rent levels resulting from combining new and old was one of the reasons which made this approach inadvisable in the Lippitt Hill area. In lieu of attracting investors to the area, other methods of financing might be available. Financing could be achieved through the use of a private revolving fund or through public housing programs.

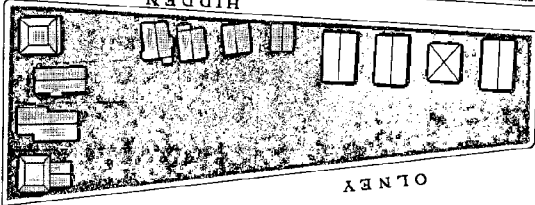
The principal features in this scheme include the following: 1) the location of a new elementary school on two blocks just west of Hope High School, 2) the removal of structures and out-buildings in dilapidated condition; 3) building new dwellings on the vacant and cleared lots; 4) clearing the interiors of the deep blocks of deteriorated structures and developing them for parking of automobiles or reapportioning the area for extra backyard space; 5) concentrating the retail business to form one convenient shopping



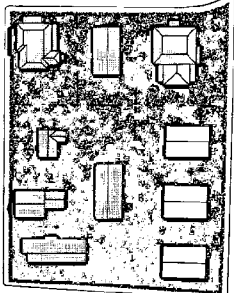
PROSPECT



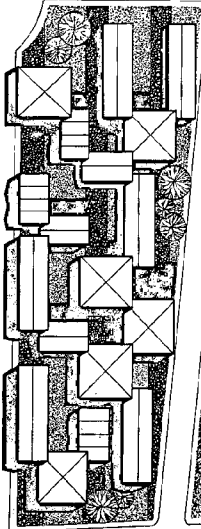
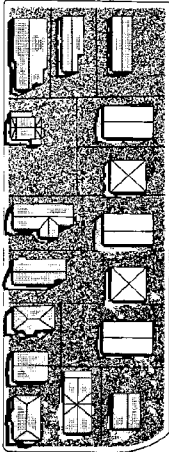
HIDDEN



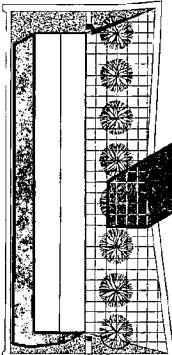
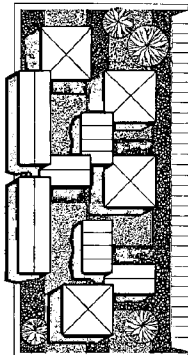
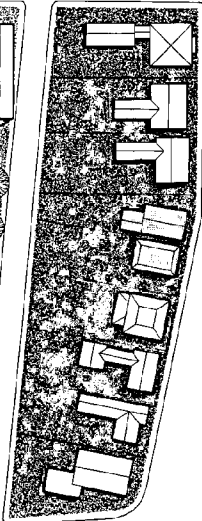
OLNEY



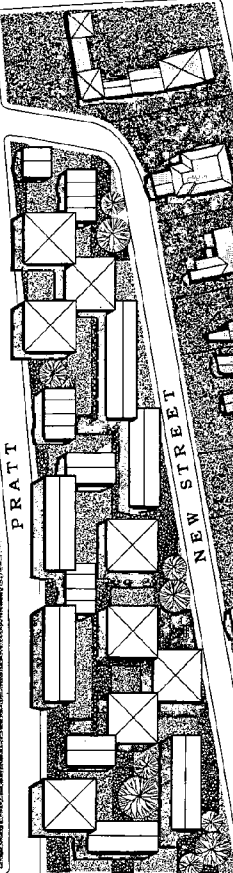
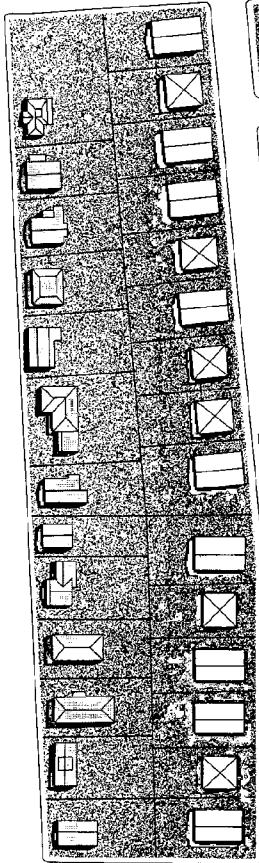
CONGDON



HALSEY

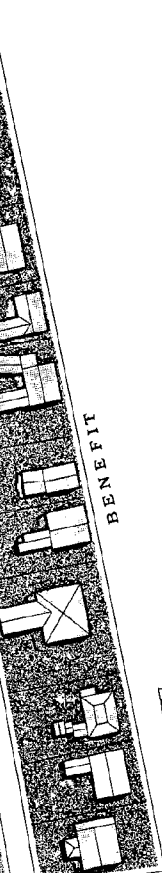


JENCKES

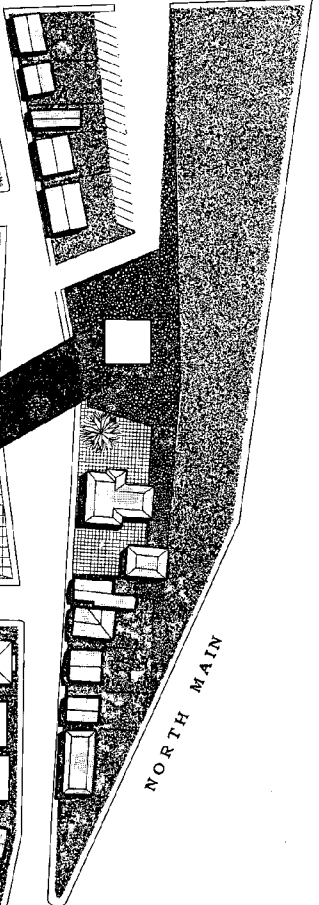


PRATT

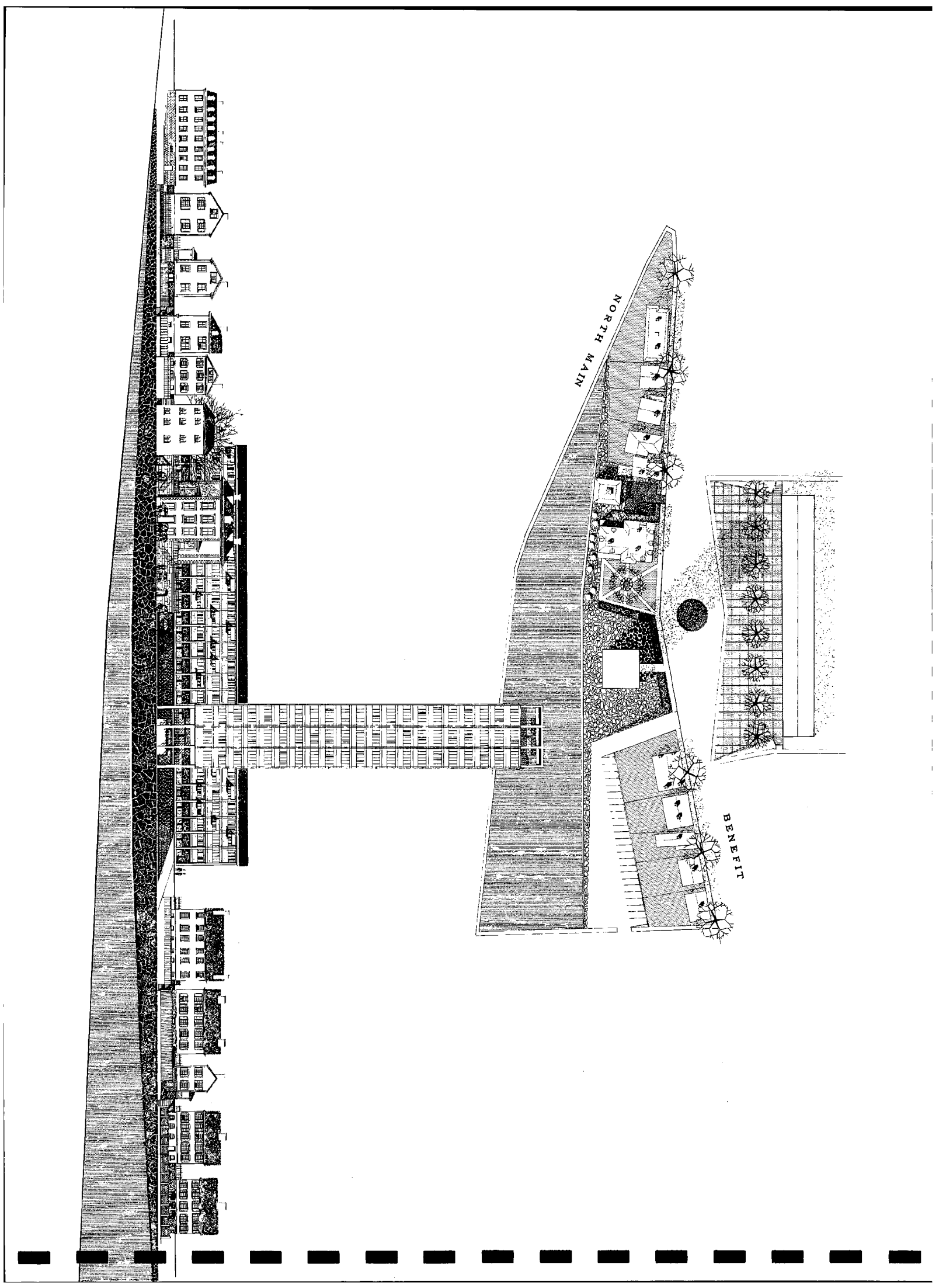
NEW STREET



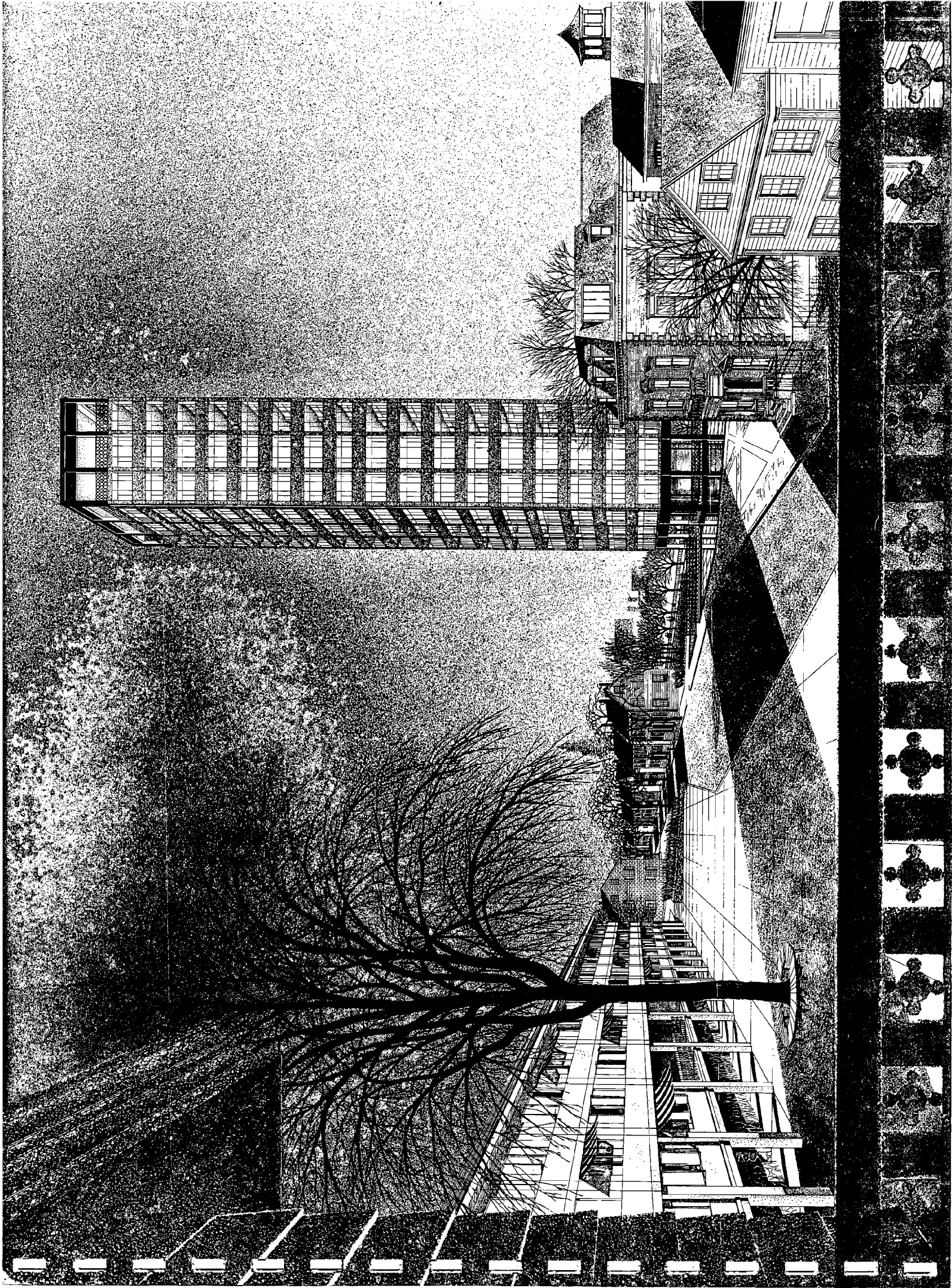
BENEFIT

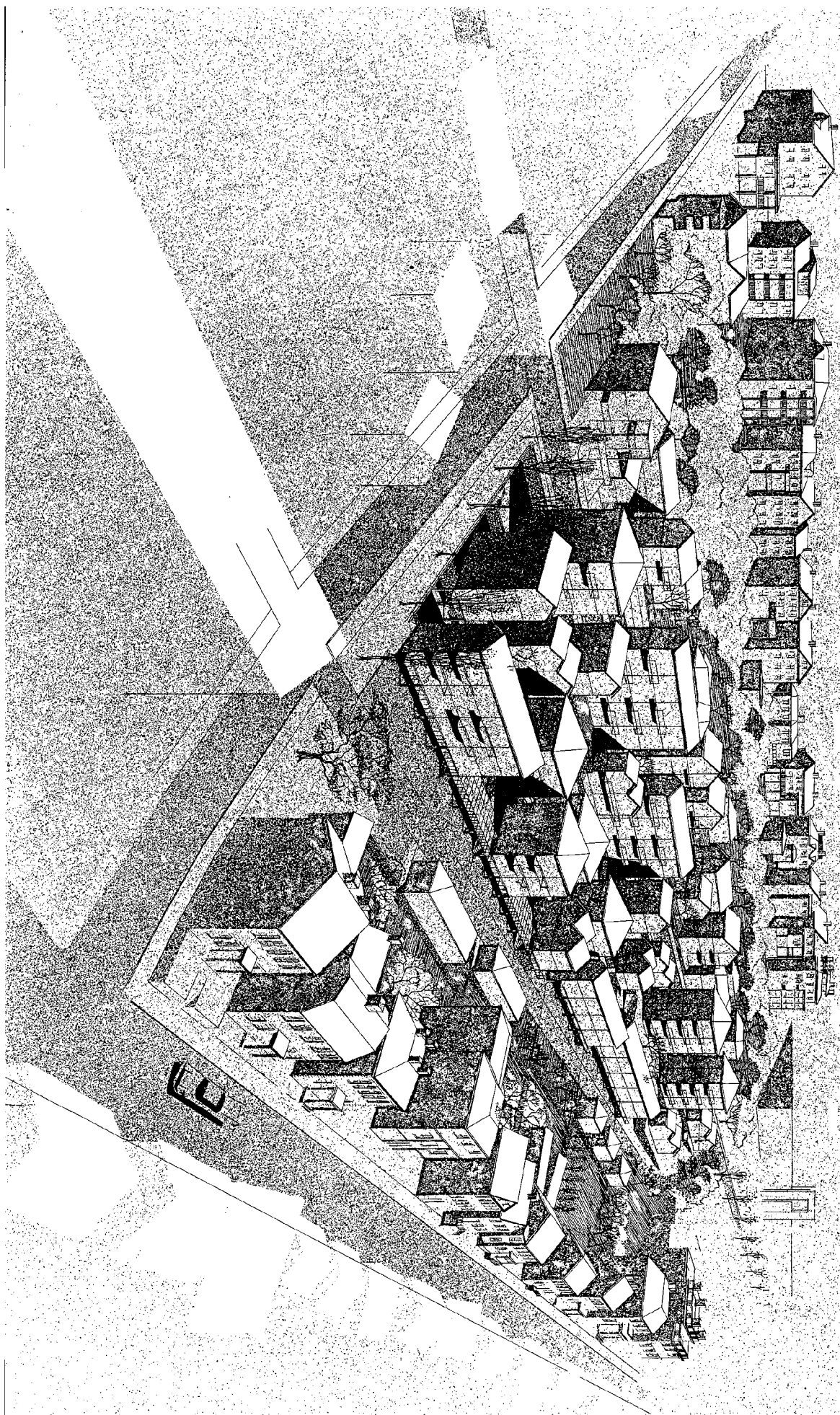


NORTH MAIN











area on the west side of Benefit Street; 6) clearing all the structures fronting on North Main Street from Benefit Street to Star Street and development of a landscaped buffer strip; and 7) replacing the slum structures on Benefit Street between Olney and Halsey Streets with historically valuable structures moved from other sites to create a strong northern entrance to College Hill. Benefit Street should be regarded as a collection area for historic architecture as it becomes available from areas cleared for highway or building construction in College Hill or elsewhere in the city. The plan for scheme 1 is shown on page 152 and a perspective of a typical rehabilitated "3-decker" on page 153.

SCHEME TWO

As the growth and sprawl of the suburbs continue year after year, problems of congestion have followed people to the Scarsdales, the Winnetkas and the Newtons. Consequently, a small but growing back-to-the-city movement is taking place. The advantages of city living are numerous: convenience, variety, culture, and shopping. The disadvantages include crowded living quarters, traffic hazards, parking problems, little or no garden space, noise, and lack of privacy. This design seeks to solve these problems and create an urban residential environment in which and from which the inhabitant can enjoy the amenities of city life.

If and when a demand for a sizable amount of new housing can be shown for College Hill, the plan proposed here shown on page 155 has some decided advantages. Its stability over a long period of time should be guaranteed and, in terms of comprehensive planning and rent levels, it is more consistent with the extensive type of development contemplated in the Lippitt Hill project to the north. Furthermore, it will result in a considerable increase in tax return. It will also make this end of Benefit Street a more effective entrance to the Trail. Disadvantages, primarily from the point of view of the people now living there, are the considerable higher rents that will result because of new construction, the high cost of which will probably prevent most of the same families from coming back to the area. Many of the planning proposals in scheme one apply here with two important changes: an increase in the amount of clearance programmed, a corresponding increase in proposed residential construction, and a minor change in the street pattern. The site plan design is based upon the unusual topography and the location of deteriorated structures to be cleared. It

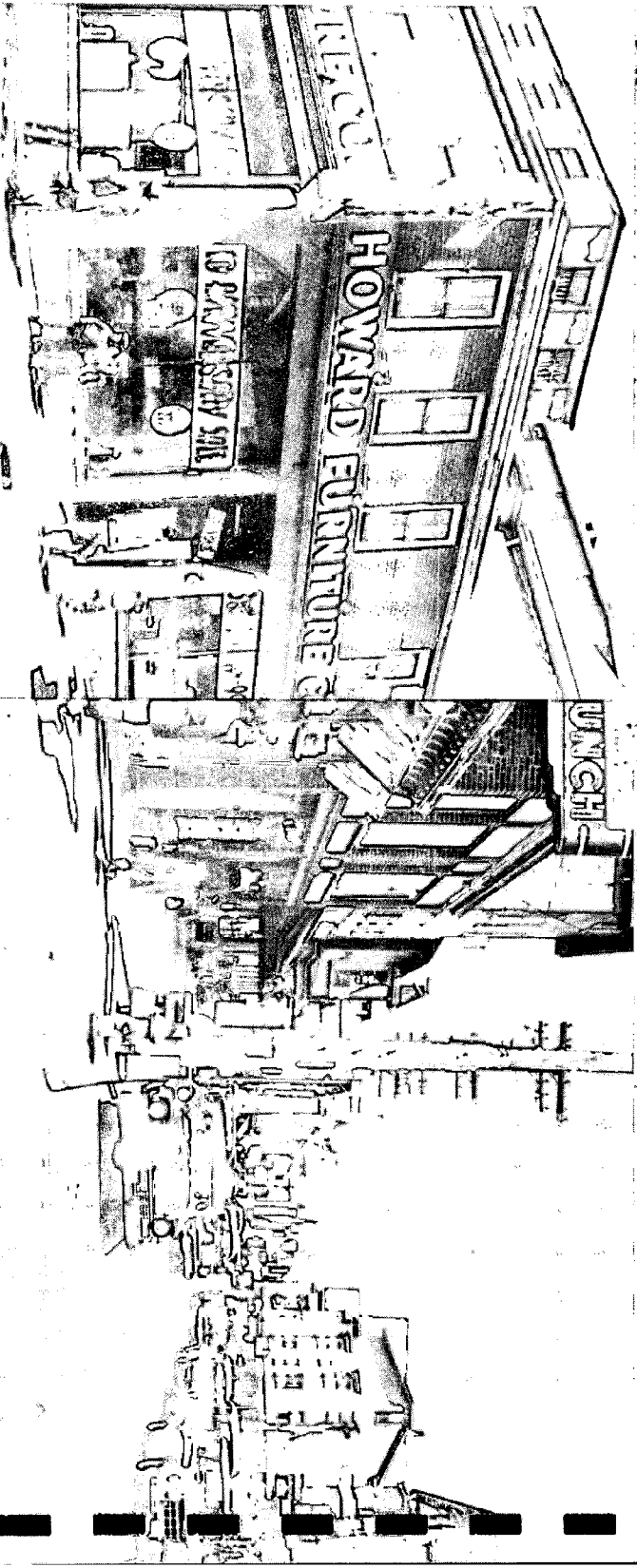
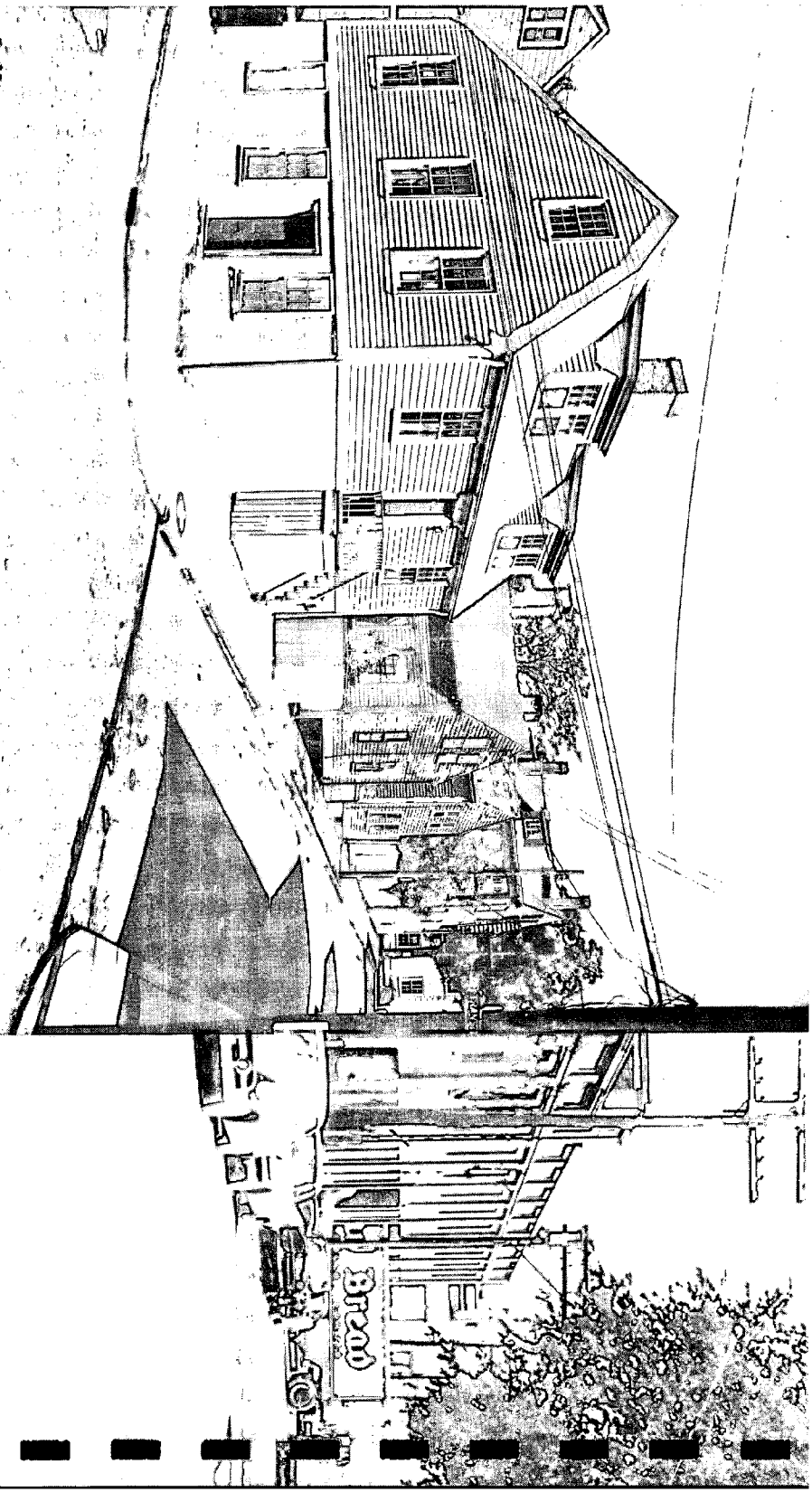
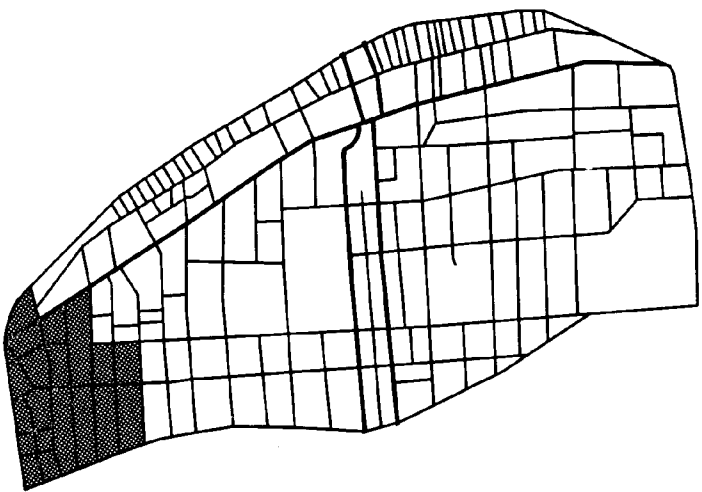
is arranged in a series of terraces stepping up the hill from North Main Street to Congdon Street. In the middle of the first "terrace" is a plaza with two rehabilitated brick buildings to be used for shops, offices, studios, and a restaurant. Also on the plaza is an apartment tower marking the northern end of Benefit Street and overlooking the city and the state capitol and is shown in perspective and plan on pages 157 and 156. Flanking the plaza on either side is an existing row of houses of the colonial and federal periods. Across the street and similarly flanked by historic buildings is a proposed three-story apartment building set back from a forecourt with parking in the rear. The old buildings to the north of the apartment will have been moved to this location as suggested in scheme one.

On the next level is a continuous strip of terraced rowhouses and apartments. These are designed to give nearly every unit a view of the city and its own private court and garden. Separating this development from the property on Benefit Street is a new alley giving access to parking and service off of each side. On the uphill side of Pratt Street will be single and two family units designed to keep the scale of other buildings in these blocks. Hidden Street has been cut through to connect with Pratt Street in order to give houses in this block frontage on a local street and to allow the extension of the backyards to Olney Street. This development is shown on the previous page.

The following chart compares the existing situation with Schemes one and two:

item	existing	Scheme One	Scheme Two
total area in acres . . .	25.3 . . .	25.3 . . .	25.3 . . .
dwelling units . . . . .	520 . . . .	461 . . . .	549 . . . .
existing structures . . .	192 . . . .	192 . . . .	192 . . . .
■ structures cleared	0 . . . .	65 . . . .	116 . . . .
■ structures rehabilitated	0 . . . .	48 . . . .	15 . . . .
■ structures unaffected	0 . . . .	79 . . . .	61 . . . .

WICKENDEN AREA



WICKENDEN AREA

This forty-seven acre area has a population of 2,560. It is the western half of a larger residential neighborhood known as Fox Point where a total of 7,400 people live. Two ethnic groups, Portuguese and Irish, are strongly represented. These groups have lived in the area for several generations and have strong ties to the community through family, church, and social organizations. Relatively low income families predominate; many live in old houses, some of which are in poor condition. Localized areas of slum housing exist in the vicinity of Wickenden Street and in the eastern section of Fox Point. Many of the houses date back to the early 1800's, particularly those along Arnold and John Streets. They are architecturally worthwhile, although they need restoration to bring out their authentic quality. The area contains three churches and a parochial school with almost no playspace. Wickenden Street and Ives Street to the east serve as the main neighborhood shopping centers with a few more stores along Brook Street. Most of the shops are small and occupy the first floors of dwelling structures. Two major nonconforming uses, a laundry and a factory, are responsible for considerable amounts of trucking and many additional curb-parked cars.

Although the greatest concentration of children in College Hill lives in this section, it is deficient in playspace. When the construction of the new Fox Point school consumed half of the neighborhood's playground, a very small lot was made available on the site of the old Arnold Street School. The lot is not level and is inadequate in size.

Most of the houses are of wood frame construction and are inhabited by from one to three families. The old street blocks are very narrow, the houses are built close together, and consequently the building coverage on the lots is considerably above the amount approved by planning standards. The already limited yard space has frequently been sacrificed further for garages or for parking areas.

Although the income level is low, there is a high percentage of

owner-occupied dwellings, most of which are well cared for and situated in relatively blight-free areas. Almost every case of residential blight occurs in the vicinity of the strung out commercial activity along Wickenden and Brook Streets. With few exceptions the commercial buildings are in fair or poor condition. The economic status of these shops is also seriously impaired by the lack of adequate parking space in the area. At present, parking is allowed on only one side of Wickenden Street and these spaces are frequently used by people other than customers. In the blocks in the south of the area there is a confusing layout of streets and an appreciable excess of street area serving little function. This condition was caused when the George M. Cohan Boulevard was constructed in a manner which left some unusable triangular pieces of land and cut the area off from a strip of waterfront land and the Bay to the south.

An approach to the renewal programming and design for the area must take into account not only the social, housing, economic, and historic factors but also the half of the Fox Point neighborhood outside the area of this study, which lies east of Hope Street and extends to the bank of the Seekonk River. In 1951 the Providence Redevelopment Agency in its Central Areas Study proposed the clearance of land from the Boulevard north to Sheldon Street for development as a shopping center to be both highway and neighborhood-oriented. Today, at a time when the city is making efforts to strengthen the economic life of its business core it seems inadvisable to provide additional retail space in such close proximity to the central business district. A second reason against such extensive clearing in this location is that a large number of the houses in the area are owner-occupied and in a good state of repair. These two factors have led to the planning decision to propose a minimum of clearance and to rehabilitate the neighborhood as a whole. The commercial area would be primarily related to local needs.

The specific planning program includes some clearance, some new as well as rehabilitated housing, enlarged playground facilities, parking space, and some street changes. In this scheme, the com-

mercial area is concentrated and forms a center at the foot of Brook Street which connects with all streets to the north. The shopping center is flanked at each end by a parking lot. The Arnold Street playground has been enlarged and extends on both sides of Brook Street. The blocks east and west of Brook Street will remain essentially the same but spot clearance is recommended for dilapidated structures. The resulting open lots are to be used for parking, open space, new residences, or divided for purchase by adjoining home owners. A typical example of this kind of block renewal can be seen in the section on parking. The street pattern to the south of Wickenden Street has been changed to cut down on the unnecessary street segments now existing, to improve the circulation, to relate the institutional, commercial, and residential uses to one another more satisfactorily, to gain some land suitably shaped for development, and to create a buffer for the area from the Boulevard traffic and noise.

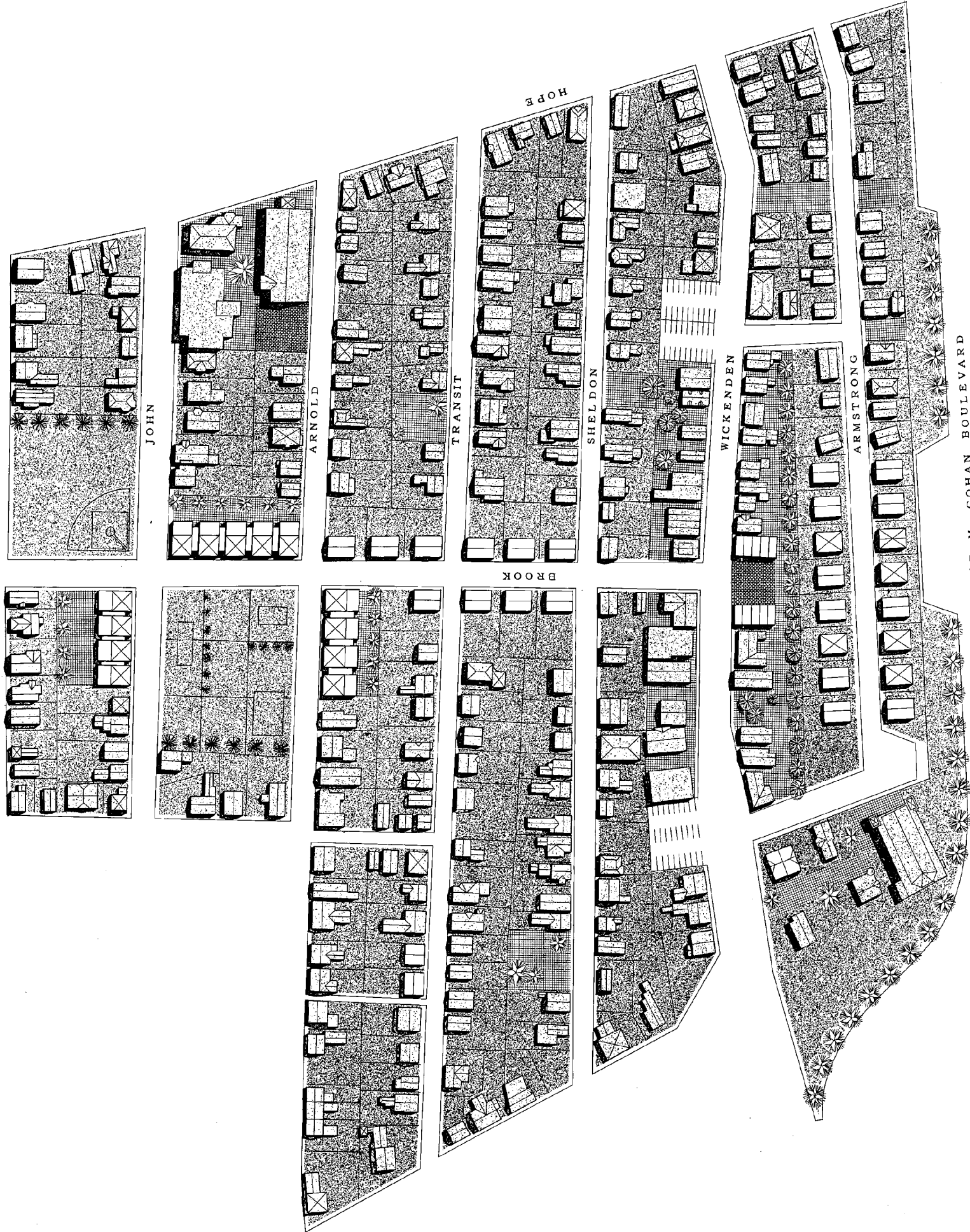
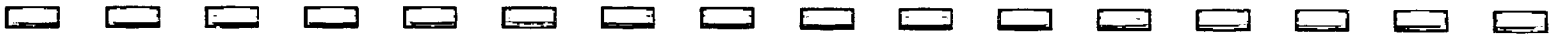
The reorganized shopping center would be housed primarily in rehabilitated structures and a few new buildings. The existing buildings were constructed in various periods and with little unity of character, which, because of the heterogeneous architecture of the group, will make the problem of designing visually attractive shops a difficult one. The accompanying sketch of the center shows one concept of how the separate buildings can be treated to make a satisfactory relationship. The principal elements of the proposed design concern color, signs, "streetscape" (urban landscape) and ordered arrangement. Color can be used to unite the shops by selecting colors which will form a composition. The shops can be set off from the houses at each end of the street if the latter are painted white and gray. Signs are an important visual element in a retail area and the careful use of color, symbols, and lettering in their design can help the appearance of the entire street. Attention should also be given to the design of the elements of the streetscape; such as street and sidewalk pavements, litter baskets, street lamps, and signs, and open areas. An open area has been set aside as a focal point of the center. It has been designed for the use of the older people of the neighborhood for talking, reading or for games. The Portuguese character of the area could be emphasized if some shops specialized in Por-

tuguese products. A wine store, a restaurant, and a specialty shop are possibilities.

Proposals have been made for the construction of new apartment buildings and rowhouses around the Arnold Street Playground along Brook Street and also just south of the shopping center. Those around the playground would be built on land cleared of substandard housing and commercial buildings. Since this location adjoins the residential areas to the west and north where rents are more in the range of those necessitated by new construction, units in this area should be feasible for development by private capital. However, the units proposed for construction along Brook Street and south of the shopping district may not attract private investors' capital because of the lower rent levels and character of the surrounding neighborhood. Here perhaps cooperative housing or public housing projects may be necessary. The colleges which may want to provide housing for faculty and married students might also develop residential units in this area.

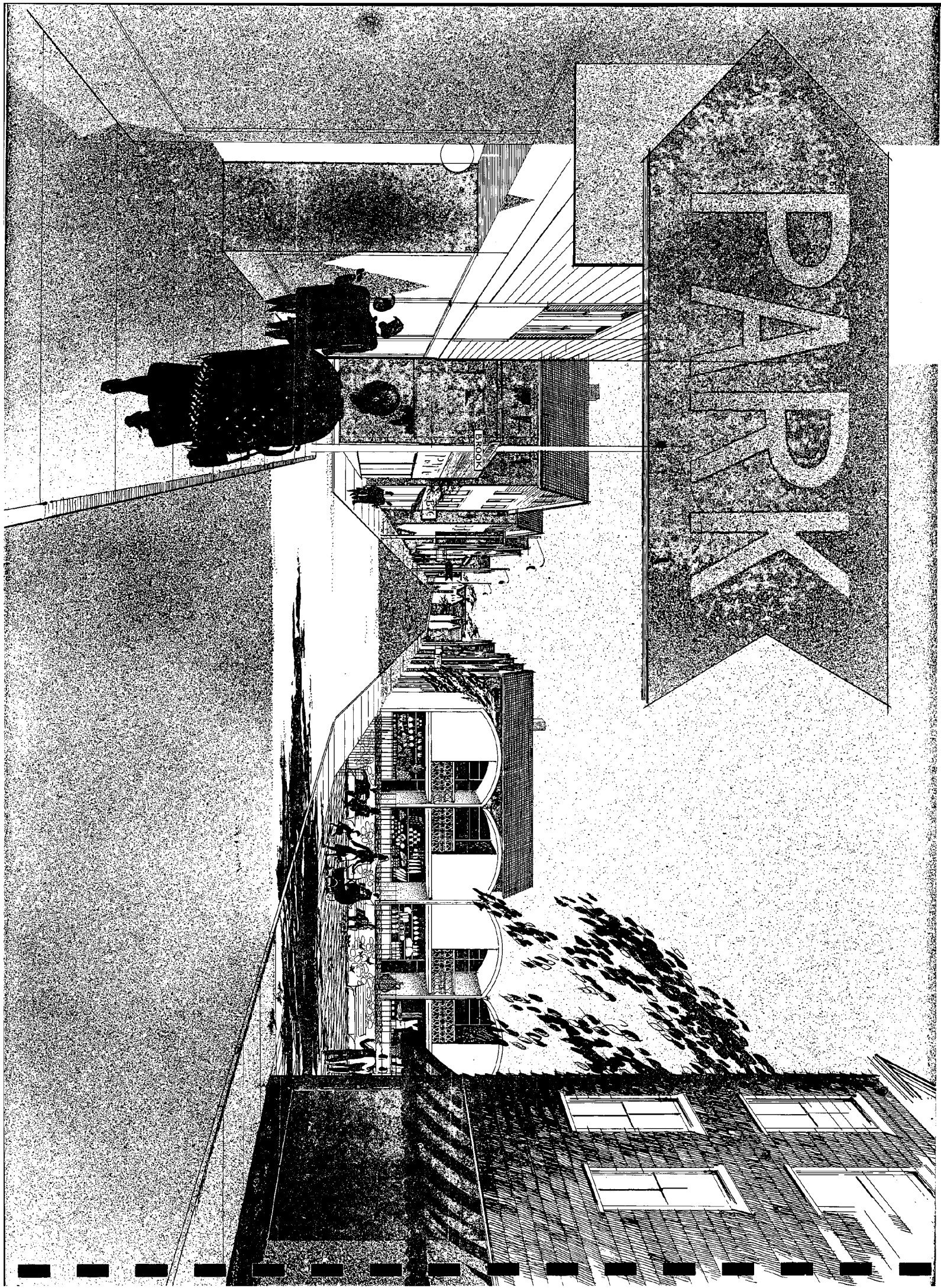
The sketch shows an enlarged Arnold Street playground divided into two parts, one for smaller children and across Brook Street, the other part designed for the use of the older children. The enlarged area would be accomplished by clearance of substandard dwellings west of the present playground and by the clearance of a commercial structure to the northeast. This separation of play areas is advisable since it keeps older more aggressive youngsters from interfering with younger children.

At the present time, a mixture of three-family houses, gas stations, and a few businesses lines George W. Cohan Boulevard. One heavily-used and three or four little-used streets now open out onto the Boulevard. The Boulevard will ultimately have to be incorporated into the freeway system, requiring the application of limited-access design standards and grade separations. The Wickenden area will be affected and the design suggested here shows a grade separated intersection at Hope Street, all local streets closed to the Boulevard, and a landscaped buffer strip in place of the buildings now fronting the Boulevard. One service station with controlled access is included in plans for this strip.

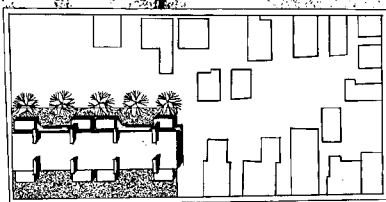
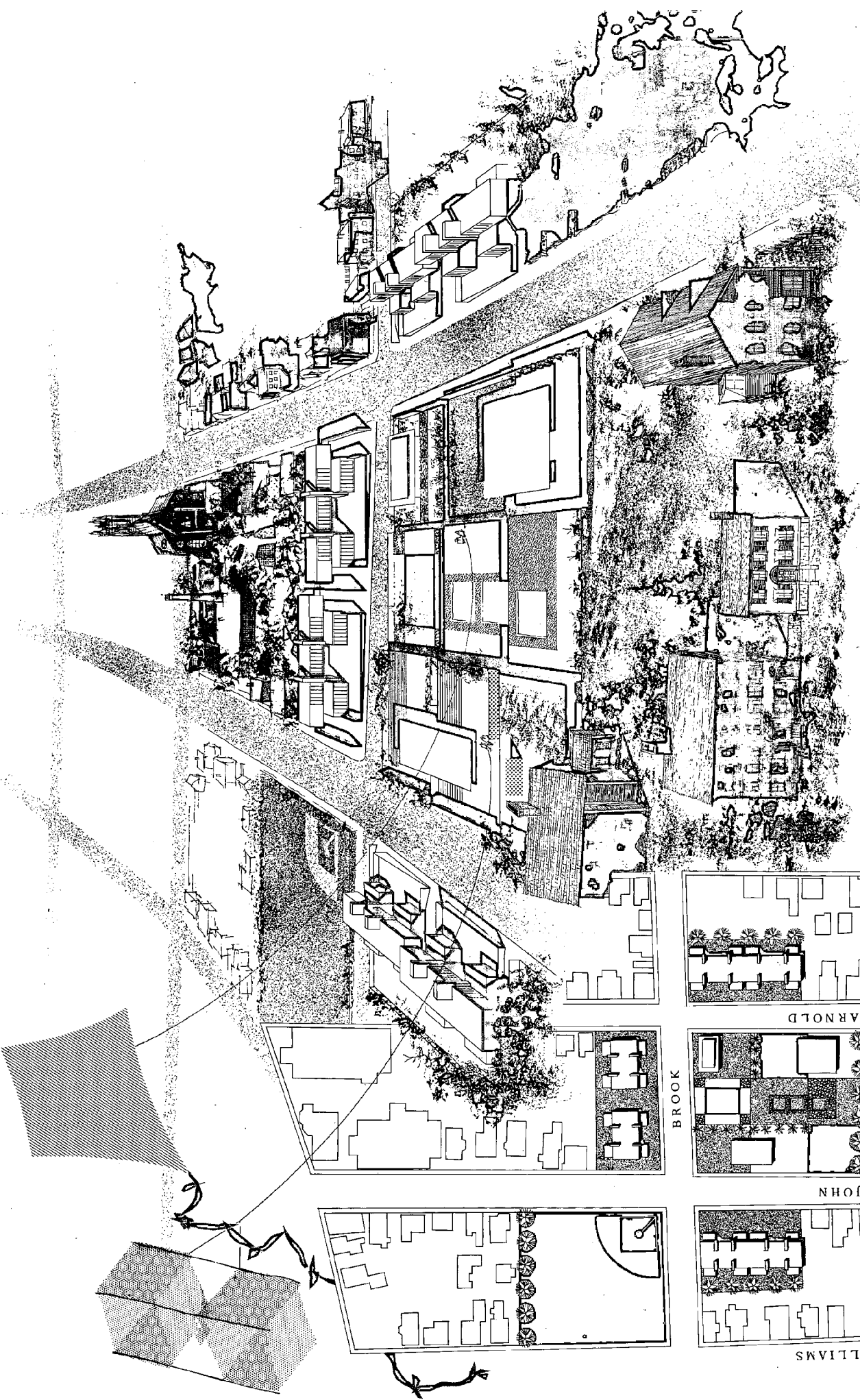


GEORGE M. COHAN BOULEVARD

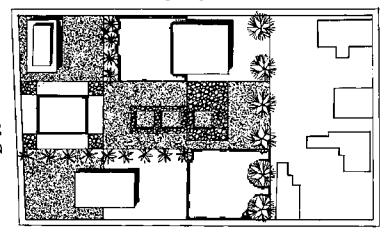




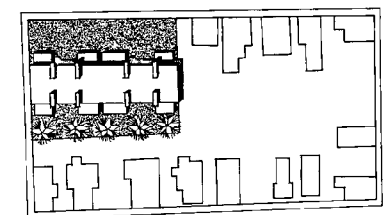




ARNOLD



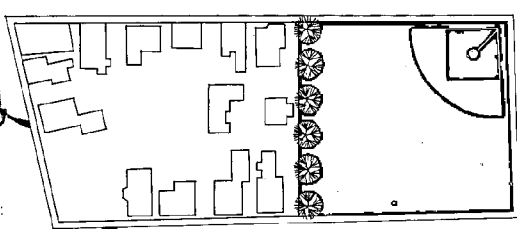
JOHN



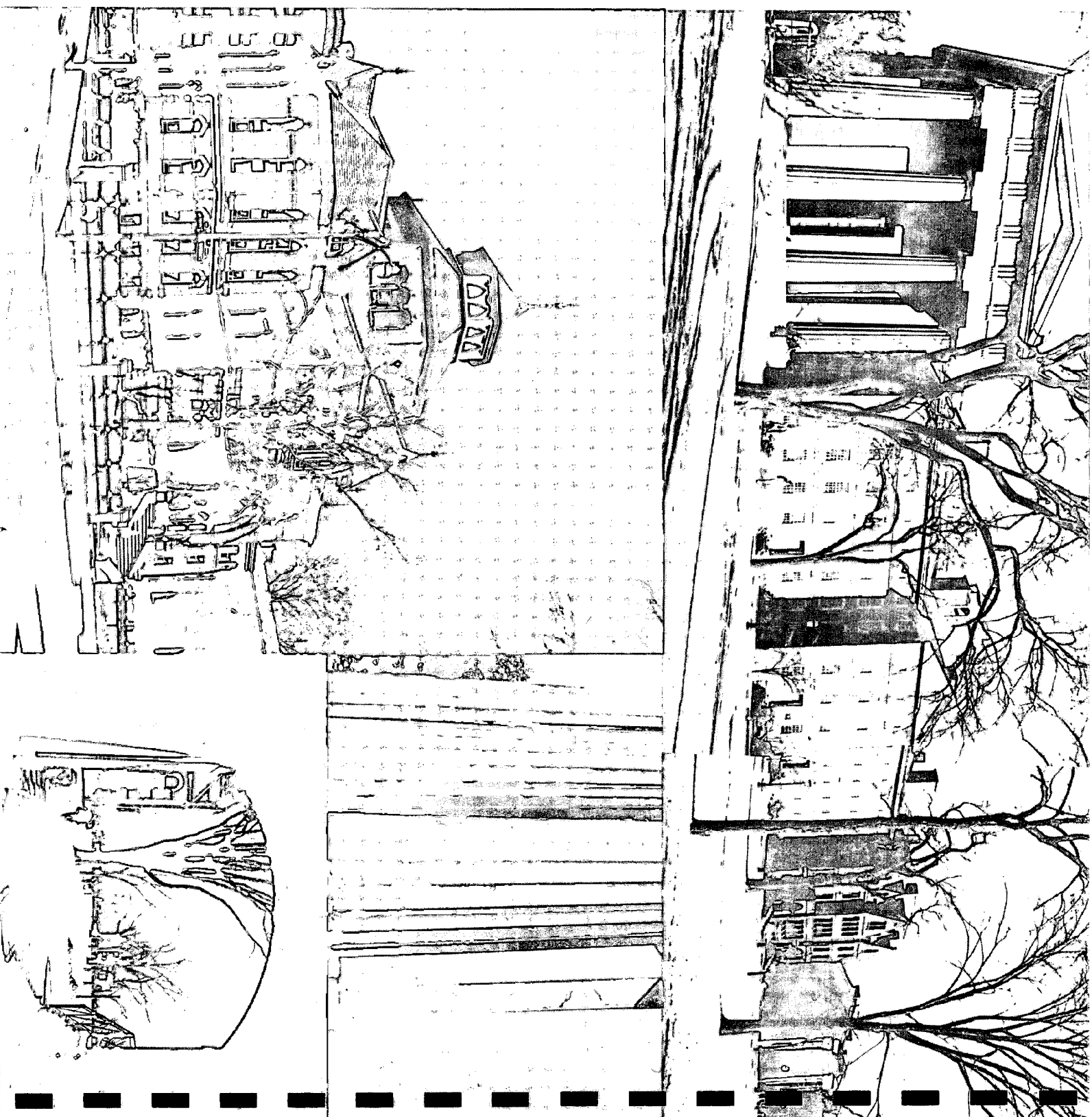
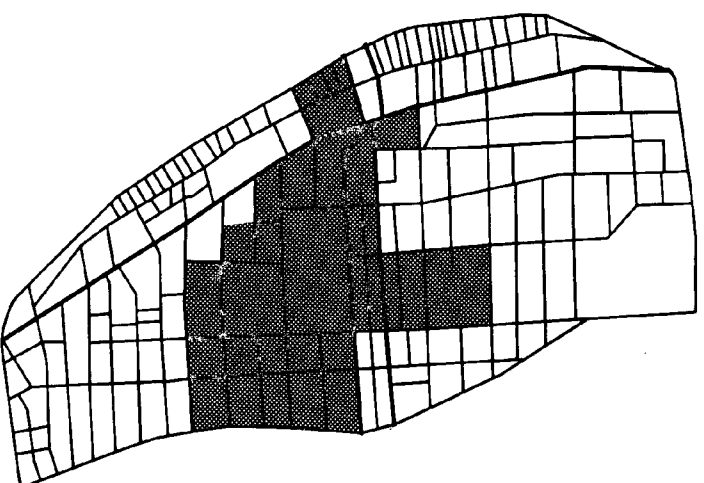
WILLIAMS



BROOK



# UNIVERSITY AREA



## UNIVERSITY AREA

Studies of College Hill have shown that the area falls into two separate parts, which have been designated previously as 1) the Urban Renewal area and 2) the University area. Each has basically different problems, the solutions to which will require different planning procedures. Problems in the Urban Renewal area are primarily those incurred by conditions of residential and commercial blight. The planning goal for this area is the improvement of residential neighborhoods so as to guarantee their future welfare. The chief problems in the University area have resulted from the rapid growth of the three educational institutions in the area and the lack of vacant land to use for their expansion. The planning goals in this area have been to provide a pattern for growth which will be beneficial to each of the institutions and which will not jeopardize 1) the character of adjacent neighborhoods, 2) the authentic quality of the historic architecture, and 3) the development of the Thayer Street shopping center. Most of the proposals being made for the Urban Renewal Area would be carried out as a renewal project under the terms of which a combination of public and private funds would furnish the capital necessary for the acquisition of land and construction. On the other hand, it is the intent of the proposals made for the University Area that, except for regulations involving parking and zoning, the institutions themselves would be responsible for the planning and execution of their own programs. Planning decisions made by the colleges have a far-reaching effect on the neighboring areas. The City Plan Commission is aware of the importance of this inter-relationship, and feels that the long term plans of Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design and Bryant College should be related to one another and also be coordinated with comprehensive plans for the community. It is in this spirit that the plans in this section are submitted. They are the preliminary plans for the entire area and are based on the comprehensive needs of the neighborhood. They are intended to be used by the institutions and the City Plan Commission as a basis for future coordinated planning as outlined in the institutional policy section of the program in section III-D.

The University Area effectively divides the total area into two neighborhoods, one in the north and the other, Fox Point, in the

south. The University Area overlaps the Urban Renewal Area to the west to include all of the School of Design property and extends beyond Hope Street on the east to include part of Bryant's campus and Brown's newly acquired Dexter Asylum property. The main campus of Brown University is situated in the center of the area with a dormitory quadrangle for men extending to the south and Pembroke College campus to the north. The various elements of the Campus are on the whole well related in terms of student circulation. Pembroke College is cut off from the Brown campus by Angell and Waterman Streets, the two most-used traffic arteries within College Hill. The old Dexter Asylum property, which Brown plans to develop for athletic and parking facilities, is separated from the campus by Hope Street and the Thayer Street shopping area. Major problems for Brown, and for the other institutions as well, are the lack of land for future development and the constantly increasing need for more parking space.

The Rhode Island School of Design is located close to downtown Providence and consequently, as can be seen from the map on land values on a previous page, finds land acquisition in its immediate vicinity very expensive. Most of its classroom buildings are located in a single block which is hemmed in by high value office buildings, the First Baptist Church, and the Providence County Court House. The school has few recreation facilities and no outdoor playing fields and the prospects for developing them in the immediate vicinity are slight. The parking problem is made more difficult because of the competing demand for space created by the proximity of the downtown business area. The majority of the students rent rooms in the area; but with the completion of the dormitory unit this year, the number rooming out will drop considerably. Streets carrying heavy traffic separate the dormitory from the three block area which constitutes the campus. As a result street crossing problems, particularly during rush hours, are acute.

Bryant College, which has been expanding rapidly in the center of a settled residential area since 1939, is cut in two by Hope Street. It has built one classroom building and has recently completed a refectory and library, but most of the other buildings consist of converted residential structures. A large part of the student body commutes and as a result, parking is a particularly important problem.

The Thayer Street shopping center is now surrounded by institutional property except for the area between Angell and Waterman Streets to the southeast which is occupied by doctors' offices. For several blocks between the Thayer Street center and the larger Wayland Square shopping center to the east, Angell and Waterman Streets are lined with old houses converted into offices, apartment buildings and private institutions. The Thayer Street shops are both college and community-oriented, and consequently are subjected to slack periods during vacations and summers when the students and many residents are away. The center has no department store or large supermarket and neighborhood residents go downtown or to Wayland Square for this type of shopping. With the growth of the colleges, the district has assumed greater social and commercial importance for the students. Two serious problems are the lack of parking space and the congestion of traffic on Thayer Street.

The residential areas on the periphery of the colleges are for the most part in very good condition. As a result, the institutions cannot count on taking advantage of the urban renewal program to help them acquire land as they could if the adjacent areas were suffering from blight and were slated for redevelopment. To the north of the center lies a good residential area consisting almost entirely of one-family houses, most of which were built after 1875 and are similar in size and condition. The chief exceptions occur along Congdon and Prospect Streets where there are some large and important early and mid-nineteenth century houses. The area also contains some structures of historic or architectural worth, most of them in good condition. In the eastern and southern part of the University area, there are sections rich in historic houses also in good condition. A number of three-and four-family houses have gone up in a small area near Hope High School, and some apartment houses are to be found between Hope and Thayer Streets. Parts of the area afford a panoramic view of the city. Between the campuses of Brown and Bryant is a section of about five blocks where the residences in general have no architectural importance, but are on the whole in satisfactory physical condition.

A chart showing the major land uses in the area appears on the opposite page. It gives the location of the various institutional, business and professional properties together with their growth

patterns over the years; it estimates 1) the additional land which will be needed by 1968 and again by 1983, and 2) probable student enrollments for the same periods. Holdings for the various periods were obtained from city atlases. Brown University's first building, University Hall, built in 1774, still stands at the top of College Street. From this point the campus has grown first toward the east then to the north and more recently to the south. About 1900, the University acquired Aldrich Field, a large tract of land about a mile north of the College proper, which has been used for recreational purposes. With the recent purchase of the Dexter Asylum property some of Aldrich Field is to be sold. Predictions for future land needs have been based on the enrollment increases and rate of land acquisition. Acquisition of the Dexter Asylum tract is expected to take care of the University's requirements for space for recreational purposes for the next twenty-five years. As a result, need for additional land will probably be less pressing than it has been in the immediate past. Additional land requirements for Brown are estimated at eight and twenty acres for 1968 and 1983 respectively.

The Rhode Island School of Design is expected to grow by 50 percent in the next twenty-five years. As noted before, the additional land needed to take care of this growth will be difficult to acquire in this location. Mary Wheeler School for Girls on Hope Street at present occupies an area of three acres; its expected future growth of one acre should be planned for. The Thayer Street shopping area is expected to grow 40 percent, which would result in a coverage of nearly ten acres by 1983, including the area required for parking. Bryant College, expected to expand at a greater rate than the other institutions, will probably double its holdings to twelve acres during the next twenty-five years. Enrollment predictions have been based on an estimated ten percent increase per decade. This is approximately the present rate of increase for the School of Design and is the stated rate of increase for Brown.

The following pages show a suggested preliminary plan for the University Area. This plan is set forth in two drawings; the first diagrammatically shows the main concepts of the scheme and how the various parts relate to one another; the second shows land to be acquired by the various institutions by 1968, the first stage of the plan, and by 1983, the second stage. The goals of the plan

# GROWTH OF

# INSTITUTIONAL AREAS



THAYER STREET

THE MARY C. WHEELER SCHOOL

BRYANT COLLEGE

RHODE ISLAND  
SCHOOL OF DESIGN

BROWN UNIVERSITY

1803

1873

1908

1926

1958

1983

ENROLLMENT

4800.0

ACRES

10.0

3.8

325.0

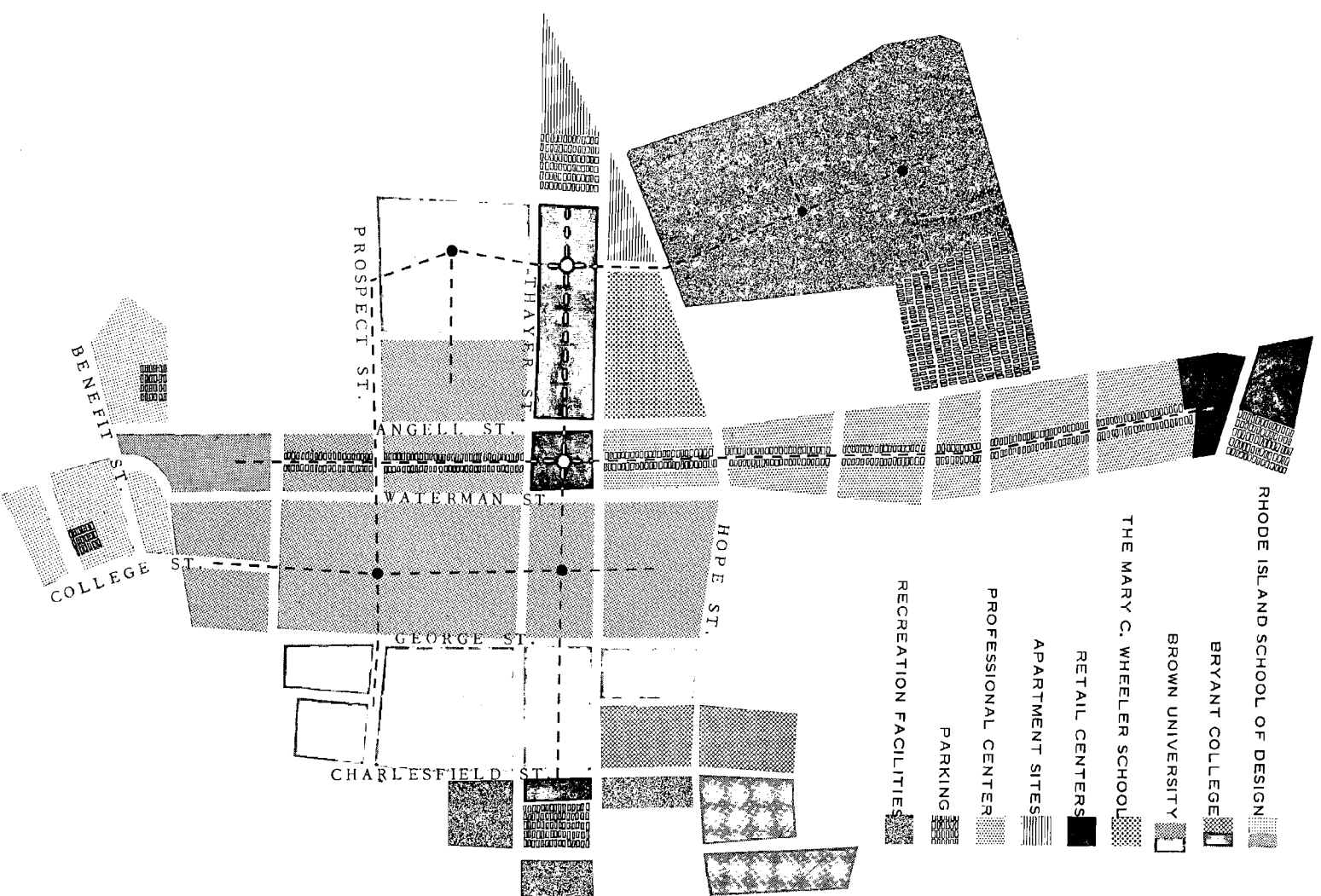
12.0

1610.0

9.3

1100.0

133.0



are **1** ) to be of mutual benefit to the residential, commercial and institutional elements at all stages of development, **2** ) to make use of the historic architecture wherever feasible or to direct development requiring clearance toward areas which do not have concentrations of historic building, **3** ) to make an orderly arrangement of the elements of the plan so that the system of student circulation can be designed to provide easy access between campus elements and from the campuses to the shopping area, **4** ) to develop the Thayer Street business area into a more specialized center for college people than it is at present, **5** ) to encourage increased office uses in the Thayer Street area so that more economic stability can be assured during the summer months, **6** ) to encourage the orderly intensification of the medical-professional use of the area between Waterman and Angell Streets, and **7** ) to estimate the demand for and suggest locations of adequate parking facilities.

The schematic plan on the left shows the basic elements of the plan as envisaged for 1983. The plan is ordered around two intersecting axes; 1) the important east-west streets, Angell and Waterman, and 2) the important north-south streets, Thayer and Brook. The block formed by the intersection of these four streets represents the geographic heart of the scheme, and is expected to be used for shopping and offices; it should be zoned to permit the building of a central office tower to mark the center of the plan. Extending to the north will be the shopping center designed to include an interior mall and parking facilities incorporated along parts of the periphery. The two triangular sites just north of the center are somewhat cut off from the other residential areas by traffic but have the advantage of looking over the grounds of Moses Brown School and Brown University's new athletic field. These factors should make both sites ideal for apartment buildings.

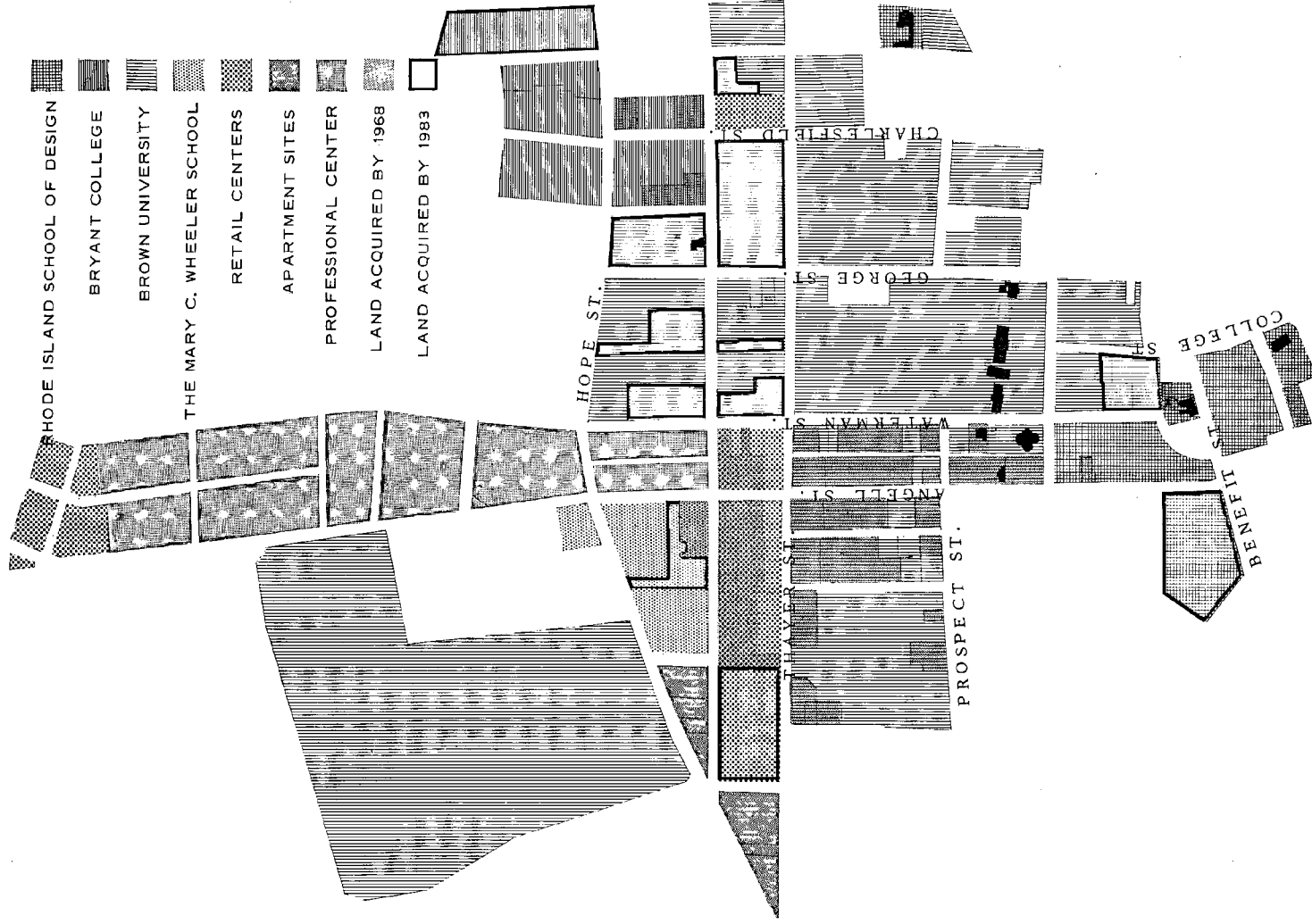
To the east along Waterman and Angell Streets extends a strip of professional offices, apartments, and private institutions. It is expected that in the next twenty-five years more apartment buildings and one or two medical clinics and office structures will be constructed in the area. This activity is to be welcomed for it will help to offset the tax loss caused by an increase in lands owned by the institutions and should contribute significantly to the economic stabilization of the Thayer Street shopping district.





The southern part of the north-south axis first cuts through the eastern part of Brown's main campus then through the men's dormitory area and terminates in a block slated to contain parking facilities for the staff and a small shopping area designed to serve the dormitory residents. This block is separated from the neighborhood of the south by tennis courts and playing fields for dormitory use. The western part of the east-west axis connects the Thayer Street shopping center with the Rhode Island School of Design's new dormitory complex. In the plan this connection has been accomplished by landscaping and paving Fones Alley. Here the blocks between Waterman and Angell Streets have been developed for Brown's use as classrooms and administrative offices and it is expected that parking facilities for the staff could be increased here.









The cross shaped pattern resulting from the plan of the north-south, east-west intersecting axes leaves quadrants which contain: in the north-east sector, Mary C. Wheeler School and the Brown University athletic facilities; in the south-east, Bryant College and the proposed eastern extension of Brown's dormitory and classroom campus; in the south west sector, the western extension of Brown's dormitory and classroom campus; and finally in the north-west corner, Pembroke College. A second north-south axis along Brown Street links Pembroke College on the north and the men's dormitory units on the south with the central campus.

The second map shows land now owned by the institutions and land which should be acquired at both planning stages 1968 and 1983 by Brown University, Rhode Island School of Design, Bryant College, Mary C. Wheeler School, and the Thayer Street shopping center. The areas to be added at each stage are equivalent to those indicated on the chart on the previous pages. The area shown for future development by Bryant College is tentative, since much of it lies outside the College Hill area. The parking scheme recommended for the area has already been included in proposals for parking in College Hill. Existing buildings of historic merit or practical value are shown distinguished from new building groups. To guard against the creation of a giant scaled "university city" it is hoped that some blocks will be developed where the smaller scaled existing buildings can be combined with new ones of the same scale. In this way the campus can be made to relate to the neighborhood of which it is a part.



## PROPOSED 25 YEAR PLAN

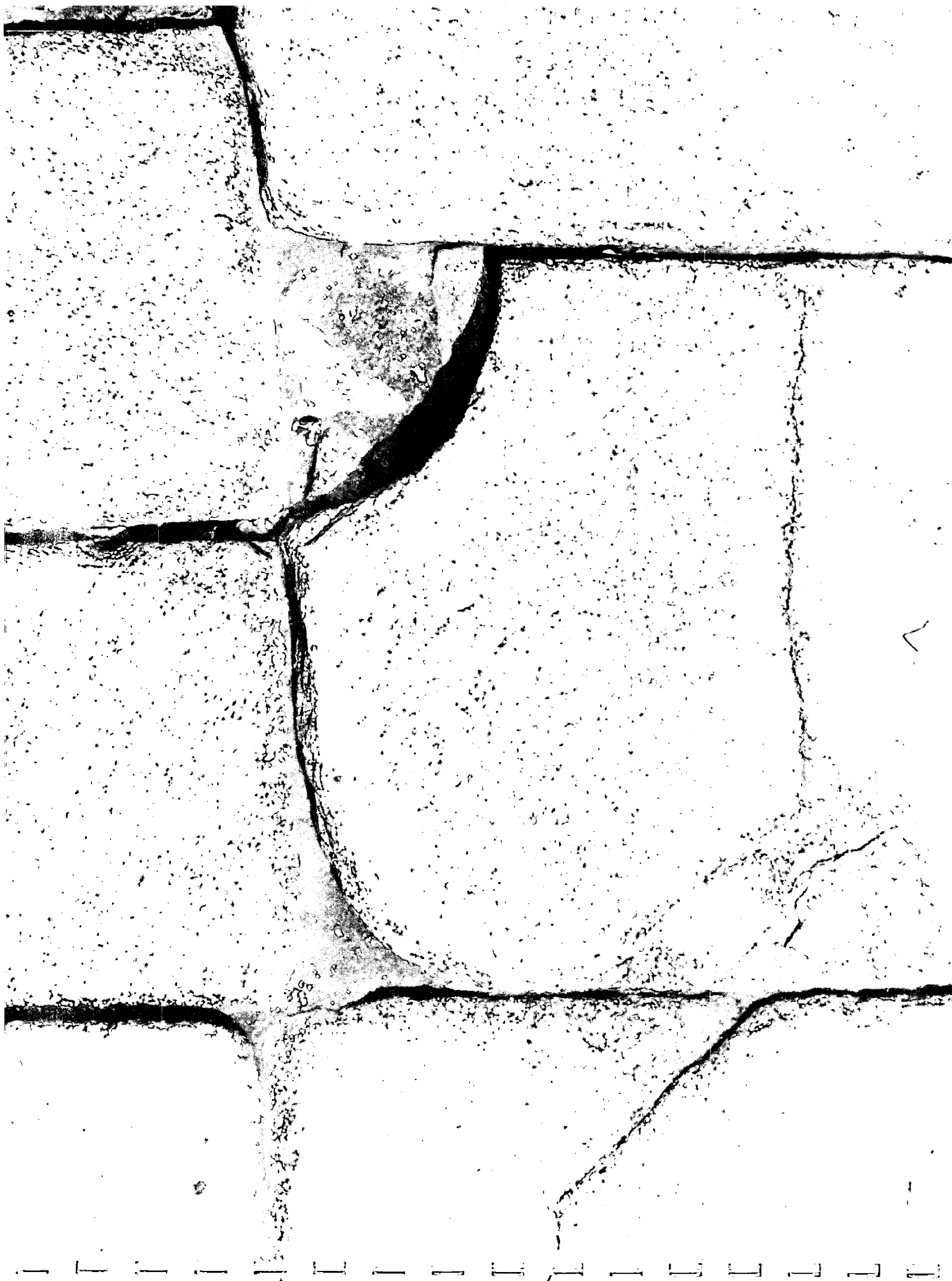
The map on this page shows College Hill today. All streets and buildings within the study area are indicated as well as those streets entering and leaving the area. Sections planned for complete redevelopment are shown in color. Those indicated as  are slated for the first stage of action included in the proposed urban renewal project. Those indicated as  are proposed for the second stage, estimated for completion in 1983.

The fold-out map opposite shows College Hill as it might appear twenty-five years from now. Proposed land use is designated by color with  indicating residential,  indicating the larger institutions,  indicating the business and commercial areas, and  indicating public lands. Within areas of proposed development, new buildings are indicated as  , existing buildings of particular importance are marked with roof lines and longer shadows, while other existing structures are indicated by simple white rectangles with uniform shadows. Pedestrian circulation is indicated by  , landscaped areas by  , and parking by  .

This plan is presented to show how the general planning in Section III-B and the nine specific projects detailed in Section III-C integrate to form one comprehensive physical plan, to be implemented through the action program which follows in Section III-D. It is pointed out that the proposals in this study are suggestive in nature and decisions for action must come from the various local, state, federal, and private agencies, concerned with future development of the area.

In concluding this section of detailed proposals, something should be said concerning principles guiding the physical design of the College Hill area. First among these is that the worthwhile structures of past eras should be protected and preserved but those not significant should not be protected and their removal promoted. To this end, the survey of historic buildings described in Section II was performed. A second principle guiding the design was to promote rebuilding of the area in terms of this generation's design and engineering concepts. It is felt that College Hill is a panorama of architectural styles and that each age should be represented in this display. A third principle was to consider not only the isolated structure but the relationship between groups of structures in terms of their scale, form, texture, and color. The group and the neighborhood are the important design factors rather than a building alone. It is hoped that these principles will continue to guide the persons, commissions, or agencies that are to make future decisions about renewal of College Hill.

PROPOSED TWENTY-FIVE YEAR PLAN



# III D.-RECOMMENDED PROGRAM

## SUMMARY

One of the most important aspects of any attempt to renew a historic area is to have a comprehensive program for such purpose. PART ONE of this report set forth the various elements of programs for historic area preservation and gave examples of important programs in operation in other parts of the country. It was obvious from this investigation, however, that what was lacking elsewhere was a comprehensive approach to historic area preservation. The program for action presented on the following pages is designed to be such a comprehensive effort, and it is hoped that it will demonstrate to other cities how the various elements in such a program can be made to work together in close association with federal urban renewal activities.

The program for action includes many recommendations, the most important of which concern proposals for the following:

- an organization to guide the development of the plans;
- a federally-assisted urban renewal program;
- a tourist trail along Benefit Street;
- a national historic park at the site of Roger Williams Spring;
- historic area zoning regulations;
- aids to private investment activities;
- institutional activities;
- city agency and city regulatory programs; and,
- publicity, education, and information programs.

This program recognizes that success lies in the cooperation of all parties concerned with the development process on College Hill. It is based on the hope that private citizens, institutions and the various levels of government can and will work together to bring about the improvements spelled out in the plans. This may take an extraordinary effort on the part of those concerned, but it is felt that the results will be worth this effort.

These proposals are presented on the following pages and are followed by an estimate of the costs involved in completing the program.

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT A PERMANENT COMMITTEE BE ORGANIZED, TO BE CALLED THE COLLEGE HILL COMMITTEE, FOR THE PURPOSE OF GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS NECESSARY TO CARRY OUT THE COLLEGE HILL PLAN.

In order to coordinate all the efforts recommended for the carrying out of the College Hill Plan, it is strongly recommended that a permanent committee be formed. In other cities, it has been recognized that citizen participation is vitally important in the effectuation of such a plan and is, indeed, the key to its success. The functions of the committee would be as follows:

- to oversee the activity and to guide and coordinate the development of the proposals made herein;
- to perpetuate interest in College Hill planning beyond the life of the special project until the objectives of the plan are achieved;
- to develop community cooperation towards the goal of the plan and to educate the community to the possibilities of planning for the future;
- to act as the means of communication between the citizenry and city agencies;
- to prepare the stage for an urban renewal project to take place in the future within the study area; and,
- to formulate new programs for the development of College Hill as conditions change over the course of the years.

This committee should work with existing organizations already functioning within the area. Key groups are listed in this report, and all of them should at some point be contacted with regard to the work to be done.

### Formation

The permanent committee, which might be called the College Hill Committee, should be closely affiliated with the Providence Preservation Society and other groups active in the area, but in order to reach a broader base, it should be organized as a separate entity. The Coordinating Committee which was set up by the Preservation Society and the Plan Commission, and which functioned as the guiding group during the period the study was being performed, should take the initiative in the formation of this new committee. With completion of the study report, the principal

function of the Coordinating Committee has been served. It is recommended that this group be dissolved but at the time of its dissolution, it should launch the new College Hill Committee as the organization to carry out the program set forth in this report. The job of getting this committee in shape, then, should be the final job of the Coordinating Committee.

### Membership

Positions on the College Hill Committee should be drawn from the membership of the Preservation Society and from among the current membership of the College Hill Study Coordinating Committee. In addition, members should be drawn from the ranks of the special subcommittees which functioned during the course of the study, the educational institutions in the area, business groups, civic groups, churches, and persons representative of the diverse College Hill neighborhoods.

As there is a great deal of work to be done, committee members should be chosen who will be willing and able to give a portion of their time to this program. A relatively large committee would be desirable so that the work load can be shared by many hands. It is recommended that the membership be numbered at between fifteen and twenty persons and expanded when necessary.

In addition to the active membership on the committee, two ex-officio members should be appointed. The director of the City Plan Commission and the director of the Redevelopment Agency should be afforded positions as their advice on certain technical matters will be invaluable to the work of the committee.

### Paid Executive

Experience in other cities with similar organizations has shown that a paid executive to handle the day-to-day operating problems of the organization will greatly enhance the possibilities for successful completion of the program. It is recommended that a paid executive be employed on a half-time basis for at least the first year of the program and that a sum of \$5,000 be raised from contributions for the annual budget to be used for the salary of such a person and for other expenses. The committee may be able to function without such an executive but more work would have to be undertaken by the committee members and continuity of effort could not be guaranteed. Ability to perform effectively the following types of activities is desirable in such an executive, and will suggest the usefulness and scope of his services:



- to set the stage for community thinking,
- to summarize discussions orally,
- to write concise summaries,
- to use research results and fact finding methods,
- to act effectively in public meetings,
- to organize complex groups,
- to communicate the program to interested persons,
- to time action effectively; and
- to identify and involve resource persons.

#### WORKING SUBCOMMITTEES

As has been indicated, the primary responsibility of the College Hill Committee will be to carry forward the program set forth in this report. To function efficiently in this respect it is recommended that the tasks be separated and parceled out to subcommittees each of which should be directly responsible for one phase of the program. At the outset, nine subcommittees of two or three persons each should be formed from the membership. These subcommittees may be expanded and it is hoped that they will draw upon other members of the community to aid them in their work. The following subcommittees are recommended and indicated in the accompanying organization chart:

**1. Urban Renewal:** A most important job must be done by this subcommittee. It is probable that there will be an urban renewal project within the next decade in the College Hill area. The effects of this activity will be far-reaching and this group should represent College Hill interests in following the progress of such a project from the time of the publishing of this report to the time of its completion. Much planning will be done along the way and decisions will be made by city agencies and the community. This group should serve to stimulate urban renewal activity for the area and aid in the making of decisions. The urban renewal plan set forth in this report should serve as a guide to this subcommittee.

**2. Benefit Street Trail:** The basic job of this subcommittee should be to work for the development of the trail as described in the special report sections concerning this proposal. A small amount of funds will be needed for this project and these should be raised by the committee. Effort must be given to the design, construction, and erection of street signs, the writing and printing of a brochure, and the placement of plaques. Finally, publicity for the trail needs its attention.

**3. Roger Williams Spring Park:** This subcommittee should be responsible for seeing this special project through to completion. Effort must go into keeping contact with city officials and the National Park Service, and in the marshalling of community support for the project. If the National Park Service should decline to participate, means should be developed to keep the project alive and to develop a scheme to bring it about through joint city and state effort.

**4. Historic Area Zoning:** Action should be taken by this subcommittee to make known throughout the community the goals of this type of control and the specific provisions of local and state laws which may be adopted. It should be responsible for supporting state enabling legislation in the General Assembly. When such legislation is enacted at the state level, the subcommittee should pursue the adoption of an appropriate historic area zoning ordinance by the City Council of Providence. Suggested drafts of legislation for consideration at the state and local levels are included in this report.

**5. Private Investment:** A big job needs to be done in developing private investment activity in the College Hill area. Types of activities are suggested in a later section of this report devoted to private investment opportunities. A great deal of "selling" of the area must be done by the subcommittee members, and the forms of organization to promote investment should be explored and developed. A proposal for a new mortgage facilities corporation as described in the report is an important part of the program and should be followed through by this group.

**6. Institutional Activities:** This subcommittee should act as the organizer of efforts concerning the relationship of the institutions to the city and the community, and it should work with the liaison committee suggested for institutional and city coordination. A list of recommendations is given in the section of the report devoted to this subject, and this group should serve to see that these recommendations are acted upon. It should be the representative of the College Hill community in all matters concerning institutional activity that affects the area.

7. **Municipal Programs:** The extent of cooperation and activity required of city agencies is spelled out in special report sections. This subcommittee should be responsible for keeping these agencies apprised of the needs of the College Hill area, as detailed in the plan, for keeping these agencies informed of the progress of the plan, and for promoting the completion of recommended projects.

8. **Information and Education:** Much effort must be put into publicizing the program, educating the community to the possibilities and goals of historic area renewal, and collecting certain pertinent information about the program. This group should be responsible for these efforts which are spelled out in greater detail in the program that follows:

9. **Community Relations:** A ninth and final subcommittee recommended is the Community Relations Subcommittee which has a special job to do. The job is a big one and accordingly it is recommended that part of the paid executive's responsibilities should be to work closely with the members of this group. This subcommittee should be responsible for all relations between the College Hill Committee and the community. In general, it should be aware of the effect of community opinion upon success of the planning activities, and should act to create the most favorable situation possible in this regard.

It is recommended that under its aegis, neighborhood committees be formed. A Community Relations group that was active during the study period made an initial step towards this goal in one part of College Hill - North Benefit Street. This effort should be continued and at least two other neighborhood groups should be formed. These would be developed from among residents and property owners in the southern part of the area (in the vicinity of Wickenden and Transit Streets) and among those along the Historic Trail planned for Benefit Street. Once formed, these neighborhood groups would serve to represent their particular area and make known the views of the residents and property owners in deliberations concerning urban renewal and other projects in College Hill.

## COMMITTEES FUNCTIONING DURING THE STUDY

The College Hill Study Coordinating Committee worked closely with the City Plan Commission and its staff throughout the eight-month course of the study. Monthly meetings were held for the review and discussion of study materials and proposals. In addition, special groups were formed to assist the staff in particular critical aspects of the work, such as community relations and real estate and finance. The Rhode Island Chapter of the American Institute of Architects aided in setting up an Advisory Committee on Historic Area Zoning. It will be desirable to draw upon the experience of these committee members for service on the proposed College Hill Committee and its subcommittees. Membership of the several study groups was as follows:

### Coordinating Committee

Mrs. William Slater Allen; Thomas B. Appleget; the Very Reverend Darby W. Betts; Thomas F. Black, Jr.; John Nicholas Brown; Murray S. Danforth, Jr.; Franklin S. Eggleston; Mrs. Peter Geddes; Conrad E. Green; E. Gardner Jacobs; Frederick Lippitt; W. Easton Louttit, Jr.; Frank H. Malley; Jonathan Rawson; Raymond H. Trott; James N. Williams; and Charles R. Wood.

### Community Relations Subcommittee

The Very Reverend Darby W. Betts; Mrs. M. Jerome Brown; Mrs. R. H. I. Goddard; Everett I. Kalver; The Honorable Frank Licht; John F. Lopez; Mrs. Paul W. Monohon; Maurice Mountain; H. Clinton Owen, Jr.; Jonathan Rawson; H. E. Skerry; C. George Taylor; and the Reverend John R. Washington.

### Finance and Real Estate Subcommittee

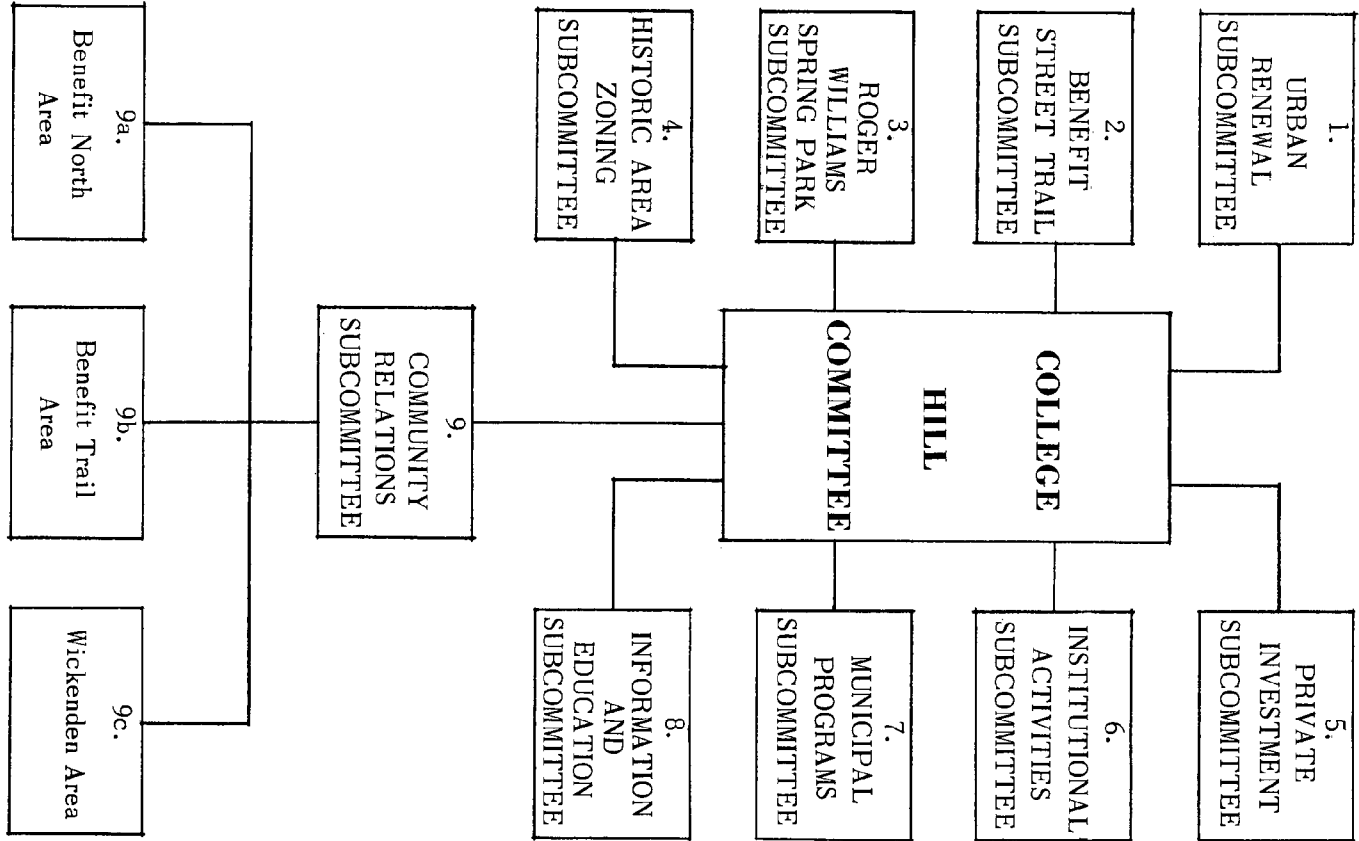
Thomas F. Black, Jr.; Roger A. Brassard; Michael Gammino; Frederick Lippitt; Clarence H. Philbrick; Raymond H. Trott; and Edward W. White.

### Historic Area Zoning Advisory Committee

George Fraser; Peter Geddes; Lloyd W. Kent; Knight D. Robinson; Albert E. Simonson; Lloyd H. Turoff; and William P. Buffum, Jr.

CITY-WIDE CITIZENS ORGANIZATION

Mention must be made in this discussion of the College Hill Committee of the obvious need felt in the course of the College Hill study for a city-wide citizen's group concerned with urban renewal and housing.



The federal Housing Act of 1954 considerably broadened the extent of urban renewal activity by promoting rehabilitation and conservation of neighborhoods rather than strict concentration on slum clearance. This extension implied a great reliance on voluntary activity and participation among citizens groups. Many cities responded by setting up city-wide organizations, and such organizations currently exist in many large cities throughout the country. The American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods — ACTION — has promoted such citizen effort on a community basis as part of the answer to the downgrading of urban residential areas. Three years ago an effort was made with the cooperation of ACTION to create a city-wide citizens group, but with little success. The need is still evident now and has been brought into focus by the efforts of this study. While it is somewhat beyond the scope of this project, it is strongly recommended that such a group be formed in the Providence area. When and if it is formed, the College Hill Committee can serve as an active arm of this broader committee working alongside other groups representing other sectors of Providence.

URBAN RENEWAL

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT AN URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT BE UNDERTAKEN IN THE COLLEGE HILL AREA.

The Urban Renewal Program has as its purpose the renewal of slum or blighted areas of cities throughout the United States. It is a complicated program, but basically it will help a city renew its run-down areas by supporting renewal operations with loans and grants of federal funds, in most cases providing two-thirds of the net cost.

Urban Renewal, as it is used today, is not limited to clearance of delapidated structures. It has recently been broadened to include rehabilitation and conservation of areas of the city as well. Thus the designation of an area of the city as an Urban Renewal Area does not necessarily mean that it will be cleared of buildings; but that a total attack to raise the standards of a neighborhood will be undertaken.

Of the several coordinated proposals in the program for renewing the historic College Hill area of Providence, one of the major elements is that for an urban renewal project. This project has been designed to include almost all of the historic structures that are currently in existence on the Hill. The proposed boundaries of the project and the re-use of land within these boundaries have been shown earlier in this report in section III-B and III-C.

A course of action for an urban renewal program is set forth in the following pages. This is being made as a proposal to the city agencies that would be involved in such a program, primarily the Providence Redevelopment Agency. The renewal area has been set forth in a general way. It is hoped that the Redevelopment Agency will consider this as a preliminary proposal which will be developed in more detail as a renewal project in the agency's regular program. This section of the College Hill report is intended to set down the thinking that went into the formulation of this preliminary proposal for the information of the citizens of the area and the city agencies that are formally charged with carrying forward such a project, and to guide the efforts of the proposed College Hill Committee.

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

As set forth in federal Urban Renewal Administration directives, a renewal project must meet the following general requirements, and it is felt that no serious problems will be met in this regard:

- a slum area or a blighted deteriorated, or deteriorating area, or an open land area.
- approved by the Urban Renewal Commissioner as appropriate for an urban renewal project.
- eligible under state and local law for the remedial actions proposed.

TYPES OF ACTIVITIES

Within an Urban Renewal Area, three types of activities can take place:

- **Redevelopment or Clearance**, in which areas are completely cleared and replaced with new structures or open space uses. The proposal for the College Hill renewal project indicates several areas where total clearance of substandard housing is recommended. This clearance would be performed by the city and in most cases the cleared and prepared land would be resold to private developers for new structures to be built according to a plan laid out by the city.
- **Rehabilitation**, in which the majority of existing structures would remain, but housing aids would be applied to upgrade the quality of the area. Some spot clearance of particularly bad structures can take place. Several extensive rehabilitation areas are proposed which, for the most part, include substantial numbers of architecturally valuable structures in poor condition. In rehabilitation areas, a combined effort is made with the city and private enterprise cooperating to upgrade living conditions in the area. The city promotes private renovation by applying the rules of the housing code, stepping up such city services as sanitation, street repair and police protection, and providing more lenient mortgage arrangements by making certain sections of the federal Housing Act concerning mortgage financing available to property owners.

■ **Conservation**, in which most of the area is in good condition but may show signs of the onset of housing blight. Community action in the form of personal attention to repair of structures and open spaces with local governmental support given where appropriate is the normal extent of conservation activities. The remainder of the area included within the proposed project boundaries, not otherwise designated is considered to be a conservation area.

## **POLICIES DEVELOPED**

As is indicated in another section of this report, much of the area included within the boundaries of the renewal project proposed herein has already been formally designated as being appropriate for renewal action. Study had been started on the so-called Constitution Hill project prior to launching of the College Hill Study. The work on Constitution Hill was set aside pending the completion of this study at which time it is to be reconsidered. As is set forth in this proposal, there has been a somewhat different approach taken and a project of greater magnitude has been developed.

To guide the urban renewal program for College Hill, the following policies are recommended.

■ A broad scale approach should be taken and a large portion of the Hill should be included in the urban renewal project. In this way, it will be possible to include other redevelopment projects within areas previously designated as needing renewal and to undertake renewal of all these areas at one time. The previously designated blighted areas on Constitution Hill, along South Main Street and along the Cohan Boulevard are still in need of renewal even after the passage of eight years since they were first designated. By expanding the project boundaries from what was previously designated the Constitution Hill project a comprehensive program can be developed so that the renewal of the area can be accomplished more quickly and more efficiently.

In addition, by enlargement of the project boundaries, the city will have an opportunity to attack the first stages of housing blight currently appearing in some of the blocks surrounding the cores of poor housing. In this way, future slums may be prevented, relieving future generations of the burden of solving serious housing problems in such areas.

■ Emphasis is to be placed upon the historic value of structures lying within the project. Boundary lines should be drawn accord-

ingly and plans for renewal should be developed to retain as many of these structures as possible within practical limits. The technique for judging historic worth of structures was developed to guide the staff in its approach to the development of the proposed urban renewal project.

This is the best concentration of historic structures in the city of Providence and that this should be recognized in any renewal work done in this area. Following this policy would dictate some changes in the standard approach to redesign of an urban renewal project. Where ordinarily an area may have been completely cleared, certain structures have been kept and study was given as to how a site can be developed while retaining the historic structures within it, and how new structures can harmonize with the old ones. In general, in areas where there is a concentration of worthwhile historic structures, rehabilitation techniques are favored in preference to clearance.

The historic zoning district proposed in this report overlaps much of the recommended renewal area, and such a situation has certain other implications. This would mean that the Historic District Commission, to be set up under the terms of the proposed zoning amendment, would have the power to review plans for new construction in those areas falling within the historic zone. It is emphasized that the real job of the Commission is to review plans for work to be performed on existing historic or architecturally valuable structures, and not to impede plans for entirely new structures. The activities of the Commission would enter into the planning, however, of large projects which affect groupings of historic structures. In such a case, the Commission would act to preserve these structures and any developer presenting a plan for a total development would be encouraged to incorporate such structures into the project or show good cause for their removal. The ordinance makes provision for allowing removal of worthwhile pieces of architecture under such circumstances.

■ Emphasis is to be given to the creation of a favorable atmosphere for the investment of private capital in key "target" areas of the College Hill area. It is felt that as much as possible of the financial load for renewal should be placed on the shoulders of private investors and that the city and federal government should step in to do the job of renewing the area only where private enterprise is unwilling to do so. Many of the key target areas, where clearance is recommended, have a direct relationship to the more

important concentrations of historic structures where it is felt that there is a great opportunity for rehabilitation by private persons or groups. Thus, clearance of the poor structures should stimulate rehabilitation activity of the historic structures.

This policy is carried out in the proposed project by a) the elimination of run-down properties, the condition of which acts to depress land values in their immediate vicinity, b) replacing them with structures that are more modern, efficient, and appropriate, and c) additional stimulation of private activity by causing better mortgage financing arrangements to be made available, by the stricter application of existing legislation pertaining to housing, and by promoting the creation of community improvement groups.

■ Re-use of land cleared by the urban renewal process is to be for private or public development that most nearly meets the most pressing needs of the community. As is usually the case, many of the areas that are marked for clearance include concentrations of minority groups that have great difficulty in finding adequate housing. The problems of relocation for families in these groups should be considered, and, if possible, at least as many if not more dwelling units for members of these groups should be rebuilt.

### PRIORITIES

The College Hill project must take its place on a priority list already established for the city's active urban renewal program.

At the time of this writing, the city's priority list stood as follows:

Urban Renewal Project	Stage Reached
1. Lippitt Hill	Final Project Report submitted to Urban Renewal Administration, and undergoing technical review.
2. Central-Classical	Survey and Planning Funds authorized. Project planning begun.
3. Randall Square	Application submitted for Survey and Planning Funds.
4. Mashapaug Pond	Under preliminary consideration. No formal action taken.
5. Constitution Hill	Preliminary planning suspended pending completion of the College Hill Project.

This list is not a hard and fast one, and it is possible that changes can and will be made in the future. However, considering the extent of activity already undertaken for the first three projects listed, it is probable that the priority list will remain intact for them. There has been only a limited amount of work done on the Mashapaug Pond area and its future is still in doubt. In addition, there is a tentative commitment for early consideration of a project in the College Hill area due to the premature closing-out of the Constitution Hill project. Such commitment may place it before the Mashapaug Pond project on the priority list.

Certain factors point to the necessity for early consideration of the proposed College Hill urban renewal project. Among them are the following:

■ The South Main Street area contains one of the worst groups of blighted housing in the city. Because of this, it was considered for the first redevelopment project in 1950, but was subsequently dropped from the priority list because of certain local situations. Conditions have not changed a great deal and it is probable that housing in the area still is the worst in the city.

■ New highway construction has created greater opportunities than previously existed for the renewal of run-down areas of College Hill. Due to the construction of the Providence River Bridge, the areas along Cohan Boulevard and particularly along South Main and South Water Streets are ripe for renewal. The revitalization of these areas is now well within the realm of practicability and these sites, because of their unusual locations as "gateways" to the city, can be developed in such a way as to be an outstanding contribution to the welfare of the city. Unless action is taken under the urban renewal program relatively soon, it is entirely possible that these "gateways" will become dotted with strings of gasoline stations.

■ Several other renewal projects are located close to the northern border of the proposed project. The Lippitt Hill project is immediately adjacent to the Constitution Hill area and not much farther north, the city has undertaken the West River project and contemplates early action on the Randall Square project. Originally, all of these projects were considered to fall in one area requiring redevelopment. This thinking is still valid, and the proposed College Hill project should be considered as an extension of the work being performed just to the north of it and should thus be undertaken in conjunction with these efforts.



**TIMING OF PROJECTS**

Generally, the urban renewal process is a slow one. There are several stages along the road to completion of an urban renewal project and each usually consumes a fair amount of time before it is completed. In addition, an urban renewal project must be scheduled to fit into the city's renewal program that is currently underway and must take its turn behind those which rate higher priority. If it is assumed that the proposed College Hill renewal project is undertaken immediately after the completion of this study, it is likely that a capital grant reservation could not be made until four years from now and that completion of the project will not take place for another four years. The following stages must be gone through by a renewal project before it reaches completion:

- Preparation of Application for Survey and Planning
- Submission of Application
- Approval of Application for Survey and Planning
- Submission of Project Eligibility Report
- Approval of Project Eligibility Report
- Submission of Final Project Report
- Approval of Final Project Report
- Local Approval of Redevelopment Plan
- Development Period (condemnation, clearance, site preparation, land disposition)

**PROBABLE COSTS**

Only a moderate amount of the property in the proposed renewal project must be acquired, structures removed, and street and utility lines reorganized to meet the needs of redevelopers. In those areas recommended for clearance, the cost of doing so will exceed the amount that the redeveloper will pay for the improved site. This difference is to be underwritten by both the federal and the city governments. In general, the federal government pays two-thirds of the cost of the write-down while the city pays the remainder. The working capital required to clear and improve the recommended clearance areas may be borrowed from the federal government.

The areas proposed for clearance are shown elsewhere in this report. Assuming costs that have been experienced in redevelopment work in the past, the following estimates of government expenditures in the proposed renewal project are as follows:

Estimated Cost of Acquisition, Clearance and Site Preparation,	
Planning and Administration	\$10,500,000
Resale Value of the Sites	2,100,000
Net Project Cost	8,400,000
Federal Contribution (2/3 of Project Cost)	5,600,000
City Contribution (1/3 of Project Cost)	2,800,000

The city need not expend cash entirely as its one-third share of the project cost. New public improvements which benefit the project may be credited by the federal government as part of the city's contribution.

**COURSE OF ACTION**

There are several steps which must be taken to bring about the proposed urban renewal project for College Hill. The proposal differs somewhat from the existing master plan for Providence and portions of the proposed project fall outside of redevelopment areas as approved by the city council in 1948. Therefore, it is recommended that the following steps be taken:

- The general plan as presented in this report should be considered in the current revision of the overall city master plan being undertaken by the Plan Commission and must be adopted in legal manner as a prerequisite to developing final plans for re-use of the renewal project area.
- The redevelopment areas as approved by the city council in 1948 must be expanded to include parts of the College Hill area in the proposal that do not now fall within these legally defined areas. City Council action on this must be received before formal action can be taken by the federal government.
- The Redevelopment Agency should take this proposal under consideration and should carry it forward as part of its continuing program for renewal of the city.
- The Urban Renewal subcommittee of the College Hill Committee should work closely with the Redevelopment Agency in formulating the plans for the project and should act as the means of communication between residents of the College Hill area and the city in all aspects of the project.

## BENEFIT STREET TRAIL

### IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT A HISTORIC TRAIL BE DEVELOPED ALONG BENEFIT STREET AND IN SURROUNDING AREAS.

Renewal of the whole of College Hill depends a great deal on the renewal of Benefit Street. As one means to foster renewal, to preserve the values existing along the street, and to stimulate an economic use of the older structures, a proposal for a historic trail with Benefit Street as the major part of such trail is set forth in a previous section of this report. As a method for achieving the stated goals of the whole project, it is anticipated that the development of the trail will:

- provide a focus for diverse activities relating to the preservation of Providence's heritage;
- lend greater prestige to the properties along its route, induce owners to upgrade their properties, and attract organizations and families to this section who will be interested in rehabilitating structures;
- stimulate the renewal of areas in proximity to the trail;
- attract attention outside the city and state to the assets of College Hill; and
- act as a framework for the various plans for renewal of College Hill.

It should be emphasized that the developments anticipated above will reinforce trends already in evidence. Economic use of the structures is a major necessity if any are to be preserved for the future. The role of College Hill as a living area and historic point of interest has been developing in the past few years. It is vital to continue this development and to develop the historic community so that it can, as elsewhere, add dollars to the economic base of the city. In recent years, there have been some examples of renovation of historic structures in the Benefit Street area for living and for preservation. This proposal will serve to deepen and broaden this trend.

In order to carry out the program for the trail, a subcommittee of the College Hill Committee should be appointed. It would act basically as the coordinator of efforts rather than the instrument for carrying forward all aspects of the proposal. The committee would probably become engaged in several or all of the phases of the job listed below. The development of a program to organize the route is of first importance. Basically there are three things that should be done to guide the visitor through the area and to give him an understanding of what he is seeing:

■ **Erection of Route Markers** — An adequate number of signs put in places that will direct the visitor along the route is a necessity. The signs should be simple and should bear some recognizable symbol as the outstanding element. They should also have relatively small lettering indicating that it is the historic trail. It may be possible to have a class at the School of Design present designs from which to choose. The signs should be placed on a pole or on a structure and should have an arrow indicating the direction in which to proceed.

Tentative estimates indicate that such signs and poles should not cost more than ten dollars each. Fifty signs would be adequate for the trail; one thousand dollars would be a generous estimate for this item. In other cities, this money was donated by businesses, banks, or institutions and the donor's name is placed on the sign in small letters. The responsibility for maintenance was accepted by the city in most instances.

■ **Placement of Plaques and Markers on Historic Structures** — A brief description of the importance of each point of interest on the trail is necessary to tell the visitor about the structure he has been directed to by the signs. These plaques could be metal, wood or ceramic, and should be simply worded and readable. The costs would vary of course with the size and material of the plaques, but it should be nominal. The owners of each structure may be willing to pay for the plaques.

■ **Printing and Distribution of a Descriptive Pamphlet** — Each visitor should be able to take a brief descriptive pamphlet with him as he travels the route. Such a pamphlet should explain the points of interest and be illustrated with old lithographs or sketches to give a better sense of history to what is being viewed. The printing costs would be relatively inexpensive and may be paid for by businesses, banks, or institutions.

Each of these items is necessary to put the trail into operation. It is estimated that about two thousand dollars would be adequate to do the job described above.

In addition, the committee could undertake the following steps with relatively little effort:

- cooperating with other subcommittees in any plans to take part in special events such as street fairs and historic seminars;
- directing buyers to the most important structures and those in need of repair on the trail;
- keeping in touch with service, professional, and civic organizations as well as business establishments that may be interested in moving into the trail area. A card file could be developed indicating available buildings and specifications of potential buyers;

- publicizing the trail through the use of existing information media including local radio stations and newspapers; and
- if it is financially feasible, acting to make the Benefit Street area a collection area for the relocation, from other parts of College Hill, of significant structures that are threatened with demolition.

#### SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES

It is recognized that the success of this proposal will be in some measure dependent upon the success of other elements of this program. The urban renewal program can do much to create a better climate for private investment by removing blighted areas that are presently threatening the historic structures. An active urban renewal program in this area, if carried forward, will do much to insure the future of Benefit Street. A historic area zoning ordinance, the boundaries of which would include the historic trail, will prevent unwarranted destruction of important structures along its route. Governmental support in the form of enforcement of existing codes and the coordination of agency programs for education, recreation, traffic and parking will also be helpful. Community cooperation, and support from individuals, groups, and institutions in the area, will make the job of developing the Benefit Street Historic Trail much easier. These supporting activities should be forthcoming in the years ahead to insure that efforts to make a historic trail along Benefit Street will be a success.

### ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING PARK

#### IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT A NATIONAL HISTORIC PARK BE DEVELOPED AT THE SITE OF THE ROGER WILLIAMS SPRING ON NORTH MAIN STREET.

This proposal, as spelled out in a previous section of this report, is meant to follow closely the pattern set down in Philadelphia where the National Park Service is currently developing the Independence Hall National Historic Park, the first such park of its type in the nation. This proposal seeks to extend the Park Service's activity in the important area of developing in-city national historic parks for growing urban populations.

It is anticipated that this area can be included within the urban renewal project proposed for the College Hill area. Estimates for acquisition by condemnation under an urban renewal program are as high as \$2,500,000 for the land and buildings necessary for the

park. Assuming that the land can be made available in this way, it can then be sold to the National Park Service at a price written down by the city and the federal government. Thus, it is estimated that the total cost for acquisition of land for the park by the Park Service would be approximately \$900,000. It is contemplated that the city's share of the write-down which would be approximately \$530,000 can be used as part of the required local contribution for the entire College Hill urban renewal project presented elsewhere in the report. It should be recognized, however, that neither the Urban Renewal Administration nor the National Park Service is committed at this writing to either the proposed action or the estimated cost.

In addition to acquisition of land for the park, it is proposed that the National Park Service develop the site and construct the museum and accessory buildings. The costs of such construction have been estimated at \$1,100,000, thus bringing the total cost for development of the Park to \$2,000,000. It seems preferable, at this time, for the National Park Service to undertake the responsibility for maintenance of the Park.

The fate of this proposal rests initially with the National Park Service in Philadelphia and Washington, D. C. A considerable amount of effort already has gone into apprising the Park Service of the plans for the Roger Williams Spring Park. The City Plan Commission and its staff have maintained contact with members of the Park Service concerning the project, and a study of the feasibility for federal participation has been started by the Park Service. It is recommended that the City Plan Commission continue to oversee this proposal and maintain contact with the Park Service until it is determined whether the Service will act favorably. If there is a negative answer from the Park Service, it is recommended that the Plan Commission investigate the possibilities of a joint effort between the state and the city. If there is a positive answer, it is recommended that the Plan Commission carry the program forward along the lines proposed in this report.

It is important that the subcommittee of the College Hill Committee that is responsible for this effort keep abreast of the actions taken concerning this proposal. In matters of this type requiring federal assistance, evidence of community support is often helpful and joint participation between governmental and citizens groups will keep the project alive and may assure its success. The subcommittee members should contact the Plan Commission and work closely with it, providing assistance wherever possible.

## HISTORIC AREA ZONING

### IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT SPECIAL ZONING REGULATIONS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE HISTORIC AREA OF COLLEGE HILL BE ADOPTED.

Before presenting the proposed historic area zoning legislation for College Hill, it is well to review the goals and policies that guided the drafting of these regulations. The goals of the ordinance, which are considered to be sufficient to constitute a public purpose, may be briefly stated as follows:

- to safeguard the heritage of the city by preserving a district which reflects elements of its cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history;
- to stabilize and improve property values;
- to foster civic beauty;
- to strengthen the local economy; and,
- to promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure, and welfare of the people.

There are several guiding policies which were applied in the drafting of the proposed ordinance. These were developed in light of the experience of other cities, and with regard to conditions relating specifically to the College Hill area. There exists in the area a complete range of architectural styles dating from pre-revolutionary to contemporary. Detailed studies of the structures in the area confirm the fact that College Hill does not have a concentration of any one style as is the case in many of the other cities that have enacted historic area controls. This fact emphasizes the validity of the statement that it makes no sense to prevent the design and construction of any one style of architecture. Good design should be encouraged, so that this era's philosophy of architectural design can take its place among those of our forebears.

In terms of recommended policy, then, what the ordinance attempts to do is to give full recognition and consideration to the outstanding and valuable structures that best represent historic architectural styles, and to be quite strict in safeguarding their future. On the other hand, the ordinance is designed to be flexible in regard to new construction and in regard to repairs to older structures of little historic worth, so that the designers of this era can have relatively free rein and be encouraged to do their best to add to the unusual panorama of architecture that exists in the College Hill area.

A policy recommended in regard to delineation of the area within which the regulations should apply, is to outline a segment of Col-

lege Hill that includes the largest concentrations of important structures according to studies performed by the staff. These boundaries are also drawn to complement other programs set forth in the overall plan for renewal of the area and are shown in section III-B.

One of the most important set of policy matters concerns a Historic District Commission which would be set up to administer the ordinance. As to choice of membership, it is felt that the members should be the most able persons that can be found, and should be representative of those segments of the population most deeply concerned with the future development of the historic area. To achieve this, it is felt that each such segment should have considerable say in the choice of its representative.

As for the duties of the Commission, it is recommended that decisions concerning matters that come before it should be binding upon the building inspector, but the intent of the ordinance should be made clear and the matters that should come before the Commission should be carefully spelled out and limited to a judgment concerning the welfare of the area. It is important that the Commission does not set itself up as an autocratic regulatory body that will overstep the power given to it.

### PROCEDURES FOR THE ADOPTION

The right to zone is granted to the city by the state legislature which sets forth the limits and powers in the zoning enabling act. A historic area zoning ordinance would have to meet these requirements to be legal. The wording of this act is not specific concerning regulation through zoning of historic areas and, although the general wording of the act might be construed to allow its adoption, it is advisable to seek additional state enabling legislation to be on safe ground. This legislation should include the finding that historic area zoning is a public purpose and should list the limitations and powers of a historic commission. At this time, it seems advisable that the enabling act be state-wide in its applicability. It is expected that support can be provided by local groups as well as by groups in other cities and towns in Rhode Island that may be interested in historic zoning.

State enabling legislation providing for a similar type of regulation of historic areas currently exists in Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Massachusetts, California and Texas. Based on a review of experience in these states and the work of the College Hill study, a historic area zoning enabling bill was introduced in the 1959 session of the Rhode Island General Assembly. A copy is reproduced herewith.

PROPOSED ENABLING BILL

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

JANUARY SESSION, A. D. 1959

AN ACT Providing for Historic Area Zoning.

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

Section 1. The preservation of structures of his-

toric and architectural value is hereby declared to be  
a public purpose and the city council of any city and  
the town council of any town shall have the power by  
ordinance to regulate the construction, alteration, re-  
pair, moving and demolition of such structures within  
the limits of such city or town. It is recognized that  
the purpose of such ordinance is to: (a) safeguard the  
heritage of such city or town by preserving a district  
in a city or town which reflects elements of its cul-  
tural, social, economic, political, and architectural his-  
tory; (b) stabilize and improve property values in  
such district; (c) foster civic beauty; (d) strengthen  
the local economy; (e) promote the use of historic dis-  
tricts for the education, pleasure and welfare of the  
citizens of the city or town.

Sec. 2. For such purposes each city and town shall  
have the authority to establish, change, lay out and  
define districts which are deemed to be of historic or  
architectural value in the same manner as such cities  
and towns are presently empowered to establish or  
change areas and classifications of zoning.

Sec. 3. In order to carry out the purposes of this

act the city council of any city or the town of any  
town shall have the authority to create a commission  
to be called the historic district commission. The mem-  
bership of such a commission in a city shall consist of  
seven (7) qualified members and in a town shall con-  
sist of not less than three (3) nor more than seven (7)  
qualified members whose residence is located in such  
city or town. In a city the members shall be appointed  
by the mayor and in a town by the president of the  
town council. The members of such commissions shall  
be appointed for three-year terms except the initial  
appointments of some of the members shall be for less  
than three years to the end that the initial appoint-  
ments shall be staggered and so that subsequent ap-  
pointments shall not recur at the same time. Mem-  
bers of the commission shall be eligible for reappoint-  
ment. In the event of a vacancy on the commission in-  
term appointments may be made by the appointing  
authority to complete the unexpired term of such posi-  
tion. Duty organized and existing preservation so-  
cieties may present to the appointing authority of a  
city or town a list of qualified citizens from which  
list the appointing authority may select members of  
the commission for his respective city or town.

Sec. 4. Before any construction, alteration, repair,  
moving or demolition affecting the exterior appear-  
ance of a structure is made within such a district or  
any addition or alteration to any structure which is

intended to be visible from the public way adjacent  
thereto and which by present or future ordinance re-  
quires the taking out of a permit shall be made within  
such a district, the person, individual, firm or corpora-  
tion proposing to make such construction or changes  
shall file an application for permission to build, alter,  
repair, move, demolish or make any addition as is or  
shall be required by present or future ordinance or  
duly adopted rules and regulations governing such  
matters in the respective cities and towns. All such  
applications after filing shall be referred prior to the  
granting thereof together with all plans pertaining  
thereto to the historic district commission and it shall  
be the duty of the commission to review such plans  
and applications and no permit shall be granted until  
the commission has acted thereon as hereinafter pro-  
vided.  
In reviewing plans the commission shall give con-  
sideration to: (a) the historic or architectural value  
and significance of the structure and its relationship to  
the historic value of the surrounding area; (b) the  
relationship of the exterior architectural features of  
such structure to the rest of the structure and to the  
surrounding area; (c) the general compatibility of ex-  
terior design, arrangement, texture, and materials pro-  
posed to be used; and (d) to any other factor, includ-  
ing aesthetic, which it deems to be pertinent.  
The commission shall pass only on exterior features

33 of a structure and shall not consider interior arrange-  
34 ments, nor shall it disapprove applications except in  
35 regard to the considerations as set forth in the previous  
36 paragraph.  
37 It is the intent of this act that the commission be  
38 strict in its judgment of plans for structures deemed  
39 to be valuable according to studies performed for dis-  
40 tricts of historic or architectural value. It is also the  
41 intent of this act that the commission shall be lenient  
42 in its judgment of plans for structures of little historic  
43 value or for plans for new construction except where  
44 such plans would seriously impair the historic or  
45 architectural value of surrounding structures or the  
46 surrounding area. It is not the intent of this act to  
47 limit new construction, alteration, or repairs to any one  
48 period of architectural style.  
49 In the case of an application for repair or altera-  
50 tion affecting the exterior appearance of a structure  
51 or for the moving or demolition of a structure which  
52 the commission deems so valuable to the city, town,  
53 state or nation that the loss thereof will be a great  
54 loss to the city, town, state or nation, the commission  
55 shall endeavor to work out with the owner an eco-  
56 nomically feasible plan for the preservation of such  
57 structure. Unless the commission is satisfied that the  
58 retention of such structure constitutes a hazard to pub-  
59 lic safety which hazard cannot be eliminated by eco-  
60 nomic means available to the owner or unless such pro-

61 posed construction, alteration and repair will not in  
62 the opinion of the commission materially impair the  
63 historic value of said structure, the commission shall  
64 file with the inspector of buildings or duly delegated  
65 authority its rejection of such application. In the ab-  
66 sence of a change in such structure arising from casual-  
67 ty, no new application for the same or similar work  
68 shall be filed within one year after such rejection.  
69 In the case of any structure deemed to be valuable  
70 for the period of architecture it represents and im-  
71 portant to the neighborhood within which it exists,  
72 the commission may file with the inspector of buildings  
73 or other duly delegated authority its approval of such  
74 application if any of the circumstances under which  
75 approval might have been given under the preceding  
76 paragraph are in existence or if: (a) such structure is  
77 a deterrent to a major improvement program which  
78 will be of substantial benefit to the community; (b)  
79 retention of such structure would cause undue financial  
80 hardship to the owner; or (c) the retention of such  
81 structure would not be in the interest of the majority  
82 of the community.

83 Moving of structures of historic or architectural  
84 value may be allowed as an alternative to demolition.  
85 All meetings of the commission shall be open to the  
86 public and any person or his duly constituted represen-  
87 tative shall be entitled to appear and be heard on any  
88 matter before the commission before it reaches its de-

89 cision. The commission shall keep a record, which shall  
90 be open to public view, of its resolutions, proceedings,  
91 and actions.

**Sec. 5.** The commission shall file with the inspector  
2 of buildings or other duly delegated authority its cer-  
3 tificate of approval or rejection of all plans submitted  
4 to it for review. No work shall begin until such cer-  
5 tificate shall have been filed, but in the case of rejec-  
6 tion such certificate shall be binding upon the inspector  
7 of buildings or other duly delegated authority, and  
8 no permit shall be issued in such case. The failure of  
9 the commission to act within forty-five days from the  
10 date of application filed with it unless an extension  
11 is agreed upon mutually by the applicant and the com-  
12 mission shall be deemed to constitute approval.

**Sec. 6.** Nothing in this act shall be construed to  
2 prevent ordinary maintenance or repair of any struc-  
3 ture within the historic district; or shall anything in  
4 this act be construed to prevent the construction, al-  
5 teration, repair, moving, or demolition of any structure  
6 under a permit issued by the inspector of buildings  
7 prior to the passage of such ordinance.

**Sec. 7.** Any person or persons jointly or severally  
2 aggrieved by a decision of the historic district com-  
3 mission shall have the same rights of appeal concern-  
4 ing such decision as is granted to an applicant that is  
5 aggrieved by a decision of a zoning board of review.

**Sec. 8.** This act shall take effect upon its passage.



## DRAFT ORDINANCE

An amendment to the Providence Zoning Ordinance should be submitted to the City Council after the passage of the state enabling act. The ordinance presented herein is designed to cover a limited area of College Hill. Recognizing that there are other historic districts outside the scope of this project, this amendment should be considered as the mechanism by which these historic districts can receive protection.

As part of the amendment, the following paragraph should be inserted after the last paragraph of Article III, Section 31 of the present zoning ordinance:

*"In addition, there is hereby established a Historic College Hill District, the boundaries of which are shown on the map entitled, 'Historic District' dated \_\_\_\_\_, which accompanies this Ordinance and is on file in the office of the City Clerk. Said map and all explanatory matter thereon are hereby adopted and made a part of this Ordinance. The regulations and requirements as set forth in Article VI-A of this Ordinance shall apply to all land and buildings within the designated district."*

Following is the amendment which, if enacted, will enable the city to protect its historic district in College Hill. The following article is recommended to be inserted following Article VI of the Providence Zoning Ordinance. The Historic District map to accompany this amendment is shown in a previous section.

### "ARTICLE VI-A. HISTORIC DISTRICT REGULATIONS

#### Sec. 601. Historic College Hill District.

The regulations contained in Article II and in the Articles respectively pertaining to the various zones that are included within the historic district boundaries shall apply in the Historic College Hill District with the additional requirements as set forth in this Article.

##### A. Purpose

The purpose of this Article is to 1) safeguard the heritage of the City of Providence by preserving a district in the city which reflects elements of its cultural, social, economic, political, and architectural history; 2) stabilize and improve property values; 3) foster civic beauty; 4) strengthen the local economy; 5) promote the use of historic districts for the education, pleasure and welfare of the citizens of the city.

**B. Boundaries of District**  
The Historic College Hill District shall be that area shown and bounded as such on the map entitled, "College Hill Historic District" which has been made part of this Ordinance.

##### C. Regulation of Structures

No structure shall be constructed, altered, repaired, moved or demolished in the Historic College Hill District unless such action complies with the requirements set forth in this Article.

##### D. Historic District Commission

1) Creation of Commission:  
In order to execute the purposes declared in this Article, there is hereby created a commission to be called the Historic District Commission.

##### 2) Membership of Commission:

The Historic District Commission shall consist of seven members whose residence is located in the city of Providence. They shall be appointed by the Mayor for terms of office of three years provided that two of the initial members shall be appointed for one year, two for two years, and three for three years and subsequently members shall be appointed for terms of three years as terms expire. Members of the Commission may be reappointed after their terms expire. The terms of office of the members shall begin as of the date of passage of this ordinance.

A vacancy occurring in the membership of the Commission for any cause shall be filled by a person appointed by the Mayor for the unexpired term.

The members of the Commission shall serve without compensation.

##### 3) Duties and Powers of the Commission:

It shall be the duty of the Commission to review all plans for the construction, alteration, repair, moving, or demolition of structures in the historic district and it shall have the power to pass upon such plans before a permit for such activity can be granted. In reviewing the plans, the Commission shall give consideration to a) the historical or architectural value and significance of the structure and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area; b) the general compatibility of exterior design, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used; and c) to any other factor, including aesthetic, which it deems pertinent.

The Commission shall pass only on exterior features of a structure and shall not consider interior arrangements, nor shall it disapprove applications except in regard to considerations as set forth in the previous paragraph.

It is the intent of this Article that the Commission be strict in its judgment of plans for alteration, repair, or demolition of existing structures deemed to be valuable according to studies performed by the Providence City Plan Commission. Two lists of such structures, designated by street addresses and plat and lot numbers are included to guide the Commission in its judgments: (lists of valuable historic structures are appended) It is the intent of this Article that the Commission shall encourage that the making of alterations and repairs to structures on these lists be made in the spirit of their architectural style, but that additions to structures may be made in styles other than the one in which the structure was built.

The first priority list is intended to include those structures within the district that have great historic and architectural worth and are deemed to be so valuable to the city, state, or nation that their demolition should not be allowed except where deemed a hazard to public health or safety by a responsible public agency as their loss will be a great loss to the city, state, or nation. Moving of a structure is to be allowed as a final alternative only if there is no other way to retain the structure on its original site.

The second priority list is intended to include those structures within the district that are deemed to be valuable for the period of architecture they represent and important to the neighborhood within which they exist. It is intended that demolition of these structures should be discouraged as their loss will be a loss to the city and the neighborhood. Moving of a structure should be encouraged as an alternative to demolition of a structure on this list if there is no other way to save the structure.

It is also the intent of this Article that the Commission shall be lenient in its judgment of plans for new construction or for alteration, repair, or demolition of structures of little historic value not shown on the lists, except where such construction, alteration, repair or demolition would seriously impair the historic value and character of surrounding structures or the surrounding area. It is not the intent of this Article to limit new construction, alteration, or repair to any one period of architectural style.

The Commission shall review the priority lists at least once every five years and if, after careful study, it deems structures on the lists not worthy for inclusion on the list, or if it deems structures not on the list worthy of inclusion on the lists, it should make its recommendations for such changes to the City Council.

The Commission shall have the power to call in experts to aid it in its deliberations.

The Commission shall have the power to issue a Certificate of Approval if it approves of the plans submitted to it for its review. The Inspector of Buildings shall not issue a building permit until such Certificate of Approval has been issued by the Commission.

4) Rules of the Commission:

The Historic District Commission shall elect from its membership a chairman and vice-chairman whose terms of office shall be fixed by the Commission. The chairman shall preside over the Commission and shall have the right to vote. The vice-chairman shall, in case of absence or disability of the chairman, perform the duties of the chairman.

The Commission shall have assigned to it a secretary who may be an employee of the City Plan Commission. The secretary shall keep a record of all resolutions, proceedings and actions of the Historic District Commission.

At least four members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of its business. The Commission shall adopt rules for the transaction of its business which shall provide for the time and place of holding regular meetings. They shall provide for the calling of special meetings by the chairman or by at least two members of the Commission. All meetings of the Commission shall be open to the public, and any person or his duly constituted representative shall be entitled to appear and be heard on any matter before the Commission before it reaches its decision.

The Commission shall keep a record, which shall be open to public view, of its resolutions, proceedings and actions. The concurring affirmative vote of four members shall constitute approval of plans before it for review, or for the adoption of any resolution, motion, or other action of the Commission. The Commission shall submit an annual report of its activities to the Mayor.

E. Procedure for the Review of Plans

Application for a building permit to construct, alter, repair, move, or demolish any structure in the Historic College Hill District shall be made to the Inspector of Buildings. The application shall state whether the property is in the Historic College Hill District. Plans shall be submitted showing the structure in question and also showing its relation to adjacent structures.

Upon the filing of such application, the Inspector of Buildings shall immediately notify the Historic District Commission of the receipt of such application and shall transmit it together with accompanying plans and other information to the Commission.

The Historic District Commission shall meet within fifteen days after notification by the Inspector of Buildings of the filing, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the applicant and Commission, and shall review the plans according to the duties and powers specified herein. In reviewing the plans, the Commission may confer with the applicant for the building permit.

The Commission shall approve or disapprove such plans and, if approved shall issue a Certificate of Approval, which is to be signed by the chairman, attached to the application for a building permit and immediately transmitted to the Inspector of Buildings. The chairman shall also stamp all prints submitted to the Commission signifying its approval.

If the Commission disapproves of such plans, it shall state its reasons for doing so and shall transmit a record of such action and reasons therefore in writing to the Inspector of Buildings and to the applicant. The Commission may advise what it thinks is proper if it disapproves of the plans submitted. The applicant, if he so desires, may make modifications to his plans and shall have the right to resubmit his application at any time after so doing.

The failure of the Historic District Commission to approve or disapprove of such plans within forty-five days from the date of application for the building permit, unless otherwise mutually agreed upon by the applicant and Commission, shall be deemed to constitute approval and the Inspector of Buildings shall proceed to process the application without regard to a Certificate of Approval.

After the Certificate of Approval has been issued and the building permit granted to the applicant, the Inspector of Buildings shall from time to time inspect the construction, alteration or repair approved by such certificate and shall take such action as is necessary to force compliance with the approved plans.

F. Demolition or Moving of Historic Structures

The demolition or moving of structures of historic or architectural worth shall be discouraged and the priority lists included in this Article shall serve as a guide for judgment of plans for demolition or moving by the Historic District Commission. The Commission shall not issue a Certificate of Approval for demolition except when deemed a hazard to public health or safety by a responsible public agency but may issue such a certificate for moving a structure on the first priority list. The Commission may at its own discretion, issue a Certificate of Approval for demolition or for moving a structure on the second priority list, but shall be guided by the following conditions in exercising its judgment in granting such a certificate: a) the Inspector of Buildings deems such structure to be a hazard to public safety or health and repairs are impossible; b) such structure is a deterrent to a major improvement program which will be of substantial benefit to the community; c) retention of such structure would cause undue financial hardship to the owner, which would be defined as a situation where more funds than is reasonable would be required to retain the structure; d) the retention of such structure would not be in the interest of the community as a whole. In cases where approval for demolition is granted, for reasons other than public health or safety, such certificate shall not become effective until six months after the date of such issuance in order to provide a period of time within which it may be possible to relieve a hardship or to cause the property to be transferred to another owner who will retain the structure.

G. Yard Variances

Due to peculiar conditions of design and construction in historic neighborhoods where structures were often built close to the lot lines, it is in the public interest to retain a neighborhood's historic appearance by making variances to normal yard requirements. Where it is deemed that such variance will not adversely affect neighboring properties, the Commission may recommend to the Zoning Board of Review that such variance to standard yard requirements be made.

H. Exceptions

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to prevent ordinary maintenance or repair of any structure within the Historic District; nor shall anything in this Article be construed to prevent the construction, alteration, repair, moving or demolition of any structure under a permit issued by the Inspector of Buildings prior to the passage of the amendment incorporating this Article in the Zoning Ordinance.

I. Appeals

Any person or persons jointly or severally aggrieved by a decision of the Historic District Commission shall have the same rights of appeal concerning such decision as are granted to an applicant that is aggrieved by a decision of the Zoning Board of Review. Such rights are set forth in Article IX of this Ordinance.

FIRST PRIORITY LIST<sup>1</sup>  
(Within Zoning Area Only)  
(arranged in order from North to South)

Address	Plot/lot	Score <sup>2</sup>
St. Johns Cathedral	265 N. Main St.	10-116
Sullivan Dorr House	109 Benefit St.	10-151
Dr. Jabez Bowen House	39 Bowen St.	10-381
Benjamin Cushing St. House	38½ N. Court St.	10-84
Old Colony House	150 Benefit St.	10-80
Meeting Street School	24 Meeting St.	10-75
Shakespeare's Head	21 Meeting St.	10-79
Amory, Providence Marine		
Cops Artillery	176 Benefit St.	10-631
Captain George Benson House	64 Angell St.	10-255
First Baptist Church	75 N. Main St.	12-78
Edward Dexter House	72 Waterman St.	12-202
Governor James Fenner House	41 Waterman St.	12-248
Hope College	Brown Campus	12-249
Manning Hall	Brown Campus	12-249
University Hall	42 College St.	12-216
Truman Beckwith House	251 Benefit St.	12-236
Athenaeum	Stephen Hopkins House	266 Benefit St.
Brick Market	Market Square	12-141
Joseph Brown House	"50 S. Main St."	12-24
Benoni Cooke House and		12-122
Carriage Houses	112-114 S. Main St.	12-124,127
Candace Allen House	12 Benevolent St.	12-332
First Unitarian Church	285 Benefit St.	12-376
John Larcher House	282 Benefit St.	12-139
Ambrose Bunside House	314 Benefit St.	12-305
Pease Building (Sullivan		
Dorr Warehouse)	152 S. Water St.	12-422
John Brown House	52 Power St.	16-530
Thomas P. Ives House	66 Power St.	16-152
Joseph Nightingale - Brown		
House and stable	357 Benefit St.	16-202
Edward Carrington House	66 Williams St.	16-201
Thomas Hopkin House	383 Benefit St.	16-239
Samuel Arnold-Green House	14 John St.	16-241
Tulley Bowen House	389 Benefit St.	16-295
Christopher Sheldon's Warehouse,		
Blockmakers Shop	367-371 S. Main St.	16-39
Capt. Joseph Tillinghast House	403 S. Main St.	16-41
		71

1. The first priority list is made up of buildings which score above seventy points in the system developed for rating the buildings in the College Hill area and described in part II of this report. The data on which the list is based is on file with the College Hill Study materials. It consists of the field work sheets, filled in and scored, historical information and photographs. A separate list also on file, tabulates the scores for first priority buildings and all the buildings in the zoning area. This list gives, besides the total score, the scores for historic interest, architectural merit, importance to the neighborhood, and physical condition.

2. The score given here represents the total score for each building according to the system developed in the Study and is based on the following factors: historic interest, architectural merit, importance to the neighborhood and physical condition.

SECOND PRIORITY LIST<sup>1</sup>

BENEFIT STREET  
(Jenckes to Waterman)

No.	9-Plat	9	Lot	498
30	"	3	"	215
42-44	"	3	"	223
43	"	9	"	174
48	"	3	"	224
49	"	10	"	136
50	"	3	"	226
52	"	3	"	463
56	"	3	"	227
61	"	10	"	140
62	"	10	"	132
66	"	10	"	130
69-73	"	10	"	144
74-76	"	10	"	121
75	"	10	"	145
78	"	10	"	120
80	"	10	"	119
81	"	10	"	146
84	"	10	"	118
87	"	10	"	78
88	"	10	"	117
93	"	10	"	150
94-96	"	10	"	111
98-100	"	10	"	110
101	"	10	"	562
102	"	10	"	109
106-108	"	10	"	104
110	"	10	"	103
112	"	10	"	102
118	"	10	"	100
rear 119	"	10	"	197
122	"	10	"	522
123-127	"	10	"	198
129	"	10	"	205
134	"	10	"	90
133-135	"	10	"	200
136-138	"	10	"	82
144	"	10	"	82
145-147	"	10	"	201,202
187	"	10	"	592
188	"	10	"	55

BENEFIT STREET  
(from Waterman to Wickenden)

No.	219	Plat	12	Lot	214
226	"	12	"	99	
225-227	"	12	"	224	
257-267	"	12	"	237,278	
270-276	"	12	"	279,280	
277-279	"	12	"	133,134,140	
281-283	"	12	"	328	
286	"	12	"	329	
296	"	12	"	138	
309	"	12	"	126	
306-310	"	12	"	369	
312	"	12	"	303	
322	"	16	"	423	
326	"	16	"	71	
336	"	16	"	74	
344	"	16	"	36	
350	"	16	"	90	
364	"	16	"	91	
367	"	16	"	100	
368	"	16	"	238	
392	"	16	"	101	
395	"	16	"	115	
401	"	16	"	344	
400	"	16	"	345	
405	"	16	"	121	
406-408	"	16	"	409	
407-409	"	16	"	133	
410	"	16	"	576	
414	"	16	"	142	
418	"	16	"	134	
419	"	16	"	135	
420	"	16	"	501	
424-426	"	16	"	529	
433	"	16	"	137	
				461	

1. The buildings on the second priority list are made up of the structures built before 1840 which score from 40 to 69 and fall in the categories of good to excellent, and of buildings before 1870 which score from 50 to 69 and fall into the categories of good-plus and excellent. The data sheets and reference lists describing and rating the buildings and tabulating the scores, are on file with the College Hill Study materials.

CONGDON STREET

No.	2	Plat	10	Lot	537
10-12	"	10	"	602	
24-26	"	10	"	377	
30	"	10	"	509	
34	"	10	"	211	
38	"	10	"	212	
48	"	10	"	214	
73	"	10	"	222	
87	"	10	"	186	
88	"	10	"	614	
90	"	10	"	153	
93	"	10	"	184	
97	"	10	"	182	
99-101	"	10	"	181	
104	"	10	"	156	

CUSHING STREET

2	"	10	"	231
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PROSPECT STREET

45	"	12	"	154
59	"	10	"	288
62	"	10	"	246
72	"	10	"	242

CHURCH STREET

9	"	10	"	114
11	"	10	"	112

BOWEN STREET

36	"	10	"	543
43	"	10	"	101
40	"	10	"	544
39	"	10	"	381

CADY STREET

11	"	10	"	93
14	"	10	"	537

NORTH COURT STREET

38	"	10	"	84
42	"	10	"	83
46-48	"	10	"	601

NORTH MAIN STREET

No.	221-223	Plat	10	Lot	105
225-229	"	10	"	106	
233-237	"	10	"	107	
243-245	"	10	"	114	
251-253	"	10	"	115	
123-129	"	10	"	71	
119-121	"	10	"	70	
115-117	"	10	"	69	

MEETING STREET

52-54	"	10	"	8
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ANGELL STREET

2	"	10	"	524
22	"	10	"	537
36	"	10	"	252
48	"	10	"	253
52	"	10	"	254
97	"	12	"	156
89	"	12	"	155
100	"	10	"	260
106	"	10	"	261
107	"	12	"	158

DEFOE PLACE

4-	4½	"	10	"	247
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THOMAS STREET

5	"	10	"	535
7	"	10	"	481
9	"	10	"	52
10	"	10	"	53
11	"	10	"	53

THAYER STREET

1	"	16	"	357
2	"	16	"	353
6	"	16	"	354
7	"	16	"	356
10	"	16	"	355
24	"	16	"	306
29	"	16	"	308
51	"	16	"	229
55	"	16	"	228

**SOUTH COURT STREET**  
No. 24 Plat 10 Lot 430

**BROWN STREET**

10 " 16 Lot 151  
38 " 16 " 343

**SOUTH MAIN STREET**

201 " 16 " 25  
224 " 16 " 252  
228 " 16 " 70  
231 " 16 " 27  
253 " 16 " 29, 62,  
262 " 16 " 269, 278  
263 " 16 " 79, 80  
282 " 16 " 160, 505, 506  
286-288 " 16 " 81  
283-297 " 16 " 81  
296-302 " 16 " 31  
320 " 16 " 82  
328 " 16 " 85  
367-371 " 16 " 86  
379-381 " 16 " 39  
404 " 16 " 40  
" 16 " 116

**SOUTH WATER STREET**

292-296 " 16 " 36  
326-328 " 16 " 17

**SHELDON STREET**

12 " 16 " 411  
20 " 16 " 413  
21 " 16 " 459  
23 " 16 " 458  
24 " 16 " 414  
29-31 " 16 " 457, 508  
40 " 16 " 417  
41 " 16 " 455  
46 " 16 " 418  
47 " 16 " 454  
48-50 " 16 " 419  
56 " 16 " 421  
57 " 16 " 453  
62 " 16 " 422

**MAGEE STREET**

No. 1 Plat 16 Lot 26

**TRANSIT STREET**

43 " 16 " 581  
44-46 " 16 " 121  
47 " 16 " 581  
53 " 16 " 129  
68 " 16 " 346  
73 " 16 " 408  
74-76 " 16 " 337  
78-80 " 16 " 348  
81 " 16 " 406  
82-84 " 16 " 349  
87 " 16 " 212, 405  
86-88 " 16 " 544  
91 " 16 " 404  
95 " 16 " 403  
98 " 16 " 351  
101 " 16 " 402  
102 " 16 " 352  
109 " 16 " 400  
115 " 16 " 398  
116 " 16 " 358  
120 " 16 " 359  
123 " 16 " 397  
131 " 16 " 395  
132 " 16 " 361  
135 " 16 " 394  
136 " 16 " 362  
142 " 16 " 363

**ARNOLD STREET**

7 " 16 " 579  
8 " 16 " 342  
10 " 16 " 342  
12 " 16 " 341  
14 " 16 " 340  
15 " 16 " 298  
16-16a " 16 " 339  
18 " 16 " 338  
20 " 16 " 337  
22 " 16 " 336  
23 " 16 " 301  
26-28 " 16 " 334  
27-29 " 16 " 304, 305  
32 " 16 " 332  
33 " 16 " 309  
34-34½ " 16 " 303  
36 " 16 " 331

**JOHN STREET**

No. 7 Plat 16 Lot 294  
9 " 16 " 293  
11-13 " 16 " 291, 290  
16 " 16 " 242  
21 " 16 " 289  
20-22 " 16 " 211, 560  
23 " 16 " 288  
25-27 " 16 " 286, 287  
26 " 16 " 246  
28 " 16 " 247  
30 " 16 " 248  
31 " 16 " 285  
32 " 16 " 248  
34-36 " 16 " 249  
38 " 16 " 250  
39 " 16 " 226

**WILLIAMS STREET**

3 " 16 " 103  
77-79 " 16 " 236  
87 " 16 " 235  
88 " 16 " 200  
91 " 16 " 234  
92 " 16 " 203  
97 " 16 " 233  
102 " 16 " 204  
106-108 " 16 " 205, 180  
123 " 16 " 227  
125 " 16 " 210  
129 " 16 " 572

**POWER STREET**

80 " 16 " 469  
81 " 16 " 571  
85 " 16 " 199  
89 " 16 " 198  
93 " 16 " 197  
99 " 16 " 196

**CHARLESFIELD STREET**

1 " 12 " 371  
5-7 " 12 " 371  
35 " 12 " 413  
37 " 12 " 412  
38 " 16 " 154

**PLANET STREET**

21 " 12 " 132  
28 " 16 " 71

**JAMES STREET**

No. 18 Plat 16 Lot 113  
22 " 16 " 114  
21-23 " 16 " 111, 527

**BENEVOLENT STREET**

1 " 12 " 376  
2 " 12 " 350  
5 " 12 " 378  
22 " 12 " 345  
26 " 12 " 344

**GEORGE STREET**

2 " 12 " 238  
18 " 12 " 240  
21 " 12 " 342  
28 " 12 " 242  
37 " 12 " 336  
67 " 12 " 341  
71 " 12 " 322

**COLLEGE STREET**

48 " 12 " 217  
54 " 12 " 218  
58 " 12 " 219  
66 " 12 " 222  
65 " 12 " 419

**WATERMAN STREET**

68 " 12 " 204  
(R. I. H. S. Cabinet)  
Robinson Hall N. E. corner Water-  
man and Prospect St. (12-205)

**BROWN CAMPUS**

Rhode Island Hall " 12 " 249

PRIVATE INVESTMENT

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT ATTEMPTS BE MADE TO STIMULATE PRIVATE INVESTMENT IN COLLEGE HILL BY ALERTING CERTAIN INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS TO THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR INVESTMENT IN THE AREA.

Stimulation of the investment of private capital to renew the historic College Hill area is one of the goals of the proposed program. Various parts of the program set forth in the study report are designed to this end. The Urban Renewal project recommendation is set up to remove only those portions of the blighted area that are depressing property values and deterring investment of private capital. The Benefit Trail program is designed to focus popular interest on the nucleus of the historic area of the Hill. The zoning proposals are drawn to protect the values inherent in the historic structures still standing, and to guide future growth so that there is as little deterioration of these values as possible. Thus, with these and other programs, it is hoped that the normal flow of private capital will be increased to certain parts of College Hill.

This section of the report sets forth opportunities seen by the project staff for the investment of private capital. The term "opportunities" in this instance should be explained. The purpose of this report is to indicate the instances where it appears that private capital can be invested and a return realized from the investment. The return may be in terms of actual capitalization of the money invested or in less tangible forms. The various levels of investment in regard to tangible or intangible returns are investigated. Basically, however, the emphasis in the discussion is on investment in historic structures and the implication is that the results will be an upgrading of the quality of the structures to serve the various income groups living in the metropolitan area.

CONDITIONS INFLUENCING INVESTMENT

Population

Investment opportunities rely on many factors, an important one of which is the growth of population. While the population of the city

of Providence is not growing, there are changes taking place within the city that run counter to the overall trend. Population estimates for the College Hill area show a fairly sizable increase for the area over the past few years and the indications are that this increase will continue in the near future. It is evident that the College Hill area has grown, and probably will continue to grow at the rate of approximately one per cent per year.

Rent

The statistics for rent gathered by the 1950 Census for Housing have some bearing on the investment picture for the area. According to these statistics, the central part of the College Hill area commands very nearly the highest rents in the city. The rents in the northern and southern fringes of the area, however, are very near the bottom of the list. If the core of high-rentals is stable and healthy, then this situation indicates that there is an opportunity for growth of this high-rental area. Indeed, past trends have shown that the rents, irrespective of inflationary trends during the past years, have been going up and the number of high-level rentals has increased. Plans being drawn for the future by the educational institutions in the area will undoubtedly strengthen the core of high rentals and should greatly increase demand for dwelling units in the middle to high rental categories.

Value of Residential Structures

Census statistics tell a similar story with regard to the value of residential structures. While this is primarily a rental area, there is a sizable number of single family homes throughout College Hill and, in the central part of the area, their value is on the average, very nearly the highest in the city. The northern and southern parts of the Hill also have located within them a number of owner-occupied one family structures, but their estimated value is quite low. As with rental structures, the indications are that the area of high-value owner-occupied residential structures has grown in the past and indications are that this trend will continue.

Other Factors

To give a complete picture of the area, several other factors which bear on the climate for private investment should be mentioned. These factors, taken together, will tend to exert a strong upward effect on the values of properties within the area.



■ **History:** Currently, there is a great deal of interest in the historic College Hill area. This is a result of a local awakening to the cultural values, as well as a renewed interest on a national level in our country's heritage and in the preservation of this heritage. An "idea" seems to be catching on, and many people wish to be part of the movement to fix up and to own a historic house and to live in the area. As time goes by, and with the continuation of activity resulting from the publishing of this study report, this idea should become more popular and thus increase the demand for older structures.

Related to the probability of growth of the preservation idea is the hard fact that there is a limited number of pre-1900 structures in existence and obviously no more of them are being built. As time goes by, there undoubtedly will be some depletion of the supply due to irrevocable demands for the use of land in the area. Thus, since the supply is limited, the demand for the early structures should increase.

■ **Character and Charm:** There exists in many parts of the historic area a charm that is very difficult to match elsewhere in the city. We no longer build by the same standards, and modern technology dictates different methods of construction and different designs. As a result, the character of many of the streets in College Hill is a definite asset to the property in the area. Similar old sections in other cities in the United States are very much in demand as places to live.

■ **Prestige:** Because of the aspects of history, character and charm, an area such as College Hill lends prestige to its residents.

■ **Proximity to the City:** There are many people who prefer to live close to the heart of the city. In some places a small but apparent reverse movement from the suburbs back to the city seems to be taking place as people realize that suburban living is not fully satisfactory. This reverse trend has barely started in the Providence metropolitan area, but it should become more evident in the future.

Since College Hill is close to the heart of the city, it presents an unusual opportunity for people to live in a residential section, and yet be able to walk just a few blocks to work or to shop in downtown Providence. Many people value the chance to live in this manner. This should be reflected in the value of property in the area.

■ **Low Prices for Great Architectural Value:** In many instances, a historic structure, because of its rundown condition, can be purchased quite reasonably. While there are many types of structures throughout the city that can be bought as reasonably, the final product of any effort to renovate them may not be as permanently worthwhile. With imagination, the effort put into restoring an early house can result, not in just a fixed-up old house, but in a structure of unusual character and charm. The fact that a very little initial investment for renovation efforts can be repaid so handsomely adds an intangible value to certain parcels of real estate.

■ **Growing Demand:** As was indicated previously, there are evidences of a growing demand for dwelling units in the area. The greatest influence will come from the expansion of the educational institutions, but growing population, a revival of interest in this part of the city, and the slight trend of people back to the city will accentuate the demand for dwellings.

## OPPORTUNITIES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

### A. Investment in New Structures

The plan for the College Hill area presented in this report demonstrates the need for new structures for various uses in different parts of College Hill. These proposals have been thought out with relation to their feasibility and appropriateness in the plan for the future College Hill area and it is felt that there are opportunities in regard to all the proposals shown on the maps. The plans can but indicate where these opportunities lie, showing the proposed new structures in relation to a comprehensive plan. It is hoped that private investors will recognize some of these opportunities and will investigate the proposals further.

## B. Rehabilitation of Older Structures

It is recognized that there are various individuals and groups with different goals and different roles to play in rehabilitating College Hill properties. The following section describes these, their goals, and the method by which it is recommended they operate in the area. It is recommended that the following types of private investors be alerted to the opportunities for investment in the College Hill area and that the special subcommittee of the College Hill committee apprise individuals in the community and members of the following groups of such opportunities:

■ **Small Investor:** He is a person who makes his living at something other than real estate or construction, but who may invest in real estate occasionally. His resources are usually limited and he does not often pool his funds with anyone else. The number of opportunities for investment are limited to him because of his limited finances, but he expects to build up enough capital over a period of time through small, successful real estate transactions, so that he will be able to vie for larger opportunities in real estate. Some small investors are content merely to supplement their primary source of income by the small return from rents or profit from sales.

There are many such persons active in the area. Unless their source of finances is great, however, it is probable that they will not further the goals of this project to any great extent. The small investor probably would be interested in only one house, and because he must be sure of protecting a small investment, he may be forced to cut many corners when rehabilitating with the result that his product may not be wholly satisfactory to its neighborhood. Of course, there are small investors who would only be satisfied with a first rate job, but in this category, they are usually not in the majority.

The small investor, because of limited capital, usually must limit his risk. Thus, he probably would be careful to choose the neighborhood within which he purchases. As such he should be considered as a follower; someone else must buy into the neighborhoods in need of upgrading. Most likely, he will purchase to convert a structure to apartments to receive his return from rents. Occa-

sionally, he will purchase a structure, renovate it, and sell for a profit which he uses to buy another piece of property.

There are many opportunities for the small investor in the College Hill area. It is obvious, however, that the small investor, because of his limitations, may not do an adequate job and should not be encouraged unless he is aware of the character of the area and will be sensitive to the value of the structure.

■ **Group Purchasers:** These are individuals interested in buying a home to live in who can at the moment afford homes only in deteriorating areas, but who are reluctant to move into such a home because they are uncertain about the neighborhood. They would not, as a rule purchase a home singly, but would purchase in a dubious area if they could do so in concert with others.

These individuals usually are young and associated with the colleges. They want to live in the College Hill area for various reasons, currently rent an apartment, and have limited means. They are willing to purchase a home that needs fixing up because of its low initial cost, and they will put a great deal of their own time and labor into its renovation. The greatest deterrent for them is their uncertainty about the neighborhood, but they may risk purchase if they could be assured that a number of others with similar interests would buy into the same neighborhood.

The College Hill area is ideal for the arrangement of group purchasers. There are many people who would like to live in the area to be near the schools and who are, as a rule, sensitive to the values inherent in historic structures and to the character and charm of the older streets and lanes. There are several groups of structures that have great potential for rehabilitation by such groups in the northern and southern ends of Benefit Street, and in the Arnold, Transit, and Sheldon Street areas. Impetus should be given to the organization of such groups and this may properly come from the College Hill Committee.

Initially a meeting should be called of potential purchasers and a presentation of the idea made to the group. Subsequent meetings should be held until the program is thoroughly understood and a course of action is outlined. At such time, it can be determined what help must be given to the group. It may be necessary for the committee to assure the group of adequate mortgage financing and to secure the aid of realtors in purchasing a group of properties. The feasibility of a specialized corporation should be investigated.

■ **The Operative Remodeler:** He is a person who has, as a major source of income, the renovation of deteriorated real estate. He generally has enough money, either of his own or from established sources to do a big job and to do it right if he so wants. If he has enough backing, he may be able to work with groups of houses which would be quite beneficial to the neighborhood as well as to himself.

The operative remodeler usually renovates for rental purposes, but quite often will do so for resale. Many remodelers have the reputation for doing a good job but there are others who must be educated to the requirements for a decent remodeling job in a historic area. In the College Hill area, there are many examples where those who remodel for profit have done good work with older homes. A good example is 100 Angell Street, a job which was completed within the past year. Other good examples can be seen at 38½ North Court Street, 25 Williams Street, and 48 Angell Street. There are many opportunities for operative remodelers in the College Hill area. It would be wise for groups interested in having historic houses renovated to point out the opportunities in the project area to remodelers who have good reputations in the city.

■ **A Citizen Investment Corporation:** This would be a local corporation formed for the purpose of investing in College Hill properties. Usually, the shareholders are residents or institutions of the neighborhood within which the corporation is operating, but it may be open to broader community membership. The corporation attempts to make a profit, but the percentage return on money invested is usually more modest than is ordinarily expected in a real estate transaction. The incentive to investment, in lieu of financial return, is two-fold. First, there is the stabilization of a

neighborhood in transition. Second, there is the protection of investment already made in one's home, business or institution. Quite often the magnitude of financial return is secondary to the above goals, as has been proven in other cities where groups have banded together to save their neighborhoods.

In general, such a corporation may operate in two ways. First, it may be interested in concentrating its efforts in a limited area of the neighborhood. The goal in this instance is to have as many properties as possible rehabilitated within such an area within a specified period of time. Much work in this direction can be accomplished by stimulating interest and creating the feeling among property owners that they are part of a team. The corporation comes into action when certain properties are not being rehabilitated and if there is no cooperation from the owner of such property. At such a time, the corporation attempts to buy the property and resell it to someone who would renovate it, or it buys and renovates the property itself. In the latter case, the corporation could resell, or it could retain ownership and rent. It is entirely possible that this effort on the part of the corporation can be carried out without loss and actually at some profit as the work being performed will upgrade the character and value of the immediate area.

Secondly, a citizen investment corporation may concentrate its efforts in upgrading the whole of College Hill. In this instance, the corporation could act to secure and rehabilitate key properties, the welfare of which is intimately tied to the welfare of the group of properties immediately surrounding it. If chosen discreetly, the renovation of such a property would greatly influence the thinking of surrounding property owners and could act as a seed from which would germinate a better area.

The activities of citizen investment corporations can be observed in operation today in a limited number of cities in the United States. Their goals are similar and their success still not determined. There are, however, instances where a great deal of good has been done at a profit, albeit minor, by these corporations. There seems to be a good opportunity for a similar corporation to accomplish a great deal in the College Hill area.

■ **Philanthropic Investors:** These are people who are wealthy enough to invest in properties without having the necessity for monetary gain the primary incentive, although such gain is not precluded. In such cases the incentives might be civic or intellectual concern, interest in keeping busy, participation in a form of hobby, or other benign motives.

There is a pressing need for such investors in the College Hill area. The most likely targets of their efforts would be structures of unusual interest in a very poor state of repair. These are the properties that require more imagination, courage, and skill than usually needed in attacking a renovation job and which, when renovations are complete, will give the greatest satisfaction because their unusual architectural merit will have been revealed. The philanthropic investor should not anticipate a financial gain when embarking on such an endeavor, but it is entirely possible that a return on money invested can be realized. Usually, the uses to which such structures are subsequently put; e.g. meeting places or homes, are not in the nature of a profit-making investment.

■ **Business or Industrial Investors:** These are organizations looking for a home or for office space. Here, the investment is prompted mainly by convenience, advertising, civic duty, or the seeking of prestige. The advantages of locating in historic areas may be indirectly converted into financial gain.

Several groups and businesses, of late, have seen the opportunities present in older structures as places for their operations. The cost for space is usually more reasonable than in downtown areas, parking more accessible, and the environment more interesting. The Audubon Society building on Bowen Street, the Fisher Decorating Co. on Benefit Street, and the Arnold Hoffman building on Canal Street are examples of groups that have fixed up old buildings with very favorable results. There is an opportunity for other business or institutional investors to locate in structures on College Hill.

Thus, it is seen that there are many groups with different goals and methods of operation that can be considered as potential investors of private capital in College Hill real estate. A four-part action program for coordinating their efforts is listed as follows:

1. It is recommended that the College Hill Committee take the lead in causing a citizens investment corporation to be formed for the dual purpose of (a) investing in critical single parcels of real estate throughout College Hill and (b) investing in selected groups of properties in College Hill. This corporation should be patterned after Baltimore's Bolton Hill Corporation, Washington's Historic Georgetown Incorporated, or Cincinnati's Renewal Corporation. It should be incorporated, sell shares and use the money to buy, renovate, and sell or rent real estate. It should attempt to operate on a profit-making basis.

2. It is recommended that the College Hill Committee take the lead in organizing groups of families to purchase homes in sections of College Hill containing deteriorating historic houses. There are many such families in the city, but an organizing element is needed to bring them together and to lead them in a program of action.

3. It is recommended that consideration be given, in the future, to the establishment of a trust fund for the purchase and renovation of outstanding structures in danger of demolition. It is important that efforts to raise money for such a trust fund not interfere with fund-raising efforts for the citizen's investment corporation and thus it is recommended for future action. It is felt that the investment corporation has the greatest potential for accomplishment and should receive initial priority.

4. It is recommended that the College Hill Committee work closely with small investors, operative remodelers, philanthropic investors, and business and industrial investors. The Society should promote, through personal persuasion and public education, the investment of funds in College Hill. It should attempt to contact individuals that are contemplating an investment in the Hill and offer its help wherever possible. It should attempt to guide these efforts, where such guidance is possible, along the channels that will contribute the most to the ultimate welfare of the area.

## MORTGAGE PROGRAMS

It is recommended that a special mortgage facilities corporation be formed to provide mortgage financing not readily available at present in certain parts of College Hill, to stimulate the flow of private capital into the area.

It is obvious that mortgage programs are an important consideration in a discussion of private investment in College Hill. Indeed, the availability of mortgage financing is the critical factor in determining the feasibility of the programs set forth for various groups of investors, and can play a deciding role in the success or failure of any such venture. Thus, an examination of available mortgage programs and the problems evident in such programs is germane to this study.

### A. Federal Mortgage Aids

■ **FHA and VA Mortgages:** There are several federal programs in the Federal Housing Act that bear upon mortgage financing. In general, the programs provide for the insurance of mortgages by the federal government, and the banks may add others. In effect, the government tells the bank that it will back up loans made by them and that the risk will be shouldered by the federal government. The banks, if the interest rate is competitive, are usually happy to provide these "no-risk" loans. The most common examples of such loans are the FHA and VA mortgages.

With respect to the housing problems existing in the College Hill area, and in regard to the various types of investments enumerated herein, VA and FHA mortgages, because of their requirements, have limited applicability. They are used primarily for new housing, whereas the primary problem in the College Hill area is one of renewing a deteriorating stock of older structures. Furthermore, the requirements are so rigid that it is probable that even a new house planned for the College Hill area would not be given such a mortgage because of the character of the neighborhood as it exists today.

■ **FHA Improvement Loans:** There are FHA improvement loans available to home owners for general repairs or for building additions to their homes. However, the standard loan is usually too small for the type of work that should be considered by the ranks of private investors, and the terms of the loan too stiff for a great many of the individual home owners in the area.

■ **Mortgages for Apartments and Cooperatives:** There are many provisions in the Federal Housing Act that provide for mortgages in the field of apartment houses and cooperatives. Few of these provisions have evoked interest yet in the Providence area, but may be of greater interest in the future. There are some very real opportunities in the application of these sections in the Housing Act and builders elsewhere seem to be taking a closer look at their provisions. The plans for the College Hill area indicate desirable areas for the construction of new multi-family housing which may find the means of financing in these provisions of the Federal Housing Act.

■ **Special Mortgages in Urban Renewal Areas:** Perhaps one of the most promising forms of federal mortgage aid is provided under the terms of Section 220 of the Federal Housing Act. This section is aimed at stimulating mortgage financing for structures in areas that have been formally designated as urban renewal areas by the City Council. Within such an area, home owners can receive mortgages of more liberal terms than are available elsewhere, if they meet certain requirements. Usually the mortgages are for a longer duration and at a lower interest rate than standard FHA or VA mortgages.

This type of mortgage has seen very limited use in the Providence area. Banks here, and also elsewhere, have been somewhat reluctant, even with federal backing, to lend money in deteriorating areas. It seems that under current conditions, even with federal insurance against loss of the loan, these loans cannot compete adequately against other demands for mortgage money. In addition, tentative results of studies being carried out by the ACTION Research Office in Cambridge, Massachusetts, indicate that the mortgages provided for under this section of the act have a further limitation in that the requirements call for rehabilitation costs that will in many cases outstrip the ability of the average borrower to pay back the loan.

Nevertheless, Section 220 mortgages can be of some use in rehabilitating homes in the College Hill area. Action in regard to designation of an urban renewal area should take place as soon as possible, so that this form of mortgage financing can be made available to home owners and investors in the area.

■ **Standard and Private Mortgage Financing**  
Local banks and private lenders as a rule are reluctant to lend money in areas like College Hill. Loans to structures here are

naturally compared to home loans in other parts of the metropolitan area and the comparison in terms of risk appears to be unfavorable. Of course, each bank has its own individual policy concerning this area, but as a rule, there appears to be a definite lack of mortgage money for borrowers in many parts of the College Hill area. Information on individual mortgages is difficult to get, but it seems that some banks will not lend any money at all in some of the parts of College Hill that need it most critically. Thus, home owners and investors cannot rely, as a rule, on standard or private mortgage financing.

#### A NEW MORTGAGE PROGRAM

It is recommended that a new approach be taken to the solution of the problem posed by the lack of adequate financing in areas like College Hill. It has become apparent of late that there is such a problem and to solve it would be in the best interest of the community and the state.

Areas such as those found in College Hill make up a large part of our inventory of dwelling units and, when a sizable portion of this stock of housing begins to decay, steps must be taken to prevent it. Apparently, the risk seems too great for any one bank to take in lending money to home owners or investors in areas that are deteriorating. Yet this stifling of the flow of mortgages will, in the future, create dire problems for the city that will eventually reflect on the well-being of its lending institutions. To overcome this problem it is proposed that a joint lending organization be set up to pool the risk in lending mortgage money. Such an organization can be very similar to the Business Development Company of Rhode Island that was set up to pool the risk in lending money to industry, and can operate in a similar manner. This company seems to be working successfully in the area of industrial development in the brief period it has been in existence. There is no reason why a company for lending mortgage money to properties that are unable to obtain financing through ordinary channels should not be equally successful.

A program similar to the one proposed here is currently in operation in the state of New York, and its two years of experience can be used as a guide for Rhode Island. In 1956, the New York State Legislature passed an act establishing the Mortgage Facilities Corporation, the authority for which is set forth in Chapter 564 of the Laws of New York, 1956. During its first six months of ac-

tivity, the company committed \$500,000 in mortgages. Most of these were on older properties whose owners had been unable to obtain refinancing through conventional channels.

The corporation is designed to be an auxiliary mortgage facility and not a competitor to established lending institutions. Its membership consists of such lenders, who subscribe to the corporation's capital stock and provide it with its loan funds.

The corporation works in essentially the same manner as does any mortgage lender, with the exception that it will not shy away from an older or a sound property merely because of neighborhood blight. Private capital, channeled through this specially created corporation, has begun to combat neighborhood deterioration by giving property owners a chance to put their buildings on a sound financial footing. Refinancing can frequently mean the difference between the perpetuation of a slum property and its rehabilitation.

The experience had by this corporation in New York seems quite encouraging in the efforts to save deteriorating sections like the historic College Hill area of Providence. Consideration of a corporation of similar scope and purpose in Providence is strongly recommended to aid private investors and owners in the rehabilitation of structures in College Hill and throughout the city.

It is obvious from this discussion that, while there are opportunities for private investment in the College Hill area, a fresh and imaginative approach is needed before there will be a change in investment patterns. Roles for various individuals and groups to play in this effort have been indicated. However, it should be realized that this must be a joint effort with many sectors of the community lending their support. The general public and the people on the Hill must be made aware of the problems of the area and opportunities open for promoting its renewal. The city, state, and federal governments must be apprised of the situation since they can give a large helping hand to private investors through various existing programs. Above all, decision-makers in the community, whether they be bankers, realtors, businessmen, or others must take a fresh look at the problems of investment in the deteriorating but valuable areas of College Hill and the City of Providence.



## INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE COLLEGE HILL AREA CAREFULLY CONSIDER THE PLANS PRESENTED IN THIS REPORT AND GUIDE THE FUTURE PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONS ALONG THE LINES INDICATED IN THE PLANS.

The plans in the previous sections of the report have been carefully considered in relation to the overall needs of the community and they represent an attempt to balance the requirements of future growth for all interests in the College Hill area. This is the first time in recent years that the needs of the entire College Hill community have been looked at in a comprehensive manner. This approach lends greater weight to the recommendation that the broad lines for growth as recommended be followed by the institutions as they evolve their development programs.

It is recommended that the Rhode Island School of Design, Brown University and Bryant College work jointly with the Providence City Plan Commission to plan the future growth of the community and the institutions.

It is further recommended that the three institutions cooperate in the physical development of their campuses and meet regularly to work out problems common to each.

Almost every university and college in the United States today is expanding its campus or planning a new one. The problems of traffic, streets, zoning, parking, and housing all grow as the campuses grow, and with this growth has come the increasing realization by school administrators as well as city officials and citizens living near the colleges that campuses are not isolated from the cities and neighborhoods in which they are located; that what is

needed is not campus planning alone, but joint campus-community planning. Moreover, most schools of higher education have common planning problems and there is a need for more discussion between institutions if sensible solutions are to be found. The following examples cite cases where universities and cities have come together to develop a Master Plan in order that "town and gown" may iron out problems of growth for the benefit of both:

### The City of Berkeley and the University of California

The City of Berkeley and the University of California now have a comprehensive master plan in successful operation, and since 1957 the University has dropped its traditional policy of treating planning matters confidentially to replace it with one of open discussion with the community.

The effort of the City and the University to draw mutually satisfactory plans goes back at least as far as 1949, when the city allocated funds for the development of the long range policies which are now contained in the *Master Plan* prepared by the City Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council in 1955. Because the University is the community's most important single cultural and economic force, the City's plan included a major section on the mutual problems of the University and the City. In 1954-56 the University prepared a *Campus Development Plan* which superseded earlier studies and followed in general the procedures developed in the City Plan. In the meantime, a comprehensive study of the impact of campus land and population expansion on the existing and proposed streets was prepared and published in 1956 at the joint request of the University and the City.

Two liaison committees were formed in 1953 to facilitate discussion of mutual problems of the City and the University. They have aided greatly in the formulation of a program in which all the problems of the University and the City are worked out jointly. In 1957 the City of Berkeley Liaison Committee published a special report designed to incorporate new information and settle differ-

ences between the *Master Plan* and the *Campus Development Plan*. This plan has been accepted by the City and by the University and is a significant example of joint and open planning.

#### The City of Cleveland and University Circle

The University Circle Development in Cleveland is not restricted to a single institution but is comprised of some thirty-three institutions, including Western Reserve University, Case Institute of Technology and the University Hospitals, banded together "for the purpose of shaping the University Circle area into a cultural center unmatched anywhere in the world." The University Circle Planning Committee, formed in 1956, has been instrumental in developing a \$175,000,000 plan which was presented to and accepted by the City of Cleveland in October of 1957. It is ambitious but logical, involving nearly 500 acres of land and making proposals for a twenty-year program of land acquisition, new parking facilities, a road system, landscaping and recreation. In the words of the President of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, "It is designed to keep what is worth keeping, discard the obsolete, and build what is needed for the future of a great cultural center."

The basic principles of the plan have been accepted by the trustees of Case Institute, Western Reserve University and University Hospitals, each of which has agreed to follow recommended land use and, through a subsequently organized development foundation, to:

- develop their own facilities in keeping with the plan;
  - submit architectural plans for specific buildings to a central reviewing board; and
  - act jointly on matters of land acquisition and parking facilities.
- In April of last year, the Foundation purchased a sizable tract of land to be cleared for park use until it is needed for future dormitories.

The plan, designed to be developed in three stages over a period of twenty years, aims at three major goals in the area's future development:

- to have the institutions follow a recommended planned direction of growth as they expand;
- to improve traffic circulation; and
- to develop a park-like character throughout the area.

A prospectus on the University Circle Development Foundation makes the following statement, "With the area's three largest institutions already in agreement on the plan's basic outlines, with strong support from community and civic leaders, and with the plan reflecting an intensity of research, study and detailed thought, a vital area of the city would seem to be crossing the threshold into a remarkable era. Because University Circle radiates strength not only into surrounding neighborhoods but into the entire community, its progress will be a major factor in Cleveland's future."

#### Opportunities for Joint Planning in College Hill

There are three expanding colleges and universities plus churches and several private schools in the College Hill area. The time is opportune to explore the possibility of developing a program of joint planning for future growth of the community and the institutions. The examples of such cooperation in other cities indicate that a city and its institutions can work together successfully to the benefit of both parties. It is recommended that a similar program be launched in the College Hill area as soon as possible. In the past a traditional argument presented by institutions regarding joint planning efforts between them and the city has been that publicity of intended property acquisition might result in higher land costs. In this age of rapid institutional expansion this possible disadvantage has been shown in many instances to be offset by other gains. These include (1) elimination of competitive interest in the same property in areas occupied by two or more institutions, (2) planning benefits resulting from the coordination of institutional and city plans for an area, (3) realization by possible buyers that property is eventually to be acquired by an institution will discourage their purchasing the property and improving it. Willingness for institutions to make known their plans to the city might be encouraged by creating institutional zoning. The city knowing which lands were to be eventually acquired could so zone



The educational institutions are in an excellent position to press for better public schools as part of the broad program of area renewal. Because of the projected school's proximity to the colleges, it is recognized that such a school could provide opportunities for a teacher training and practice teaching program for the colleges or for some other formal association with the colleges. Thus, it is being recommended that Brown University and the Providence School Department explore means for developing a special arrangement prior to the construction of the school.

1. The first step is to identify the problem or question that needs to be answered. This involves understanding the context and the specific requirements of the task.

**It is recommended that each institution attempt, wherever practical, to save the historic buildings that it owns or will acquire in the future.**

For many reasons, colleges have felt justified in altering and demolishing at will their own historic buildings and others which have come into their possession. As a result, almost no early college buildings have survived in their original state and many fine buildings formerly part of the university neighborhood have been lost.

Students of American History and architecture, have been increasingly anxious to have the older universities recognize the fact that their architectural heritage is a tangible academic asset, similar in importance to collections of early documents and museum materials. Members of departments of art and architecture regard these buildings as their laboratory materials, materials for which photographs, books, slides or totally rebuilt structures cannot serve as adequate substitutes. Understood in this light, they

become part of the resources of the university and the universities need to accept the responsibility for safeguarding the important buildings in their own possession and for encouraging the neighboring communities to keep early buildings. Enlightened concern and a program of trail blazing will be required if the remains of early building under the jurisdiction of our colleges are to survive even in their present altered state. A few colleges have made some attempt to deal with aspects of the problem:

**Wesleyan College in Middletown, Connecticut**

Middletown is a small New England town with an attractive body of Colonial and post-Colonial buildings. The College has taken over early buildings to be used for faculty houses, the early nineteenth century Samuel Russell House to serve as the University's Honors College, and a Greek Revival building to serve as the Faculty Club and as a guest house for visitors. The Alsop House, a late Greek Revival building of unusual merit has been expertly restored and added to at the rear to serve as the Davison Art Center.

## Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design

Both Brown University and the School of Design have been aware of the architectural importance of their buildings. Brown has, up to the present time, kept the original campus intact, although the interiors of its two earliest buildings have not been retained. The School of Design, at some sacrifice, has rescued and maintained the Old Market Building.

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**It is recommended that the educational institutions use the architectural and historical legacy in their environs as source material for studies in American history and culture.**



**MUNICIPAL PROGRAMS**

**IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT THE PROPOSALS FALLING UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF CERTAIN CITY AGENCIES BE CONSIDERED BY THESE AGENCIES AND INCORPORATED WITHIN THEIR PROGRAMS WHEREVER POSSIBLE. IT IS ALSO RECOMMENDED THAT SOME OF THE CITY'S REGULATORY PROGRAMS BE REVISED AND ADAPTED FOR USE IN THE COLLEGE HILL AREA.**

The participation of several city agencies in the plans developed for the area is vital to the success of the program, and it is important that some of the city's regulatory programs be intensified in the area and directed along the lines proposed.

**AGENCY COOPERATION:**

The fields where city agency cooperation will be needed are listed and described as follows:

■ **Urban Renewal:** One of the most important parts of the College Hill program is the recommendation for a renewal project as presented in this report. The so-called Constitution Hill Renewal Project which was undertaken in 1957 has been set aside pending the results of this study. The recommendation made in this report is a greatly expanded project encompassing a good part of the western slope of College Hill. With the expansion in area, there is an expansion in the amount of funds that would be required to complete the project. Because of this new approach, the Redevelopment Agency should begin anew its studies for urban renewal of this part of the city, and it is recommended that the proposal set forth in this report serve as the basis for action by the Agency. It is recognized that there are certain procedures to be followed and regulations to be met for a federal-aided project of this sort. These plans are put forth merely as recommendations to the Agency. They should, however, serve to lay the groundwork for the development of an active renewal program for College Hill.

■ **Planning:** This study represents the first time that a total effort has been made to draw a plan for the College Hill area. The plans as they are presented are felt to be valid with regard to conditions at the time of their development. But planning is a continuous project and conditions change over the years. It is recommended that the Plan Commission give continuous attention to the College Hill area and up-date the plans where necessary to meet changing conditions.

As part of the planning process, it is recommended that the Plan Commission incorporate the proposals for future land use into the master plan revision currently being prepared.

In its capital improvement program, it should take cognizance of the proposals concerning capital improvements made in this study in setting up the city's six-year schedule expenditures for capital improvements.

When acting upon referrals concerning zoning changes and sale or purchase of city property, for which the Plan Commission's advice is sought, recognition should be made of the proposals set forth in this report. Decisions of the Commission should be guided by this program, and this study should be referred to when any referral concerning property within the limits of College Hill comes to the attention of the Commission.

Special projects have been proposed for the College Hill area, particularly the Roger Williams' Spring National Park. The Plan Commission should be responsible for carrying forward these special proposals subsequent to the publication of this report.

■ **Highways:** Several highway projects are recommended in the plan section of the report. These projects must be carried out under the continuing public works program in which the city is engaged. It is recommended that the Public Works Department consider the proposals set forth and fit them into its schedule for road improvements.



■ **Recreation:** Because the College Hill area is deemed to be lacking in adequate park space, several recommendations have been made for increasing existing recreation space and for creating new recreation areas. These recommendations are set forth in the plans section of this report. It is recommended that the Park Department consider these recommendations and incorporate them into its long-range program.

■ **Schools:** A recommendation is made for a new school in the College Hill area. It is proposed that this school replace both the Doyle Avenue School being removed by the Lippitt Hill Redevelopment Project, and the aged Benefit Street School. A preferred location for this new school is designated in the plans section of this report, and it has been so planned to be part of the urban renewal program for the area. It is recommended that the School Committee give priority to construction of this school due to the inconveniences to be caused by removal of the Doyle Avenue School, and for the obvious need of a new school structure in this part of the city.

■ **Parking and Traffic:** Parking and traffic proposals are made in earlier sections of this report. While a large part of the parking recommendations are to be carried out by private investors or institutions, there is some need for action by the Department of Public Works. In the field of traffic, the Department of Traffic Engineering is presented with several proposals for its consideration.

■ **Landscaping:** It is recommended that the City Forester in the Public Works Department consider the planting of street trees in the renewal areas designated for rehabilitation. Special attention should be given to planting along Benefit Street. In the "Benefit Street Trail" section of College Hill, sidewalk paving should be retained in the spirit of Colonial Days and, particularly, brick sidewalks should be rebuilt wherever possible.

■ **Sanitation:** It is recommended that the areas earmarked for rehabilitation be given special attention in regard to street cleaning

and garbage collection. These city services should be stepped up to give an impetus to private rehabilitation efforts.

#### **REGULATORY PROGRAMS:**

There are three regulatory devices, the uses of which should be designed to coordinate with the efforts of the College Hill program: the Zoning Ordinance, the Housing Code, and the Master Plan.

##### **The Zoning Ordinance**

Strict enforcement of the zoning ordinance is, of course, an important factor in guiding growth of the area. The zoning ordinance is the major effectuating device for any planning program and should reflect the master plan. The proposed revisions of the zoning map have been designed to reflect the plans for desirable use of land throughout the area. Many changes in the zoning map are suggested and it is strongly recommended that the city council give consideration to these changes and enact them into law. The initiative for this action should come from the City Plan Commission which should prepare a submission for zoning map changes and transmit it to the City Council.

The suggested amendment for historic zoning regulations is considered to be an important weapon in renewing the College Hill area. Suggestions for this amendment are included in another section of this report and it is recommended that steps be taken by the Plan Commission to have the Providence zoning ordinance amended to include historic area zoning regulations.

Several minor changes are recommended for further study in regard to the zoning regulations. Throughout the city, there is an extremely small amount of land area devoted to R-4 (multiple dwelling) zoning, but a large portion of this use district falls within the limits of the College Hill area. This is to be expected as the study area is close to the heart of the city and in just such a location which is appropriate for high-density residential structures. In working out the plans for College Hill it was found that the density

requirements were too restrictive for an efficient yet healthful utilization of this relatively high-priced residential land. It is recommended that study be given by the Plan Commission to a change in the zoning ordinance relaxing the requirements for the number of families allowed per acre and also for raising the height limitations for multifamily structures. These studies should be followed up by a recommendation for an amendment to the zoning ordinance.

The use of the variance and special exception clauses of the zoning ordinance are an important factor in carrying out the spirit of the land use regulations of the zoning ordinance. Often what is in reality a change in use is granted under the guise of a variance or exception. It is important that not only the enforcement of the ordinance be strict, but that the Zoning Board of Review be strict in carrying out their function of granting variances and exceptions and not grant them except in legitimate cases absolutely requiring such action.

### The Housing Code

The recently enacted housing code is a powerful tool for upgrading the city's residential neighborhoods and for fighting the onslaught of slums and blight. Since its enactment, the ordinance has not been applied to any great degree in the College Hill area. This has been done to give the College Hill Study group a chance to develop renewal plans for the area. With the publication of this report, renewal plans are presented and it is recommended that the city send inspectors into the area as soon as possible to exercise the regulations set forth in the housing code.

It is recommended that the program for carrying out inspections follow the urban renewal proposals. Initially, the housing code inspectors should concentrate in areas designated as rehabilitation areas. Areas marked for demolition should be left for last as there is doubt whether the code should be enforced in such areas. If the structures are earmarked for clearance, it is questionable whether the public welfare will be served by causing owners to renovate

the structures thereby adding substantially to their value. These increased values will then have to be absorbed by the city when it eventually condemns these structures. On the other hand, recent actions by the federal government indicate that activation of an urban renewal project and purchase by the city of structures may be many years away, perhaps as long as seven to ten years. The Urban Renewal Coordinator will have to make a decision as to whether it would be better to require owners to upgrade their properties in possible clearance areas so that living conditions will be better in the interim, or whether it would be better to take no action in clearance areas pending eventual condemnation and clearance by the city.

The housing code together with citizen participation is one of the key elements in a rehabilitation effort for a residential area showing signs of housing blight. Considerable energy should be given to its utilization in certain areas of College Hill to stimulate the betterment of the entire area.

### The Master Plan

The master plan is a legal document prepared and adopted by the City Plan Commission. There is a direct relationship between zoning and the master plan as the land use restrictions of the zoning ordinance should reflect the master plan. The master plan is also used as a guide for the development of the city, to be used by city agencies and private enterprise. It is primarily advisory in nature, but there are times when it becomes a binding legal document. Under present Urban Renewal legislation, the Plan Commission must make a finding concerning the conformity of a proposed renewal project to the master plan, as a prerequisite to the project's going ahead. At other times, the matter of conformity to the master plan arises, although not in a binding legal sense, in consideration of zoning and property cases referred from the City Council or the Zoning Board of Review. It is important then, that the official master plan reflect latest agreed thinking as to the general patterns of future development of the city and suggestions for a revision of the master plan are made in order to reflect the planning proposals made in this College Hill program.

## INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

### IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT CAREFULLY PLANNED PUBLICITY, EDUCATION AND INFORMATION PROGRAMS BE SET UP TO FORWARD THE BASIC AIMS OF THE PROJECT.

This section of the report is devoted to suggestions for public information programs for use in the College Hill area. Most of the following suggestions have value as a part of a larger program and should be undertaken because they help accomplish the following:

- publicize the general program and therefore widen the base of support;
- educate the people who will take part in accomplishing the program i.e., the people who will be responsible for buying and restoring the buildings or will have the power to keep or demolish them; and
- serve as an information center to furnish data about various types of activities and support.

Many of the activities mentioned have been sponsored by the Providence Preservation Society, and it is fitting that it continue its good work in the future. They are an important part of a comprehensive program for the renewal of College Hill, and the following should be carried out by the College Hill Committee:

#### Publicity

- **A carefully planned publicity program** – Many organizations fail to reach the public because the various ways to publicize their work are not studied, or are not followed up. Programs for civic improvement and wide-scale rehabilitation of old neighborhoods are dependent on general public concern for their final success and a good publicity program is important. A publicity committee can profit by analyzing and listing the opportunities available for publicity; and then by developing a set pattern for dissemination of information to the various media, related organizations, the Public Schools, the Chamber of Commerce, the Development Councils, etc. The Newport Preservation Society has had good publicity, based on setting up a publicity program at the Society Headquarters which takes the form of news releases and photographs sent out methodically to the various media and the organizations on a general list.

- **A program designed to include staging of special events of interest to numbers of people** such as street festivals can serve to

dramatize parts of the program. In the Spring of 1958, the Providence Preservation Society, anxious to call attention to the numbers of attractive houses in need of rehabilitation, arranged a Street Festival of one day's duration to show twenty small houses in a single section of the city. The Society plans to show houses in other areas on a biennial basis. Open house days may be arranged to show unusual houses not generally opened to the public, or to see special exhibits set up in various houses.

Street festivals can also serve to bring people together in an area designated for restoration or exhibition for block parties, exhibitions of early dancing, music, or for showing objects too large to show in museums.

**Special events** arranged with other organizations, can widen the base of interest. Two possibilities are a program of early music, and a showing of early musical instruments in cooperation with the Music Clubs; or a garden show and the development of a period garden in cooperation with the Garden Clubs.

- **Contests** – designed to encourage people to improve their property in general and to impress upon them the historic value of other old houses. The following types of contests have possibilities:

**Fix-up contests** with awards for the best general appearance of 1) a single house or 2) a whole block. In some instances, the city itself has sponsored such contests and has given material rewards such as tax abatements to the winners. In other cases, local organizations, such as the Chamber of Commerce, or a home owners association have been the sponsors.

**Landscaping contests**, ranging from relatively simple programs such as a windowbox contest to a broader problem of landscaping on a block basis.

**Restoration contests.** The Newport Preservation Society stages a doorway contest and offers a prize for the most authentic restoration of an old door and a separate prize for the most attractive doorway treatment.

#### Education

- **Exhibition of a demonstration house.** A demonstration house is a structure that is typical of those needing rehabilitation which has been renovated and restored as an example of what can be done with such a house and how it can be done. Such a house

could be shown as a permanent exhibit, or in conjunction with annual real estate small house showing events. It should be painted, decorated and furnished, and show how it can be made to conform to modern concepts of convenience and comfort without sacrificing its early character and charm.

- Acquisition and restoration of an important early building as a museum house and/or society headquarters.

- Sponsoring annual or biennial seminars devoted to topics which will help the people responsible for museum houses and the development of preservation programs to acquire specialized information concerning such matters as 1) restoration of historic houses, 2) operation and maintenance of museum houses, 3) program, etc. The National Trust for Historic Preservation, which has been sponsoring annual seminars in Cooperstown, New York has announced its decision to drop these seminars at least temporarily in favor of helping local organizations to stage their own programs geared to fit local needs. The successful seminars held in St. Louis and in Providence last year were influential factors in this decision. It would be well to continue holding seminars on a biennial basis.

- Sponsoring a series of lectures on subjects which will be helpful in solving problems of restoration, etc.

- Organizing a committee to give technical advice on problems of restoration, decoration, furnishing, landscaping, etc., which arise as buyers are found for the old properties. The Providence Preservation Society has already set up a committee of this type in which each member has been made responsible for developing a body of accurate information on a particular aspect of restoration, such as construction, hardware, woodwork finishes wall decoration, textiles, wall papers, furnishings, etc. Another function of the committee has been to develop a list of experts who can be consulted, reliable workmen who are equipped to work on old houses, shops where authentic materials can be purchased, etc. The committee has also been planned as a study-training committee and has proven to be rewarding for its members, as well as helpful to the people who have already made use of its services.

#### Information

An information center should be developed where, among other things, the following will be available:

- Data about programs in operation elsewhere.

- Information about the various types of financial support offered by foundations. In general, application for foundation support should be reserved for well-developed clearly stated and unusual programs, with very specific goals, and with step-by-step plans laid out for accomplishing them. Many states have local foundations set up to include purposes which would allow support to some aspect of preservation and community improvement program and with broad powers of decision about the value of the appeals. A careful study of the purpose for which the foundation was set up may mean that a successful appeal for funds can be made. The National Trust for Historic Preservation can act in an advisory capacity with up-to-date information about the type of help available on a less local scale.

- Information needed to help individuals and organizations in their fight to prevent destruction of important buildings. A committee set up for this purpose can keep informed by enlisting the help of the city agencies which condemn the property or grant permits for demolition, alteration, etc. The next step will require the organization of an action committee, such as a group of citizens who will be empowered to buy the buildings and restore them, perhaps for resale, or if necessary arrange for moving them to new locations.

Such a program requires some means of financial backing, either by people who are willing to be called on for help in an emergency, or by building up an emergency fund, or through the incorporation of a holding company to handle real estate matters as need arises. See the section of this report dealing with Opportunities for Private Investment for other suggestions.

This program also presupposes the development of a group of people prepared to take charge of the actual work of buying, restoring, or moving, etc. Real estate agents, architects, and contractors all interested in the project and working together make a good combination.

- Up-to-date lists of old houses available for sale or rental. A committee charged with bringing this information together should plan to help prospective buyers not only by giving them lists of houses but also historic data and other pertinent information. The Providence Preservation Society has organized a real estate committee which offers the service of taking prospective buyers over the area to point out the various houses available. Clients are then referred to the agents who handle the houses they desire to investigate further.

## **COSTS OF THE PROGRAM**

The proposals for renewal of the College Hill area, as presented in this report, represent a considerable expenditure of money. An attempt was made to estimate the cost of the total project and to allocate these costs according to the parts to be played by governmental and private interests. These cost estimates and the division of responsibilities are presented here.

It should be realized that the projects recommended are proposals which may change in scope and character if and when they come into being. The cost estimates are based on rules of thumb which may vary from actual costs as the project is refined and modified in the future. An attempt has been made, however, to make these estimates as accurate as possible within the limitations placed upon the study. It is felt that they are reasonable and give a valid indication of the expenses to be anticipated in carrying forward the College Hill program.

It should be recognized that there are two stages for development of the ideas proposed in this study: one in which proposals can be carried out within a ten-year period; and one in which projects are not to be built until some later time, say twenty-five years. The urban renewal project, if carried forward under current standard procedures, can be accomplished within ten years and for the purpose of this study, the financial program presented here has been keyed to the renewal project. Those recommendations falling outside the boundaries of the project are to be carried out in the twenty-five year period but are not considered in this discussion of project costs.

## **URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT COSTS**

As has been shown, the recommended urban renewal project includes one hundred and twenty acres of the total three hundred and eighty-one acre College Hill study area. Of the one hundred and twenty acres, fifty-seven are slated for clearance, the rest for rehabilitation or conservation. Within the project area, there are twelve separate clearance sections. Total costs for the project are estimated at \$10,500,000 for the twelve sections. This includes the cost of land acquisition, site preparation, planning and administration. It is anticipated that this land, after it is cleared and prepared, can be resold for public or private development for a sum of \$2,100,000. Thus a net project cost before development will be \$8,400,000. Of this amount, according to current federal legislation, the federal government will share the burden of write-down costs to the extent of paying two-thirds of the net project cost, while the city of Providence will pay for one-third. Thus, the federal government should contribute \$5,600,000 and the city \$2,800,000.

## **DEVELOPMENT COSTS**

What is described above, is the normal urban renewal process as it is being carried out in Providence and throughout the country. Slum property is acquired, cleared and prepared for new development. The net project cost stated above is the cost of this process of bringing the land to a point ready for resale. Private and public development costs must be added to the net project cost to arrive at a figure that will represent the total cost of the project as it is described in this report.

Estimates have been made for the various developments proposed for re-use of the clearance areas in the urban renewal project delineated in section III-B. These estimates of development and construction costs are set forth below:

Area 1: Public elementary school for 550 pupils	\$ 800,000
Area 2: New multifamily housing for 343 families in several structures	4,500,000
Area 3: Roger Williams Spring Park includes museum, grounds, and parking area	1,100,000
Area 4: New multifamily housing for 40 families in several structures and garage parking for 60 cars	600,000
Area 5: Golden Ball Inn — Accommodations for 120 units in a new structure and in rehabilitated houses, and including restaurant and other hotel facilities	1,000,000
Area 6: Parking area for 100 cars	20,000
Area 7: Commercial area including a) parking deck for 100 cars; b) office building three stories high; c) rehabilitation of two historic structures; and d) surface parking for 100 cars	950,000
Area 8: Residential area including a) new apartments for 170 families; b) rehabilitation of existing structures to provide apartments for 30 families; c) rehabilitation of some shops and offices; d) surface parking for 100 cars; and e) garage parking for 100 cars	2,550,000
Area 9: Residential area including a) apartment tower for 120 families; b) rehabilitation of several structures; c) new theatre; and d) site improvements	1,900,000
Area 10: Commercial area including a) rehabilitation of existing building for exposition hall; b) new motel; c) surface parking for 80 cars; and d) an antique center composed of 7 new structures and 4 rehabilitated structures	1,940,000
Area 11: Residential area including a) new apartments for 40 families; and b) several new stores	560,000
Area 12: Residential area including a) new apartments for 80 families; and b) city playground space totaling 2 acres	1,080,000
Total Development Costs	\$17,000,000

GRAND TOTAL

The total of Urban Renewal project costs and development costs represents the grand total of the estimate of costs for carrying out the recommendations in this study. They are as follows:

Urban Renewal Gross Project Cost	\$10,500,000
Development Costs	17,000,000
Grand Total	\$27,500,000

DIVISION OF COSTS

Obviously the greatest burden falls on private developers, but the

city and the federal government share in the projected expenditures. The following chart shows this division of costs and indicates that for every dollar the city spends, approximately two dollars should be spent by the federal government and four dollars by private developers:

City	
1. Share of write-down for urban renewal project	\$ 2,800,000
2. New elementary school	800,000
3. New playgrounds	40,000
4. Land for school and playgrounds	100,000
	\$ 3,740,000
Federal Government	
1. Share of write-down for urban renewal project	\$ 5,600,000
2. Roger Williams Spring Park	1,100,000
3. Land for Roger Williams Spring Park	900,000
	\$ 7,600,000

Private Developers	
1. Area 2	\$ 4,500,000
2. Area 4	600,000
3. Area 5	1,000,000
4. Area 6	20,000
5. Area 7	950,000
6. Area 8	2,550,000
7. Area 9	1,900,000
8. Area 10	1,940,000
9. Area 11	560,000
10. Area 12	1,040,000
11. land for various developments	1,100,000
	\$16,160,000

Estimated Tax Return

Current Assessment in proposed clearance areas	\$ 3,501,040
Current tax return per year (at tax rate 35.50 per thousand)	124,290
Proposed private investment	16,160,000
Probable assessment (at 75 per cent of market value)	12,420,000
Tax return per year	440,910
Increase in taxes per year	316,620
Approximate number of years for return of city's renewal write-down cost	9

The table presented above indicates that, in terms of tax return to the city, the proposed development makes good sense. It is estimated that the cost of the city's write-down for the renewal project will be returned in nine years. It is probable that surrounding areas will increase in value due to the clearance of slum structures thereby raising further the tax return. In addition, city services will probably be reduced. It is not possible to obtain estimates of these latter figures but it is safe to assume that they reinforce the statement that in terms of financial return to the city, the proposals for renewal of College Hill are worth serious consideration.



