

## Abstract

Title of Thesis : **Boundaries and the Built Environment**

Alyse Riggan, Master of Architecture, 2010

Thesis Directed By: Ronit Eisenbach (Chair), Hooman Koliji, Brian Kelly  
Master of Architecture

Boundaries can be found throughout our physical and cultural landscapes.

Boundaries can either be physical or invisible, permanent or temporal, political or natural, they can invite or exclude, unite or divide. Boundaries can assist in regulating communication between separate entities, but they can also isolate and be detrimental to the well being of their contents. It is a natural human tendency to place people and things into well-defined categories, and it can be difficult to dismantle our preconceptions about these categories. If designers are not aware of this predilection, harmful environments can be created if these boundaries are replicated spatially.

The Oldtown and Penn Fallsway neighborhoods in East Baltimore, Maryland

are disconnected and therefore isolated from their surroundings, and also function as a centrifugal boundary between downtown and East Baltimore. This thesis explores the rise and fall of these neighborhoods over time, and how a series of decisions relating to physical and sociocultural boundaries were instrumental in their eventual decline. This thesis explores how to dissolve those perceived and actual boundaries by weaving the urban fabric back into the surrounding context. By critically studying how boundaries related to the temporal, sociocultural, and ecological aspects of this site, Oldtown can once again be a healthy connected neighborhood.

**BOUNDARIES AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

BY: ALYSE RIGGIN

THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE  
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THESIS COMMITTEE:

PROFESSOR RONIT EISENBACH, CHAIR

PROFESSOR HOOMAN KOLIJJ

PROFESSOR BRIAN KELLY

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2010

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*Thank You:*

RONIT EISENBACH

HOOMAN KOLIJ

BRIAN KELLY

DOUG MCCOACH

ADAM GROSS

SIDNEY BROWER

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GILBERT SANDLER

TAMARA WOODS

RICHARD LAWRENCE

ROBERT HOUSTON

MICHAEL LATI

MARGE SMILTH

KAITLYN MCCOACH

LUANNE GREENE

MICHAEL TALBOTT

JESSICA LEONARD

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## INTRODUCTION

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*“The political elements I have in mind are such things as walls and boundaries and highways and monuments and public places; these have a definite role to play in the landscape. They exist to insure order and security and continuity and to give citizens a visible status.”*

- J. B. Jackson, *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape*

J. B. Jackson teaches us that we can learn a lot about a place by reading and interpreting the cultural landscape. Part of that cultural landscape are the boundaries, both physical and metaphysical, that exist in a place. Boundaries are extensions of the human body, and therefore define who we are as people. People many times identify themselves by a place in which they live or come from. Many times these physically and socially defined areas are vibrant places of culture and shared identity, but other times these boundaries can be restrictive and uninviting. Some boundaries can physically restrict connectivity between two places, and therefore can have a social

implication on the people isolated by that bounding edge. Boundaries of limitations can also be placed on certain groups of people, and at times the architecture which houses those people only perpetuates those problems.

Even with good intentions, architects and planners can design the built environment in a way that isolates groups of people of a particular income, race, ethnicity, age, gender, or sexuality from being connected into the surrounding areas. Part of what designers need to understand are the implications their designs might have on creating or affecting invisible sociocultural boundaries. Looking at planning patterns done in the past can shed light on how to prevent making these mistakes in the future. Sociocultural areas that currently exist, or once existed on a site, are also necessary to understand before intervening in that area.

When building the physical framework that enables communities to grow and thrive, a careful balance must be achieved between giving a place a sense of identity, and stitching that neighborhood into its surrounding context. The neighborhoods of Oldtown and Penn Fallsway in East Baltimore are both isolated from their context, and acting as a physical gap restricting connectivity between Downtown and East Baltimore (Figure 1.1 Existing site plan and section). In addition to studying the physical boundaries on this site, temporal, social, and ecological boundaries have also

been studied in depth. The temporal dimension includes how this site has evolved over time, and how memories of the past play a part in planning for the future. Social boundaries such as income level, race, ethnicity, gender, and age are present not only on this site, but in other locations in Baltimore. And finally, with Maryland's waterways being connected to the health and wellbeing of Baltimore's past and future, it is crucial to understand how urban areas and natural environments can coexist as a system. This thesis will test these ideas of boundaries, and propose how to go about mending detrimental physical, cultural, and ecological boundaries. The site intervention will demonstrate how to potentially end the isolation and restrictions that have been caused by the creation of unwanted boundaries in East Baltimore by re-stitching this neighborhood back into its surroundings. (Figure 1.2 Proposed plan and Section).

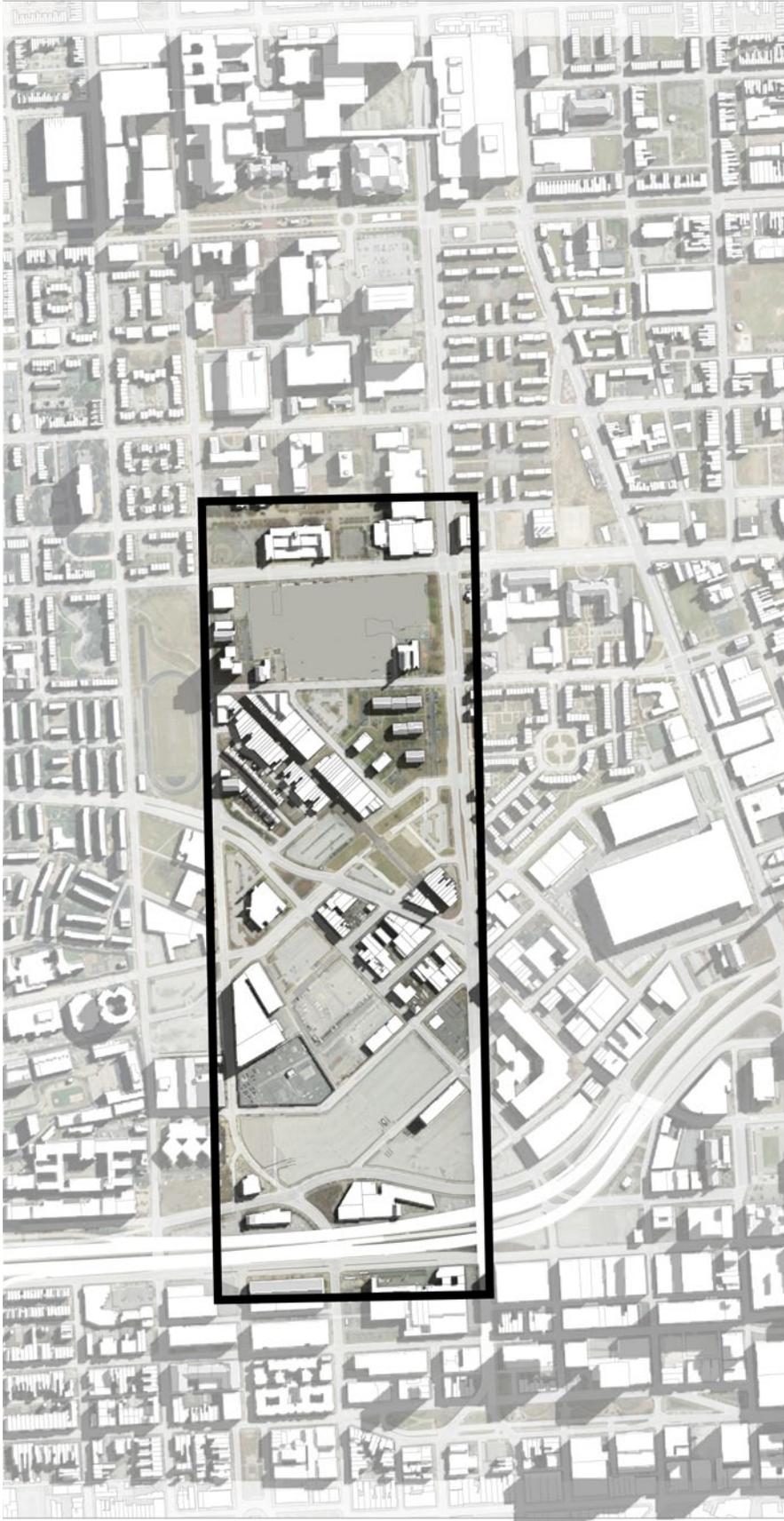


Figure 1.1 Existing site plan and section

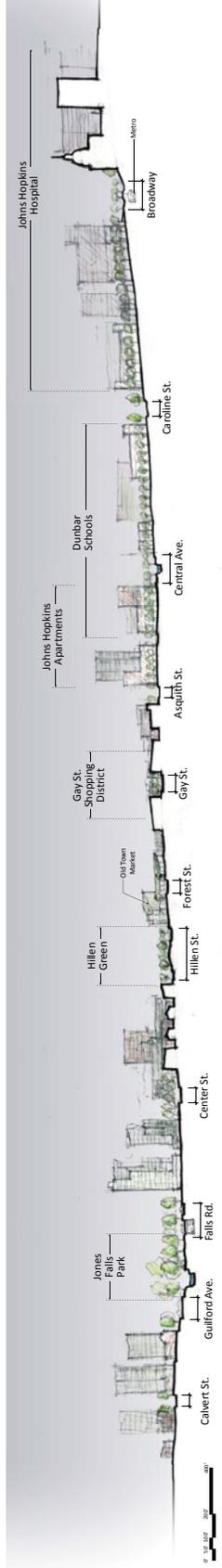


Figure 1.2 Proposed plan and Section

## OVERVIEW OF BOUNDARY ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH

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This portion of the document analyzes the existing and historical site conditions by looking through the lens of boundaries. Three categories are used to study this site in more depth, which are *temporal*: how the site has changed over time, *social*: what issues are found not only on this site, but in greater Baltimore, and *ecological*: how is this site is part of or cut off from a larger system. The research focuses on how the physical boundaries effected the social aspects of the site, and also how social events effected physical edges. The information about this site was found both by traditional research means, and also by interviewing people knowledgeable about this site. The people interviewed included, but were not limited to, historians, architects and planners (Figure 2.1 Thesis Contacts). People who live, work, or go to school in and around the thesis site were also interviewed in order to gain different perspectives about the site. The three site representatives whose perspectives will be elaborated on throughout the document are Robert Houston, Richard Lawrence, and Kaitlyn McCoach. Gaining subjective information about this

site assisted in the understanding of the metaphysical boundaries and memories that exist on this site.

Thesis Contact Chart

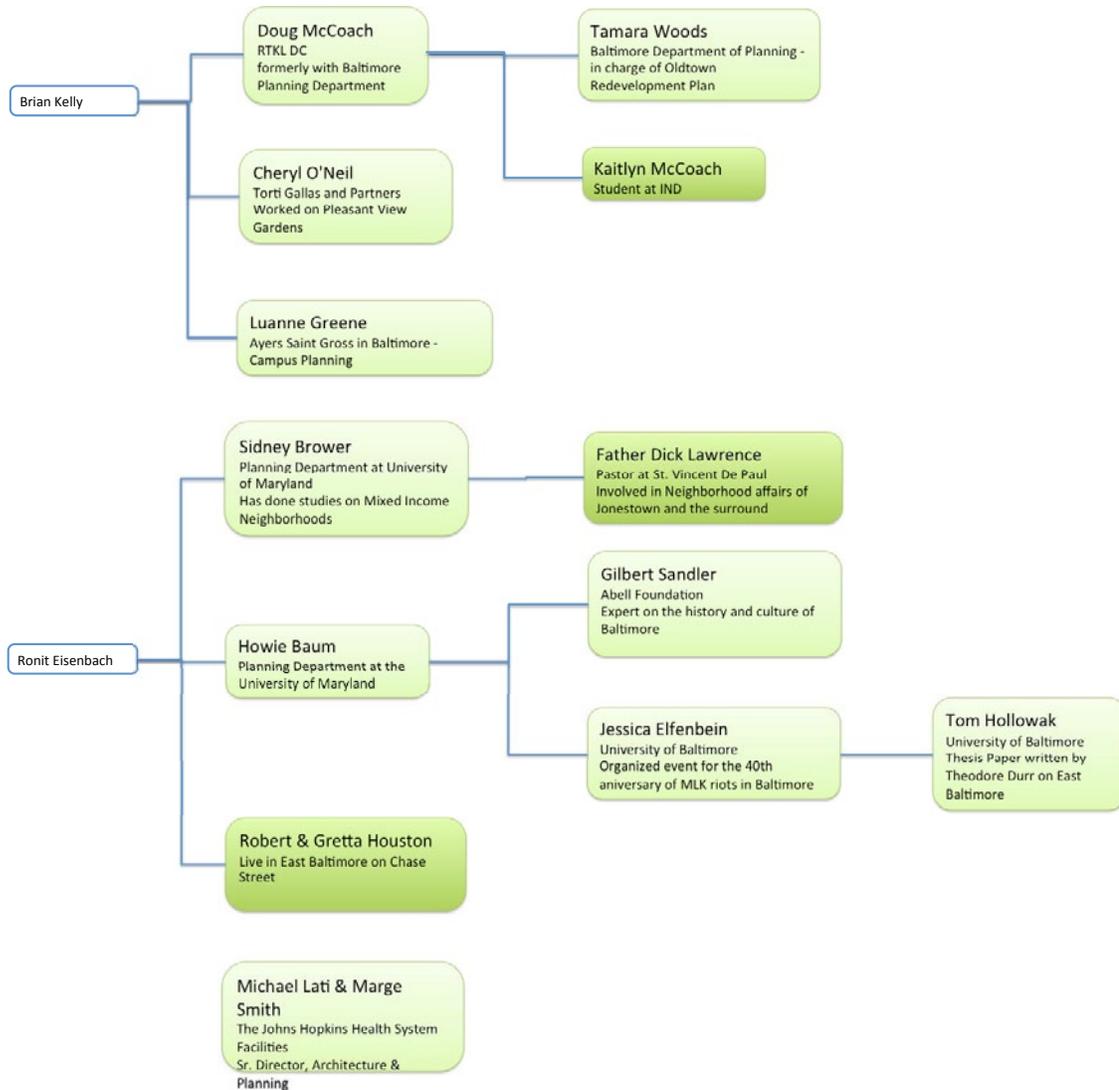


Figure 2.1 Thesis Contacts

The people in dark green are the above mentioned neighborhood representatives.

Amos Rapoport demystifies how to go about learning and understanding a culture, and places it as one of the most important analytical tasks to accomplish before designing. He argues that although climate, available materials, technology, construction methods, site, and economics all have an influence on the built environment, the sociocultural factors have the greatest impact on the form of architecture and urbanism.<sup>1</sup> This is not to say that the other factors are not important to study and understand, but rather that they shouldn't be the only determiner of form. Understanding culture and social structure is not as straight forward as understanding physical site conditions, but it can be done. Rapoport outlines five different aspects of culture that effect building form the most:

1. Some Basic Needs
2. Family
3. Position of Women
4. Privacy
5. Social Intercourse

These five elements provide a good foundation for beginning cultural research. From these five points, a questionnaire has been created to address these issues (Figure 2.2 East Baltimore Questionnaire). This questionnaire was used as more of a guideline for discussion in the interviews with the neighborhood representatives. Rapoport's

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1 Amos Rapoport

five aspects of cultural analysis have been combined with ideas of boundaries in order to formulate questions for the interviews. The three neighborhood representatives

#### **East Baltimore Questionnaire**

- What area or neighborhood do you identify with?
- How long have you lived here, and where are you originally from? Draw a rough map of where you live on the back of this paper using paths, streets, and landmarks you use to locate yourself.
- What is your relationship with this neighborhood/region in terms of some or all of the following aspects: live, work, education, social, religious, commercial, recreation, or other? Indicate these things on your map.
- What areas belong to you, or you feel welcomed into in your neighborhood or in the city? (Indicate those places or boundaries on your map.)
- In which areas do you not feel welcome, or you would like to keep others out of?
- Does this feeling change depending on the time of day? (Indicate those places or boundaries on the map.)
- Are their differing roles for men and women in your community, and if so what are they?
- Are those roles different with different age groups?
- What are things about this area and your community that you are pleased with?
- What is something you need in your neighborhood?
- Have you been expecting something to change within your community or neighborhood that hasn't yet?
- Who do you know that would be good to also interview about this subject?

**Figure 2.2 East Baltimore Questionnaire**

are diverse demographically in order to understand East Baltimore from a range of perspectives. These individuals are briefly described below.

Robert Houston is an African American, protestant male who is about 75 years old, and lived in east Baltimore growing up, and again now with his wife Gretchen Houston. Robert brings an interesting perspective because he saw Oldtown during a time of great prosperity, and is now witnessing its current state of neglect. His perception of the changes that have occurred are invaluable to this project (Figure 2.3 Robert Houston).

Richard Lawrence is of Irish Catholic decent, and has been the Pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church since 1973. He is also an elderly member of this neighborhood. He is the head of the Jonestown neighborhood association, and the goals of him and his church are to create social justice. Many of his efforts go into helping those who are less fortunate, and he has played a role in the social services that have been built in east Baltimore (Figure 2.4 Richard Lawrence).

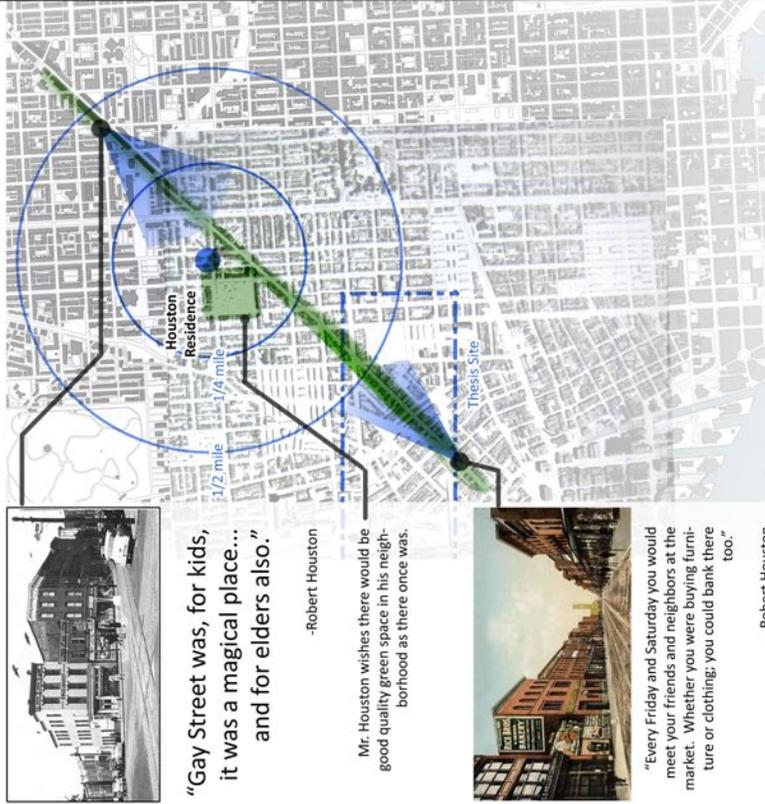
Kaitlyn McCoach is an 18 year old Caucasian female student of the Institute of Notre Dame Girls School. She did not mention her religious preference if any. She has experienced east Baltimore as a white person, but also as a female. The way in which her perception changed over the course of four years is a testament to allowing for diversity in neighborhoods. Her view of this part of the city a young woman is also important (Figure 2.5 Kaitlyn McCoach).

## Robert & Gretchen Houston Residents of East Baltimore



Robert grew up in East Baltimore on E. Chase Street in the 1950s. He bought back his parents house when him and his wife Gretchen decided to move back to Baltimore in 1973. He still lives there today.

### Perceptions of East Baltimore from 1942 - 1953



### Perceptions of East Baltimore from 1973 - 2010



**Figure 2.3 Robert Houston**

Top left image of Gay Street from *The Pratt Library Album* pp. 121. Bottom left postcard image of Gay Street from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gay\\_Street\\_Looking\\_Northeast,\\_Baltimore,\\_MD.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gay_Street_Looking_Northeast,_Baltimore,_MD.jpg) (public domain).

### Kaitlyn McCoach

Student at Institute of Notre Dame Girls School

Kaitlyn is in her last year at the Institute of Notre Dame located at 901 Aisquith Street. She claims that the diversity of her school has given her a more open minded view of the world.



#### Perceptions of East Baltimore from 2006 - 2010

"At first it was a bit of a culture shock (going to school at IND), but eventually you see beyond race and income."

-Kaitlyn McCoach



Kaitlyn is used to walking past the 'projects', (as she puts it) but she still feels as if she doesn't belong, and that she is entering into their territory when doing so.

On the way to get coffee, Kaitlyn does not like to pass by the gentleman's club, Scores.



Kaitlyn feels more safe when walking past areas with buildings lining the streets such as Soujourner Douglass College and the Pleasant View Gardens Senior Housing.



Figure 2.5 Kaitlyn McCoach



### Richard Lawrence

Pastor at St. Vincent de Paul Church

Father Richard Lawrence has been the pastor at St. Vincent De Paul Catholic Church since 1973. His residence is attached to the church. He is also the chairman of the Jonestown Neighborhood Association.

#### Perceptions of East Baltimore from 1973 - 2010

"Gay street was route one, which ran from Boston to Richmond. It was the old post road...which is one of the reasons why it really needs to be reopened, or at least pre-served."

-Father Lawrence

Father Lawrence feels that the Hope VI projects, Pleasant View Gardens and Albarmarle Square, were some of the best things to happen to this neighborhood. He was instrumental in the implementation of these projects.



There was once a proposal to build the I-83 overpass further south and along the harbor's edge, and Father Lawrence is very pleased that never occurred seeing the effects of the Jones Falls Expressway today.

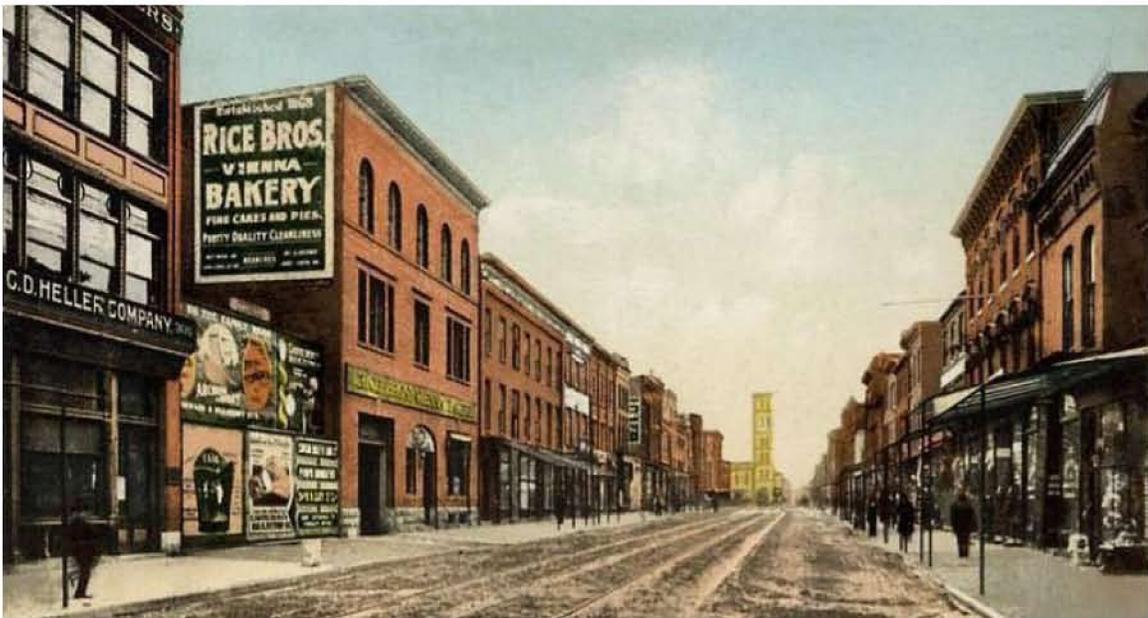
Figure 2.4 Richard Lawrence

Image of I-83 from <http://www.roadstothefuture.com/170-1170-195-1395.html>

Each of these voices are just a few examples of the perceptions, hopes, and fears of the inhabitants of east Baltimore. Their opinions will be heard throughout the analysis and proposal portion of the document. The more interviews that are done per project, the better informed the designer will be to alter that built environment. It must also be kept in mind that this information is subjective, and has to be taken with a grain of salt before being integrated into a project. Understanding the physical and metaphysical edge conditions of Oldtown, and of greater Baltimore through the eyes of its residents is essential to understand before proposing a new urban intervention.

## HISTORY OF OLDTOWN AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

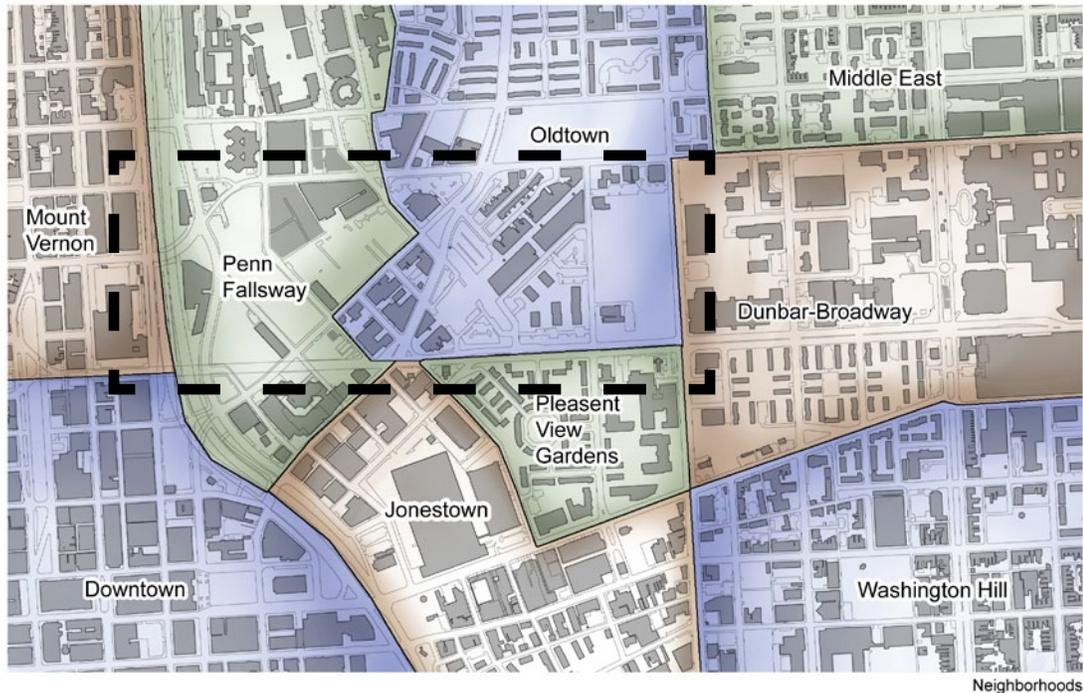
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**Figure 3.1** 1912 Gay Street Postcard

Image from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gay\\_Street\\_Looking\\_Northeast,\\_Baltimore,\\_MD.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gay_Street_Looking_Northeast,_Baltimore,_MD.jpg) (public domain).

The rise and fall of the Oldtown and Penn Fallsway neighborhoods in east Baltimore (Figure 3.2 Neighborhoods) take place from the mid 15th century up to the present day. This area has evolved both physically, and culturally over the years, initially accommodating wealthy settlers, and now is generally occupied by the very poor where residents exist at all. Despite some efforts to revive this area, it has been



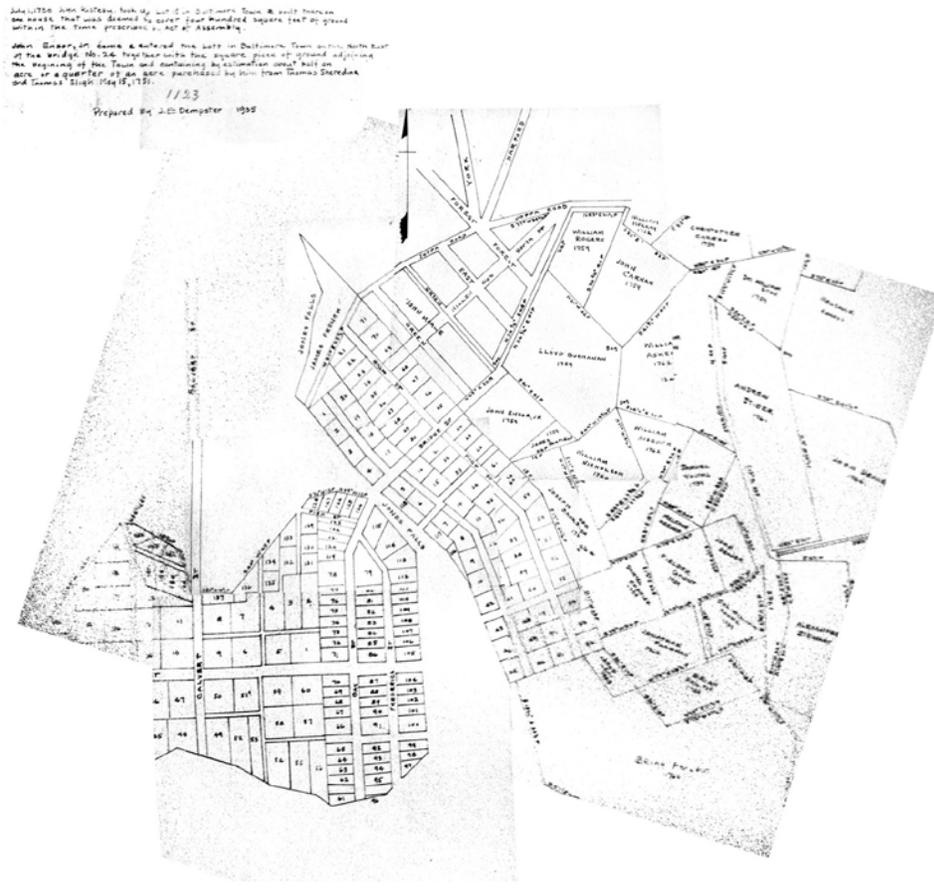
**Figure 3.2 Neighborhoods**

left culturally and economically bereft. Exploring the past will help to inform what aspects should not be repeated in the proposed design, and what aspects could be reintroduced.

The Jones Falls River was the generator of Jonestown, a settlement to the east of the river, in the mid 1600s. It was named after David Jones, who was the first settled on the east bank of this river, and who built one of the first mills.<sup>1</sup> Jonestown was unique in that it was removed in purpose and demographically from the other two deep water port towns, Baltimore Town and Fells Point (Figure 3.4 Site in 1792).

<sup>1</sup> Maryland thesis written about the falls

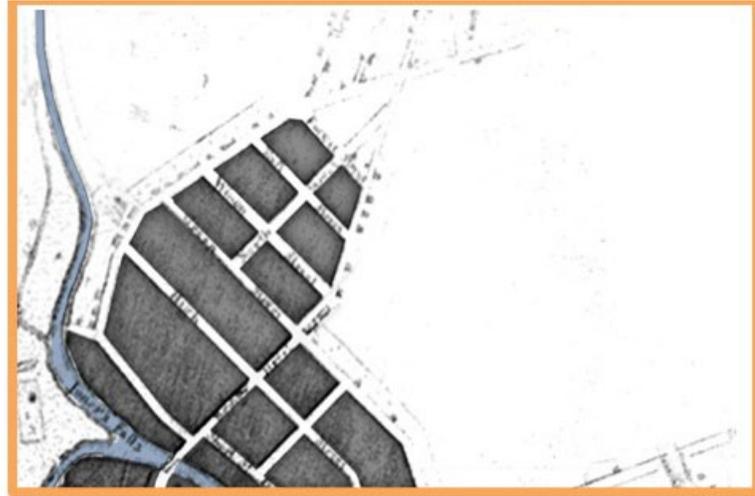
Baltimore Town and Fells Point were working industrial towns, and Jonestown was on much higher ground and was more secluded. Because of this, it attracted wealthy English settlers (Figure 3.3 Property Boundaries). Eventually these three towns decided to unite, and Baltimore City was incorporated in 1797. The street that is shown crossing the river in the large figure ground from 1792 was called Bridge



**Figure 3.3 Property Boundaries**

Notice the large estates to the east in Jonestown, and the more compact and grided properties surrounding the river and to the west in Baltimoretown.

1792



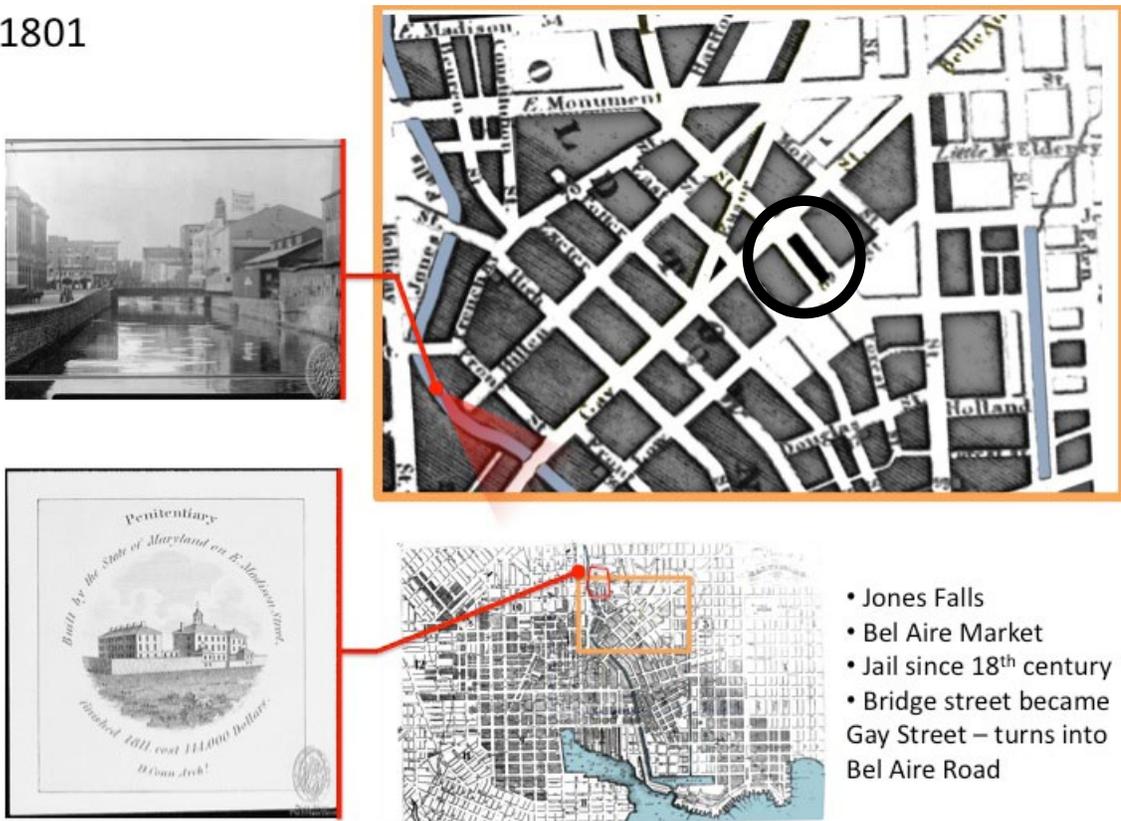
**Figure 3.4 Site in 1792**

Street/Belair Road (Figure 3.4 Site in 1792). This was because it was one of the first bridges over the Jones Falls River, and the street went to Belair, which is northeast of then Jonestown. This road is now called Gay Street/Belair Road, and is a strong diagonal street that goes against the regular north/south grid of east Baltimore.

Because this was one of the first roads in and out of the city, it became the primary commercial street. Forrest Street was also one of the primary roads in and out of the city, and where Belair Road and Forrest Street intersected the Belair Market formed.

In the 17th century, This area was still at the outskirts of the city, but development followed Gay Street and the Jones Falls River outward (Figure 3.5 Site in 1801). The jail was established around this time directly to the east of the Jones Falls River, and is still present at this location today. A hospital was also built at what was then the eastern most edge of the city, and later was purchased by Johns Hopkins to become Johns Hopkins Hospital. Baltimore’s period of greatest growth would occur

1801



**Figure 3.5 Site in 1801**

Belair Market, circled on the large scale map, is the narrow building running perpendicular to Gay street, and runs parallel with the topography. This is a very typical English market model.

over the next century.

When the industrial revolution occurred, Baltimore grew at lightning speeds because of its ability to import and export goods through its extensive port system (Figure 3.6 Site in 1855). Many blue collar workers moved to Baltimore to work at large industrial companies such as Bethlehem Steel. Most of these workers were eastern European immigrants, and later African Americans from the south took

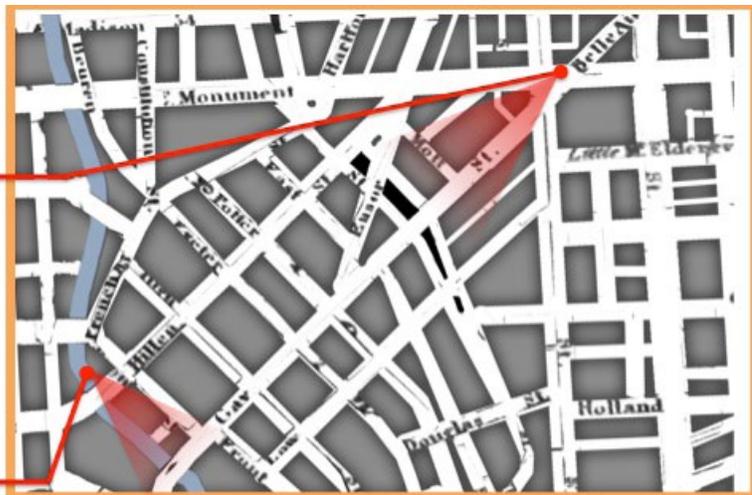
1855



Gay Street in 1890s



Jones Falls after 1868 flood. Benjamin Latrobe proposed to cover the falls in 1810.



- Jones Falls
- Bel Aire Market
- Jail since 18<sup>th</sup> century
- Hospital Later to become Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1889

**Figure 3.6 Site in 1855**

Top left image from *Baltimore Transitions*. Bottom left image from Maryland Historical Society website.

advantage of the job opportunities as well<sup>2</sup>. This is how Robert Houston's family came to live in Baltimore in the 1930s.

Because of the invention of new technologies, the mills along the Jones Falls River were not as important anymore, and a bad flood in 1868 severely damaged the embankment and the buildings lining the falls (Figure 3.6 Site in 1855). Many people, including Benjamin Latrobe, suggested to channel the falls into an underground sewer. This would not occur until the early 20th century<sup>3</sup>.

Because of the influx in population and increased commerce due to the industrial revolution, Gay Street became one of the most popular places to shop. Many large department stores, banks, and theaters lined Gay Street, and the Belair Market also expanded. Because of the Jones Falls River, Oldtown was protected from the 1904 fire that destroyed much of downtown Baltimore, which also contributed to its success as a commercial district. Oldtown would continue to thrive up until the first world war when it would gradually begin its downward spiral.

In the early 20th century (Figure 3.7 Site in 1914), the Jones Falls River was finally tunneled underground beginning at Penn Station, about a mile north of the site, and emptied into the inner harbor a half a mile south. At the time, people welcomed

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2 Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*.

3 Wilbur A. Street, *The History and Development of the Jones Falls in Baltimore*. 1926

this decision because the falls was no longer useful, and it was in poor condition.

Concern for the natural systems and the watershed did not occur at this time. The

implication of doing this would spawn a number of later interventions that would take

advantage of the river’s right of way, and further create a dividing boundary out of

this edge. A railroad following the Jones Falls River path can be seen terminating on

the thesis site at Hillen Street in the 1914 image. The widening of this edge creating a

boundary between east Baltimore and downtown is possibly one of the largest factors

1914



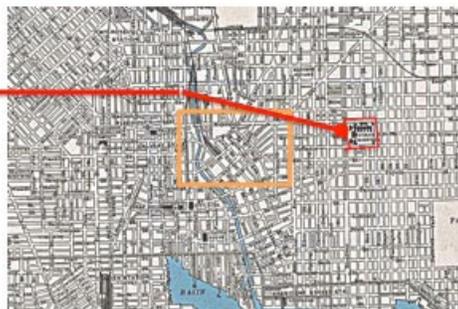
Postcard view of Gay Street



Jones Falls 1910



Johns Hopkins Hospital  
Built in 1889



1914

- Fire of 1904
- Jones Falls covered
- Jones falls corridor used for railroads
- Bel Aire Market expands

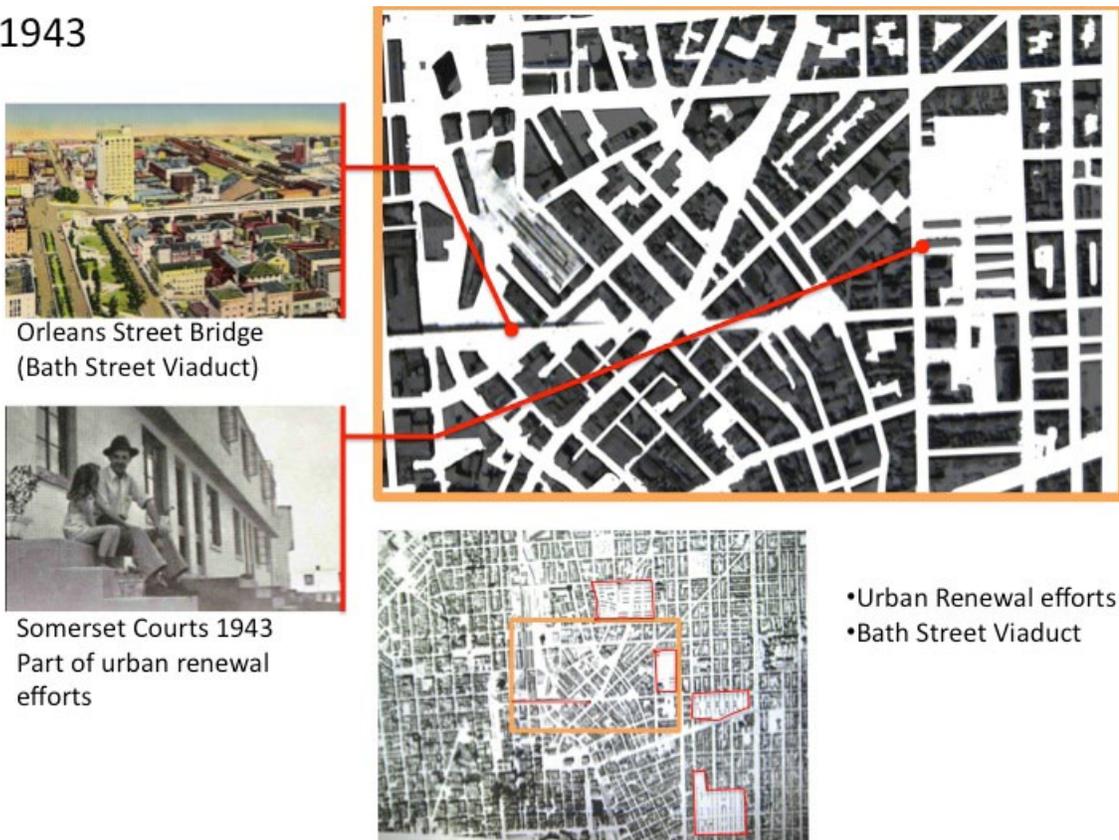
**Figure 3.7 Site in 1914**

Top left image from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gay\\_Street\\_Looking\\_Northeast,\\_Baltimore,\\_MD.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Gay_Street_Looking_Northeast,_Baltimore,_MD.jpg) (public domain). Middle left image from *Baltimore Transitions*. Bottom left image from Maryland Historical Society’s web site. Bottom right map from Hornbake Library’s *Maryland Maps Collection*

contributing to Oldtown’s isolation from Downtown.

After World War I began, much of the commercial and industrial activities shifted to assisting in the war efforts. The old row houses were aging, and there was a demand for affordable housing.<sup>4</sup> Because of this, multiple blocks of row houses were torn down at a time, and low-rise public housing was built in its place beginning in 1939 (Figure 3.9 Site in 1943). A few of these housing developments still exist today,

1943



Orleans Street Bridge  
(Bath Street Viaduct)

Somerset Courts 1943  
Part of urban renewal  
efforts

- Urban Renewal efforts
- Bath Street Viaduct

**Figure 3.9 Site in 1943**

Top left image from <http://www.kilduffs.com/Bridges.html>. Bottom left image from Maryland Historical Society website. Bottom right map from Enoch Pratt Library’s map collection.

4 Joan Jacobsen. “The Dismantling of Baltimore’s Public Housing.”

including Latrobe Homes to the north of the study site, and Douglas Homes to the southeast of the site. The impact of the automobile on urban fabric also became apparent at this time. A bridge was built over the Jones Falls corridor as an extension of Orleans Street, which attempted to better connect east and west Baltimore. This did assist in bridging this gap between the two sides, but it went against the grain of Oldtown's grid. Orleans Street would later become part of Route 40, a dividing edge between the thesis site to the north and the housing developments to the south.

The late 1930s is also the time when Robert Houston's parents, aunts and uncles decided to move up to Baltimore from the south to work for Bethlehem Steel. They choose to live on East Chase Street (a few blocks north of the thesis site) because it was quiet, and it had a nice residential green nearby. The neighborhood at the time was primarily German, with some African Americans, including the Houstons. These two groups got along well, and Robert even has memories of his father spending time at the corner car repair shop on Friday nights to hear radio broadcasts of World War II with the Germans. Robert recalls that after the war, the Germans mysteriously disappeared from east Baltimore, and were primarily replaced by African American families.<sup>5</sup>

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5 "Interview with Robert Houston." Personal interview. 18 Mar. 2010.

Robert has memories of Gay Street as a young boy, and describe's it as a magical place. It was were everyone did their shopping on the weekends, and you could buy anything there. The mostly Jewish merchants had a very good relationship with the mostly African American residents, and they trusted them enough to give them lines of credit at their stores. This is one of the reasons, Robert pointed out, that this shopping street was so popular.<sup>6</sup> Gay Street was a seam in both the physical sense, and in the cultural sense. The riots proceeding Martin Luther King Jr's assassination would change this healthy edge for decades later to come.

Also occurring the 1950s, east Baltimore saw another wave of public housing built (Figure 3.11 Site in 1967). The public housing built in 1955 was in the form of garden apartments were over ten stories high (Figure 3.10 Building Flag House Courts). The difference between the low-rise garden apartments and these new high-rises was immense. Social networking was not the same, and people felt isolated from each other and the rest of the city. Father Lawrence mentioned that it was too big of a network for everyone to know everyone else, and therefore there was no surveillance and accountability as there was in the row house model.<sup>7</sup> Other people would say that these towers failed because of the high concentration of a singular

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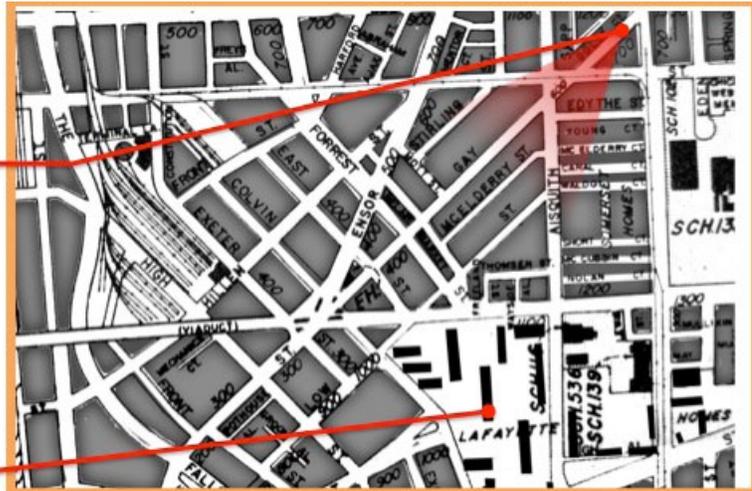
6 "Interview with Robert Houston." Personal interview. 18 Mar. 2010.

7 "Interview with Richard Lawrence." Personal interview. 19 Feb. 2010.

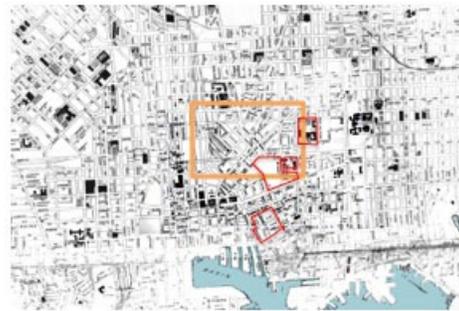
1967



1968 Riots on Gay Street



Lafayette Courts



- Lafayette Courts and Flag House Courts Built in 1955
- Paul Lawrence Dunbar Schools built
- Assassination of MLK one year later

**Figure 3.11 Site in 1967**

Upper left image from <<http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/images/index.html>>. Lower left image from *Baltimore Transitions*. Bottom right map from Enoch Pratt Library map collection.



**Figure 3.10 Building Flag House Courts**

Image from “Voices of Lombard Street” exhibition. and the stair wells and elevators were often

income level, and these people felt socially

isolated from the rest of the city. These

public housing projects are the first example

of a well intended planned community, that

had unpredictable consequences. The units

in the high rises were not maintained well,

the sites of criminal activity. It is not completely known why these high-rise housing complexes didn't work, and the low-rise developments did, but perhaps the isolation felt by the people who lived in these towers is what bred hate and anger. These towers would later be torn down, and replaced with more typical row house blocks with a mixture of incomes. Although these developments still occasionally have their issues, they work much better than what they replaced.

The year 1967 is significant because it was the last year that Gay Street



**Figure 3.12 Gay Street during Riots**

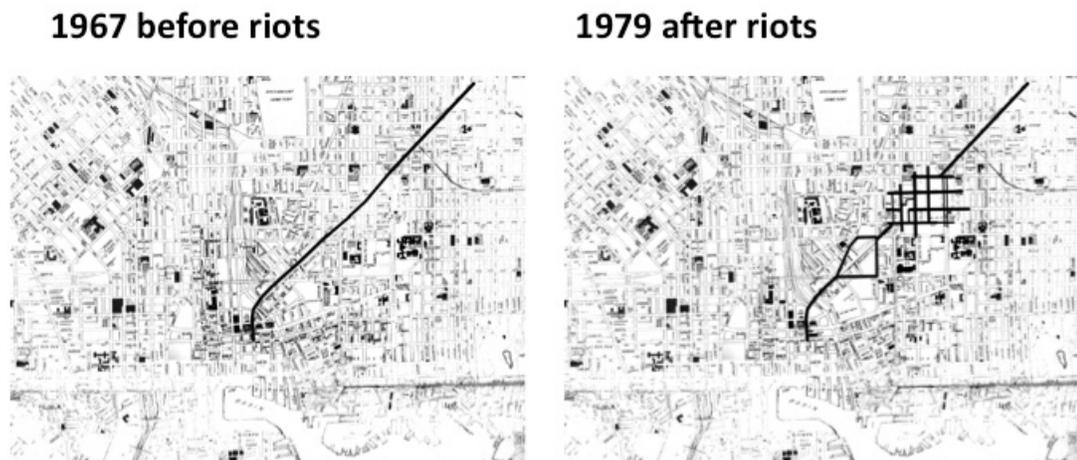
Images from <http://archives.ubalt.edu/bsr/images/index.html>.

functioned as a working commercial street in the neighborhood. The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 would cause so much anger in the African American community that riots would occur for days following that tragic event. Both East and West Baltimore rioted, and in East Baltimore, Gay Street was the primary target (Figure 3.12 Gay Street during Riots). The stores along Gay Street were looted and burned, and the healthy relationship between the Jewish

community and the Black community was ruptured.<sup>8</sup> People who owned businesses took any insurance money they received, and moved out of East Baltimore.<sup>9</sup> This social event had a large impact on the physical condition of Gay Street after 1968 (Figure 3.13 Transition of Gay Street).

## Transition of Gay Street as boundary

Social event effecting physical boundary



**Figure 3.13** Transition of Gay Street

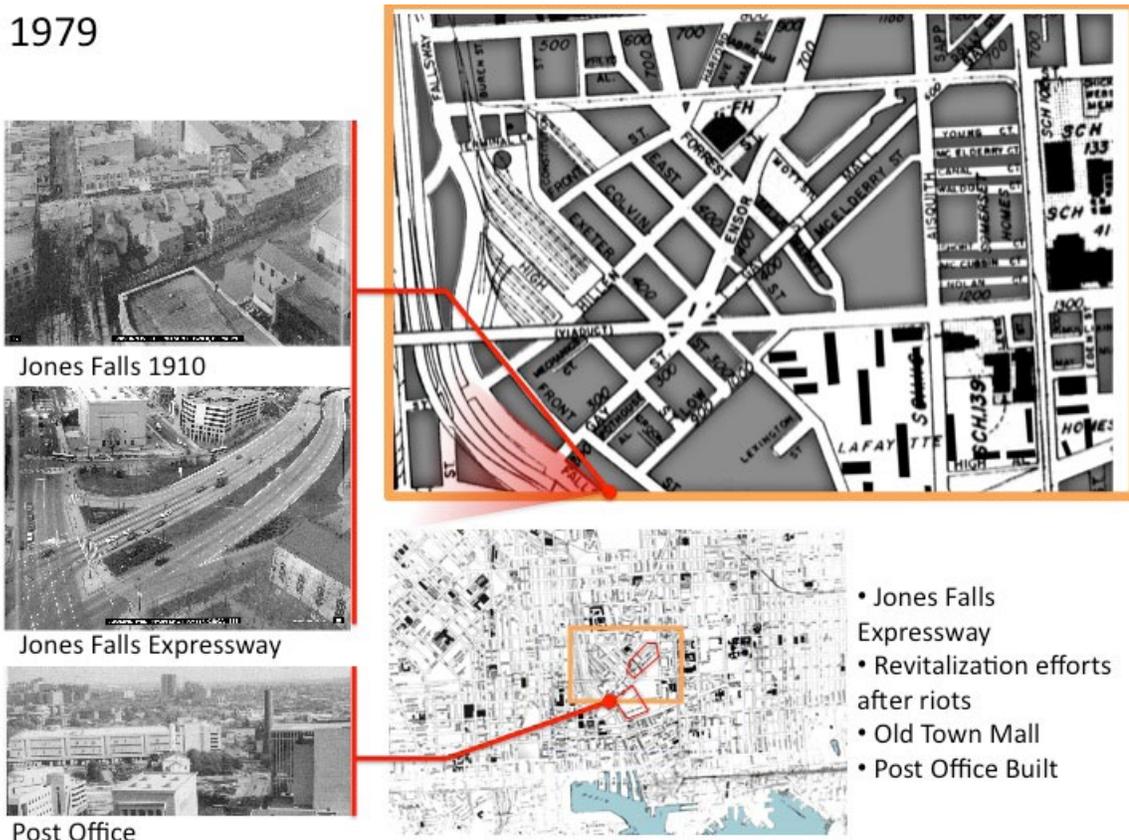
Maps from the map collection at the Enoch Pratt Library

The social stigma now imbedded into Gay Street had an effect on the rebuilding efforts after the riots. This strong diagonal was almost completely ignored, and the regular north/south grid was superimposed over top of this historic street.

<sup>8</sup> "Baltimore '68; Riots and Rebirth"

<sup>9</sup> "Interview with Richard Lawrence." Personal interview. 19 Feb. 2010.

1979



**Figure 3.14** Site in 1979

Images on the left from *Baltimore Transitions*. Map at lower right from map collection at Enoch Pratt Library.

Efforts to restore a commercial block of Gay Street was attempted in 1976 in the form of a pedestrian mall. This project was called the Old Town Mall, and it was one of the first malls built in a neighborhood of primarily public housing developments. This mall was a success at first, but once the high rise public housing was torn down in the 90s, this mall lost its primary customer basis, and slowly began to fail. It also didn't help that Harbor Place, the large commercial development that was built on Baltimore's

Inner Harbor, was built in 1980. With this series of events, the last hope for reviving Gay Street as a commercial center was looking hopeless.

During this time, the Jones Falls Expressway overpass was also built (Figure 3.14 Site in 1979). This portion of the Interstate 83 highway further severed Downtown from East Baltimore. It also sparked a chain reaction of using the east side of the overpass as a place to put social services and unwanted uses. Between the stigmatization of Gay Street as an edge, and the dividing boundary of the Jones Falls Expressway, Oldtown had completely transformed for the worst in less than a century. It wouldn't be until the mid 1990s that hope would be regained in this area.

With funding from the Hope VI program, Lafayette Courts and Flag House Courts were demolished, and new mixed income housing replaced them (Figure 3.16 Site in 1996). These new housing developments of Pleasant View Gardens and Albemarle Courts, designed by Torti Gallas and Partners, were on the right track to encouraging diversity in this neighborhood. Although Pleasant View Gardens is still slightly inward focused, this development was a huge improvement over the high-rise apartments of Lafayette Courts it replaced. Other aspects of this site also began to slowly improve.

One of the largest pieces of history that has survived on this site since 1889

1996



Pleasant View Gardens replaced Lafayette Courts



Demolition of Flag House Courts



- Demolition of high rises – replaced with lower density housing
- Because of this, Old Town Mall suffers.

**Figure 3.16 Site in 1996**

Lower left image from “Voices of Lombard Street” exhibition. Bottom right image from Google Maps.



**Figure 3.15 1889 Johns Hopkins Hospital**

Image from Maryland Historical Society’s Website.

is the Johns Hopkins Hospital located in the Dunbar-Broadway neighborhood (Figure 3.15 1889 Johns Hopkins Hospital). Preceding 1889, a large flooding of the Jones Falls River had just occurred, and Mr. Hopkins felt it would be appropriate to build a hospital on high ground. This site at the time was also

on the outskirts of the city to prevent the spread of disease, and there was already an existing asylum on the site. Mr. Hopkins was an advocate for assisting those in need, and although the surrounding neighborhood residents were sceptical, Mr. Hopkins had good intentions by building a hospital in a poor neighborhood.<sup>10</sup> Currently the Johns Hopkins Hospital is a share holder in the East Baltimore Development Inc. This is a new neighborhood and biotech park located just north of the now multi-block complex that will provide many new jobs, and revitalize this neighborhood. Between the philanthropic efforts, and the amount of people it employs, Johns Hopkins Hospital is a positive force in this neighborhood.

Each event throughout history has shaped Oldtown into what it is today (Figure 3.17 Site in 2010). As a result of certain events, physical and cultural boundaries exist on the site that must be addressed in the redevelopment proposal (Figure 3.28 Physical Boundaries, Figure 3.29 Cultural Boundaries, Figure 3.30 Void Boundaries & Figure 3.31 Discontinuous Boundaries). The neighborhood of Oldtown is still in poor condition, but if these issues are addressed, Oldtown's full potential can be realized.

Despite Oldtown's current state of neglect, this site also carries good redevelopment potential. The proximity of this site to both Downtown, and to Johns

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10 Rebecca Skloot, *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*.

2010



2010

- Parts of Old Town Mall burn down
- Increasing number of vacant properties
- Juvenile Justice Center
- Healthcare for the Homeless

Figure 3.17 Site in 2010

Hopkins Hospital to the east are major contributors to this site’s potential. The Inner Harbor is about a half a mile to the southwest of Oldtown, and it can attract people from downtown to visit, or even live in this area. Johns Hopkins Hospital is also about a half a mile away to the east, and employees could be residents of or easily visit Oldtown. There are also a variety of schools such as the Notre Dame Institute, a private girl’s school towards the North, Lawrence Dunbar public schools to the east, and the Sojourner Douglas College to the South. These schools can contribute

to the diversity and vitality of this area as well. Oldtown and the Penn Fallsway neighborhoods also have the potential to connect the two vibrant neighborhoods of Mount Vernon to the northwest, and Washington Hill to the southeast. The two biggest issues or challenges on this site could also be looked at as the biggest opportunities.



**Figure 3.18** Gay Street



**Figure 3.19** Jones Falls Corridor

The Jones Falls Corridor and Gay Street, although currently problematic to the health and wellbeing of this area, carry huge potential in becoming the primary physical and historical connectors on this site (Figure 3.18 Gay Street & Figure 3.19 Jones Falls Corridor). If properly addressed, these two entities could become the generators that assist in weaving Oldtown back into the urban fabric of Baltimore.

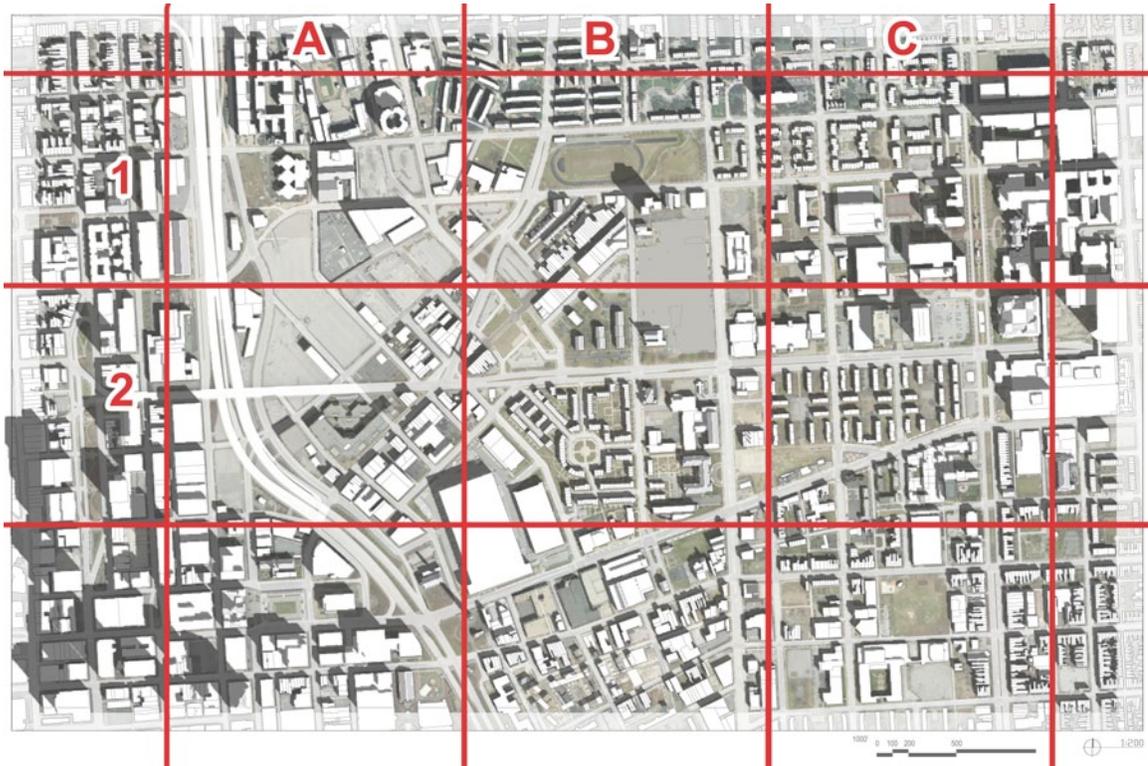
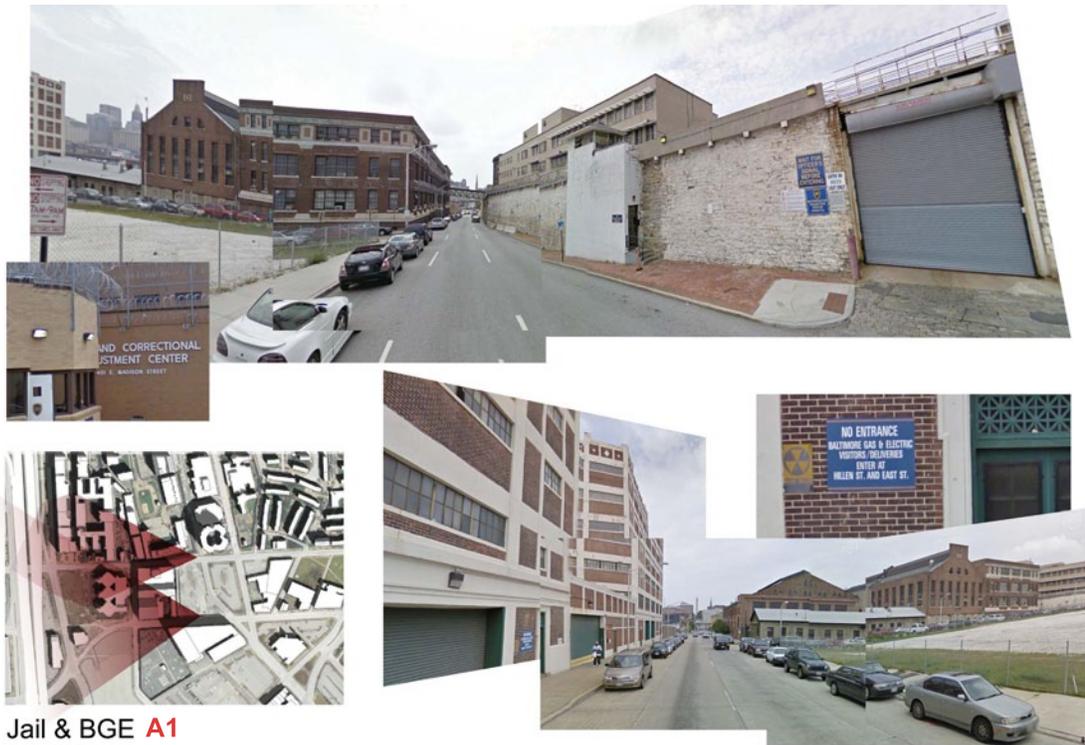


Figure 3.20 Existing Photos Key

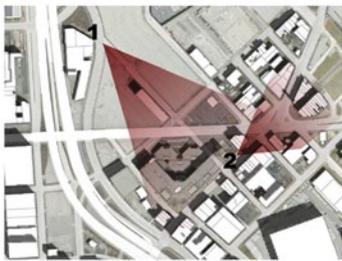


Jail & BGE A1

Figure 3.21 Northwestern Site Photos



1



Parking & Gay Street A2



2

Figure 3.22 Southwestern Site Photos



1 Institute of Notre Dame (Right) Latrobe Homes (left)



2 Fire Department (left)



B1



3 Historic Stirling Street



4 Monument St. Senior living tower (right) tracks for local schools & park (left).

Figure 3.23 Northern Site Photos



Figure 3.24 Central Site Photos



Figure 3.25 Southern Site Photos



1 Johns Hopkins' Main Building



2 Historic Church & Dunbar Middle School



C1



3 Interior Street to JHMC



4 Houses on Monument St.

Figure 3.26 Northeastern Site Photos



1 Johns Hopkins' Medical Campus - N Broadway



C2



2 Douglas Homes



3 N Broadway St

Figure 3.27 Southeastern Site Photos

# Physical Boundaries



**Figure 3.28 Physical Boundaries**

This diagram describes the current physical boundaries that can be found on the study site, and the nature of that boundary.

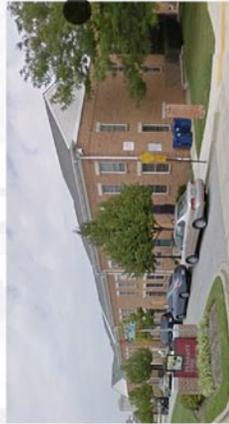
# Cultural and Institutional Boundaries



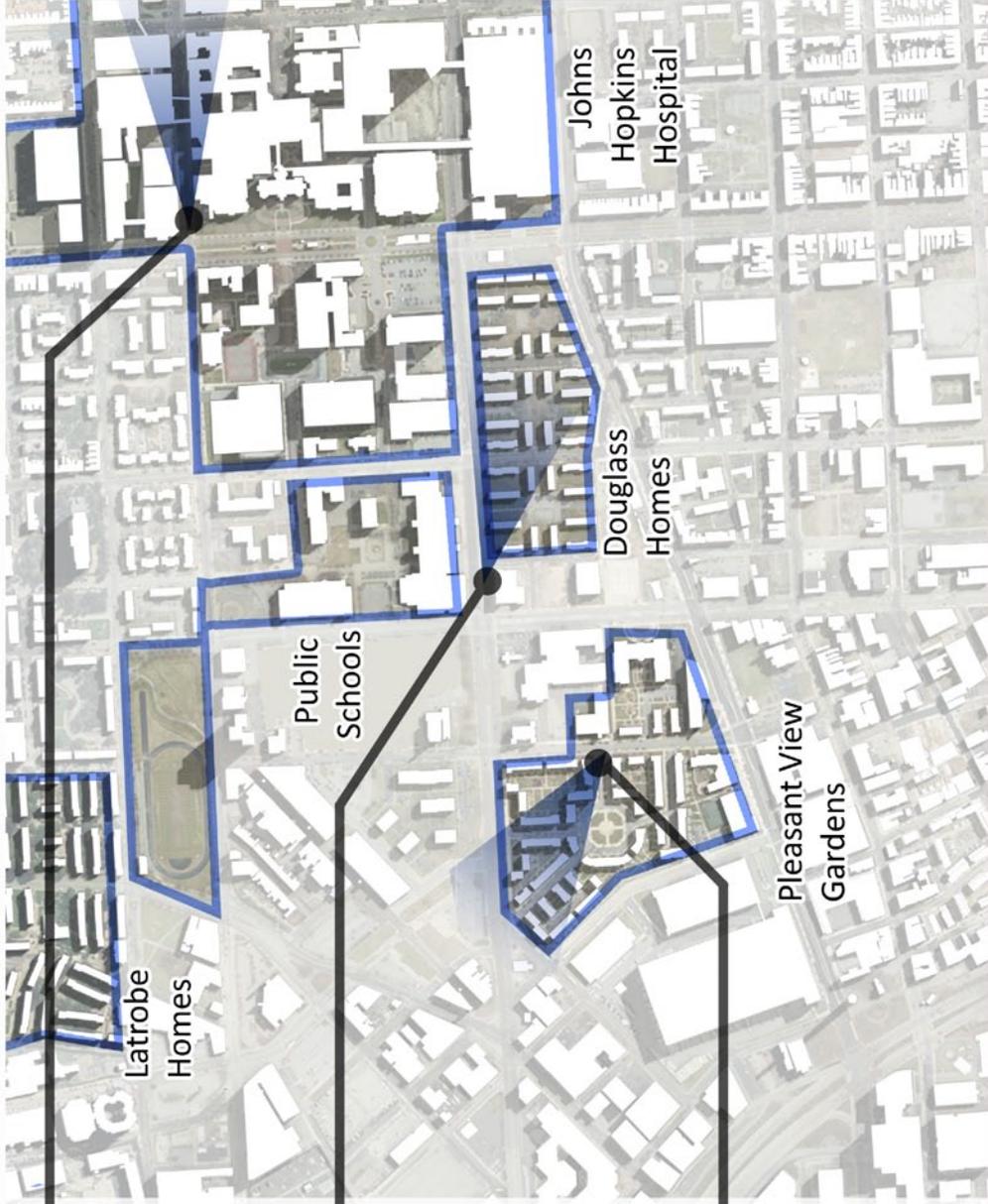
Johns Hopkins Hospital is an asset to East Baltimore. However, because they are responsible for so much construction, the residents of East Baltimore view this institution as somewhat destructive.



The older public housing in East Baltimore such as Latrobe and Douglass Homes are very recognizable in architectural character, and therefore are understood as culturally bound areas.



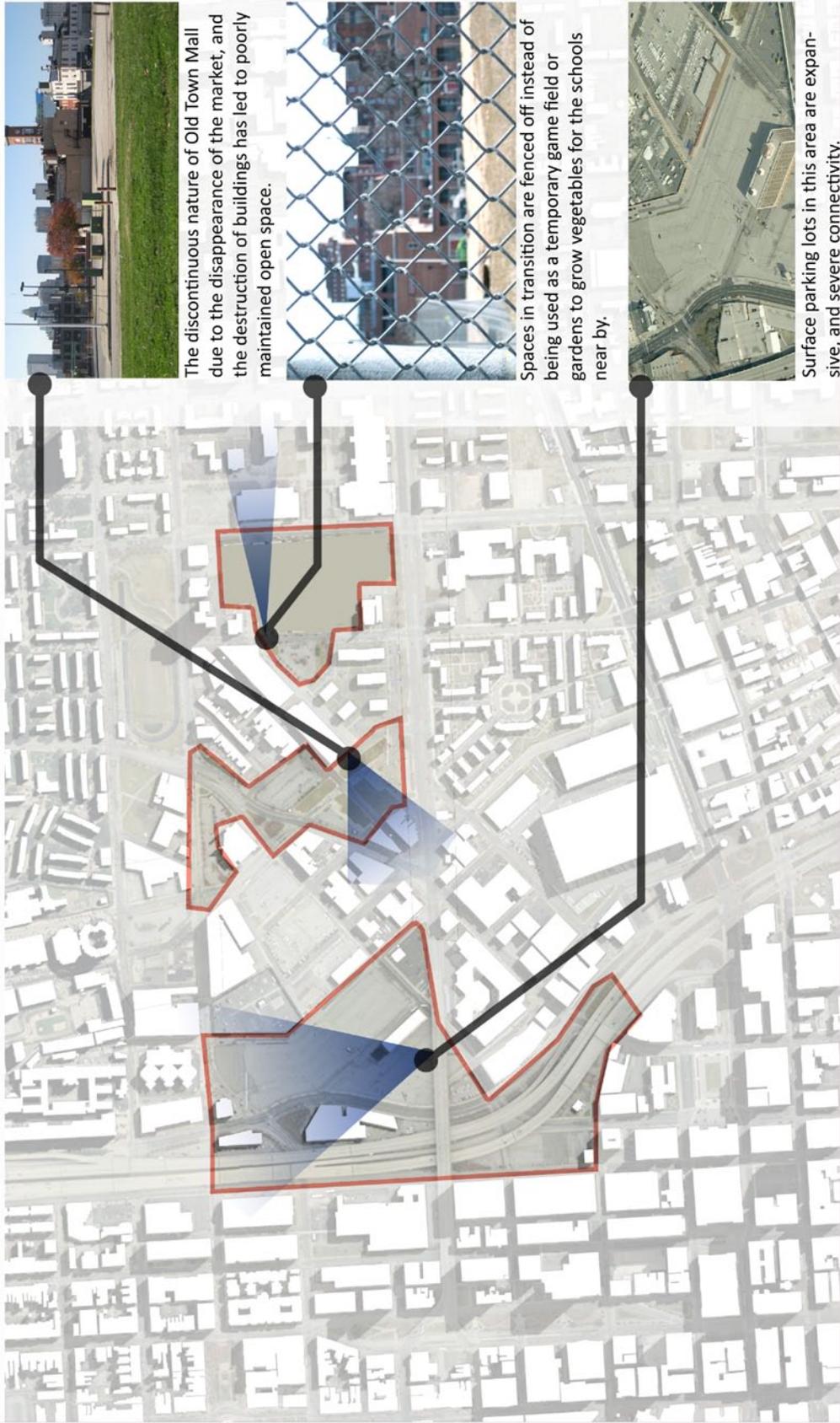
Newer housing developments such as Pleasant View Gardens are slightly more inviting, and don't carry the stigma of Latrobe and Douglass Homes.



**Figure 3.29 Cultural Boundaries**

This diagram describes the current social, cultural and institutional boundaries that can be found on the study site.

# Void Boundaries



**Figure 3.30 Void Boundaries**  
This diagram describes the current physical boundaries of the absence of something that can be found on the study site.

# Discontinuous Boundaries - Gay Street



**Figure 3.31** Discontinuous Boundaries

This diagram describes the current discontinuous nature of Gay Street.

## SOCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

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Figure 4.1 Urbanite: After Race

A study was done in 2001 at Harvard University assessing the level of segregation in American cities. Out of the 300 cities analyzed, Baltimore ranked as being the 39th most segregated city. About a decade later, race still plays a large role in where we choose to live.<sup>1</sup> This isn't to say that Baltimore has the 39th most racist population in the country; but some people would argue that this separation could

perpetuate racist tendencies. Janice Ellis, the publisher and executive editor of the online periodical on race, *USA Rise Up*, expresses her concern for segregated urban neighborhoods and how, "...urban areas have very definitive geographical divides

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1 Jacobsen, Joan. "The Color Line." *The Urbanite Magazine* #68. Feb. 2010. .

that breed and perpetuate racial, educational and economic boundaries.”<sup>2</sup> Although race was profiled in Harvard’s study, it should be pointed out that the discrimination of different types of people can also be based on ethnicity, age, income, gender, sexuality, and disability. Daphne Spain has noticed similar trends in the relationship between physical separation and women’s status. She states that, “...although women’s status is a result of a variety of cultural, religious, and socioeconomic factors, the *physical separation* of women and men also contributes to and perpetuates gender stratification by reducing women’s access to socially valued knowledge.”<sup>3</sup> Both Spain, and Ellis suggest that if these boundaries of separateness are dissolved, the underprivileged groups will have a much higher chance of raising their economic and educational status. Dissolving these boundaries, however, will not be easy because of the multiple factors that contributed to the creation of these social boundaries.

Many of the primary reasons for Baltimore’s segregation today can be attributed to events that took place 60 years ago, and some even over 100 years ago. When Baltimore was rapidly expanding because of the industrial revolution, companies built block after block of housing for their employees, which were usually identical row houses (Figure 4.2 Identical Row Houses). Although over time most

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2 Janice Ellis. “Divisive Ties That Bind... Racial Discrimination Lives On”.

3 Daphne Spain. “Gendered Spaces and Womens’ Status.”



**Figure 4.2 Identical Row Houses**

Block after block of identical row housing was built very quickly to accommodate the influx of industrial workers immigrating into the city in the mid 19th century. Image from <http://www.kilduffs.com/Homes.html>.

of these row houses have been altered or replaced, there is still a homogeneous nature to some of the neighborhoods physically and demographically. Although the monotonous architecture played a role in the lack of diversity in neighborhoods, the major driving factors of neighborhood segregation

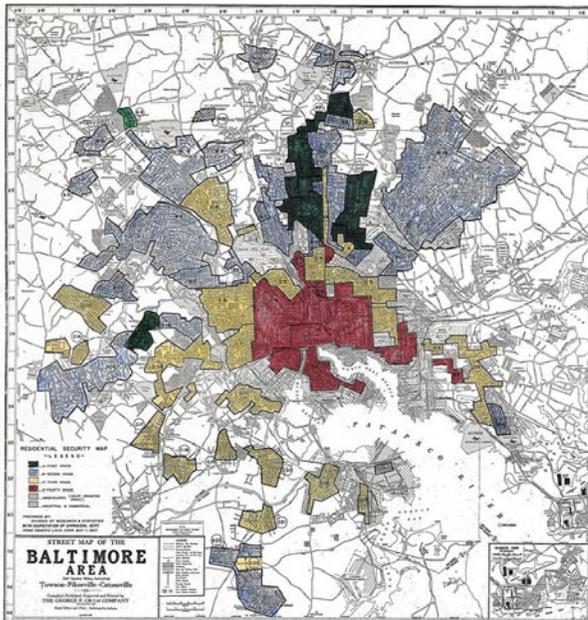
were the discrimination against minorities by the government, banks, and realtors in the 20th century.

In the 1950s, Baltimore's population was one quarter black, and the remaining residents were white of various ethnic groups. During this time it was unheard of to live in a neighborhood with people of other races or incomes. At times ethnicity played a role, but not as much as race and income. The groups with the most prejudice tended to be the white middle class, evident by the 'white flight', a mass exodus of this demographic out of the city and into the surrounding suburbs. The population in the city went from being one quarter black and three quarters

white to being almost half and half in less than two decades. The occurrence of ‘white flight’ did not happen by chance, but rather it was a carefully orchestrated deception tactic used by realtors to make a generous profit, now referred to as ‘blockbusting’. Because of the restrictions placed on African Americans by banks and the federal government that kept them from participating in the mainstream real estate market, these families would rely on realtors to sell them a house, and have it privately financed through that realtor. Some corrupt realtors, the ‘blockbusters’, took advantage of this, and sold overpriced houses to black families with poor financing plans. In addition to this, these realtors would encourage black families to move into all white neighborhoods, and proceed to use scare tactics on the white residents until they would sell their house for below market rate to that realtor for fear of African Americans moving into their neighborhood. The realtor would keep using the white fear and black desperation to repeat this process until the entire neighborhood was flipped for a huge profit.<sup>4</sup> It should be kept in mind that although these were horrible acts of deceit, they would not have been possible if it wasn’t for the discriminatory practices of lenders and the Federal Government that had taken place decades beforehand. The government was well aware of the various

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4 Orser, W. Edward. *Blockbusting in Baltimore: the Edmondson Village Story*.



**Figure 4.3 Red-lined Map of Baltimore**

Image from <http://www.anteropietila.com/books.html>

segregated neighborhoods all over the United States, and a ranking system was devised partially based on race, ethnicity, and religion to determine whether a loan or mortgage could be granted to anyone living in that neighborhood. This process is now referred to as 'red lining' (Figure 4.3

Red-lined Map of Baltimore). This

map is an example of the real estate

risk maps prepared by the Roosevelt administration in the 1930s to prevent lenders from getting bad loans. The blockbusters used these maps created by the federal government to know which neighborhoods to target. Usually the areas marked in yellow were targeted because these neighborhoods were predominantly white, but they could still convince African American families to move in opposed to the areas marked in green or blue, which were too expensive and established. The areas marked in red were usually all black neighborhoods. This process kept low

income minorities from ever being able to own property and improve their economic situation.<sup>5</sup> Although the blockbusters did sell homes to minorities, they were usually selling them poorly built homes with poor financial plans, which gave these minorities the illusion they were improving their economic situation much more than they actually were. All of these factors perpetuated the problems of racism and classism that already existed at the time. Even with equal housing opportunities today, the red-lining and blockbusting deeply scarred Baltimore with social boundaries of race, class and ethnicity. These scars will take time to heal, and spreading awareness about these past occurrences will help people better design for the future. In addition to race and ethnicity, encouraging diversity of age, gender, and income should also be a high priority in rethinking the Oldtown neighborhood. Other instances of separating different groups of people should be eliminated as well, including separation based on age.

Some people might argue that senior housing is a very necessary amenity for elders who need assistance, but collecting people of a similar age in one place is not very different from creating socially defined boundaries based on race and income that have been previously discussed (Figure 4.4 Senior Housing). Robert

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5 Pietila, Antero. *Not in My Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City*.



**Figure 4.4 Senior Housing**

This senior housing building is on the corner of Monument Street and Aisquith Street.



**Figure 4.5 Demolition of Flag House Courts**

Image from "Voices of Lombard Street" exhibition.

Houston does not think senior housing is a good idea because it is, "taking the wisdom out of our neighborhoods." He explains that historically the elderly population in neighborhoods were responsible for introducing new people into the neighborhood, or knowing when somebody was up to no good. He also pointed out that these senior housing facilities placed restrictions on its residents that even limited how much they could visit with family members.<sup>6</sup> This is reminiscent of the feelings of limitation and isolation felt by the residents that

eventually led to the demolition of Lafayette Courts and Flag House Courts in the 1990s (Figure 4.5 Demolition of Flag House Courts). In order to encourage equality and discourage discriminating tendencies, we must design for diversity by dissolving

<sup>6</sup> "Interview with Robert Houston." Personal interview. 18 Mar. 2010.

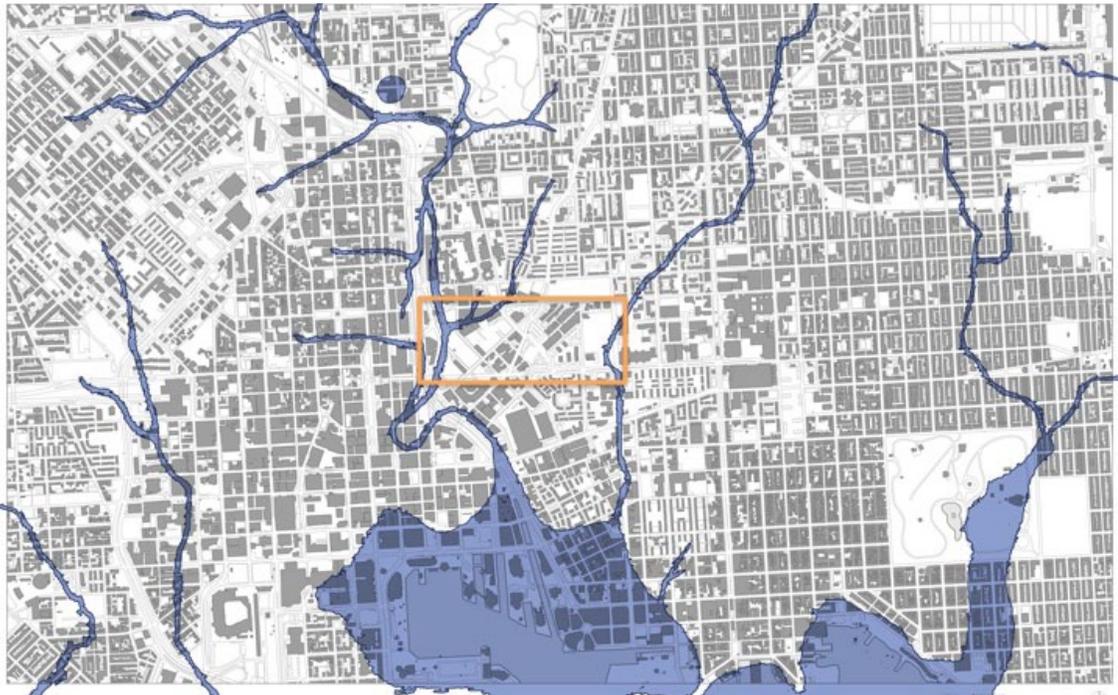
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social boundaries that may exist in our built environment. Better access to amenities, and connectivity should be the top priority among architects and planners when designing in Baltimore, and cities all over the United States.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

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Baltimore's waterways were the initial reason for its formation as a city, and the reason Baltimore was so prosperous during the industrial revolution (Figure 5.1 Original Water's Edge). The water ways are gradually losing their utilitarian functions, and are now being re-purposed as attractions or recreation, if being re-purposed at all. Many of Baltimore's waterways are still buried underground, and are not connected to



**Figure 5.1 Original Water's Edge**

Baltimore's original water ways overlaid on a current map of Baltimore.

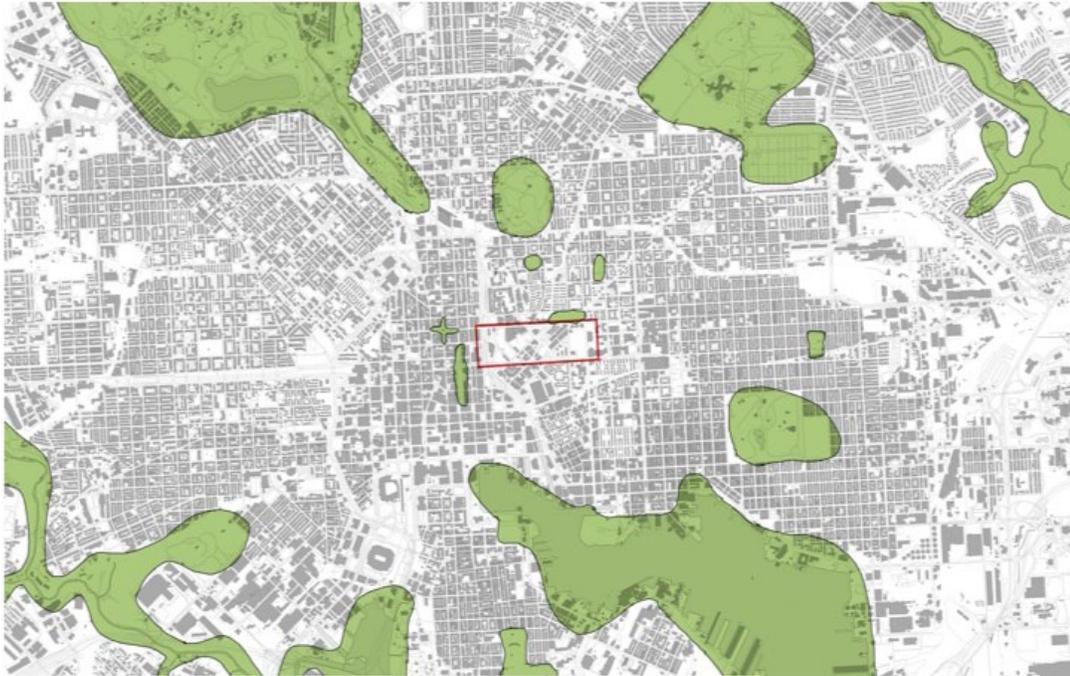
the natural ecosystems they once were (Figure 5.2 Current Water's Edge). In addition to this, the amount of impermeable surfaces in the watersheds feeding Baltimore's harbor, and the Chesapeake Bay, are harmful to the ecosystem, and increase the chance of flooding. If better connections were made between Baltimore's waterways



**Figure 5.2 Current Water's Edge**

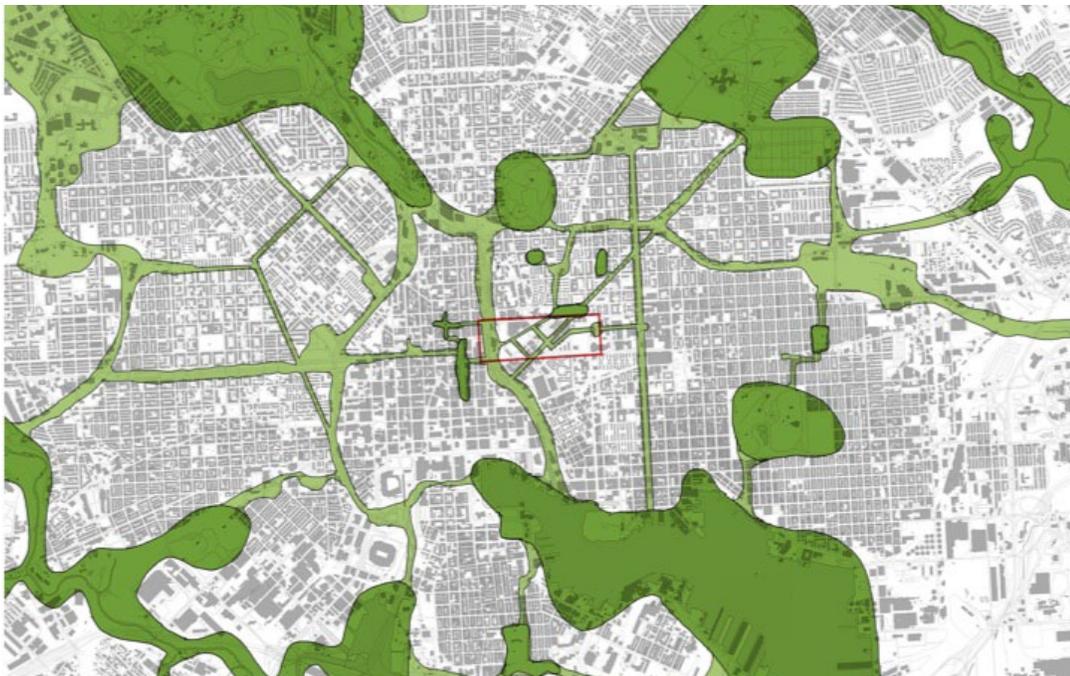
Most of the streams and rivers still exist, but they are channeled underground, including the Jones Falls River on the west of the thesis site, and another river underneath Central Avenue to the east.

and park systems, it could enrich life for the city's residents in addition to improving Maryland's natural systems (Figure 5.4 Existing Green Space and Bio-habitats & Figure 5.3 Potential Green Connections).



**Figure 5.4 Existing Green Space and Bio-habitats**

Green space and waterways that are isolated from surrounding ecosystems are not as healthy because they do not allow for the migration and movement of wildlife.



**Figure 5.3 Potential Green Connections**

By connecting green spaces with natural corridors of rivers or greenery, wildlife can penetrate deeper into urban areas, which can better connect people to nature.

The integration of green space and permeable surfaces can occur at all scales of the city, from large park systems to rethinking edge details between the road and the sidewalk. The size of the Jones Falls Water Shed is very large in comparison to the thesis site, however, the last two mile stretch of the Jones Falls River is probably where it picks up the most polluted run-off, and where there are the most impermeable surfaces (Figure 5.5 Watersheds into the Harbor & Figure 5.6 Permeable v. Impermeable Surfaces).

## Tributary Watersheds into the Harbor



**Figure 5.5 Watersheds into the Harbor**



**Figure 5.6 Permeable v. Impermeable Surfaces**

This isolation of green space from natural ecological systems is an issue not only for our environment, but also for people. Humans are just as much a part of the ecological equation as plants and animals, and exposure to natural systems greatly improves our experience of our environment. Weaving natural systems through our urban environments should therefore be a high priority in urban design and architecture.

## OVERVIEW OF DESIGN PROPOSAL

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This portion of the document describes how the intervention addresses the above mentioned temporal, social, and ecological aspects that exist on the thesis site. With this site being one of the most historic areas of Baltimore, it is important to preserve good memories, yet interpret the past in a contemporary way. The social issues surrounding Baltimore can also be tested on this site, and this neighborhood could set an example of diversity for the rest of Baltimore. Lastly, the ecological and environment opportunities this site has can be uncovered (literally) and used to strengthen Oldtown as a place to live, and a destination for others.

After critically looking at the existing conditions and how this site evolved over

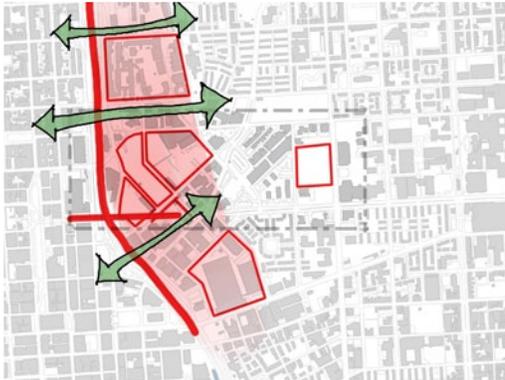


**Figure 6.1 Physical Boundaries**

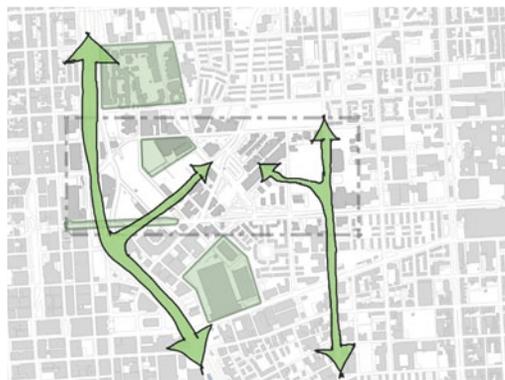
time, the first major issue that needs to be addressed are the physical boundaries following, and including the Jones Falls Expressway (Figure 6.1 Physical Boundaries). Attempting to increase connectivity across and along this gap is of primary importance

(Figure 6.2 Bridging Physical Boundaries & Figure 6.3 Movement Along Boundaries).

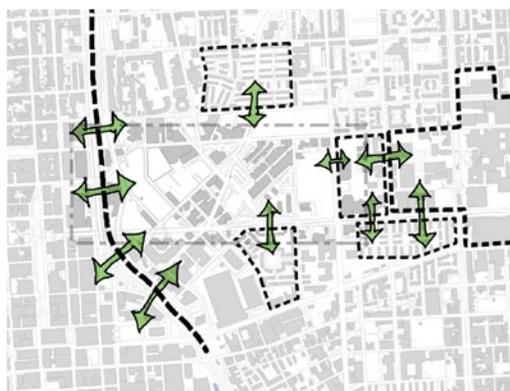
The cultural and institutional boundaries should also be woven into Oldtown so that



**Figure 6.2 Bridging Physical Boundaries**



**Figure 6.3 Movement Along Boundaries**



**Figure 6.4 Bridging Cultural Boundaries**

this new neighborhood can take advantage of the cultural diversity surrounding the site (Figure 6.4 Bridging Cultural Boundaries).

These areas need to be reconnected back into the neighborhood physically, and

they need to be connected to necessary

amenities. These amenities include access to public transportation, healthy food,

health care facilities, schools, recreational areas and facilities, and other public

services. Many of these things exist on this

site currently, but increased connectivity to them is one of the goals of this thesis.

The major generators for the design of this neighborhood are derived from these

needs and goals.

Using Gay Street and the Jones Falls Corridor as the primary north/south seams, and the connection from Downtown to Johns Hopkins Hospital as the primary east/west seam, the rest of the grid can fall into place around these major axes (Figure 6.5 Major Connecting Axes). Because of the desire to preserve the original grid of Oldtown, and some of its historic buildings, the east/west connection is less direct, but still present (Figure 6.6 Major Modes of Movement). The parti diagram below describes the major streets, green corridors, and the overall grid used as the



**Figure 6.5 Major Connecting Axes**



**Figure 6.6 Major Modes of Movement**

organization for this new development (Figure 6.9 Parti Diagram). The major spaces in the illustrative plan are keyed by numbers one through seven, and are described in detail in the following chapters. The purpose and character of each of these public spaces is unique in how it relates to the neighborhood and city, and by what building types surround these spaces (Figure 6.8 New Public Buildings & Figure 6.7 New Public

Spaces). The diversity of spaces and buildings functions will accommodate a variety of different needs, and hopefully attract a diverse range of people to live in and use the new amenities of this neighborhood. Each of these public spaces address the above mentioned issues found during the analysis portion of this project.

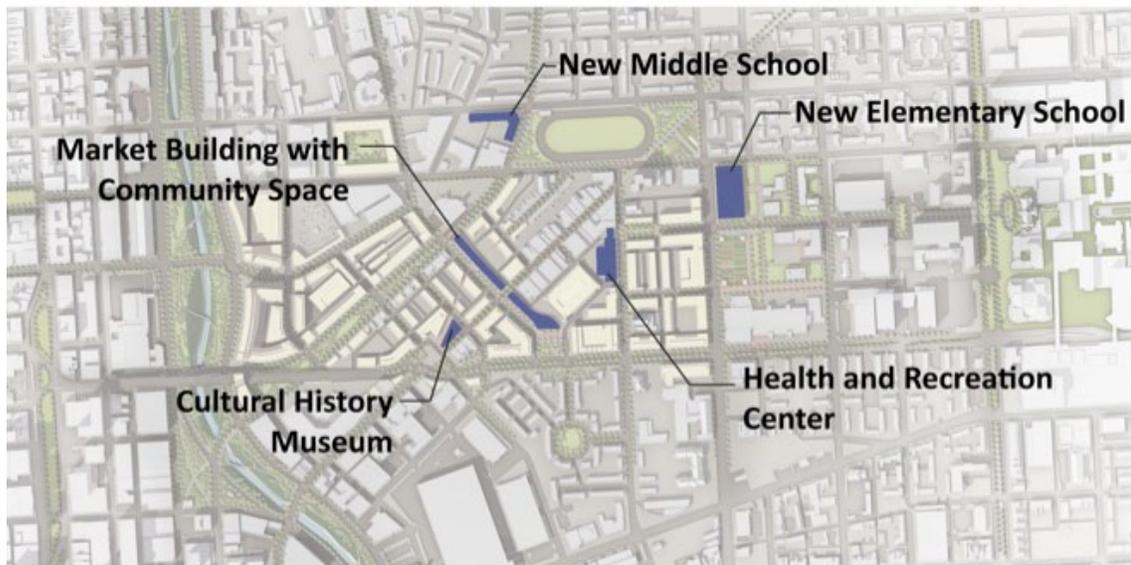


Figure 6.8 New Public Buildings

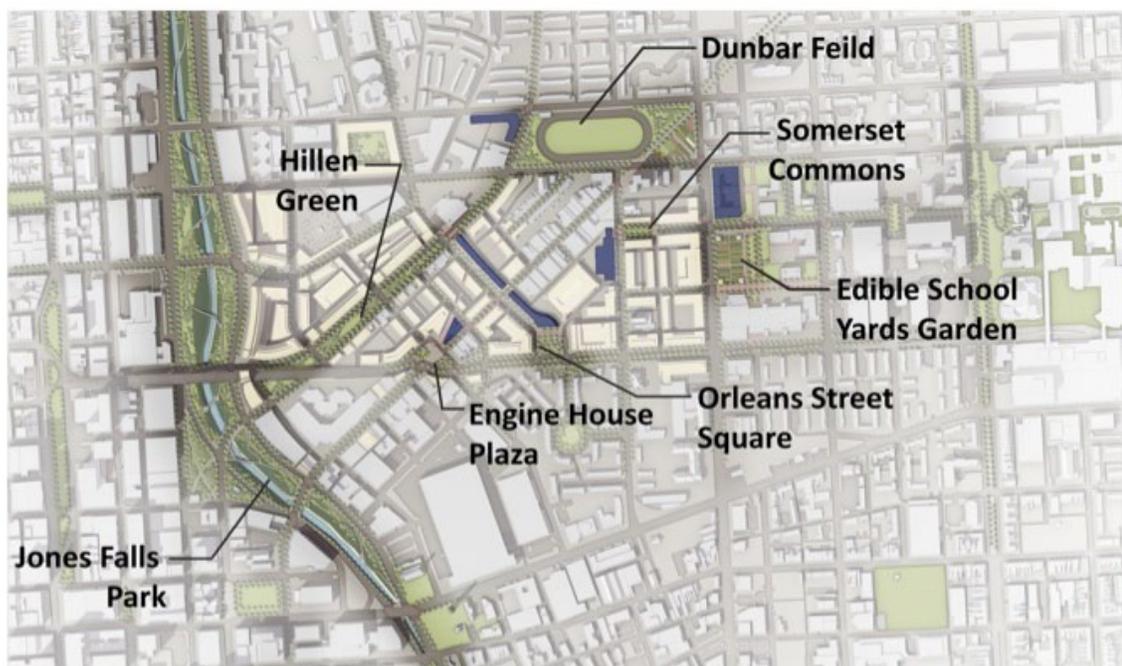


Figure 6.7 New Public Spaces



Figure 6.9 Parti Diagram

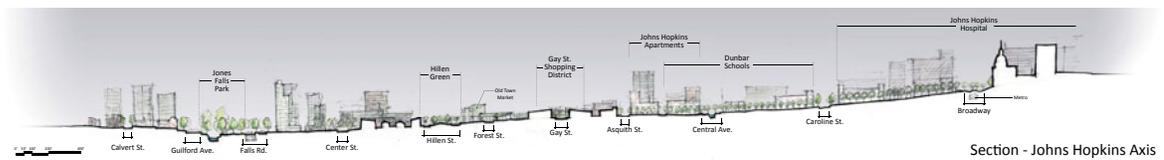
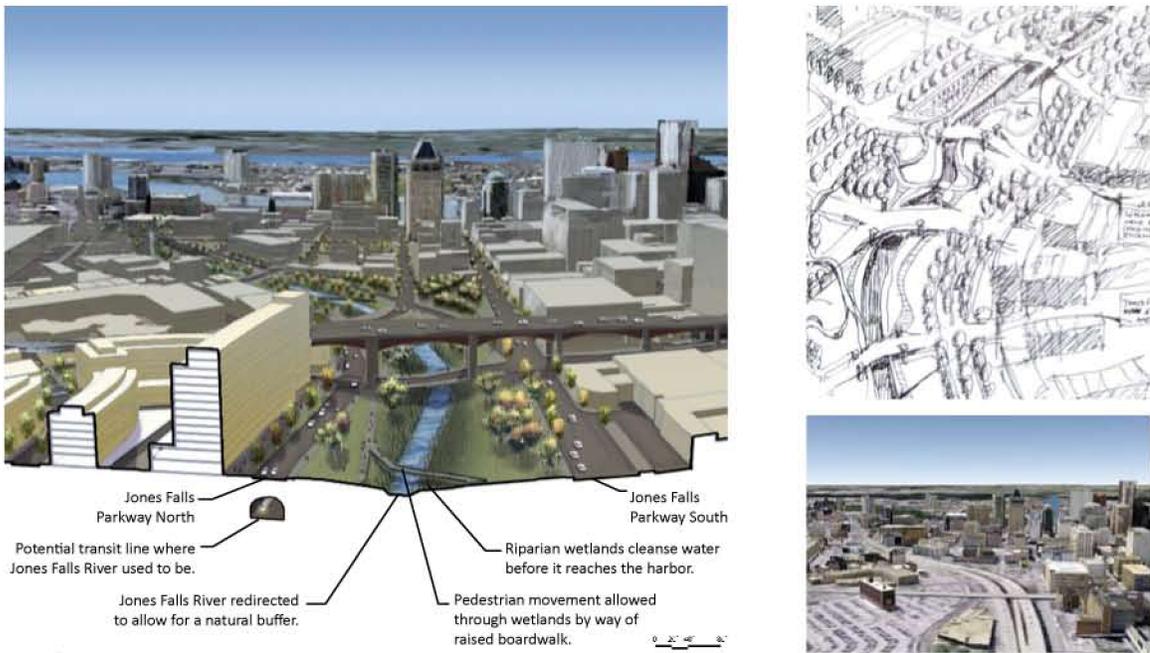


Figure 6.10 Final Plan and Section

# JONES FALLS PARK



## 1 Jones Falls Park

**Figure 7.1 Jones Falls Park**

The Jones Falls River has gone through huge changes over the past few centuries, which are a reflection of



**Figure 7.2 Jones Falls Park Key**

Baltimore's attitude towards its waterways. Almost every single human intervention

# Jones Falls Corridor: Baltimore, MD

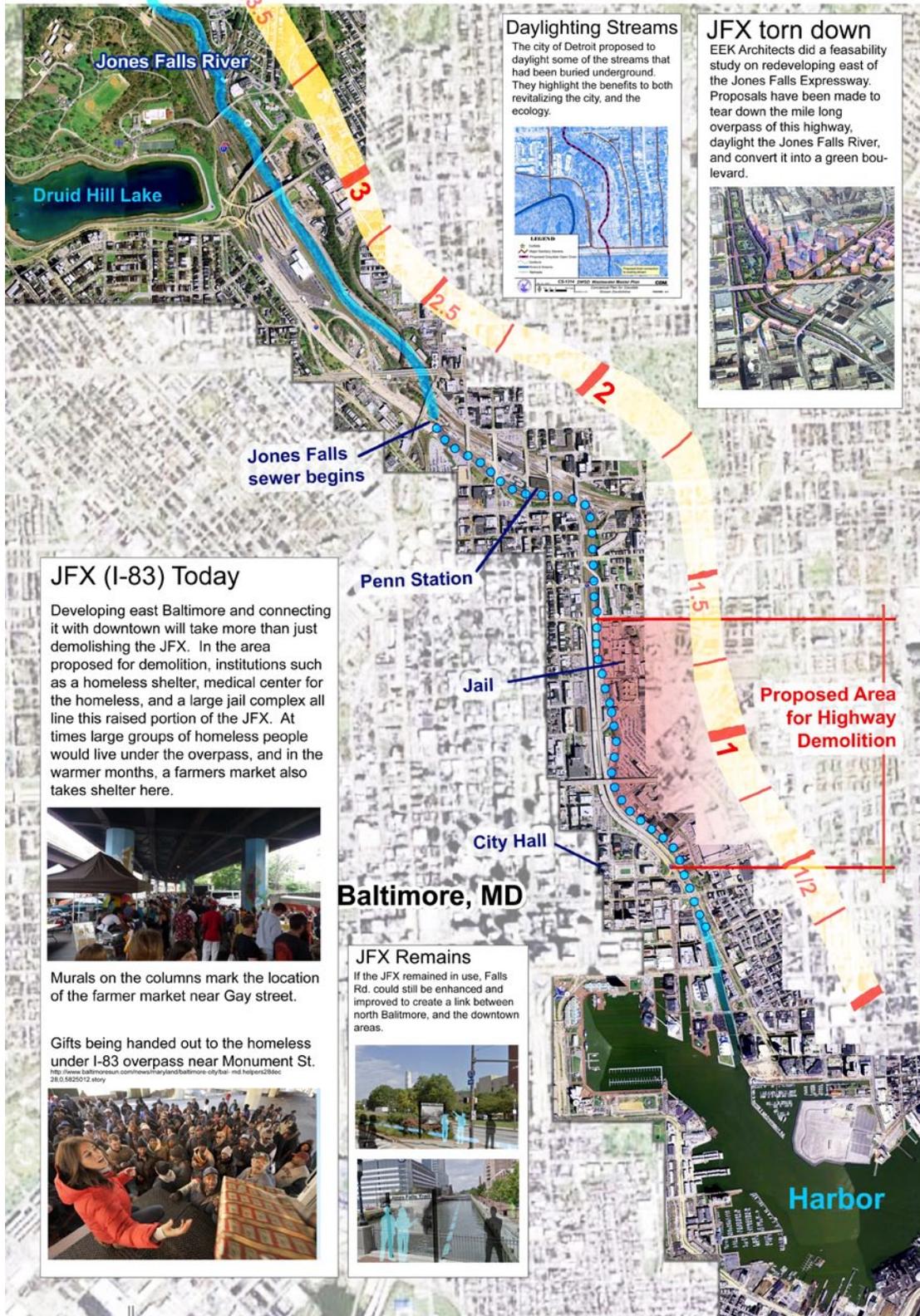


Figure 7.3 Jones Falls Corridor

has been to utilize the water's power, or right-of-way path. Now that Baltimore's waterways have begun to lose their utilitarian functions, re-purposing Baltimore's waterways should become a priority. This thesis proposes that the waterways are given back to the ecosystem, and that human use is placed as secondary to the environment. Weaving natural systems through Oldtown will not only enhance the urban environment at the neighborhood level, but it is one large step in improving the quality of Maryland's waterways.



**Figure 7.4** Cheongye Cheon Before



**Figure 7.5** Cheongye Cheon After

A process that is known to benefit both the health of water, and also be of benefit to urban environments is stream daylighting. This process takes streams and rivers that have been buried underground, and re-exposes them to daylight. If the water's edge is allowed to be permeable, plants and animals will again be able to thrive in the waterway, which will in turn make the water cleaner and more enjoyable for people to experience. If the Jones Falls is daylight,

and the potential benefits are realized for Baltimore, then there will be precedence for this process that can be used by other neighborhoods in Baltimore. The idea of tearing down an expressway, and uncovering a waterway has been tested in other parts of the world such as in Seoul, South Korea. Although this project was on a slightly larger scale than the Jones Falls Project would be, it was a huge success in transforming a dividing edge into a unifying edge (Figure 7.4 Cheongye Cheon Before & Figure 7.5 Cheongye Cheon After). This idea has even been investigated for other parts of Baltimore. Urbanite Magazine commissioned two individuals to come up with an idea relating to the improvement of Baltimore, and they proposed to daylight the waterway underneath Central Avenue (Figure 7.6 Central Avenue Daylit). Another



**Figure 7.6 Central Avenue Daylit**

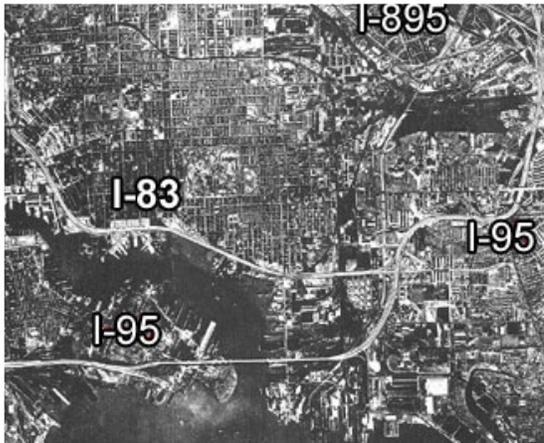
Urbanite magazine commissioned Eliza Steinmeier and Gabriel Kroiz to envision an urban project for Baltimore, and they proposed daylighting the stream underneath Central Avenue.

reality that would make this project possible is the fact that the Jones Falls Expressway stops short of its original planned route.

Interstate 83 was intended

to continue east along the harbors edge and eventually connect back to

95 (Figure 7.7 Planned I-83 Route).<sup>1</sup> This move was highly protested, some of those protests coming from Richard Lawrence, the pastor at St. Vincent de Paul’s church. Instead of the interstate connecting back into 95, it comes to a screeching halt at Lombard Street and becomes President Street. If a mile long portion of the Jones



**Figure 7.7 Planned I-83 Route**

Image of I-83 from <http://www.roadstothefuture.com/170-I170-I95-I395.html>

Falls Expressway was torn down (Figure 7.3 Jones Falls Corridor), Interstate 83 would simply become part of the city’s grid farther north. Because it is not as connected as it was originally envisioned to be, the city and federal government are not as willing to keep paying for its maintenance, and the funding for this overpass could be redirected towards the Jones Falls Park initiative.

Uncovering the Jones Falls River would have a much greater impact on east Baltimore than simply making a more scenic boulevard because of how intense the Jones Falls Expressway is as a dividing edge. With the Jones Falls corridor becoming a linear park stretching from Penn Station down to the Inner Harbor, modes of

<sup>1</sup> “Interview with Richard Lawrence”

movement would not only be increase across this edge, but more importantly along its edge. Implementing various modes of transportation along its path would make the Jones Falls Park a lifeline of Oldtown and east Baltimore (Figure 7.1 Jones Falls Park). It would provide easy access in and out of the city for wildlife, cyclists, pedestrians, and public transportation, and perhaps a few cars (Figure 7.8 New Transit Line). It also stitches downtown Baltimore back to east Baltimore by improving movement across the park with traffic signals, and pedestrian friendly crosswalks.

The buildings lining Jones Falls Park in the Oldtown neighborhood would be mixed use high rises. The ground floor would contain some commercial functions and office space. The lower floors would be office space, and the upper floors would



Figure 7.8 New Transit Line



Figure 7.9 Earlier Iteration of Park

be apartments and condominiums. With this new edge and amenity, all of the land around this park will go up in value, and many more high rises will be build over time which are similar to this model. Although this will create a desired strong edge, it is important to allow everyone to have access to green space, which is why Hillen Park is introduced into the heart of the neighborhood.



Figure 7.10 Oldtown Green Network

Just like urban streets, the veins in our bodies, and natural tributaries, green ways need to have a hierarchical system in order to reach all parts of the city. Earlier iterations of this project failed to realize the potential negative effects of limiting this park to only a few building fronts (Figure 7.9 Earlier Iteration of Park).

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Creating such a strong edge could actually create a more definitive physical and social boundary than what existed previously. This secondary green artery, the Hillen Green, functions to bring nature further into the neighborhood to provide more people with the opportunity to experience nature in their everyday lives.

# HILLEN GREEN



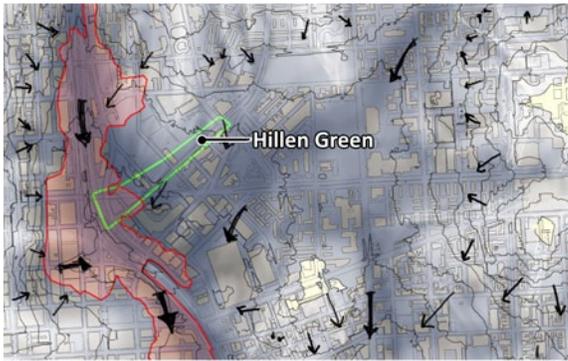
## 2 Hillen Green

**Figure 8.1 Hillen Green**

The Hillen Green is a smaller, more formal green space that branches off the Jones Falls Park at the Orleans Street Bridge (Figure 8.1 Hillen Green). This park occurs in this location because of the natural topography (Figure 8.3 Hydrology Diagram), and



**Figure 8.2 Hillen Green Key**



**Figure 8.3 Hydrology Diagram**

The Hillen Green can catch all of the water runoff from the north and filter it into the Jones Falls



**Figure 8.4 Hillen Green Connections**

its connection to the market (Figure 8.4

Hillen Green Connections & Figure 8.5

Connection to Market Perspective). It

also compliments the presence of the

Orleans Street bridge, which could be

incorporated into an iconic threshold for

people arriving both by foot or by car

on the bridge (Figure 8.1 Hillen Green).

The park would continue beyond the

market building to connect into the

existing recreational and green space of

Dunbar Field.

A successful example of a

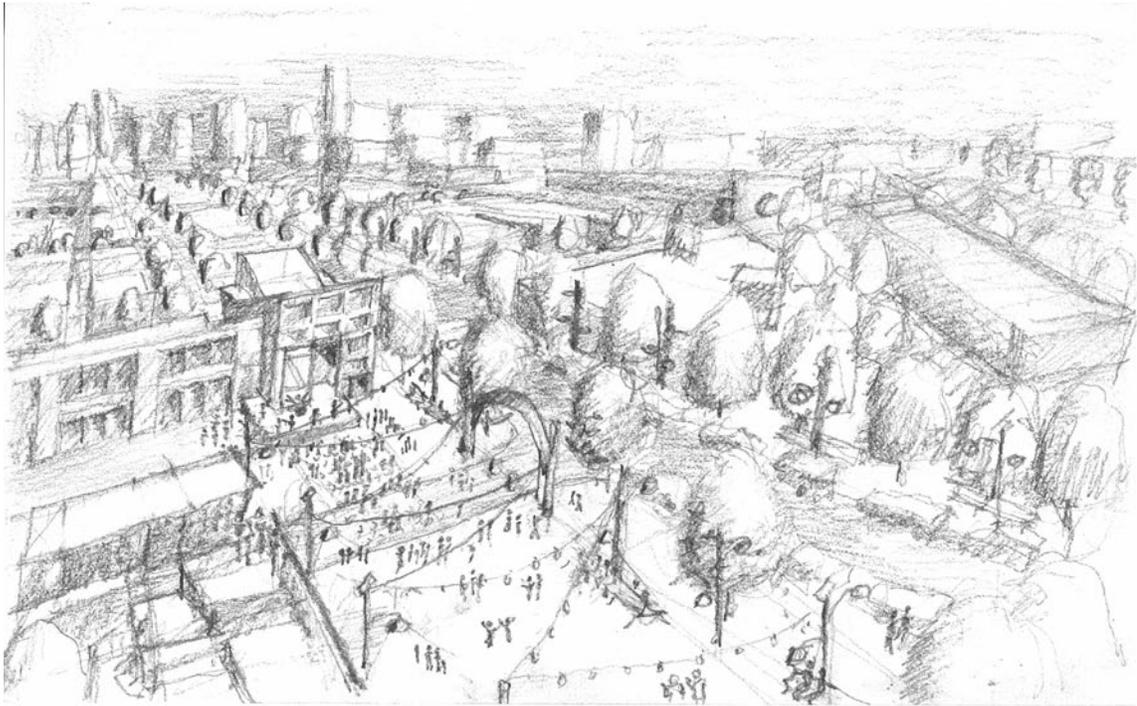
highly sophisticated park system can be found in Dusseldorf. Each portion of its green

system has a different character, which connects back to the public or civic buildings

that surround them. These parks eventually lead back to the river, or lead people

coming from the river deeper into the city. Although much smaller, the Hillen Green

embodies these ideas of a multi-scaled connector, and would have a very different

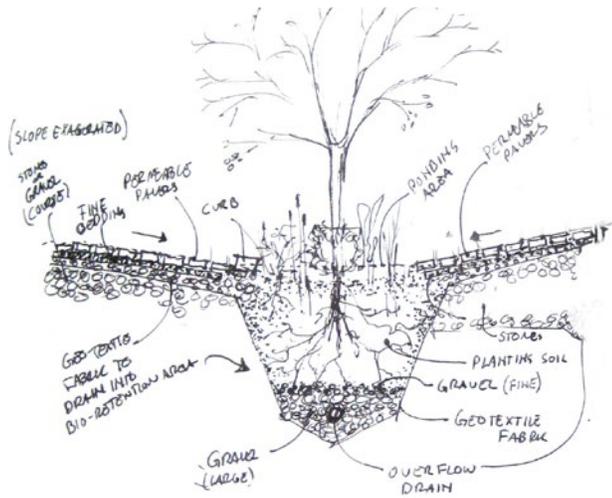


**Figure 8.5 Connection to Market Perspective**

Perspective of earlier version of market building connecting into the Hillen Green, and in turn back to downtown Baltimore. View looking from north most end towards the southwest towards downtown.

character than the Jones Falls Park and Dunbar Field. Just as this green is narrower than the Jones Falls, the buildings are scaled down to anywhere from three to seven stories depending on the width of the green at that location.

The buildings lining Hillen Street are currently commercial functions, and they would be the only exception to commercial uses lining the Hillen Green. The buildings that are vacant or in need of renovations on Hillen Street would be converted to residences. The buildings fronting the Hillen Green would be mostly for sale units, with a few for rent apartments towards the entrance of the green. The streets



**Figure 8.6 Bioswale Detail**

This edge detail would line the streets, and have an overflow system which connects all of these swales with each other, and also back to the Jones Falls River.

perpendicular to this green would be smaller units, and much more affordable than the units fronting the green. Although these units do not directly front the green, they have direct access to this public amenity, and contribute to

its liveliness. The bioswales on the perpendicular streets will be

physically connected to the Hillen

Green, which in turn is connected to the Jones Falls Park and river (Figure 8.6 Bioswale

Detail). This multi-scaled green system embodies the ideas of ecological, social

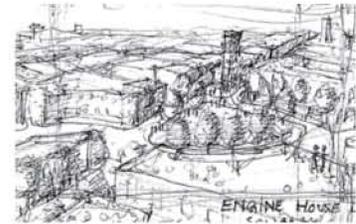
connectivity by bringing people and nature together.

## ENGINE HOUSE PLAZA



Existing Photo

This intersection is confusing and dangerous for pedestrians to cross. Giving this space back to the pedestrian will strengthen the connection from Downtown to Gay Street.



Section at 1:50



Plan at 1:50

Cultural History Museum and Visitor Center

The tower on the old engine house serves as a landmark and orienting device for Oldtown. This building can also be used as a visitor center and cultural history museum for East Baltimore.

### 3 Engine House Plaza

Figure 9.1 Engine House Plaza

An effective neighborhood edge is not a hermetically sealed envelope, but rather a membrane that regulates the communication between two spaces. A

successful edge must therefore be porous enough to let good things pass through, but

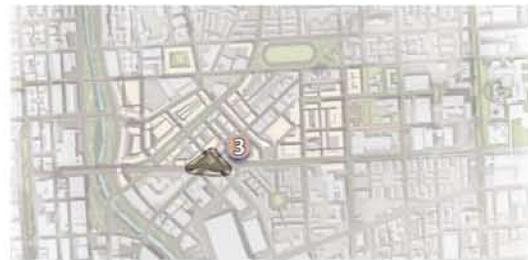


Figure 9.2 Engine House Plaza Key

not so porous that the territory is impossible to defend. In the case, the intersection between Route 40, Ensor Street, Colvin Street, and the pedestrian street that once was Gay Street, is completely designed for cars, and is not pedestrian friendly. With the desire to re-open Gay Street to vehicular movement, this intersection needs to be rethought in order to successfully filter cars, people, bicycles, and public



**Figure 9.3** Engine House Plaza Process

transportation. The form of this plaza was derived from the need to make this a memorable threshold into the Oldtown neighborhood.

The diversion of all secondary streets around this wedge-shaped plaza is intended to allow access to cars, but to stress the primary importance of pedestrian

access into Gay Street. The slight 'wiggle' in Orleans Street will signify to fast moving traffic to slow down, and it also allows for cross walks to cross Orleans Street at a more perpendicular angle. The edge of the square is also built up in order to be more well defined than it currently is, and the old Engine House is the landmark indicating this important threshold into Oldtown.

Thresholds should not only be well defined, and easily recognizable by outsiders, but they should also celebrate the area that is being defined. This unique



**Figure 9.4 Old Engine House**

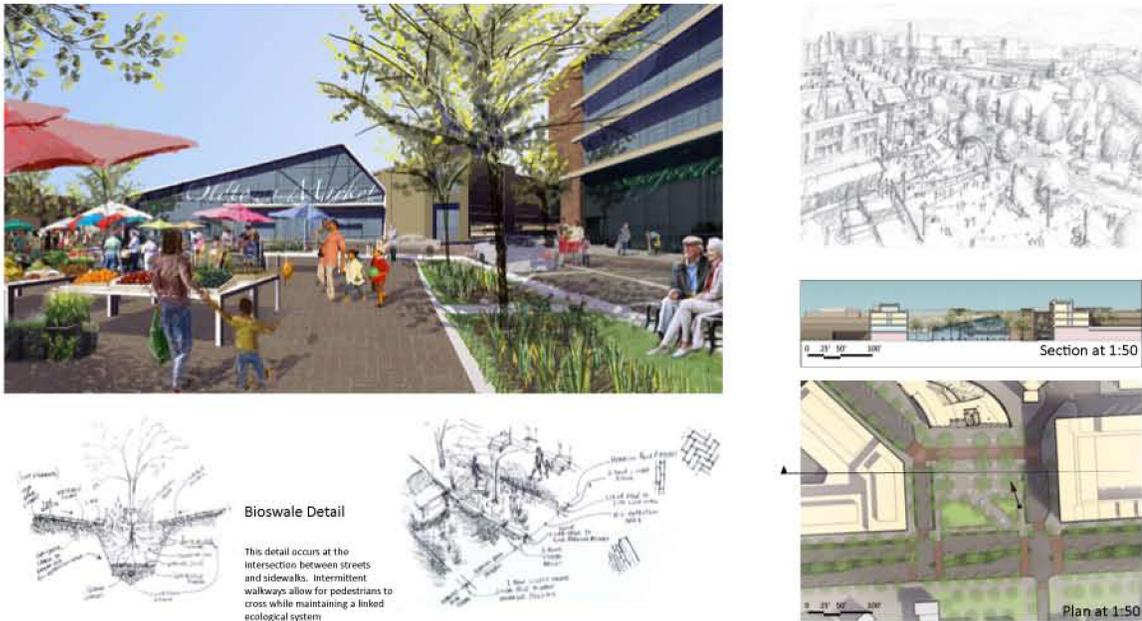
The iconic gothic tower addition was added later. The original engine house had this modest cupola.

wedge shaped building, marked by the old engine house tower on the corner, is the original footprint of this block from the 17th century (Figure 9.4 Old Engine

House). This tower is not only a piece of Oldtown's history, but it will house the new East Baltimore Cultural Museum and Visitor's Center. This threshold will

serve as a memorable orienting device for visitors, and it represents the culture and history of the people of East Baltimore.

## ORLEANS STREET SQUARE



# 4 Orlean Street Square

Figure 10.1 Orleans Street Square

The Orleans Street Square is another threshold into the Oldtown neighborhood. This square is both a physical threshold into this new

neighborhood, but it is also a representation of this neighborhood’s new values.

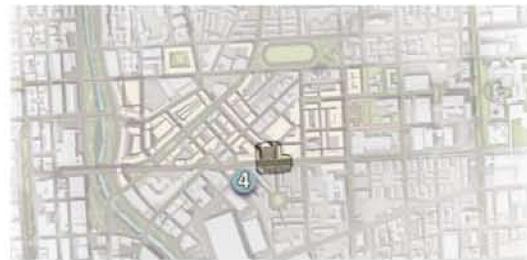
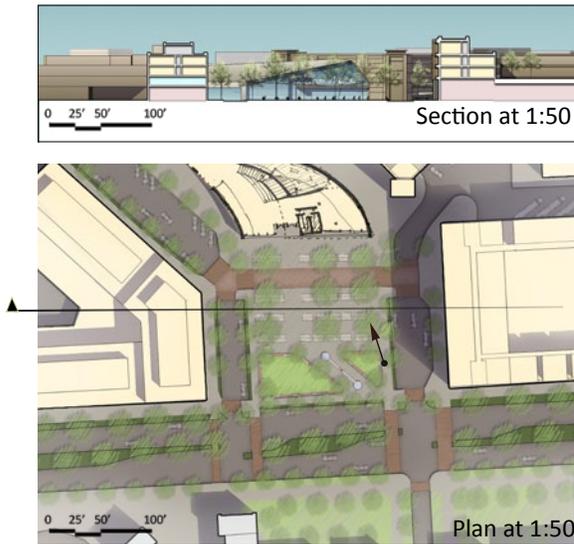


Figure 10.2 Orleans Street Square Key

This square is placed off a highly traveled road so it is easily accessible and visible to visitors. It also links to the existing neighborhood of Pleasant View Gardens as an inviting gesture as well. The creation of that intersection also provides an opportunity for a traffic light to be incorporated into this entrance. This entrance would be the primary entrance used by visitors and shoppers arriving by car because of the large parking garage behind the supermarket directly accessible off the square. With the implementation of a new traffic signal, brick paving to slow down vehicles, and more clear pedestrian paths, this entrance will also accommodate people arriving by foot.

The nature of this public space is intended to be one of the most active squares in Oldtown because of the presence of the market's head-house, which will contain a local foods restaurant, community rooms, and a performance area. Because of this, the space directly in front of the head-house of the market is hard-scaped with a coplanar paving difference to indicate where vehicles can cautiously move (Figure 10.3 Plan and Section of Orleans Street Square). This strategy gives the pedestrian hierarchy in this part of the space to allow for activities to spill out from the market building (Figure 10.1 Orleans Street Square), while still allowing vehicles to enter into the square. In order to address the sometime fast moving traffic on Orleans Street, a landscaped buffer is included on the edge of the square lining that



**Figure 10.3** Plan and Section of Orleans Street Square

street. The proximity of the parking garage to the supermarket fronting the eastern side of the square is also intentional. The parking garage will be equipped with large elevators to accommodate shopping carts in hopes of replacing the expansive surface parking lots that are typically placed in front of supermarkets. This will allow Orleans

Street Square to remain free of shopping cart clutter and vehicles, and full of people.

The physical devices used to create this public space are important, but the buildings fronting Orleans Street Square have a deeper purpose than simply defining this space.

The two major buildings fronting the square are the new supermarket to the east, and the head house of the new market to the north. These buildings are giving this community something it has not had for awhile, and has been promised for decades.<sup>1</sup> The availability of fresh and healthy food is very important, especially in low income neighborhoods where choice is typically limited. The nearest supermarkets for this neighborhood are either too small, too far away, or not

1 "Interview with Father Lawrence"

affordable. This supermarket would not only be an amenity the people living in and around this neighborhood currently, but it would be a draw for potential residents of this neighborhood. With the large parking structure in place, this supermarket can draw from a wider radius than just this neighborhood, which can ensure the economic sustainability of this neighborhood. The Oldtown Market directly would not suffer from the supermarket's presence, but rather provide a different product and experience. These two food-centric institutions with contrasting functions would not be in competition, but rather complement each other. The Oldtown Market would provide a completely different venue for food related commerce, and be able to attract farmers markets, as well as healthy dining. With available community space in the head-house, the Oldtown Market could function as Oldtown's community center



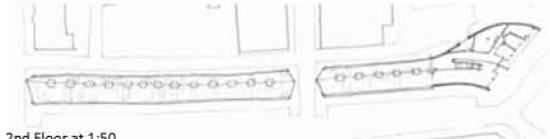
Figure 10.4 Vegetable stand at Hollins Market

only strengthen its economic  
and a healthy, viable community.

## OLDTOWN MARKET



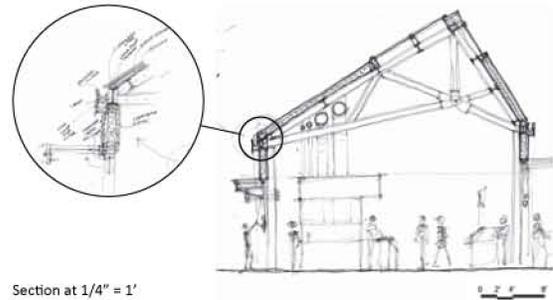
Elevation at 1:50



2nd Floor at 1:50



1st Floor at 1:50



Section at 1/4" = 1'



Structural Diagram at 1:50

## 5 Oldtown Market

Figure 11.1 Oldtown Market

People think of their bodily center as their heart, mind, or even as something intangible such as a soul or spirit. We feel these centers are what make us who we are, and therefore we use the rest of our body to protect our 'center'. These beliefs



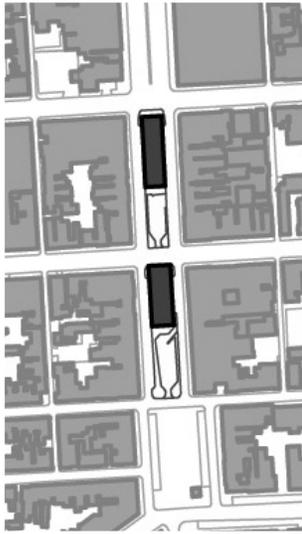
Figure 11.2 Oldtown Market Key



**Figure 11.3** Market Diagram

of the sacred center translate to our built environment. We tend to think of territories as containing an important core. An effective center becomes a landmark, the meeting place, the source of vitality, and an entity worth protecting.

The Oldtown market serves as the neighborhood's heart in all meanings of the word. This market is not only an iconic building located at the core of the neighborhood, but it provides this neighborhood that it is in short supply of healthy food. This contemporary market, although very different in form, evokes the memory of the old Belair Market, which was in the same location on Forrest Street. The linear orientation of the Oldtown Market, and its presence on both Orleans Street and the Hillen Green, draw people into the Oldtown neighborhood from those two locations (Figure 11.3 Market Diagram). The center of the market opens up at the center of Gay Street to redirect people to this important street deeper into the heart of this neighborhood. Bringing back commercial Gay Street and the market will preserve the good memories of what Oldtown once was, and attract new families and visitors.



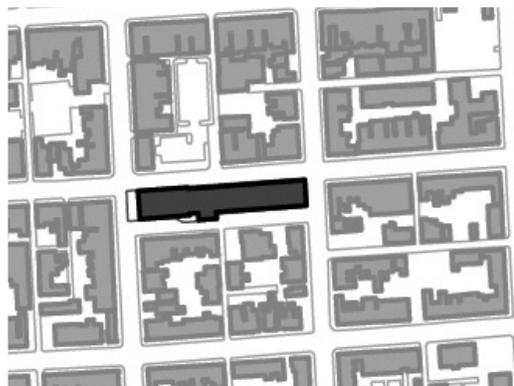
**Figure 11.4 Broadway Market Plan**

The dimensions of this market are familiar to other markets in Baltimore, but the concept and organization is slightly different. Most markets in Baltimore follow the model of the English market where a street widens to accommodate a slender market building in the center. These types of markets can be seen in Fells Point’s Broadway Market (Figure 11.4 Broadway Market Plan & Figure 11.9 Broadway Market).



**Figure 11.5 Cross Street Market Plan**

Cross Street Market and Hollins Market have a similar organization, but the markets are off to one side of the one way split, creating more of a hierarchy between the two streets on either side of the market (Figure 11.5



**Figure 11.6 Hollins Market Plan**

Cross Street Market Plan, Figure 11.7 Cross Street Market, Figure 11.6 Hollins Market Plan & Figure 11.8 Hollins Market Head House). The urban configuration for the Oldtown Market is most similar to these last two examples. This allows for Forrest Street



**Figure 11.9 Broadway Market**



**Figure 11.7 Cross Street Market**

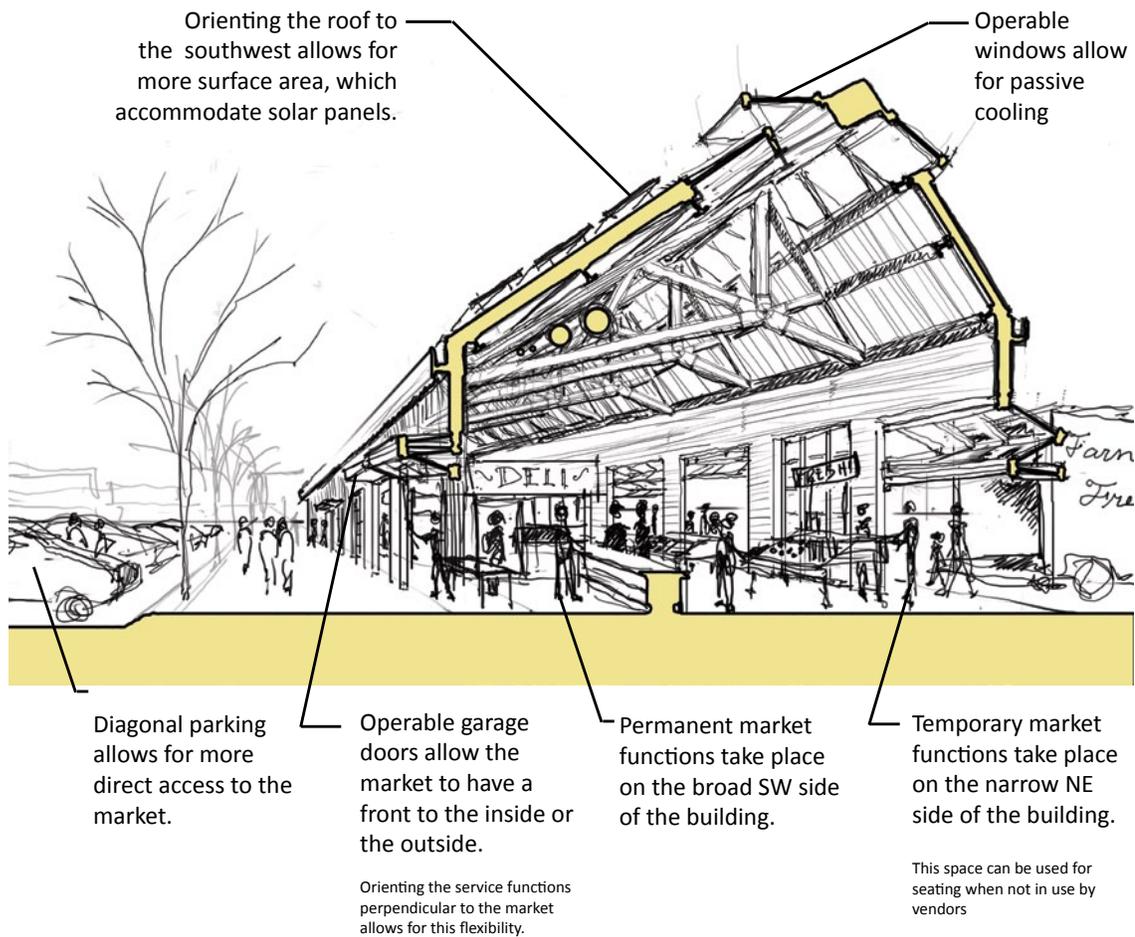


**Figure 11.8 Hollins Market Head House**



**Figure 11.10 Hollins Market**

to become more active because the service functions can take place in the alley behind the market. Many markets, including these examples in Baltimore, are very inward focused, and they do not have a strong presence on the streets lining them. The Oldtown market is configured so that it can front onto the street as well as the interior corridor depending on the weather and time of year. Another difference between these market precedents and the proposed Oldtown market is the asymmetrical section (Figure 11.11 Market Section). Most markets are organized symmetrically, and have a corridor running down the center. The interior corridor of the Oldtown market is offset slightly to the northeast side, which is mirrored by the form of the roof. This is to take advantage of the southwestern roof exposure for solar panels to be integrated into the design, and it addresses the urban condition of having the primary street of



**Figure 11.11 Market Section**

Forrest Street along its southwestern side (Figure 11.11 Market Section). Permanent vendors can rent space to the southwestern half of the market, and smaller more temporary activities can take place to the northeast. These temporary functions and uses can include farmers markets, craft fairs, fund-raising events, yard sales, art shows and any other community related events. When there isn't an event taking place on this half of the market, these spaces can be used for seating. Having these temporary functions take place on the alley side of the market also allows for vendor trucks to



**Figure 11.12 Market Plan**

pull right up to the side of the market with the garage doors open, and sell goods to people directly out of their trucks as farmers often do. In order to accommodate this, the skin of the market must be very dynamic and fully operable.

Part of what makes this market able to be flexible, and another way in which it differs from the typical Baltimore market, is that the services are placed perpendicular to the length of the market instead of lining the outside wall (Figure 11.12 Market Plan). This allows the market to open up and allows for the free movement of both people and air flow. The operability of this market will also encourage cross ventilation to reduce the heating needs. Stacked ventilation is also made possible though the operable skylights marking the circulation path. The glass doors of the garage facing south when closed can allow for passive heating in the winter time as well. Water can also be collected off the roof to be used as grey water for flushing

toilets or cleaning the floors. The sustainable qualities of this market go beyond environmental consciousness, and look to being the core of a socially sustainable neighborhood. This market alludes to the vibrant past of Oldtown, while also looking into the future of healthy sustainable living for this community.

The design of this market building down to the wall section is in response to the needs of this neighborhood, and is intrinsically linked to its urban condition. The nature of the market building typology is in itself a linking device because of its long slender dimension. The desire to bring people into this neighborhood were the primary reasons for including the market in this location, in addition to the market's historical and regional significance. The idea of this market as both a bridge spanning the neighborhood, and a seam bringing together the two halves of the neighborhood is truly what drove the form at both the detail and the urban scales.

## SOMERSET COMMONS



# 6 Somerset Commons

Figure 12.1 Somerset Commons

The Somerset Commons is a space that embodies the ideas of dissolving cultural, institutional, and physical boundaries to encourage diversity within the Oldtown neighborhood. This green space accomplishes this by being a physical



Figure 12.2 Somerset Commons Key

and figurative connection back to Johns Hopkins Hospital, and also by providing a diverse range of unit types and sizes to encourage social diversity.

The original building of Johns Hopkins Hospital built in 1898, and subsequent additions thereafter implied a strong axis east to west terminating on the iconic dome of the original building. This axis is not fully realized today, and comes to an abrupt halt at an elementary school, which does not acknowledge this axis. Furthermore, the demolished public housing project of Somerset Courts has been fenced off, and a physical impediment to movement along this iconic axis. Because Johns Hopkins is such a powerful force in this neighborhood, and is sometimes seen as being destructive, depriving the residents of Oldtown from being able to experience this axis reinforces the stigmatized beliefs that are already in place. Therefore, a better link should be made between the neighborhood and this institutional entity. Ideally, this axis would continue into Gay Street (Figure 12.5 Johns Hopkins Axis Process), but in order to preserve the historic buildings lining Gay Street, this axis terminates a recreational and health center fronting onto the Somerset Commons.

Somerset Commons is also a representation of the diversity among residents. It is an example of how social diversity can be achieved without revealing social status through the dwelling unit size (Figure 12.3 Unit Diversity). Providing a range

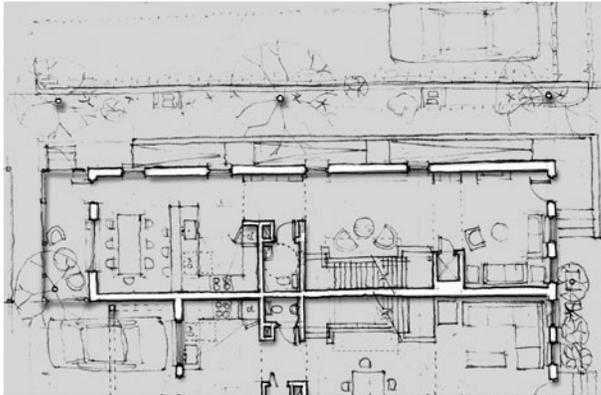


**Figure 12.3 Unit Diversity**

The two sets of row homes fronting Somerset Commons have very similar fronts, but have very different depths in order to accommodate different income levels.

of different unit sizes and types can begin to encourage diversity among residents. Also providing a range of for sale, rentable, and subsidized housing will allow for this diversity to occur. Varying the depth of lots sizes, and having a clear street hierarchy will attract a variety of different types of people. Also encouraging people of different ages to live in this neighborhood is important as well. This block's connection to the schools will encourage people with children to live here, and providing ADA accessible units will encourage the elderly to live in this housing development as well (Figure 12.4 Accessible End Unit). Robert Houston expressed his distaste for the senior housing that was becoming so popular in Baltimore because it, "Takes the wisdom out of the neighborhoods." He also mentioned that these institutions had very strict rules, even for family members, which restricted visits and length of stay. Older people are

of different unit sizes and types can begin to encourage diversity among residents. Also providing a range of for sale, rentable, and subsidized housing will allow for this diversity to occur. Varying the depth of lots sizes, and having a clear street hierarchy will attract a variety of different types of people. Also encouraging people of different ages to live in this neighborhood is important as well. This block's connection to the



**Figure 12.4 Accessible End Unit**

Apartments are typically the only types of units that can be made easily accessible, but row houses can also be made or retrofitted for accessibility as this end unit demonstrates.

strengthen a community.<sup>1</sup>

This block surrounding the Somerset Commons replaces an old public housing project which housed people of a similar income level which was quickly perceived by others as being a ‘project’. The density and variety of housing replacing the old Somerset Courts will not only provide for families in need with subsidized housing, but it will also provide other types of housing to allow for and encourage economic growth. The connection to Johns Hopkins Hospital will not only provide a vital physical connection to that public amenity and job source, but it will also provide inspiration and hope to the residents.

<sup>1</sup> “Interview with Robert Houston”

important to neighborhoods because of their knowledge and wisdom of the neighborhood and its inhabitants, and children are the future of neighborhoods, and provide joy to

the residents. Young and old people can assist each other in different ways, and this codependency can

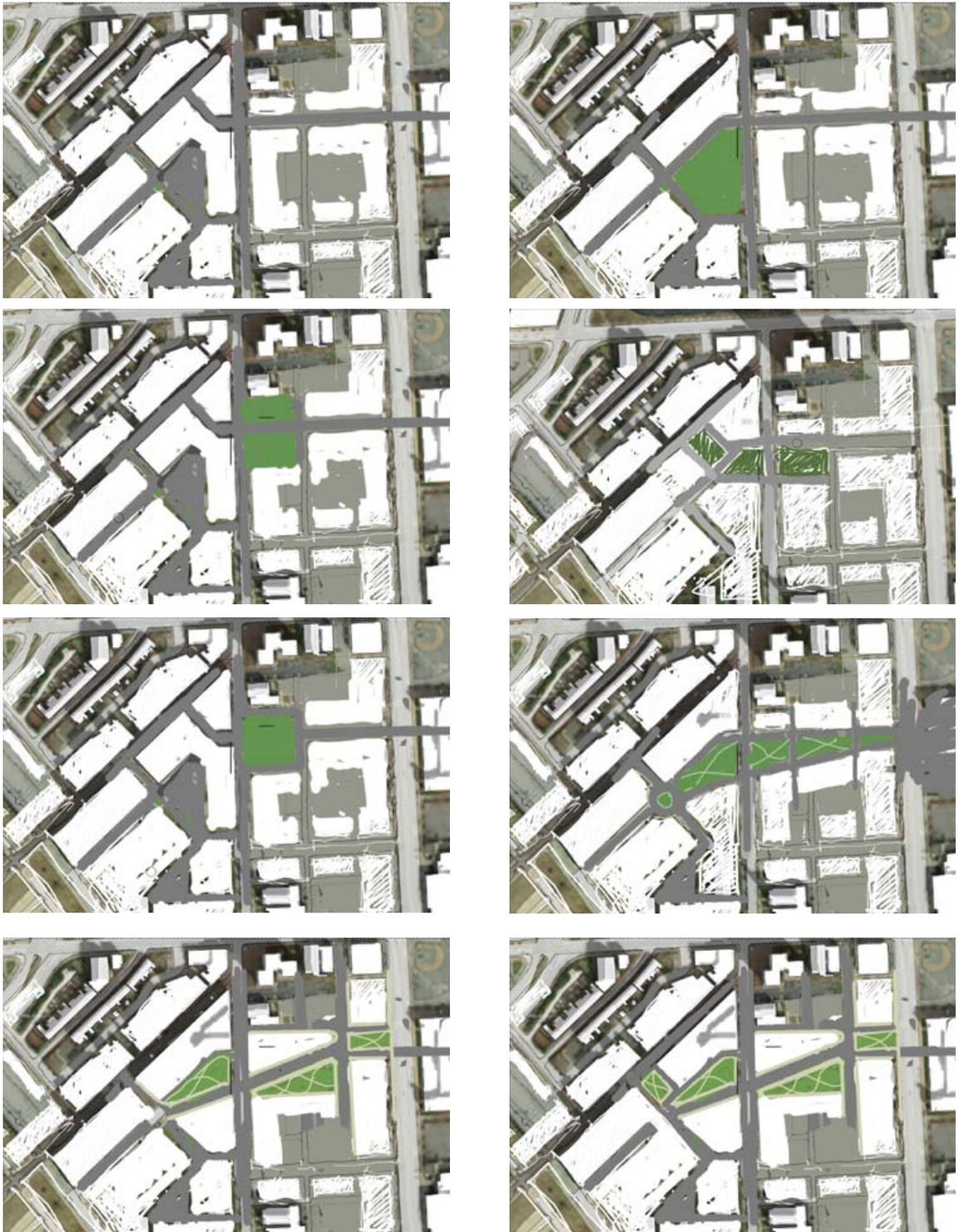


Figure 12.5 Johns Hopkins Axis Process

## GAY STREET



## 7 Gay Street

Figure 13.1 Gay Street

The rich history of Oldtown's past should be celebrated in this new development without being overly nostalgic. Carefully selecting things from the past, and reintroducing them in a



Figure 13.2 Gay Street Key

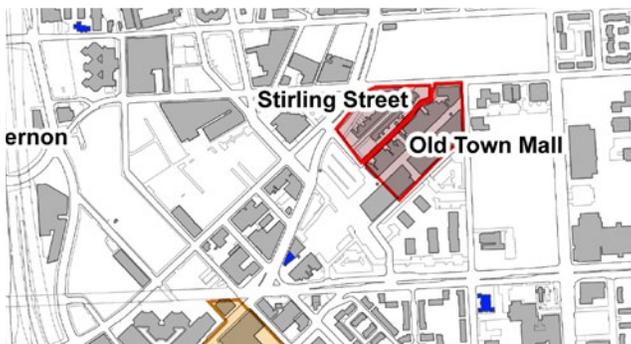
different way in the present will better connect this neighborhood to its history.

Also, restoring buildings is usually more sustainable than tearing them down and



**Figure 13.3 Buildings Preserved or Renovated**

rebuilding. Keeping and restoring the commercial buildings along Gay Street will provide a link back to the past, and will give Oldtown a unique character.



**Figure 13.4 Historically Significant Areas**

The buildings from the 19th and 20th century, which follow the original grid of Jonestown, are the most valuable to preserve because they represent Oldtown during its prime (Figure 13.3

Buildings Preserved or Renovated). Because most of these buildings are in historically significant areas (Figure 13.4 Historically Significant Areas), a tax credit would be available for anyone who renovated these structures with a likeness of what they once looked like<sup>1</sup>. The row houses on the block to the northwest of Gay Street contains

<sup>1</sup> City of Baltimore, Maryland - Home. Web. Dec. 2009. <<http://www.baltimorecity.gov/>>.



**Figure 13.5** Historic Stirling Street

restored houses from the mid 19th century.

Historic Stirling Street (Figure 13.5 Historic Stirling Street), along with some buildings on Hillen Street, are the few buildings on the original diagonal grid still left in tact.

Currently Stirling Street is very isolated, and feels very out of place with the surrounding context. Reconnecting this isolated street of historic row homes will benefit the residents, and allow visitors to see what an original cobblestone street looked like back over a century ago.

Most importantly, the buildings lining Gay Street have the most cultural significance to the people who remember it from before the 1968 riots, therefore it should be reinvigorated in order to preserve those memories. Different people have different memories of what Gay Street once was. Robert Houston has fond memories of shopping on Gay Street as a kid, and he did not live in Baltimore for the Riots of 1968. He remembers Gay Street and the Belair Market from the 1950s, “Gay street was... for kids it was a magical place, and for elders also. Every Friday and Saturday you would meet your friends and neighbors at the market.”<sup>2</sup> Pastor

Lawrence remembers vividly the riots because of his involvement in trying to control them, but he understands the historical significance of Gay Street, “Gay Street was route one, which ran from Boston to Richmond. It was the old post road...which is one of the reasons why this really needs to be reopened, or at least preserved.”<sup>3</sup>

Father Lawrence thinks the housing developments that erased the diagonal of Gay Street were a mistake. Mr. Houston remembers photographing those “hideous” (as he put it) housing developments in the 1970s after they had just been built. At the time, everyone wanted to erase the memory of the riots, but in doing so a large part of Baltimore’s history was erased also. This is why the few buildings that remain should be renovated in order to tell the story of Oldtown. Because Gay Street once functioned as the main commercial street in east Baltimore, the dimensions and character of the buildings that remain would still be appropriate for ground floor retail today. Transforming this street back into a commercial street will give it the exposure and the revenue it needs to keep the story of Oldtown alive.

The buildings lining Gay Street are much deeper and have a variety of different facade types and heights (Figure 13.7 Partial Elevation of Gay Street & Figure 13.6 Partial Elevation Key). The dimension of these buildings works best for commercial

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3 “Interview with Richard Lawrence”

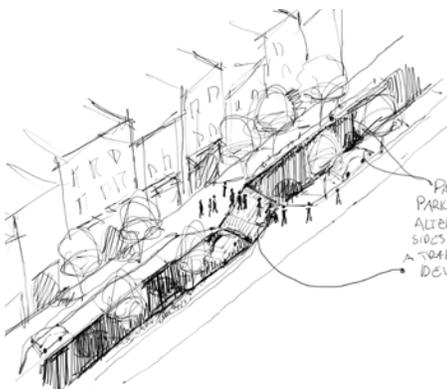


**Figure 13.7** Partial Elevation of Gay Street



**Figure 13.6** Partial Elevation Key

use, but apartments and offices could be placed above the ground floor. Gay Street will be in-filled with buildings of a contemporary character, but with a similar grain and variety of the old buildings. The length of the shopping portion of Gay Street from the Engine House Plaza, to the north entrance on Monument Street is a little more than a quarter mile. This length is just long enough that shopping at a slow pace could last a few hours, but just short enough that walking along this street wouldn't



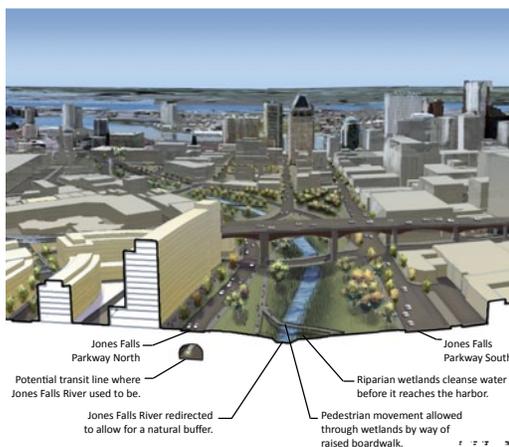
**Figure 13.8** Traffic Calming

take more than five minutes for most people. There are also many crosswalks integrated along the length of the street to encourage shopping on both sides of the street. Because the street section is fairly narrow, parallel parking has only been accommodated on one side of the street,

which alternates to incorporate a traffic calming device (Figure 13.8 Traffic Calming).

Bus routes that used to travel up Ensor Street will be rerouted to follow Gay Street and Forrest Street along the market. With multiple modes of transportation possible along Gay Street and to access this neighborhood, this commercial street can become lively and active, just as it once was.

The proposed neighborhood of Oldtown is not only intended to be a healthy neighborhood, but it is also intended to connect various aspects of urban living together as a cohesive whole. Each aspect of this plan contributes to the vitality of that whole by linking to Baltimore, and Oldtown's past, weaving different social groups and cultures together, and connecting the city and this neighborhood back to nature. The Jones Falls Park (Figure 13.9 Jones Falls Park) uses each of these elements



**Figure 13.9 Jones Falls Park**

to enliven Baltimore, and the neighborhood of Oldtown by re-introducing the Jones Falls River into urban life, using the linearity of the park to connect different parts of Baltimore, and allowing this park to restore the health of Baltimore's waterways. The Hillen Green



**Figure 13.10 The Hillen Green**



**Figure 13.12 Engine House Plaza**



**Figure 13.11 Orleans Street Square**

(Figure 13.10 The Hillen Green) brings the public amenity of green space further into the neighborhood, and it assists in promoting environmental health in Baltimore. The

Engine House Plaza (Figure 13.12 Engine

House Plaza), with the historic Engine House

Tower marking the entrance to Gay Street,

links this neighborhood back to the past,

and will serve as a cultural center for the

visitors and the residents of Oldtown. Orleans

Street Square (Figure 13.11 Orleans Street

Square) represents social equality by providing

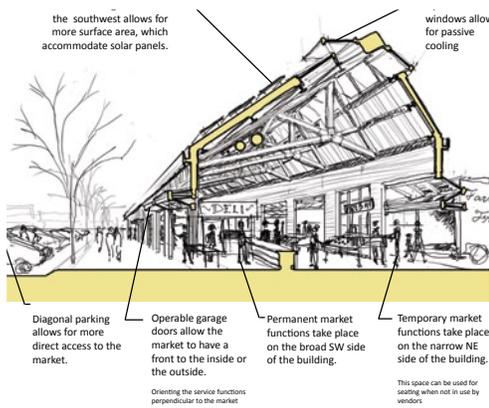
necessary amenities to this neighborhood

in need. The Oldtown Market (Figure 13.14

Oldtown Market) that fronts that square is one of those needed amenities, and it also alludes to a past ghost that served the important function of providing healthy food.

The Somerset Commons (Figure 13.13 Somerset Commons) is also representative of

social diversity and equality by providing housing units for a range of income needs,



**Figure 13.14 Oldtown Market**

as well as connecting to the Johns Hopkins Hospital. And finally, Gay Street (Figure 13.15 Gay Street Perspective) will be restored as the connecting seam of Oldtown. This street will symbolize and embody the ideas of bringing together and celebrating the diversity of



**Figure 13.13 Somerset Commons**

Oldtown and Baltimore.



**Figure 13.15 Gay Street Perspective**

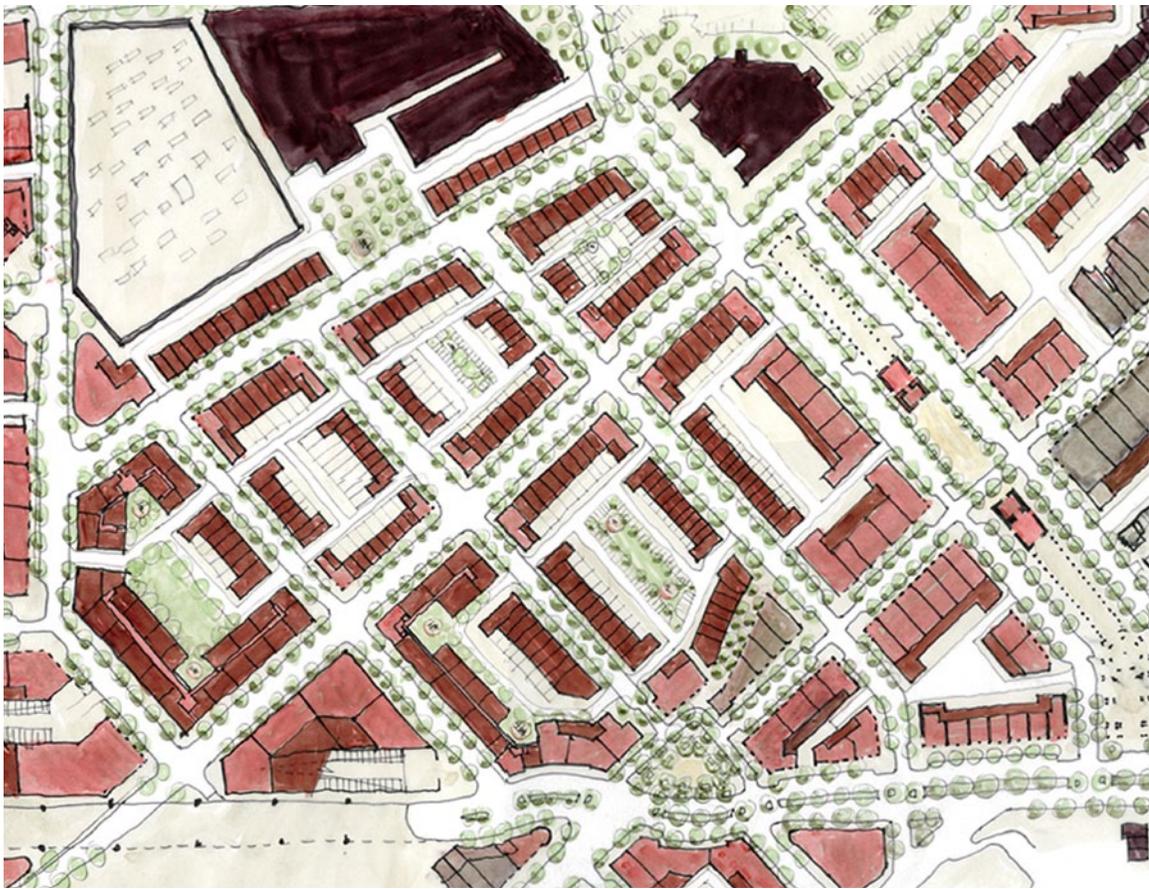
## CONCLUSION

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This urban design project done in the context of an architectural masters thesis attempts to study, among other things, the relationship between the public realm and building typologies. Architects should not only be concerned with the functionality of buildings, but also with the spaces created by those buildings, and how those two entities interface. We should be asking questions such as: what is the role of the facade in mitigating between internal functions and the public realm? Does the skin of the building mark the division between the public and private realms, or do these boundaries overlap somehow? How can building types activate public space? In order to study this set of questions, an urban design thesis was the most appropriate framework to investigate these questions. There is also the reality that no matter how large an urban plan is, the dimensions must still relate back to the human scale. This requires the ability to design at any scale at any time in the design process, and it also requires the knowledge of how buildings are organized.

The understanding of building typologies are essential in being able to design

good urbanism. It is one thing to designate the appropriate location for a specific building type, and another to understand how that typology fits into its urban context based on its organization (Figure 14.1 Process Plan). It is critical to know how much public space should be associated with certain types of buildings, and what the nature of that public space is. It is also important to know what building types will achieve



**Figure 14.1** Process Plan

This process drawing shows the simultaneous exploration of both building typologies, and the supporting spaces. Public spaces are light grey or pink, and private space is red or black. Party walls are also shown.

certain urbanistic goals. For example: the market building in this thesis proposal functions not only as an amenity into the neighborhood, but the form of the building serves the specific function of bringing people into the center of the neighborhood, and into Gay Street. Not every building type could achieve this goal, and a market building in a different form might not achieve this either. Another example of how architecture can achieve certain urban goals is the desire to encourage a demographically diverse neighborhood.

Planners have a very good grasp on demographic knowledge, and how to implement that information into a plan. Housing developments can be subdivided into distinct target markets based on this demographic knowledge. This is one possible solution to the question of how to create diversity in neighborhoods. Most architect's would approach this problem differently. Architects might approach the problem of creating diverse neighborhoods by allowing diversity to occur organically by varying block sizes, street sections, parcel sizes, and unit types. Encouraging organic diversity in neighborhoods seems more natural than the creation of policy and regulations to mandate diversity. Manipulating dimensions and building types are skills that architects possess, and can be used at any scale of design. These types of solutions can be discovered through the architectural design process, which can

include studying precedents and exploring different building typologies. Those tools are an integral part of an architect's skill set, and are arguably just as important for urban design as they are in building design. Although these skills are valuable at the urban design scale, the skills that planners, urban designers and real estate developers possess would have greatly enhanced this thesis project.

In reality, this project would become a collaborative effort between architects, planners, real estate developers, and other specialized areas. A thesis project is typically a singular discipline endeavour by one individual. Collaborative work in an academic setting is difficult because of the requirement to assess each individual's progress, however, restricting each thesis project to the task of one individual severely restricts the potential success of the thesis process. If thesis projects were allowed to be collaborative efforts, not only within the disciplines of each school, but perhaps throughout all of the University of Maryland's Graduate School programs, each student and discipline would benefit greatly. Students would not only benefit from the knowledge that other disciplines could provide, but there would be more opportunities to allow students to investigate issues concerning their own discipline in more depth. This process of finding other team members would have to start at the beginning of the pro-thesis semester at the latest, because it would take

a lot of coordination between the different students and schools involved. The document would also take a slightly different format, and that format would have to be recognized by the graduate school. This process would be much more difficult to coordinate and assess, but it would benefit the students and their prospective professions greatly if collaborative theses were made possible.

In conclusion, the overlapping of boundaries should not only occur in the built environment, but it should also occur in the academic setting as well. The opportunities provided by having a year long project should not be underestimated. Students should have the ability to study a topic within their discipline at any scale in any context of thought. Whether it be studying an architectural idea through urban design or construction details, any multi-scalar or multi-disciplinary approach is valid. The richness provided by taking an architectural idea and testing it in an atypical setting will enable creative thinking, and an expanded skill set. Just as the urban environments can be enriched by the dissolving and overlapping of sociocultural boundaries, the academic environment can be enriched by the overlapping of disciplines in the pursuit of creating valuable knowledge to further society.

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