

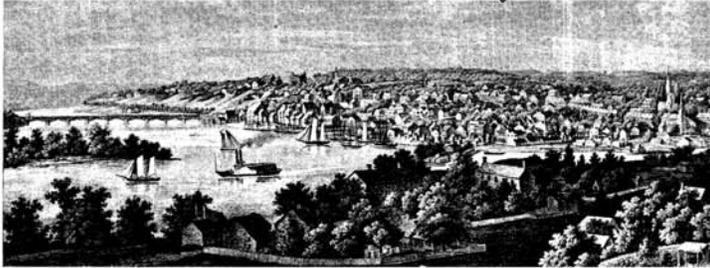
APPENDIX I: GEORGETOWN WATERFRONT PARK PLAN

Georgetown University Boathouse
Environmental Assessment

April 2006



FIRST CLASS



THE GEORGETOWN WATERFRONT PARK & THE C & O CANAL NHP

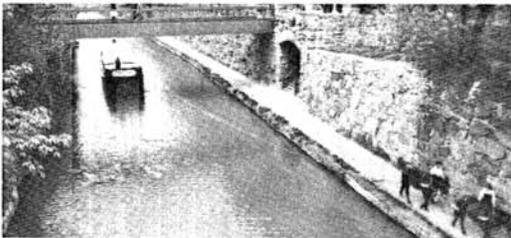
INTRODUCTION

The Congress of the United States, through the Capper-Cramton Act of 1930 (46 Stat. 482), established the Federal goal to acquire and protect both shorelines of the Potomac River from Fort Washington, Maryland and Mount Vernon, Virginia to Great Falls. Over the past 50 years, the National Capital Planning Commission, the Commission of Fine Arts, as well as Secretaries of the Interior and the Mayor of the District of Columbia, have supported this goal and have identified the Georgetown Waterfront as a potential park under Federal jurisdiction. This plan represents another step towards implementing a part of the long-standing goal of having all waterfronts in the District of Columbia as part of the Federal open space/parkland system in the Nation's Capital so that these national resources can be enjoyed by all visitors and residents of Washington.

The National Park Service, as a public land managing agency, is responsible for the system of publicly-owned shoreline parks which maximize public access along the waterfronts of the Potomac and Anacostia Rivers within the District of Columbia. With the exception of the Georgetown Waterfront, the entire Potomac River shoreline in the District of Columbia from Hains Point upriver is federally owned and managed by the National Park Service. In addition, virtually all of the nearly 200-mile Potomac River shoreline on the eastern side of the river between the District of Columbia and Cumberland, Maryland is publicly owned.

Under the terms of the Agreement between the District Government and the National Park Service which was signed October 17, 1984, the Mayor of the District of Columbia proposes to transfer to the National Park Service approximately 10 acres for park purposes. These lands, located between 31st Street and approximately 150 feet west of Key Bridge, and K Street and the Potomac River, were originally acquired for highway purposes, but are no longer needed.

The C&O Canal is a major historic feature of the Georgetown Historic District. Specific policies and proposals for its preservation and enhancement, which are also contained in this plan, have been developed with the guidance of the C&O Canal National Historical Park Advisory Commission. The plan recognizes the historic interrelationship of the canal to the Potomac River and implements and defines the policies contained in the adopted Master Plan for the Canal.



History

Georgetown's founding and evolution are historically oriented to the Potomac River at its head of navigation. The area was settled in 1703, platted in 1751, and incorporated in 1789. The town flourished as a tobacco port until silting of the Potomac River early in the 19th Century caused a decline in port activity. Construction of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal (C&O Canal), commenced in 1825. The C&O Canal maintained an association with the river through barge traffic up until the end of the 19th Century when railroads began their eventual takeover of all canal shipping.

In 1760 a public wharf was built extending out into the river to the 10-foot depth. Later, maps show these wharves filled in, creating the fast land which is the subject of this plan.



Planning Process to Date

The Georgetown Waterfront park boundary was formally established on August 2, 1984, by the National Capital Planning Commission. The National Park Service, in cooperation with the District of Columbia, entered into a public planning process to decide future uses and park-related development.

Because of the physical and historical relationship of the Georgetown section of the C&O Canal National Historical Park to the Georgetown Waterfront, the canal from Foundry Branch to Rock Creek was included in the planning process.

The draft plan was reviewed and supported by the following official agencies: the National Capital Planning Commission, the District of Columbia Office of Planning, the Commission of Fine Arts, the District of Columbia Historic Preservation Review Board, and the C&O Canal National Historic Advisory Commission. In addition, citizen involvement opportunities occurred when the draft plan was put before the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2E, the Citizens' Association of Georgetown, and the Foggy Bottom Citizens' Association.

Park construction will depend on both private and public funds. Public funding will, of course, depend on Congressional appropriations. Full park development is expected to occur in phases extending over many years.

The Plan

The following proposed plan actions have evolved out of the public planning process. In keeping with the designated historic district within which this area lies, the thrust of the plan emphasizes preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the historic resources of the area. The plan also maximizes the unique physical geography of the waterfront.

Each of those actions is numbered and corresponds to the numbers on the illustrated plan.

(1) CREATE PASSIVE PUBLIC PARK

The park's character will be passive in nature and be landscaped similar to Constitution Gardens and to floodplain parks. Features such as promenades, plazas, walkways, open lawn spaces, plantings, benches, lighting, and fountains will constitute the development within the park. No active recreation facilities will be provided except water-dependent boating facilities. No surface parking will be provided within the park.

(2) CREATE SHORELINE PROMENADE WITH SEPARATE BIKE PATH

A shoreline promenade will be created for the entire length of the park between Rock Creek and Key Bridge. Bike and pedestrian usage will be separated by landscape architectural treatment, such as paving patterns and street furniture. Surface treatment will vary depending upon the location within the park.

(3) CREATE VARIETY OF BULKHEAD TREATMENTS INCLUDING FISHING PLACES

The entire shoreline will feature a variety of treatments to achieve interest and use at the water's edge. Steps, esplanades, walls, docks, piers, and natural vegetated slopes could all be employed. Much of the existing bulkheading will be retained and improved through modification and surface treatment.

(4) CREATE SPECIAL PLACE/WISCONSIN AVENUE FOCAL POINT

The termination of Wisconsin Avenue will be treated as a focal point and special place for the park. This space will be articulated with elements such as a plaza, fountains, lighting, plantings, etc. Steps will allow the public to be close to the water.

(5) MAINTAIN RIVER VIEWS

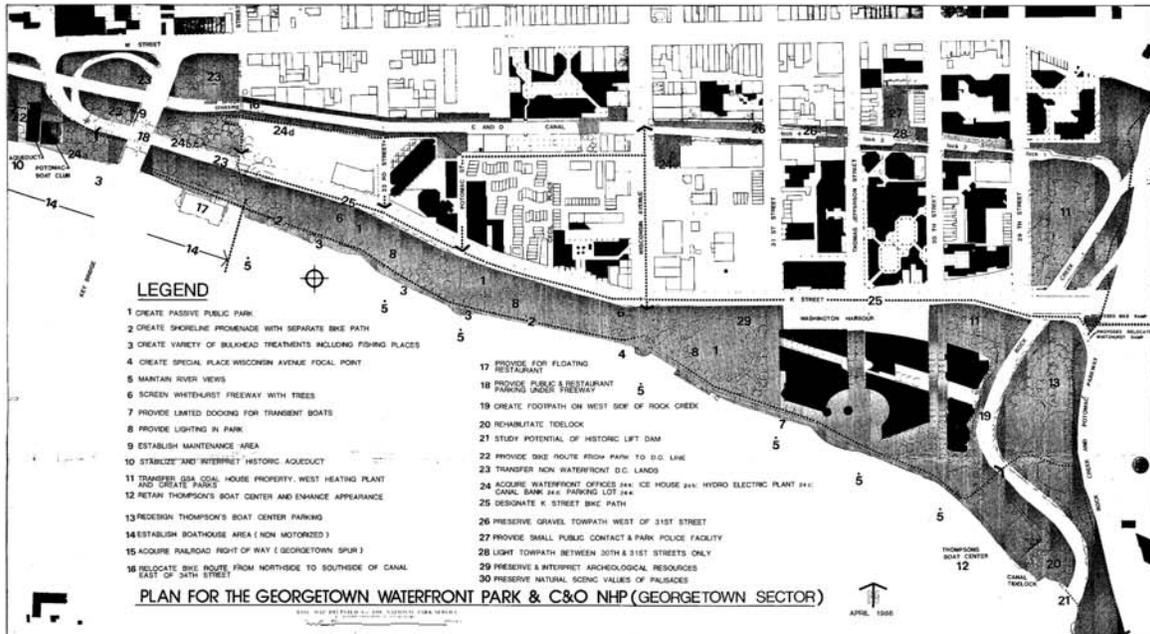
The park will be designed to preserve and respect existing river views from north/south streets. It is important that such views be preserved so that the historic visual relationship of Georgetown to its waterfront can be maintained.

(6) SCREEN WHITEHURST FREEWAY WITH TREES

Shade trees will be planted throughout the park to screen as much of the Whitehurst Freeway as possible. Exact tree locations will depend upon the limitations imposed by the need to maintain access to underground utilities, to maintain the freeway itself, the need to preserve river views from north/south streets, and to preserve archeological resources.

(7) PROVIDE LIMITED DOCKING FOR TRANSIENT BOATS

Limited public docking space will be provided east of the Wisconsin Avenue axis. This will offer an opportunity for all types of boaters to visit the park by water. Only a limited number of craft will have the opportunity to tie up, due to the potential for conflict with non-motorized boat traffic along this section of the waterfront.



(22) PROVIDE BIKE ROUTE FROM PARK TO DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LINE

It is proposed that a bikeway and pedestrian linkage be established extending from the Rock Creek path system all the way to the District of Columbia line and beyond. This route consists of a network of paths, allowing the visitor to proceed west from the waterfront, by either the C&O Canal towpath or the Georgetown Railroad spur right-of-way. The C&O Canal towpath will be accessible from the waterfront by way of Potomac Street, 33rd Street, or 34th Street, thus avoiding the congested portion of the canal towpath.

(23) TRANSFER NON-WATERFRONT DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LANDS

In addition to the transfer of the 10-acre waterfront lands, further transfers of jurisdiction to the National Park Service are proposed. The largest of these would involve the tract bounded by 34th Street, the canal, Key Bridge and M Street. Because this important space offers remarkable views of the Potomac River, and contributes to a major gateway to the city, it must be appropriately landscaped so as to integrate the space into its surroundings and respect its historic setting. A memorial to Francis Scott Key is proposed for this site and is now awaiting Congressional authorization. Transfers are also proposed involving two areas west of Key Bridge, and the right-of-way of K Street to be closed west of 34th Street beneath the Whitehurst Freeway.

(24) ACQUIRE WATERFRONT OFFICES (24A); ICE HOUSE (24B); HYDRO ELECTRIC PLANT (24C); CANAL BANK (24D); AND PARKING LOT (24E)

A. Waterfront Offices - This proposal would involve the fee acquisition and demolition by the National Park Service of a structure originally built as three 3-story townhouses. These properties represent an inappropriate use in the park which is not water-related or water-dependent. **B. The Ice House** - This commercial structure, between the canal and K Street, is occupied by numerous short-term lessees. The building is of recent origin and was built in 1937. The present use generates a fair amount of commercial traffic, and several doorways have direct access to the C&O Canal towpath. Acquisition of the building and its demolition is proposed. Any significant archeological resources will be preserved. This acquisition will complete the network of parkland surrounding Key Bridge forming the gateway. The acquisition will also prevent possible future adverse redevelopment. **C. The Hydro-Electric Plant** - This former hydroelectric plant is a small, now derelict structure adjacent to Key Bridge which is attached to and integral with the Ice House. It will be acquired and demolished. Recent National Park Service engineering studies have established that reactivation of the plant would cause damage to the canal from increased water flows. The generating equipment was removed several years ago, and only the civil works remain. **D. Canal Bank Site** - Acquisition of an access easement east of 34th Street on the south side of the canal consisting of a 15-foot wide strip is proposed in order to partially restore the canal prism to its historic condition and still provide public access along the south side of the canal. A 15-foot access easement is already in place on both the Peppo and Flour Mill properties to the east, which, together with this proposed easement, would provide a supplementary alternative to the towpath on the north side of the canal. **E. Parking Lot** - This rectangular space at Wisconsin Avenue is presently undeveloped. Because the space is lower than the surrounding terrain, it relates to the canal, and acquisition is sought in order to prevent adverse development. Acquisition in fee will enable improvements as a landscaped, open pedestrian plaza; preservation of views from the towpath towards the Grace Street Church; enhancement of the setting for the historic Wisconsin Avenue Bridge; and gaining additional interesting views of the canal.



(25) DESIGNATE K STREET BIKEPATH

It is proposed that provisions be made by the District Government for a bike route along K Street. This would provide an additional alternative to the canal towpath and would supplement the route along the riverside edge of the park. At the east end of K Street, it would cross the Rock Creek Bridge and connect with a spiral ramp proposed by the District Government as part of the Whitehurst Freeway rehabilitation.

(26) PRESERVE GRAVEL TOWPATH WEST OF 31ST STREET

This plan proposes no change from the existing paving materials now used on the C&O towpath within the Georgetown sector of the C&O Canal. Brick would be retained on the more heavily-used towpath east of 31st Street and traditional gravel would continue in use west of 31st Street.

(27) PROVIDE PUBLIC CONTACT AND PARK POLICE FACILITY

The plan proposes the construction of a National Park Service administrative facility on the recently-acquired lot adjacent to the C&O Canal barge landing, to function as a Canal contact facility and for barge operation and administrative functions, replacing the temporary contact facility now within the Foundry building. This building will also serve the Park Police. It will be in a park-like plaza setting and be in keeping with Georgetown's scale and character.

(28) LIGHT TOWPATH BETWEEN 30TH AND 31ST STREETS ONLY

It is proposed that additional, low-key lighting of the C&O Canal be confined to areas where residences are adjacent to the towpath between 31st and Thomas Jefferson Streets for safety reasons. The Canal Barge landing and Fish Market Square are already adequately lighted.

(29) PRESERVE AND INTERPRET ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES

In 1985, a National Park Service sponsored archeological overview and assessment of the proposed Georgetown Waterfront Park was completed for the area from 31st Street to Wisconsin Avenue. Subsequently, an archeological testing program was undertaken in the same area. Twelve trenches were excavated by backhoe, with hand excavation of in-situ remains and troweling of wall profiles. Early 19th Century building walls and brick flooring were discovered, as well as late 18th Century cobblestone paving, deposits from earlier historic periods, and a small prehistoric component. The landscape plan for the park has been modified to avoid excavation in those areas where intact archeological remains were discovered. A 3-panel interpretive wayside exhibit is being developed which describes the area of late 18th and early 19th Century warehouses and cobblestone paving found near K Street. A final study entitled "Georgetown Waterfront Park Archeological Assessment and Overview" will cover the area from 31st to 36th Streets. This document is expected to be completed in June 1986, and will provide the necessary historical background data and archeological interpretation to assist in future park planning and development, while protecting potentially significant archeological remains.

(30) PRESERVE NATURAL SCENIC VALUES OF PALISADES

Above Key Bridge, west of the boundary of the designated boathouse area, the natural conditions of the palisades will be preserved. The Potomac River above Key Bridge is one of the main scenic treasures of the Nation's Capital, and no new development will be permitted in this area. In areas not now adequately protected, particularly the south edge of the Georgetown University campus, attempts will be made to acquire scenic easements and other devices to prevent intrusive developments.

Approved:

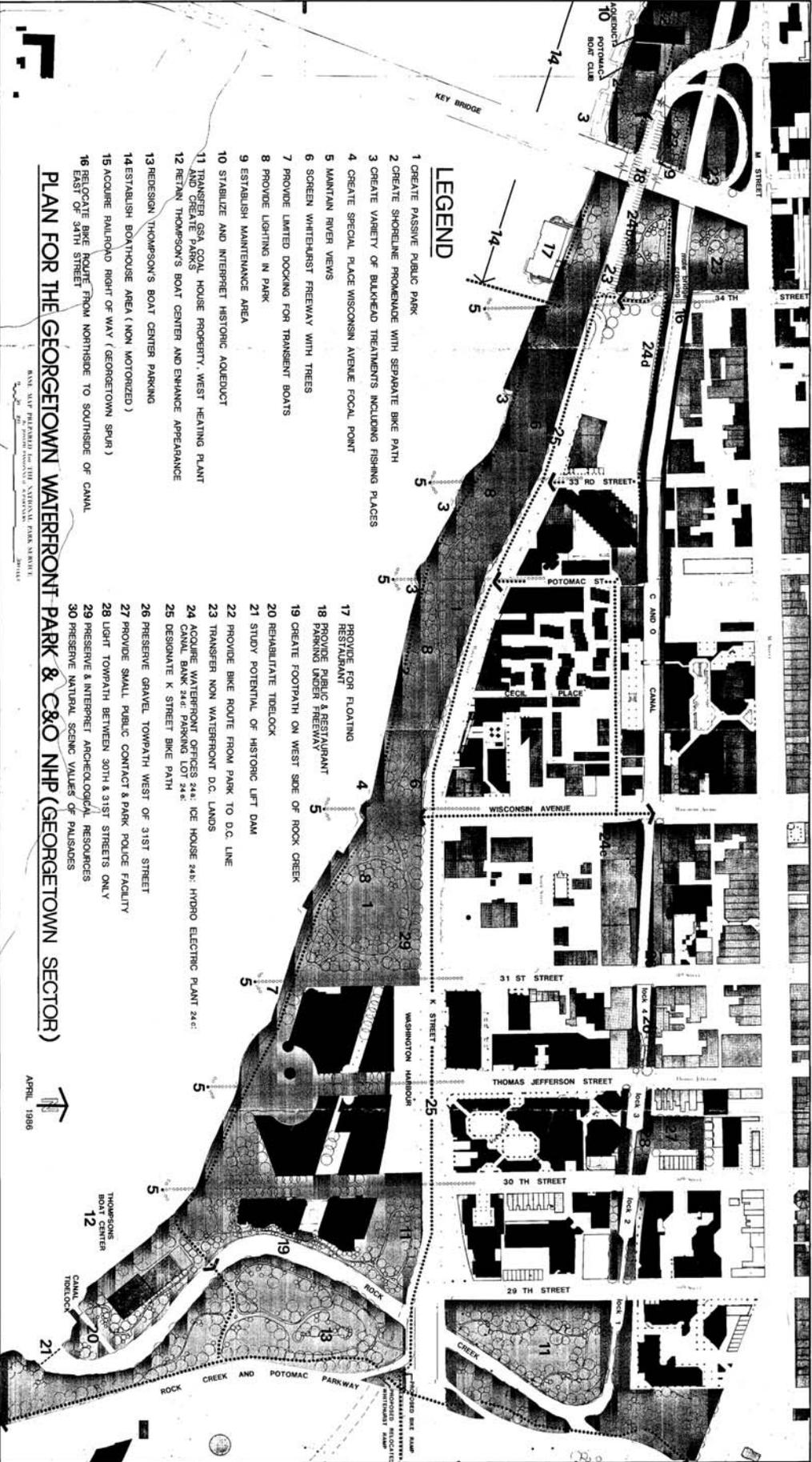
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LEGEND

- 1 CREATE PASSIVE PUBLIC PARK
- 2 CREATE SHORELINE PROMENADE WITH SEPARATE BIKE PATH
- 3 CREATE VARIETY OF BULKHEAD TREATMENTS INCLUDING FISHING PLACES
- 4 CREATE SPECIAL PLACE WISCONSIN AVENUE FOCAL POINT
- 5 MAINTAIN RIVER VIEWS
- 6 SCREEN WHITEHURST FREEMWAY WITH TREES
- 7 PROVIDE LIMITED DOCKING FOR TRANSIENT BOATS
- 8 PROVIDE LIGHTING IN PARK
- 9 ESTABLISH MAINTENANCE AREA
- 10 STABILIZE AND INTERPRET HISTORIC AQUEDUCT
- 11 TRANSFER GSA COAL HOUSE PROPERTY, WEST HEATING PLANT AND CHEAPE PARKS BOAT CENTER AND ENHANCE APPEARANCE
- 12 RETAIN THOMPSON'S BOAT CENTER AND ENHANCE APPEARANCE
- 13 REDESIGN THOMPSON'S BOAT CENTER PARKING
- 14 ESTABLISH BOATHOUSE AREA (NON MOTORIZED)
- 15 ACQUIRE RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY (GEORGETOWN SPUR)
- 16 RELOCATE BIKE ROUTE FROM NORTHSIDE TO SOUTHSIDE OF CANAL EAST OF 34TH STREET
- 17 PROVIDE FOR FLOATING RESTAURANT
- 18 PROVIDE PUBLIC & RESTAURANT PARKING UNDER FREEMWAY
- 19 CREATE FOOTPATH ON WEST SIDE OF ROCK CREEK
- 20 REHABILITATE TIDELOCK
- 21 STUDY POTENTIAL OF HISTORIC LEFT DAM
- 22 PROVIDE BIKE ROUTE FROM PARK TO D.C. LINE
- 23 TRANSFER NON WATERFRONT D.C. LANDS
- 24 ACQUIRE WATERFRONT OFFICES 244; ICE HOUSE 248; HYDRO ELECTRIC PLANT 246; CANAL BANK 244; PARKING LOT 244
- 25 DESIGNATE K STREET BIKE PATH
- 26 PRESERVE GRAVEL TOWPATH WEST OF 31ST STREET
- 27 PROVIDE SMALL PUBLIC CONTACT & PARK POLICE FACILITY
- 28 LIGHT TOWPATH BETWEEN 30TH & 31ST STREETS ONLY
- 29 PRESERVE & INTERPRET ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
- 30 PRESERVE NATURAL SCENIC VALUES OF PALISADES

PLAN FOR THE GEORGETOWN WATERFRONT PARK & C&O NHP (GEORGETOWN SECTOR)

BASE MAP PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
 FROM THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE ARCHIVES

APRIL, 1986