IV

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INTRODUCTION

The first edition of this report was issued in June 1959. Preparations for the study had begun about two and a half years before. Since then many changes have taken place in the study area, (as in the nation). In accordance with the proposals of the Report, a Historic District has been designated that includes some 500 of the 1700 buildings in the entire study area. Of these 500, 315 are listed as historically and architecturally valuable to the city and 33 more of outstanding importance. Although some ten listed buildings have been destroyed since 1960 none on the first list has been lost, and more than 140 structures in the area have been restored. Most of this work has been consistent with recommendations made in the study. As a result of this dramatic renewal program the appearance of College Hill has undergone a striking improvement.

The College Hill Study got under way at a time when there was a strong upswing of interest in both preservation and urban renewal. Organization of the Providence Preservation Society in 1956 reflected the growing concern in Providence as in many other communities for the architectural heritage of the city. The study and the 1959 report attracted extensive attention locally and nationally.

Substantial coverage was given in the news columns of the Providence Journal and Evening Bulletin during the course of the study program. A special section in the Rhode Islander Magazine of the Sunday Journal on May 10, 1959, featured the study and was followed by a series of five major stories during the week just before release of the report. The report was presented before 300 people at a public meeting sponsored by the Providence Preservation Society on May 20. Response generally was favorable. When several national groups singled out the study report for special awards, local interest was further increased. The American Institute of Architects at its national convention in San Francisco in March 1960 awarded its Citation of an Organization to the Providence City Plan Commission. Progressive Architecture magazine praised the Report and Architectural Forum included Providence in its "America Rebuilding" issue of January 1960 under the title of "New Life for Yesterday's City". Since that time many other journals including Antiques Magazine, Architectural Record, House Beautiful, Better Homes and Gardens, Reader's Digest, American Home, AIA Journal and Yankee Magazine have contained articles describing the study and subsequent activities on College Hill.

216
In this Second Edition, Part IV has been added to report progress on College Hill since the original study was made and to assess the effectiveness of the study as an approach to historic area renewal. This section reviews the key recommendations of the original study, takes stock of the current urban renewal and private restoration programs, and institutional activities, and notes the uses made of the study elsewhere.

A. THE MAJOR RECOMMENDATIONS

In Part III-D, beginning on page 176, headed "Recommended Program", nine major points were listed for implementation of the College Hill Study. This new edition of the report summarizes progress in each of these nine areas through the end of 1965.

1. Organizational Structure

It was recommended that a permanent College Hill Committee be formed for the purpose of building the development efforts necessary to carry out the College Hill Plan. This was intended to be a continuation of the Coordinating Committee which had functioned during the study program, the original members of which are listed on Page 179. That committee was drawn upon and largely absorbed into another group formally organized in 1962 to act as advisors to the Providence Redevelopment Agency in the formulation of plans and proposals for the East Side Urban Renewal Project. As work has progressed on that project, the committee's attention has shifted somewhat from the historic area alone, to the broader scope of the more extensive urban renewal project area. New members have been added to represent sections of the project not in the original study area. As a result of this shift in emphasis some of the indicated functions of the proposed College Hill Committee have been undertaken by the Providence Preservation Society. Adequate liaison between the Society and the Colleges has been lacking, however, and efforts are now being made to develop a better rapport as it becomes more evident that the problems of College Hill are of concern to everyone in the area.

2. Urban Renewal Program

Because of its importance in the overall development of College Hill, the urban renewal project is discussed in more detail in Section B of this part of the report. The project originally recommended was expanded considerably when the Redevelopment Agency elected to combine part of the proposed College Hill project area with two other areas under study. These were the Randall Square section to the northwest of College Hill and the Fox Point area to the south and east. The 128 acres originally proposed for Urban Renewal treatment in the College Hill Study were thereby incorporated into the East Side Project of 343 acres. Although many changes have occurred in the detailed planning, the proposed treatment of the central historical section of the project is substantially as recommended in the original report. Land acquisition and other project activities are expected to start in 1967.

3. Benefit Street Trail

The recommendation on Page 185 for development of a special tourist trail as a coordinated recreation attraction is being followed up by the Providence Preservation Society. A special Benefit Street Committee was established by the Society in 1960. This group has promoted recognition of Benefit Street as an outstanding national attraction. A number of leaflets and flyers have been published and Benefit Street has been made the locale of two of the street festivals held every other year in College Hill since 1958. Twenty-seven private houses and other restored buildings in the northern Benefit Street area were shown on May 11, 1962, and twenty-three more in the southern end of the street were shown on May 16, 1964. Over 4,000 visitors were counted. In the course of an average year, the Preservation Society provides guides for 15 to 25 tour groups interested in the "Mile of History" centered along Benefit Street. Hundreds of free folders describing historic Providence buildings have been distributed to visitors, and a recently published pocket folding strip map has sold well. The map contains brief notes and elevation drawings of 75 buildings along Benefit Street.

The Preservation Society has also awarded more than 150 plaques to be placed on the historic buildings, on Benefit and nearby streets, many of them suitably restored since 1956. This program is being expanded so that in time all the historic structures in the area will display markers that give the first owner and date of building.

Formal designation of a tourist route with markers, special benches, lighting and route guides, as suggested in the 1959 report, is to be developed as part of the East Side Renewal Project.

The Benefit Trail concept will benefit considerably from the development of the Roger Williams National Memorial and the South Main Street project in the East Side Renewal Project.
4. The National Park Proposal

The original College Hill Report recommended creation of a Roger Williams Spring National Park between Canal and North Main Street and focussed around the site of the spring which served the original colonial settlement. This proposal is outlined and illustrated on pages 129 through 131 of the report. One part of the proposed facility was to be a replica of a small house typical of the period of first settlement.

Although a number of changes have been made in the original concept, steady progress can be seen in implementing the recommendation for a national park facility. Legislation was introduced in the 18th Congress in 1960 for a Roger Williams National Monument. This proposal evolved into an act authorizing creation of the Roger Williams National Memorial within the East Side Urban Renewal Project as enacted in the fall of 1965. The National Park Service now will proceed with detailed planning and financing for plans for the park although Congress has not as yet voted the necessary appropriation.

At the congressional hearings in 1965 the National Park Service indicated that the total cost of developing the memorial site would be almost $700,000, including payment to the Redevelopment Agency for land in the large block bounded by North Main, Canal, Haymarket, and Smith Streets. Site development costs include those for landscaping and planting, a new museum and information center. Costs for moving the Thomas Clemence House (built about 1680) to the National Memorial Site have also been included. Now located on George Waterman Road in Johnston, this house is presently owned and maintained by the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities, who have voted to transfer title to the Park Service or an appropriate local organization. The house is one of the most important seventeenth century structures in the State. In its new location it will serve as an authentic example of the houses the earliest settlers, including Roger Williams', built along the Towne Street (now all vanished).

5. Historic Area Zoning

Section III-D of the College Hill Report contains drafts of recommended state enabling legislation and an amendment to the city ordinance authorizing and creating a historic district. The state measure, based on the preliminary report prepared for the College Hill Study, was introduced in the Rhode Island General Assembly before publication of the final College Hill Report. It received the support of other communities in the state where important historic areas had survived and was passed in the late spring of 1959.
As enacted, however, the state legislation differs somewhat from that presented on pages 188 and 189 of this report which draft called for appeals from decisions of the Historic District Commission to follow the same course as those from the Zoning Board of Review. In Rhode Island such appeals go directly to the State courts. A change was made in committee to route historic district appeals to the Zoning Board. Although no serious difficulty has arisen yet in the Providence experience, this could have the effect of setting two generally compatible municipal boards against each other and of subordinating the historic preservation factor to the traditional zoning factors of land use and intensity of development. From the preservation point of view the appeal procedure in the legislation recommended in this report is preferable.

The first municipal ordinance following enactment of the State Legislation was passed later in 1964 by the Town of South Kingston. It designated as a Historic District a section of Kingston Village near the campus of the University of Rhode Island containing Pre-Revolutionary, Federal, and Early Greek revival buildings.

Providence adopted historic area zoning legislation in August of the following year and a Historic District Commission of seven members was sworn in on September 13, 1960. Meetings are held at least monthly. The Providence ordinance defines the historic district, incorporates two specific lists of structures, designated as the First and Second Priority Lists, and establishes guidelines for Commission action.

In the period of almost seven years since its work began, the Commission has received twenty petitions to demolish buildings. Of these, twelve were for unlisted structures and were granted. Eight were for buildings on the Second Priority List; four of these were granted and four denied. One denial was appealed to the Zoning Board of Review as provided in the Rhode Island Law, and the Board upheld the ruling of the Historic District Commission. In two of the other denials, the owners revised their plans and have since restored and sold the houses. For the fourth, a structure listed for minimum housing code violations, the Providence Preservation Society volunteered to appoint an ad hoc committee to explore with the owner ways of saving the building. As a result, the owner leased the building for a dollar a year to serve as a needed International House headquarters. Money raised by private donors and a local Foundation Grant covered the costs for the repairs needed to bring the house up to code requirements. The owner, the City, the Preservation Society and International House have been satisfied with this solution, and the building is now in sound condition.

Nine permits for new garages and two for greenhouses within the College Hill Historic District have been granted. The Commission has allowed use of aluminum siding in four cases, but denied it in one, an especially attractive eighteenth century building which, in the opinion of the Commission and others, would suffer both visually and in ultimate real estate value, if the wooden clapboards were covered. Permission to install two large signs has also been denied. The Commission has also helped work out a legal procedure to allow replacement of original steps that encroach on the public sidewalk. Most other cases have been concerned with restoring houses to their original appearance, and much of the group's work has been advisory in character.

In 1966, the Commission engaged a competent architectural historian to make the fifth year review of the Historic District lists required by the ordinance. His final report, recommending upgrading two whole restored areas to First Priority rating, and 42 previously unlisted houses for the Second Priority listing, is now ready to submit to the City Council.

6. Private Investment

Stimulation of the investment of private capital to renew the historic College Hill area was one of the primary goals of the study program, and one most successfully attained. A remarkable volume of private restoration work has been carried out. This is described in more detail in Section IV-C.

Publication of the study report, the publicity given to it, and the support of city agencies did much to generate confidence in the area and to change the attitudes of mortgage agencies to investment in this older section of the city. Several private companies were organized for the purchase and restoration of historic buildings.

To encourage authentic restoration of the buildings the Providence Preservation Society has organized a Consultant Bureau. The members of this Bureau, working on a volunteer basis, supply sources for expert advice, and offer guidance on effective restoration techniques and period decoration and furnishing. This service has proved extremely useful, and the Bureau now receives many calls for advice not only in the restoration area, but throughout the state.
7. Institutional Programs

The seventh major recommendation of the College Hill Study had to do with planning for growth of the major educational institutions in the study area. It had been Brown University’s demolition of a number of historic houses to clear the way for the West Quadrangle which originally sparked formation of the Preservation Society. And the pressure of institutional growth has continued to account for the loss of houses after 1959. But the schools and other major institutions have given some attention both to their older properties and to the relationships with neighboring properties.

Brown University, the Rhode Island School of Design, and Bryant College have each undertaken development programs in the period since publication of the 1959 report. Information on some of the institutional programs is presented later in section IV-D.

8. City Programs

Recommendations on pages 207 through 209 touch upon a broad range of governmental programs at the municipal level. Steps for implementation of these have been taken in virtually every case. The most significant ones of course are the urban renewal project and the historic area zoning discussed elsewhere, but many other city activities have built upon the College Hill Study work.

The new Master Plan approved by the Providence City Plan Commission in 1964 incorporates the broad patterns of land use suggested in the proposed 25 year plan on page 173. Specific proposals for highway improvements, recreation, and school development are being carried out with relatively minor changes. A new elementary school is now near completion on a site in the Lippitt Hill Renewal Area just north of the location proposed in the College Hill Report.

Partial completion of the new freeway system has reduced somewhat the through traffic and truck traffic on Benefit Street. The Benefit Street area was selected for early attention in the city’s expanded tree planting and beautification programs, and periodic “sprucing-up” of both public and private landscape has occurred. Programs of housing code enforcement have also been effectively applied in College Hill.

9. Information and Education

The many suggestions made on pages 210 and 211 for information and educational activities relating to College Hill have been put to use in a variety of ways. Most of these have been sparked by the Providence Preservation Society which has staged street festivals and other events, placed award plaques on historic buildings and those which meet exemplary standards of restoration, and generally publicized the significance of the area within the Rhode Island community. The Society’s newsletter, with a circulation well over 1,000, frequently features articles on developments based on the study.
B. URBAN RENEWAL ACTIVITIES

It is quite clear that the priority for urban renewal project planning in College Hill was stepped up as a result of intense local and national interest generated by publication of the demonstration study. Some areas at either end of College Hill had been previously considered for separate renewal action but these did not include the main concentration of historic buildings along Benefit Street. Studies for renewal projects in the Randall Square, Constitution Hill, Prospect Terrace, South Main Street, and Tockwotton sections were summarized in a 1951 report Redevelopment Proposals for Central Areas in Providence Rhode Island, prepared with financial assistance from the Housing and Home Finance Agency. The College Hill study provided a focus for several of these with its attention to the historic area concept as distinct from a building-by-building approach to preservation. This has been maintained in the detailed planning for the East Side Urban Renewal Project.

The College Hill report was formally approved by the Providence City Plan Commission in early 1959. The Providence Redevelopment Agency then followed up by preparing an application for federal approval to work out the details of an enlarged project to include the proposed College Hill renewal area and several other sections. In March 1961, project planning officially began for the 400 acre East Side Urban Renewal Project, more than three times the area of that proposed in the College Hill report. The Urban Renewal Administration announced in July 1961 that 13 million was being reserved to cover the federal share of the net project cost, estimated then at 17 million.

Conducted in close cooperation with neighborhood residents represented through a citizens committee, project planning was concluded in the Fall of 1965. After much adjustment, a near-final urban renewal plan was submitted to the federal government in October. The Providence Redevelopment Agency expects the project to be in execution in 1967. The area as revised now comprises 343 acres. The Project outline on the accompanying map on this page can be compared with the original proposal shown on page 119.
Structural and environmental conditions vary widely within College Hill and the other sections encompassed by the project boundaries. The northernmost section around Randall Square, although old, is not of historic interest, and is closely linked in function to nearby industrial and commercial sections of the city. Many structures are in extremely poor condition and have shown no trend toward improvement. In the project’s southern section, Fox Point, considerable housing improvement has taken place, although the typical buildings are relatively modest in comparison to those in the restored areas farther north. City housing inspections conducted in 1951 and 1961 show that in this ten year period over 40 per cent of the units have had measurable improvement. Along Benefit Street, in the middle portion of the project, there are sharp contrasts in housing condition, largely as a result of private historic preservation efforts that have raised many structures from a dilapidated state to extremely good condition during the period since 1956.

Several renewal proposals for the East Side Project Area are based substantially on concepts developed in the College Hill planning study. Among such proposals are the Roger Williams National Memorial and the development of an historic trail along Benefit Street. The study also recommends for the South Main Street-South Water Street section a combination of new construction and restoration of the old residential and commercial buildings designed to keep the waterfront character of this historic area. The Providence Preservation Society, following in general the suggestions on pages 142 to 149 of the original College Hill Report, has developed proposals based on the above concept. As a result, the Redevelopment Agency officially designated the Providence Development Corporation, a group formed by the Preservation Society, as preferred sponsor. Working with the Preservation Society, a New York real estate management firm has submitted a $10,000,000 plan for the 7.7 acre tract that has been approved by the Preservation Society and the Redevelopment Agency. Execution will begin soon after the East Side Project is approved.

Other proposals of the Urban Renewal Plan include: (1) Clearance and redevelopment of virtually all of Randall Square for industrial and commercial reuse; (2) Expansion of facilities for a major religious institution in the Constitution Hill-North Benefit Street section of the project; (3) Limited new construction, large-scale rehabilitation and restoration in the North Benefit Street and Fox Point sections of the project; and (4) Expansion of recreational facilities in Fox Point. It is anticipated that the rehabilitation controls to be applied within the project area will lend support to continuing private improvement and preservation efforts.
C. PRIVATE RESTORATION EFFORTS

The most significant result of the College Hill Study can be seen in the amount of privately financed restoration activity which has taken place since 1956 when the study was first being discussed. The exteriors of nearly 150 houses have been restored in relatively authentic fashion. This represents more than a third of the buildings on the two priority lists in the historic area zoning ordinance. Important interior improvements have also been made in most of the buildings. The large fold-up map on page 223 in this section of the report shows the historic district, the buildings on the First and Second Priority lists, the buildings restored since 1956, and those lost since that date.

Private restoration activity, sparked both by the interest aroused by the Preservation Society and by the College Hill Study beginning in 1957, moved ahead rapidly. By the time the College Hill Report was published in 1959, some twenty houses had already been restored. The pace of restoration and rehabilitation work has increased since, as each additional house improved strengthens the stability of the area and the prospects for further improvement. It is estimated by Preservation Society officials that some three million dollars of private capital has been invested in the College Hill section. This has already returned in taxes several times the total cost of the College Hill study. But there have also been much greater returns to the city and the community in terms of improved living conditions, civic pride, visitor interest and tourist dollars as well as a tangible demonstration that preservation and beauty can be practical. Benefit Street a long time ago was appropriately named.

Much of the restoration activity has taken place along Benefit Street. In 1956, at the very outset of the program, a private group, Burnside Company, Incorporated, was organized to buy and reclaim dilapidated houses along the northern end of the street. A realtor-builder was engaged to handle purchase transactions and oversee some of the rehabilitation. Seventeen buildings were acquired in the initial group, and a larger number later. The Company repaired and made the houses structurally sound, restored them on the exterior, stripped out obsolete utilities and cleaned the interiors, and then put them up for sale. The basic objective of the Burnside operation was to create a new neighborhood by the effective restoration of the exterior environment; interior treatment was left to the individual buyers who were encouraged, but not required, to respect the original period of the house. This treatment made Benefit Street look rejuvenated almost overnight and called attention more dramatically than anything else could have done to the eighteenth century charm of the street with its rows of central entry gable-roofed buildings set close together exactly on the sidewalk's edge. All of the first group of Burnside houses are now owned and occupied as private residences.

A recent project of the Burnside Company, suggested by a proposal in the College Hill report, has been the restoration of the entire block bounded by Halsey, Benefit, Jenckes, and Pratt Streets. Here a garden court for common use has been developed in the interior of the block. A purchaser of a house in this block purchases a right to the common court. Now nearly completed, ten of the twelve eighteenth century, Greek Revival and mid-Victorian houses have been restored and are privately occupied. Plans to build contemporary town houses on Pratt Street where three poor houses were demolished, are waiting development.

The agent for the Burnside Company has also undertaken several restoration projects on his own, including three of the wooden Victorian row of four town houses on Benefit Street near the corner of Meeting Street.

A smaller company, Foxes Hill, has also been organized, originally to work in the southern part of the Benefit Street area. The policy of this company has been to buy one building at a time, restore it, and then put it up for sale. When the sale is consummated, the money is then reinvested in another house.

Netop Restorations, Incorporated, a company formed to work elsewhere in the city and State as well as in the College Hill area,
was composed of a board of backers who delegated their agent to find, buy, restore, decorate, and then sell the finished houses. The company, now closed out, was responsible for about fifteen restorations in the College Hill area, but the turnover in a highly specialized field proved too slow to warrant continuation of this type of company.

The range of restoration costs for these ventures has varied greatly depending on the condition of the house, the original purchase price, and the intent of the owner or the company restoring the building. From the point of view of ultimate cost, the most satisfactory restorations have been accomplished by the individual buyer, who purchased the house directly from the original owner (thus avoiding speculative mark-up) analyzed the condition of the house with a reliable contractor, put his money into making the structure sound and returning it to its original appearance, both outside and inside; made as few structural changes as possible; made sure that heating, lighting and plumbing systems were of good quality; and contented himself with simple equipment for kitchen and baths. The decoration of some of the best restorations has successfully been kept very simple. Houses privately restored have ranged in cost from (including purchase price) $17,000 for a small two family house with seven rooms, two baths and two large recreation or work rooms, to more than $100,000 for a complete structural overhaul and restoration of one of Providence's great Federal mansions with at least sixteen rooms, new kitchens and five new baths.

The Burnside Company bought houses from $3,000 to $12,000 and has sold them as restored shells for from $10,000 to $22,000. The new owners have generally invested from $25,000 to $30,000 above the purchase price to complete the restoration. Netop, Inc. prices ranged from $35,000 to $50,000. At present, realistic prices for completed restorations range from $25,000 to $50,000.

The fold-up map also shows properties which have been burned or torn down since 1956. There have been 29 of these, many not within the historic district, but including eight on the second priority list of the historic area zoning ordinance. Almost half of the losses occurred before the historic area zoning provisions went into effect in late 1960. Before then, only a wrecking permit was required, and public attention was not focussed until the demolition had begun. Now, in the College Hill Historic District, a building cannot be torn down without formal petition, public notice and hearing, passage of time, deliberation and approval by the Historic District Commission. Four significant historic buildings are still standing in College Hill because the owners' petitions to tear them down have been denied. Demolition cases involving institutions are described in the next section.

EXAMPLES OF PRIVATE RESTORATION EFFORTS

PHOTOS: Roger A. Brassard, Lawrence Tilley, Brown Photo Lab
D. INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Completion of the College Hill Study did not put a stop to problems of institutional growth on Providence's East Side. Since 1959 each of the major educational institutions has expanded and put up new buildings. Two of them are shown in the photographs on pages 228 and 229.

The Rhode Island School of Design continues to make excellent use of several historic structures including the brick market building in Market Square. The school's new contemporary dormitory group and refectory, finished in 1956, is generally recognized as an addition to the community, with architectural feeling compatible with nearby Federal and early Victorian buildings. The traditional materials of red brick and white wood trim have been handled with sensitive attention to scale and relationships to the hillside site. But in at least one case the school's development program has run counter to the restoration program.

Just three months after the city's Historic District Commission was organized, the School of Design came before it with a petition to demolish the Woods — Gerry house at 62 Prospect Street, built by Richard Upjohn in 1862. This building is on the Second Priority List and no use for the site was contemplated for at least ten years. The Commission was granted a delay of six months for representatives of the School of Design to meet with a committee from the Providence Preservation Society in an effort to find a satisfactory interim way to use the building. However, all proposals were rejected. As a result of the Committee report, the Commission denied the petition on the grounds that no immediate use of the site was planned and that proposals made for interim use of the building would relieve the school of upkeep. Upon appeal to the Zoning Board of Review, the Commission's denial was upheld and the structure is now boarded up and vacant.

The School of Design has since had a long-range development plan prepared which takes into account some of the specific needs of the historic and residential environs.
Brown University has erected a number of new structures since 1959, including the J. Walter Wilson Biology Laboratory on Brown Street between Angell and Waterman Streets, the Barus and Holley Engineering group on Hope Street, and the new John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library on Prospect Street as well as new dormitories at Pembroke College. These buildings have had to face review by the Zoning Board for exceptions to height, land coverage and parking requirements, but for the most part are located outside the Historic District. Because they are heavy and large in scale, their relationship to the smaller residential buildings surrounding them is in most cases not very satisfactory.

In preparation for building of the Rockefeller Library, the University came before the Historic District Commission to ask permission to demolish an early Federal house on the second priority list of the zoning ordinance. The Commission reluctantly granted this petition since the full set of completed plans for the new library was based on removal of the building. The library loading platform now replaces this house and unfortunately faces a historic residential group across the street. Four years earlier, in order to clear land back of the John Hay Library for a parking area the University sold a Federal house for a nominal fee to the Burnside Company who moved it to a site at Prospect and Meeting Streets. In the late 1950's Brown University restored the exterior of Hope College, built in 1818, while modernizing the interior.

In 1957 – 58 a complete interior and exterior restoration of the First Baptist Meeting House was carried out. This structure has been recognized by the United States Department of the Interior as a National Historic Landmark. Its site between North Main and Benefit Streets at the foot of Angell and Waterman Streets is pivotal in the whole College Hill plan.

Significant work has been done by the Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island in and around the Cathedral of St. John, eight blocks to the north. The church building itself has been renovated and a new diocesan headquarters office has been completed adjacent to it. Houses fronting on Church Street and Benefit Street in the same block as the Cathedral have been acquired and restored for use by resident clergy and others associated with the diocese. The block also contains an old burying-ground. Plans for a nursing home on Star Street are now completed, and the Diocese intends to develop the North Main Street frontage in the future.

On the whole the institutional developments have served to strengthen the quality and importance of College Hill, but accelerated University expansion and the resultant construction of taller and larger buildings is rapidly changing the scale and character of the central section of the area. It is apparent, however, that only increased height can alleviate somewhat the growth pressures of the colleges and assure minimum loss of the irreplaceable adjoining historic and residential neighborhoods. The dilemma of college growth in the historic and residential section may best be solved by setting up an institutional zone, a proposal being considered in the general City Zoning Study now in process.

Fitting the many proposed new institutional buildings into the limited space available so that they serve their function, add to the architectural excitement of College Hill and spare its traditional excellence will be an extraordinarily challenging and difficult problem for future planners and architects.
E. IMPACT ELSEWHERE

It is difficult to measure the extent to which the College Hill Study has influenced subsequent work in the field of historic preservation and urban renewal. The attention given to the study in 1959 and 1960 shortly after its publication did much to insure that the report was listed in all pertinent bibliographies and probably is consulted in connection with most subsequent preservation or historic renewal work. National organizations such as the National Trust for Histori
toric Preservation, the American Society of Planning Officials, and the American Institute of Architects have consistently cited the work in response to inquiries from other areas.

Within Rhode Island, considerable preservation activity has taken place. The strongest relationship to the work on College Hill is, of course, in the application in other communities of historic area zoning measures under the state enabling legislation recommended in the College Hill Report. The towns of North Kingstown and South Kingstown and the city of Newport have enacted such laws. The original report was distributed initially to all active urban renewal agencies in the United States and upon request to individuals and organizations in virtually every state. It has been specifically referred to in many other restoration and preservation studies.

The survey technique described in Parts 11-C and 11-D of the report was applied by the same consulting firm which handled the study in its work in Salem, Massachusetts; Pawtucket, Rhode Island; and Willemstad, Curacao, and by others in such places as Newport, Rhode Island; Savannah, Georgia; Rochester, New York; New Bedford and Cambridge, Massachusetts; Wilmington, North Carolina; and New Orleans, Louisiana. There are undoubtedly many other communities where modifications of the survey technique have been applied.

Historic preservation and its relationship to urban renewal has received considerable attention in more recent years as evidenced by the publication in 1963 by the Housing and Home Finance Agency of a monograph, Historic Preservation Through Urban Renewal. The College Hill program was one of thirteen described in that booklet. An updated and expanded presentation on this subject Preserving Historic America was published in 1966 by the new Department of Housing and Urban Development, successor to the HHFA.

On the whole, the College Hill Study has been most effective in demonstrating how public attention can be focused on a historic area and in gaining appreciation of the worth of the community's historic assets. It has been useful as an example to the other communities in demonstrating an approach to coordinated planning and in the application of specific techniques for evaluating older structures.

Before 1956, a relatively small group of people were aware of and seriously appreciated the value of the historic section of the city. The study and report enlarged greatly the number of those who recognized the values in College Hill — not just the real estate values, but the cultural, education, civic and social values repre-
seated in the "Mile of History," College Hill is beautifully situated within a walking distance of downtown Providence and among the institutional campuses. Young couples, and older families as well, are investing in and fixing up properties here in preference to suburban living. Some of this "comeback" might have happened in any case, but it has certainly been speeded by the concentrated attention on preservation, by the concerted organization efforts of official agencies and citizen groups, and by the striking privately-sponsored demonstration that historic preservation can work.

F. PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED
IN DEVELOPING THE PROPOSED PLAN

Most of the historic buildings in the College Hill area were originally built as private residences and the surviving historic areas are basically residential. As a result local problems encountered in efforts to carry out the College Hill goals have revolved around efforts to improve the historic residential neighborhoods. Stabilizing the pleasant aspects of a good residential area is necessary to attract the private owners who will assure the survival of these old sections.

In the restoration program developed in Providence and recommended in the College Hill Study the historic renewal program has been accomplished through investments made on an individual basis. It gives no specific area protection except that afforded by the Historic District Ordinance (which deals only with exterior appearance). With no organized covering protection, even the restored historic areas have been vulnerable to pressures caused by institutional expansion and zoning regulations. A large part of the historic area has been subject to R-4 zoning. The multiple family and rooming house uses permitted in this zone have given encouragement to absentee landlords who wish to convert their properties into rooming houses. In recognition of the need for raised zoning restrictions to discourage this downgrading trend, the City Council has recently approved R-2 zoning for the north Benefit Street area. This zoning change will serve as an interim measure until the new city-wide zoning code now in preparation is adopted.

Benefit Street has also been used as a through traffic street for many years. The planned diversion of traffic flow into the freeway system will be an important stabilizing factor. Additional plans to alleviate Benefit Street traffic have also been incorporated into the East Side Project.

Individual parking problems caused by the dense rows of older houses, are being solved by the private owners in a number of ways, most of which were suggested in the College Hill Report. More serious is the need, engendered by College growth and unforeseen ten years ago, for huge parking areas or garages on the east side. Here it is hoped that close cooperation between the City, the Colleges and the private residents will result in a solution that will help protect the historic residential area from parking garage inroads.

Because of area limitation institutional expansion poses problems for the surrounding residential and historic communities. Steps have recently been jointly initiated by the east side educational institutions and the Preservation Society to work cooperatively in planning for future change that may possibly allow mutually advantageous growth and survival.

As a result of the College Hill Study and ten years effort, this once declining area of an older city has become lovely and exciting in a unique way. The mixture of architectural styles is healthy, and the stability currently displayed by the revived Benefit Street and newer campus areas should spread out to other sections of the East Side Renewal Project where more severe change is needed. The renewed sections should strengthen one another.

The College Hill study and Report was a demonstration, paid for with federal, city, and private funds, to demonstrate a comprehensive approach to historic area renewal. But College Hill itself is a demonstration — a continuing demonstration — of how a city, its architecture, its institutions, its visual form and social structure grow and change over the years. This report is just a stepping-stone along the way. The 1959 report has influenced what happens in College Hill by providing the basis and perspective for certain actions to coordinate programs, adopt controls and set up projects. But the job of historic area renewal on College Hill is not done. It is continuing, and it involves almost the whole range of city activities. Perhaps that is what College Hill demonstrates most meaningfully: historic area renewal must be part of the total urban planning and development effort, and effective historic area renewal can only be achieved through attention to many details of that effort as they bear upon a distinctive area worth saving.

In Providence, in College Hill, that kind of attention has been given, and is continuing in the partnership of official, citizen and private interests that have made this piece of a city worth looking at. It was worth looking at ten years ago, with imagination. It is worth looking at today, with appreciation. Plans and programs under way should make it worth looking at ten years from now, with delight.

230