

The
GREEN



LIGHT

BULLETIN OF THE POINT ASSOCIATION
OF NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Spring 2024



View of the Newport Bridge from Todd Treonze's
Fishing Kayak

The Green Light

The GREEN LIGHT

The GREEN LIGHT LXVIII No. 1

Spring 2024

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Front cover photo by Todd Treonze
Back cover photo by Barbara Bessette

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The Point Association

The Point Association is a group of neighbors working together to improve the quality of life in our neighborhood by getting to know each other; preserving our historic heritage; maintaining the Point's residential character; beautifying our parks, streets and piers; and promoting public policies that strengthen all of Newport's neighborhoods.

FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

If you are reading the print version of *The Greenlight*, you will notice some changes in this spring edition. Although it has fewer than the usual 16 or 24 pages, we are now able to publish it in full color. Also, changes in postal rates have allowed us to send the lighter weight magazine through first class mail. An advantage to this is that *The Green Light* will now be forwarded along with your other first class mail.

I love the cover story by Todd Treonze on fishing from kayaks just off of Battery Park in Narragansett Bay. It seems like an enjoyable pastime judging from the smile on Todd's face holding the huge fish he caught. One can feel his passion for this endeavor from his writing. Taking advantage of his invitation to try kayak fishing would be a chance for a good adventure.

Once again, Lisa Stuart has provided us with more history of this beautiful place. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. had a plan for the Point in 1912 with the intention of preserving its charm and by building upon the street plan put in place by the Quakers in earlier times. We can appreciate his recommendation for guarding scenery through implementing building codes throughout the City that would also assure that residential neighborhoods are safeguarded against business development.

Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.'s recommendations are the same as the goals for our own Point Association.

I would love to hear from you with any recommendations, ideas for articles or feedback on this issue. Reach me via:

greenlight@thepointassociation.org

See you 'round the 'hood.

Ann McMahon, Editor, *The Greenlight*

The Green Light has been published continuously since 1957. To read this issue and all archived issues or even to search for references to your house or street, or people or events on the Point, search Google: the Point Association Newport RI Green Light

President's Letter

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the president of the Point Association. I am honored to be in this role and eager to work alongside each of you to enhance this wonderful place we call home.



I want to express my sincere appreciation to Ken Snyder, the outgoing Board President, for his dedication and commitment to the Point. His leadership laid a strong foundation for us to build upon.

In the tradition of the Point Association, it is my intention to preserve our historic heritage, continue our community giving efforts, and advocate for local policies that strengthen us as a neighborhood. Recognizing all the Association does well and knowing there is always room for improvement, it is my goal to enhance our online presence, grow our membership, and increase participation at every level of the organization. Our neighborhood thrives when we come together to share ideas, and work toward common goals.

Regardless of whether you live here full-time, or the Point is your “home away from home,” I encourage you to get involved; volunteer for a committee, attend public discussions including our Spring and Fall meetings, and join us for our social events throughout the year. Together, we shape the future of the Point.

I look forward to seeing you around the neighborhood!

Best Wishes,

Welcome New Neighbors

The best place to get to know people is joining in the Spring Clean-up of the Point. Bring a rake and plastic bags to meet the gang at Storer Park on Saturday, April 20 at 9 AM. There is nothing Point neighbors like better than meeting new people.

Kim and Scott Flanders	5 Gladding Ct
Donna Haley	33-35 Marsh Street
Eric and Susie Johnson	42 Second Street
Brody Karn	5 Walnut Street
Gwyn Kesler	84 Third Street
Stephanie & Mason Kirsch	11 Van Zandt Avenue
Christine MacDonald	181 Bellevue Avenue
Holly McLear & David Maguire	17 Poplar Street
Brooke Mastrorio	21 Calvert Street
Amy Moynihan	57 Second Street
Rev. Cory Newell	58 Washington Street
Leslie Schutte	53 Farewell Street
Elizabeth Sepinski	3 Gladding Court
Mary Jean Sherman	11 Harrison Avenue
Stephanie Smyth	15 Russell Avenue
Kelly Sterns	91 Washington Street
John A. Vincze	Stamford CT

10th Annual PA Drive for MLK a Success

By Lisa Elliott

For 101 years the Martin Luther King Community center (MLKCC), an independent non-profit, has been providing programs to fight hunger, promote health and educate young and school-age children.

For 10 of those years, Point neighbors have come together in support of MLKCC's efforts via the annual Point Association holiday drive.

Thanks to the generosity of Point neighbors, the MLKCC will have an additional \$18,200 to help fund their programs. Based on the 2024 projection of one million meals needed this year (just one focus area), your donations will be well used.

If you would like to receive the MLKCC newsletter to keep up on the good work your donations help, you can sign-up at:

<https://mlkcenter.org/newsletter/>

Thank you for your generosity!

Alyssa Maxwell's Book - Now a Hallmark Movie

It was a very big year for Alyssa Maxwell, author of the Gilded Age Newport Mysteries. *Murder at the Breakers*, the movie based on her book, premiered on Hallmark TV on February 9, 2024.

In the ten years since *Murder at the Breakers*, ten more books have been written. All the whodunnits are based at different Newport mansions in what *Goodreads* calls a “gripping series of riveting mysteries...”

Alyssa and her husband, Paul Manuel, live in Coral Gables, Florida, and are frequent visitors to Newport. The Manuel family were Point residents for several generations and relatives still live in Newport.

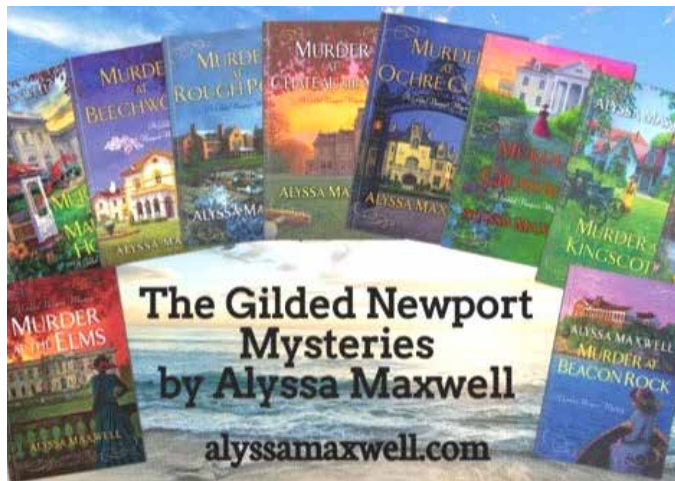
As was his father, Allen Manuel, Paul is a prolific photographer. The Manuel family photos of the Point are often featured in *The Green Light* and can be found via the PA Website or at <https://www.flickr.com/photos/146411860@N03/albums/72157671995136671/with/28611185363>



Murder by Teaspoon

Alyssa Maxwell (L) and Lisa Stuart re-enact the crime at Murder at the Elms at a tea at Lisa's home at Battery Cottage on the Point.

Alyssa's latest book, *Murder at Vinland*, can be pre-ordered at Barnes and Noble. To find out more you can contact Alyssa at AlyssaMaxwell.com or on FB at [alyssamaxwellauthor](https://www.facebook.com/alyssamaxwellauthor)



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Neighbors Party at the Brenton Hotel

by Ann McMahon

About 60 enthusiastic neighbors were the guests of the Brenton Hotel at the 2nd floor restaurant and library of that Long Wharf hotel. It was the first of a new series of soirees called Point Neighborhood Nights at the Brenton. Complimentary charcuterie platters and wine were served by the Hotel. Point Neighborhood Night will be held every 2nd Wednesday of the month from 5 to 7 PM, February through June. As Point Association hostess of the reception, I suggest that Point residents consider this our very own neighborhood “club”. You should know that we are welcome at the Brenton any time, not just our special Night.

As it was held on Valentine’s Day, the “theme” of the evening was “This is Why I Love the Point”. Not surprisingly, most of the respondents mentioned its walkability, its beautiful homes and architecture, and its proximity to downtown and the waterfront. The friendliness of the neighbors and its “old world” feel was also noted. I am happy to report that Point Association events as well as *The Green Light* were also mentioned as favorites. It is hoped that all Pointers will enjoy the evenings and encourage newcomers to join the Point Association for even more fun events throughout the year.



Rob Minaglia chats with Mason and Stephanie Kirsch



Liz Sepinski gives thumbs up to Neighborhood Nights




Wearing Valentine red: (L.) Ann McMahon, Susan Clark, Maggie Thomas

Nina Lynette

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Rhode Island Slave History Medallions

Paraphrased from: *Biography of Peter Quire*. Imen Boussayoud, PhD Candidate
Dept of History | Brown University

A committee from the Rhode Island Slave History Medallion (RISHM) recently dedicated a Medallion in honor of Peter Quire at the front of St John the Evangelist Church on Washington Street. Throughout his life, Peter Quire demonstrated a dedication to Black liberation and community building across the Northeast. Born on June 15th, 1806, in Pennsylvania, this remarkable individual worked on the Underground Railroad, bravely aiding Black slaves to freedom up north. Peter Quire worked on Abolitionist rescue missions, chasing down would-be slave catchers and rescuing the people they sought to traffic into slavery. Through his Quaker associations, he eventually found his way to the Point section of Newport RI.



In 1875, Peter and his wife Harriet invited several members of the Newport community to meet for worship in their home above Peter's cobbler shop on Third and Poplar Streets in Newport. Their storefront and home was located in the Point, a Newport neighborhood which at that time was home to sailors, immigrants, and free Black residents. As their congregation grew, so did their need for space. Peter, Harriet, and those who came weekly to worship in their home, pulled from their relationships within the Point and Newport as a whole to crowdsource donations, labor, and equipment. Later that year, they built St. John's Church, a small wooden structure further down on Poplar Street. This building remains in use to this day as St. John's Guild Hall. In welcoming those of all races to worship at its pews, St. John's became a valuable space of spiritual community for Rhode Islanders.

Read more about this extraordinary individual here: <https://rishm.org/peter-quire-founder-of-st-john-the-evangelist-episcopal-church-of-newport/>

Save this date: Saturday, June 15, for an exciting *Juneteenth* 2024 celebration in historic Washington Square.

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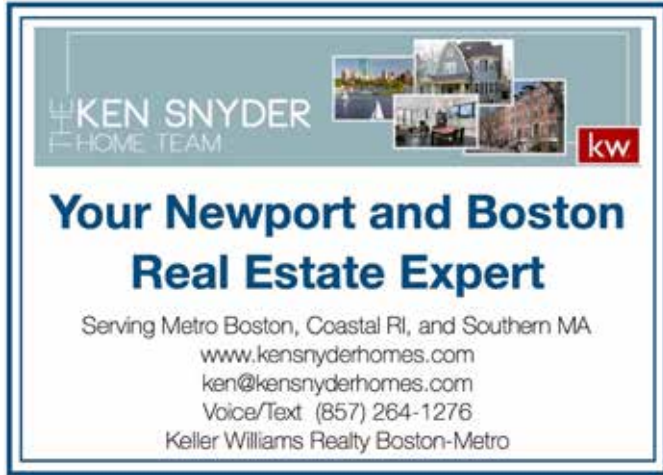
www.islandcemeterynewport.com
30 Warner Street, Newport, RI

What's New?

By Ann McMahon

Most importantly, we are welcoming a new president of the Point Association, Laura Treonze. A summer resident for many years, Laura and Todd have moved to the Point permanently. Meet Laura at the Spring Member's Meeting at St John's on Tuesday, May 14 at 6 PM. Be sure to save that date.

Also different this spring, people traveling back from their winter homes will notice a big change due to the Newport Bridge Ramp Realignment. The first Newport exit, our "shortcut" to Van Zandt Ave, has been demolished. Now we must continue on the Bridge in the left lane and circle around to eventually head south on Connell Highway toward the Van Zandt Bridge and home. A benefit to Point residents from this change is a welcome abatement of speeding traffic that used to cut through the Point.



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Recent Home Sales on the Point
(September 1, 2023 - March 1, 2024)


- 101 Washington Street**
(6 Bedrooms/4.1 Baths/4599 sq.ft.) \$3,800,000
- 57 Second Street**
(3 Bedrooms/3.1 Baths/2509 sq.ft.) \$2,625,000
- 1 Elm Street**
(5 Bedrooms/4.2 Baths/3039 sq. ft.) \$2,600,000
- 53 Washington Street**
(4 Bedrooms/2.1 Baths/2856 sq.ft.) \$2,350,000
- 41 Washington Street**
(4 Bedrooms/2.1 Baths/1888 sq.ft.) \$1,995,000
- 42 2nd Street**
(5 Bedrooms/4.1 Baths/2600 sq. ft.) \$1,900,000
- 10 Cross Street**
(4 Bedrooms/3.1 Baths/2094 sq.ft.) \$1,150,000
- 25 Willow Street**
(2 Bedrooms/2 Bathrooms/1750 sq.ft.) \$1,085,000
- 3 Third Street**
(2 Bedrooms/1.1 Baths/1100 sq.ft.) \$930,000
- 9 Cherry Street**
(3 Bedrooms/2 Baths/1200 sq.ft.) \$849,000
- 11 Poplar Street**
(3 Bedrooms/1.1 Baths/1424 sq.ft.) \$760,000
- 14 Second Street**
(3 Bedrooms/0 Baths/1176 sq.ft.) \$750,000
- 12 Maitland Court**
(2 Bedrooms/1Bath/913 sq.ft.) \$624,000



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Really Special Events

By Chris Moy, Bart Loyd, Ann McMahon

Last fall, Storer and Battery Parks as well as the Van Zandt Pier were the sites for festive celebrations as well as heartfelt farewells for some of our most loved neighbors.

At Right: Susan Pedro and Cameron Little from Sunshine Court were married in Storer Park. The light from the setting sun with the Newport Bridge in the background made an inspiring setting for the couple and close friends attending the ritual.



Photo by Liz Sepinski



At Left: Susan Duckman Scanlon and her beau, Tom Donbauer decided to make it official and were married in October, also in Storer Park. This couple resides on Gladding Court. Residents may recall the bride's late parents, Bunny and Gary Duckman.

Photo by Elope to Newport Don and Kat Beach

On a more somber note, the many friends of two different Point neighbors gathered for a Farewell.

You would know Tina Lewis as the slim pretty blond who walked the Point daily, usually with one friend or another and often accompanied by a dog she was helping to walk. She was a caring and supportive friend, always the first to offer assistance. Friends often chuckled at her “Tina-isms” (at which she was the first to laugh). e.g. She artfully dodged left turns and bridges. Most remarked upon, however, was her steadfast loyalty and kindness to her friends. These friends, shocked at her sudden demise from heart failure, gathered at the VanZandt Pier to find solace in each other’s company. It culminated in the throwing of 60 long stemmed red roses into the water off the pier. [Lucina \(Tina\) Lewis Obituary](#)



Photo by Lisa Elliott

Ross Freeman, a long time Point resident, was remembered in Battery Park. Organized by his friends Chris Moy and Beth Lloyd, the group gathered in a circle with each friend telling a story. Ross was known for his deep dedication to his community, his easy friendship and his unwavering commitment to doing the right thing. He could be seen working in his yard at his home on the corner of Second and VanZandt. His habit of drying out his gloves on the fence posts has left a poignant reminder as though Ross was waving good-bye to us all from the beyond. [Ross Freeman Obituary](#)



Photos by Chris Moy

The “Fishy” Side of the Point

by Todd Treonze



As the weather begins to transition from the grey days of winter to the sunnier days of spring, I ready my fleet of seaworthy kayaks for the new season of Narragansett Bay fishing. What most folks do not realize is that we have a world class fishery for several species just steps away from the Point. I launch my kayak regularly from Battery Park (at the end of Pine Street) starting as early as late April and continue to fish the area inside of Rose Island and along the Pell Bridge until the last Tautog move out in early December.

In the early part of the season (April & May), I focus my efforts on migrating Striped Bass and Tautog (also known as Blackfish). While most fisherman get very excited by the idea of catching larger striped bass, I prefer to target Blackfish using shore crabs I find under the rocks near Battery Park. Blackfish offer an exceptional white, flaky meat that is excellent in chowder or served in more traditional fillet or whole fish dishes.

As the water temperatures rise above sixty degrees, the summer window offers a great chance to catch Summer Flounder (Fluke), Scup, and Black Sea Bass all within waters adjacent to the Point. I'll often launch my kayak just before sunrise and pedal out to a good spot where I can see bait and predatory fish on my fish finder and then commence vertical jigging with epoxy jigs or bucktails. These lures mimic the local bait fish or squid and consistently find a hungry taker. In the summer I will harvest Black Sea Bass and Fluke regularly to make some of my favorite dishes (Ceviche, Crudo, Piccata, and Fish Tacos) combining my local catch with herbs and vegetables from my backyard garden.

With summer ending, I also start to see a change in the fishing patterns. Typically, by September the water will have reached its highest temperature, on some days approaching the upper seventies. This marks the time when the bay sees the arrival of some incredible offshore visitors including False Albacore (Little Tunny), Atlantic Bonito, and Spanish Mackerel. These hard tailed species are known for their speed and frenzied blitzes on the massive schools of bay anchovies and silversides that amass in the warmer water of the bay. For a few weeks each year we fishermen get a chance to catch these amazing fish right off the Point and this provides an opportunity for a “sushi style” meal. Atlantic Bonito can be served as sashimi, in a hand roll, or marinated with ginger and soy sauce and grilled. Catching these fish inshore, from a kayak, two blocks from my home is an experience that makes many of my out of state fishing friends very jealous.

Before winter sets in, October is spent chasing the last of the Striped Bass and Bluefish who are fattening up before they migrate to warmer waters. During this time of year you may see larger flocks of sea gulls and terns crashing into the water (especially near Rose Island) with splashes beneath them. When you see this, it is most likely striped bass and bluefish getting in their last local meals. As the water cools through October and into November, the fishing focus shifts back to Blackfish, Black Sea Bass, and the occasional Cod. At this point I'm focused on catching as many fish as I can so I can store fish away for the winter months ahead. Just after Thanksgiving, the bite usually tails off.

I have been fishing off the Point for almost 10 years and it's been a truly amazing experience for me and my family (my son often fishes with me). We have seen everything in the bay from ocean sunfish, to seals, to tuna. If you ever see me out there pedaling or pulling my red Hobie Outback, please stop and say hello. Also, if anyone is interested in starting to kayak fish, please reach out to me. I manage the Ocean State Kayak Anglers Association (on Facebook and Instagram) which is an incredible networking group for kayak fishermen and women of all levels. Tight Lines!



Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.'s Plan for The Point

by Lisa Stuart in consultation with John Ward

Facing many of the same issues we face today, the *Newport Improvement Association* was formed in 1912. Its mission was the securing and enforcement of such municipal and state action as shall appear for the best interests of Newport:

- The abatement of existing or threatened nuisances and the checking of undesirable developments
- The preservation of the natural beauties of the city and to increasing its artificial attractiveness
- The laying out of new roads and to the improvement, extension and ornamentation of existing public streets, highways, parks and grounds
- The doing of all other acts and things as shall from time to time appear for the present and future welfare of the city

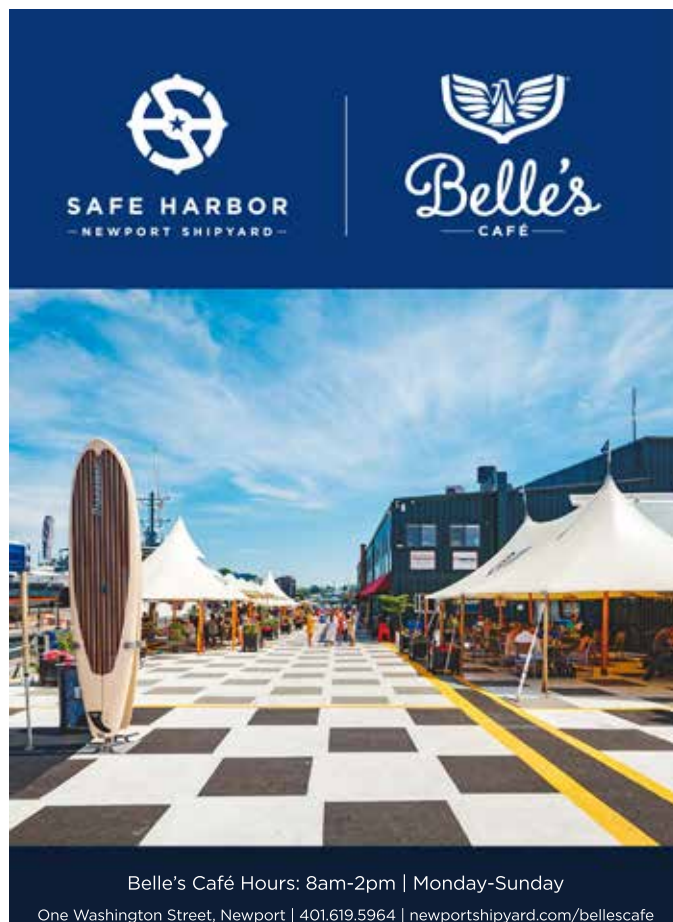
The Association engaged the landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. to conduct a study and present plans for the development of Newport for many years of steady improvement. In August 1913 Frederick Law Olmsted Jr. submitted his report: *Proposed Improvements to Newport*. The report built on the significant planning previously started by his father Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. and half-brother, John C. Olmsted. The report is a comprehensive one and takes into consideration many areas of Newport life.

In addition to the design and plan, Olmsted Jr. felt the need to safeguard scenery found throughout the city, so he recommended building codes and street improvements that would assure the building lines and prevent the erection of new buildings between these lines and the streets. The codes would also assure that residential neighborhoods are safeguarded against business development.

Olmsted Jr. believed the fundamental question to consider for public improvements is not “Will they bring a cash return upon investment in the form of increased land values?” but rather, “Will they add to the health, convenience, and happiness of the community to an extent commensurate with the sacrifices, financial and otherwise, which the community must make to secure them?”

In an 1883 report, Olmsted Sr. noted, “It was not fashion that first brought people of luxurious tastes, with means for indulging them, to Newport. It was a satisfaction found in its air and scenery by people of a rather reserved, unobtruding, contemplative, and healthily sentimental turn, little troubled by social ambitions.”

Following the vision of his father, Olmsted Jr. set to secure the scenery. Firstly he considered the distant views and views of the water including the views from the driftways on Washington Street. Secondly, the scenery found in the streetscapes—small and intimate houses and buildings, narrow roadways, Colonial detail, large, overhanging trees, small gardens and the general irregularity of the street scenery which created a certain freedom of form.



Olmsted Jr.'s Plan for The Point (continued)

The Point

A number of the improvements recommended by Olmsted were on the Point: the extension of Washington Street along the waterfront, improvements in the connection of the proposed new railroad station, a street to connect a new thoroughfare, a park, and two potential plans for land and roads around the improvements in connection with the new proposed railroad station.

Washington Street

Olmsted believed that widening Washington Street would destroy some fine trees and impair its value as a pleasure drive. Olmsted recommended the City ensure that new houses maintain a distance between the street and adjacent buildings, stating that the open space on all the lots is of benefit to the public and to the abutters.

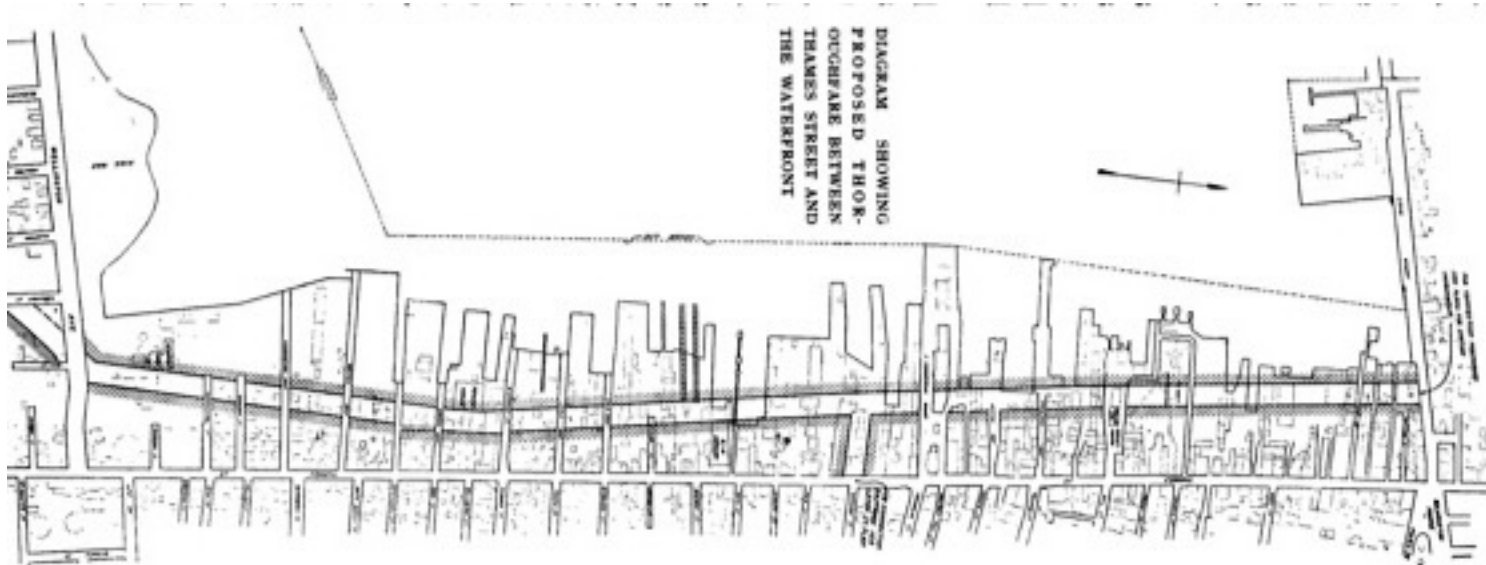
He further recommended that Washington Street be carried along the shore past the Naval Hospital and on to Training Station Road if the US Government will cooperate. If not, it must leave the shore at Cypress Street, circuit the hospital grounds via Cypress and Third streets and return to the shore north of the hospital grounds. (At this time Washington Street ended at Battery Street.)

A committee was formed to move the plan forward. In December 1916 the City reached an agreement with the owners of land desired to be taken for the Washington Street extension, a decree was adopted and the awards were ordered paid. The Navy did agree to extend Washington Street past the Navy Hospital but the extension had to leave the shore at Cypress Street. Over the next few years the extension and seawall were built.



Extension of the New Thoroughfare

Olmsted recommended a new thoroughfare between Thames Street and the Waterfront where America's Cup is now located. (see diagram). He recommended a direct extension northward from the northern section of the city where active development was taking place. He suggested a new street from Long Wharf to Farewell Street (at Walnut Street) as may be seen in *Plan A and Plan B—Improvements in Vicinity of Railroad Station*.



For the complete report by Olmsted: <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=coo1.ark:/13960/t1pg27n9m&seq=9>

Olmsted Plan to be continued in next Green Light Issue: Summer 2024.



Daffodils at 31 Poplar Street are a Welcome Sight after a Long Winter

THE GREEN LIGHT

The Point Association
P.O. Box 491
Newport, RI 02840

Save the Dates

Wednesdays, April 10, May 8, June 12, 5 to 7 PM: Neighborhood Nights at the Brenton Hotel.

Saturday, April 20, (RD April 22); Meet 9 AM: Storer Park. Earth Day. Point Clean-up. Bring rakes & gloves

Tuesday, May 14, 6 to 7:30 PM: Point Association Spring Meeting. All Members. St John's Guild Hall

Saturday, May 25, 8 AM to 12 Noon: Point Association Plant Sale. St John's Parking Lot

Saturday, June 8, 9:30 to 11 AM: New Member Coffee and Mimosas. 20 Willow Street

Saturday, June 22, 6 to 8 PM: Block Party. Between Walnut & Third Streets

Friday, Saturday & Sunday, June 28 through 30: *Secret Garden Tour*. Gardens on the Point. Start Storer Park

Tuesdays, July 9, 16, 23, and 30; 6 to 8:30 PM: Music on the Lawn. St John's Church Lawn

Thursday, August 22, 6-8 PM: Point Cocktail Party. Hunter House. 54 Washington Street

Tuesday, September 17, 6 to 7:30 PM: Point Association Fall Meeting. All members. St John's Church

*Please check the
thepointassociation.org
and Points of Interest
for updates to times or
dates of these events.*