

ROTCH 2012

ON THE WATERFRONT

In January 2010, Boston's Fort Point neighborhood and Seaport area were declared an Innovation District as part of the city of Boston's ongoing efforts to develop the South Boston waterfront.

Already home to a diverse collection of cultural institutions including the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA), the Children's Museum, and most recently the Boston Society of Architects, the area also has a well-known history as New England's largest artist community. Its fantastic stock of historical buildings – former warehouses and factories built by the Boston Wharf Company in the late 19th and early 20th centuries – continues to attract a growing population of creative people – architects, photographers, graphic artists, woodworkers, sculptors – who both live and work in the area.





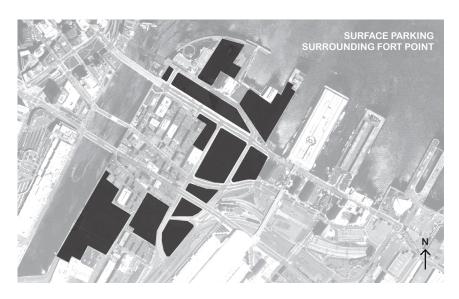


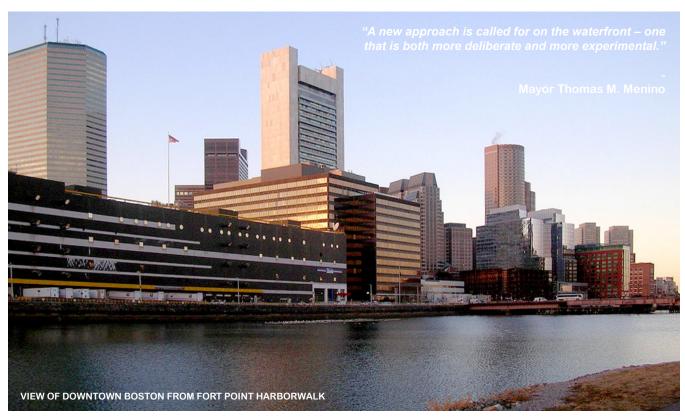


A DEVELOPING DISTRICT

Named a historic landmark district in 2009, Fort Point claims many significant valuable buildings, a dense urban fabric and proximity to downtown, yet it is also perfectly poised for further development.

Just across the channel from the heart of downtown Boston, and a fiveminute walk to South Station, Fort Point is nonetheless underdeveloped. Surrounded by a sea of surface parking, the district contains the largest tract of developable land in the city, including a number of prime parcels along the Although development waterfront. progress in the district slowed during the recent recession, a number of high profile projects have already been built, and momentum is gathering again. New projects currently on the boards include a new 180' residential tower on A Street, a gourmet market on Congress Street, a boutique hotel, and a number of additional residential buildings.





FORT POINT NEEDS A SCHOOL

Although re-appropriated architecture and high density living are increasingly attractive to city dwellers, neighborhood amenities and infrastructure must keep pace with development in order to create sustainable urban communities. While new cultural institutions and restaurants in Fort Point have begun to offer the amenities the neighborhood needs, its infrastructure is severely lacking. Young professionals and families drawn to the area's cultural attractions, historic building stock and urban density continue to move in, but the district desperately needs more green space, playgrounds, food markets and schools.

In the last ten years, many young people who moved to the area have begun to have children. The transition from an artist enclave to a family-friendly neighborhood has been difficult since the area lacks the infrastructure needed to sustain a vibrant residential community.

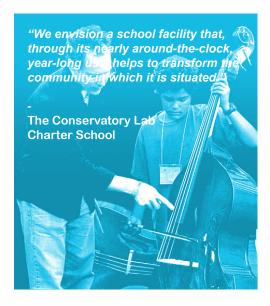
This project brief proposes a **new public school for the arts** that could serve as a cultural hub for the emerging Fort Point District. This new school would aim to promote and support the district's emerging future while providing a much needed resource for the surrounding residential community. Through a hybrid of both public and private program, this new school has the potential to secure a more stable and permanent demographic.

A PROGRESSIVE NEIGHBORHOOD, A PROGRESSIVE SCHOOL

The Conservatory Lab Charter School, currently a Brighton-based public school, is considering a move to the Fort Point / Seaport District and enlarging to a 400 student, K-8 school. The school's progressive pedagogy is based in Learning Through Music, a model of education in which music is infused in students' studies. Incorporating principles from Expeditionary Learning, the school promotes arts education as connected to the larger community through public performance spaces, galleries, and a recording studio / radio station. The public program incorporated into the curriculum and architecture is intended to create a more socially charged waterfront by overlapping existing residents and the city at large.

This project provides a vision for a new building for the Conservatory School in the Fort Point District. The building must support the school's needs while helping to ensure the neighborhood's future as an artistic and cultural center in Boston by engaging its visitors in the daily life of the community.

The Conservatory Lab Public School should be imagined as a new urban model for excellence in music education.





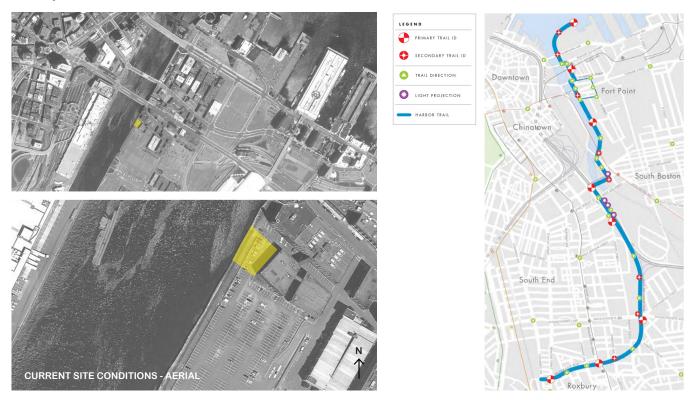
A VERTICAL SCHOOL ON THE WATERFRONT

As an urban building on a tight footprint, this project must reconfigure the school program and typology *vertically*, providing for stacked circulation and building systems as well as visual connections across multiple levels. Spatially and programmatically, the building should be organized around circulation cores, voids and various vertical elements that connect the levels of the school while also providing for sectional variety across programs. Consider carefully issues of openness and security, engagement and privacy, and flexibility and stability in the context of the daily life of the school as well as the neighborhood and the larger city context.

AN ICONIC SITE

The site under consideration for the Conservatory School is a 9,400SF parcel at the intersection of Necco Ct. and the South Bay Harbor Trail portion of Boston's HarborWalk with a 100' frontage along Fort Point Channel. Bounded on two sides by a historic fabric of five- to seven-story warehouses, the site faces downtown Boston across the Channel, and abuts what is currently a very large scale parking lot that is slated to become one of the city's major green spaces.

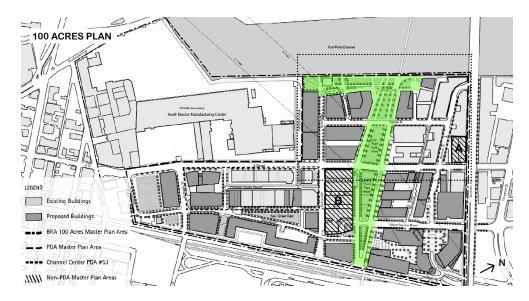
The site has the potential to bridge the gap between the historic fabric of the neighborhood and its future southern development. As seen from the city, this potential building and site are perfectly positioned to provide a new iconic image for entry into the Fort Point district.



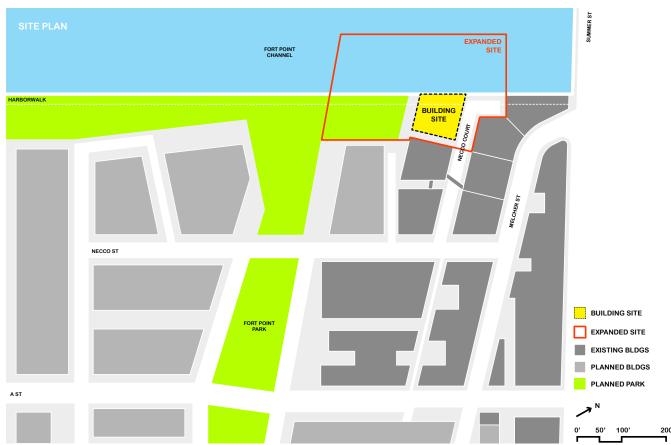
The new school building must operate on multiple scales, engaging the local street fabric and recent extension of the HarborWalk as well as the Fort Point skyline. Initially, the building would bracket the neighborhood on its southern edge, becoming an integral component in the string of cultural buildings along the waterfront, from the Children's Museum to the Moakley Courthouse to the ICA. But as the neighborhood continues to push south into the adjacent parking areas, the site will become a central cultural attractor for residents, visitors, and those that are working in the area. Your design must consider both phases of development, in terms of how your building meets the site, re-imagines the site, and how it engages with its urban fabric and the water's edge.

GREEN CORRIDOR ENTRY POINT

Although the site is currently adjacent to a sprawling parking lot owned by neighboring Gillette, that area is slated to become a major new green axis running from the Channel to the Convention Center under the city's 100 Acres Plan.



The new school building should be designed to operate as a significant entry point to this anticipated new green corridor, engaging with the adjacent landscape stitching together the waterfront with the developing south edge of the neighborhood. The site currently caps this edge, and will serve as a catalyst for development - setting the precedent for a new tectonic and programmatic language for future density and a new urban landscape at the water's edge.

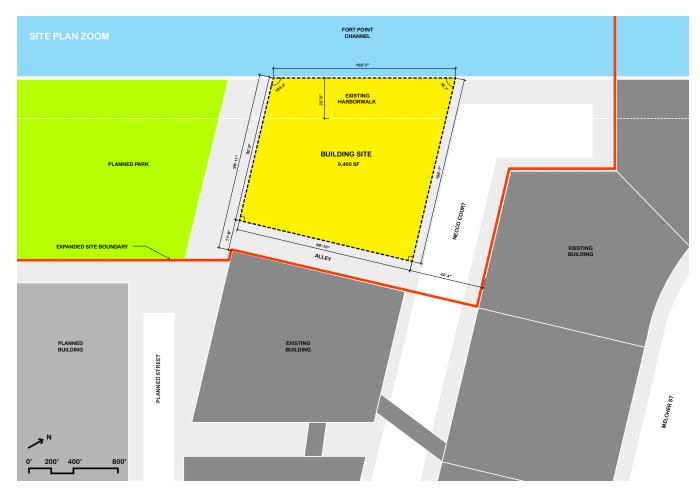


TRANSPARENCY + PUBLIC PASSAGE

At the building scale, your task is to engage and re-imagine the existing public passage through the site – the HarborWalk – with the galleries and public auditorium of the school. Your design should provide horizontal and vertical circulation and visual and physical access for both students and public visitors. This passage through the school will form a crucial space of engagement, allowing the school to broaden its audience beyond students and teachers, and to engage directly with the local community.



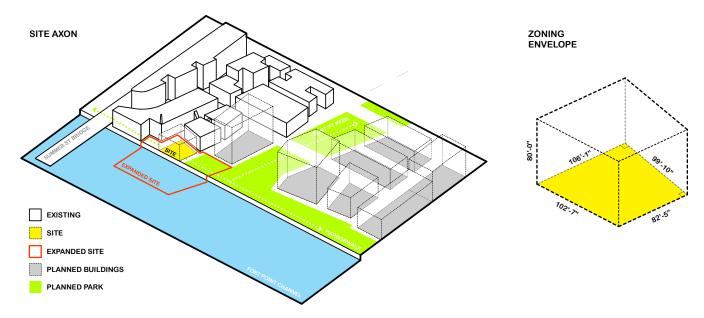
Visual transparency and issues of acoustics must be carefully considered in both the public passage and the inner life of the school. All classrooms - known as "learning studios" - are thought of as small-scale performance spaces, where students of varying ages teach and learn from one another through the experience of collective performance. While performance spaces must be acoustically isolated from one another in order to function properly, sound and visual transparency may be used to broadcast performances into public spaces, both within and outside the school.



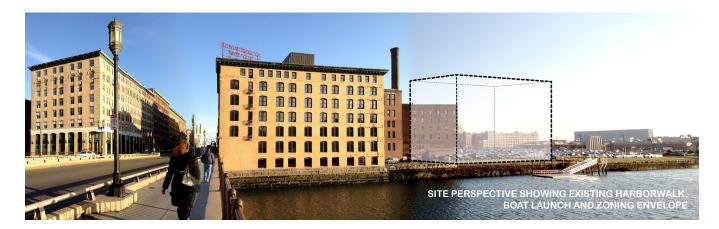
VERTICAL MASSING + EXPANDED SITE

Building massing should take into account the 100 Acres Plan, which designates this particular parcel with an 80-foot height limit. Consider the site in relationship to the large landscape axis planned for the south, existing adjacent buildings, and other planned buildings. Since the site for the school is constrained by potential future development, the school must rise vertically to fit the required program. Vertical cores serving both school and public functions should take into account questions of visual transparency and acoustic separation in addition to the requirements of circulation of people, air, light and water.

In addition to the public passage, some exterior space should be allocated for open space and playgrounds serving the school as well as the local community. These areas may be located on site or adjacent to the site in the expanded site area (see site plans and site axon for expanded site boundaries). A loading dock and bus drop off zone should be indicated on your plans (assume 12' minimum width), and may be located in Necco Court with a turn-around at the end of the block, or in the adjacent alley extended to meet the planned street to the south of the site.



This site is the last remaining buildable parcel in the 100 Acres Plan that is directly adjacent to the waterfront. Take full advantage of this adjacency to develop an architectural strategy for meeting the water's edge. You may choose to divert the current path of the HarborWalk through your site, incorporate a redesign for the existing public boat launch, or integrate floating components with your building program, but in any case you should consider the waterfront as a crucial frontage for your project.



PROGRAM

Building program is divided into areas that must be accommodated within the given site boundaries and zoning envelope, and areas that may be located within the expanded site as indicated on site plans.

PLEASE NOTE:

- ALL PROGRAM SQUARE FOOTAGES ARE APPROXIMATE
- CONSIDER A HIGHER CEILING HEIGHT / SECTION FOR ALL STARRED PROGRAMS (*)

To be located within building site:

CIRCULATION	11,000 SF
*Public (interior or exterior)	4,000 SF
*School (interior)	6,000 SF
*Art Gallery / Foyer	1,000 SF
PERFORMANCE SPACE	4,000 SF
*Performance Hall	2,000 SF
*2 Ensemble Rooms	1,500 SF
Radio / Recording Station	500 SF
STUDIOS / CLASSROOMS	25,000 SF
18 Learning Studios	16,200 SF
3 Group Music Studios	4,500 SF
6 Individual Music Studios	700 SF
8 Math / Reading Studios	1,600 SF
1 Art Studio	1,000 SF
1 Science Studio	1,000 SF
COMMON SPACE	10,000 SF
*Kitchen / Dining Hall	2,500 SF
5 Gathering Spaces (Large & Small)	1,500 SF
*Gymnasium & Locker Rooms	4,000 SF
*Library / Media Center	2,000 SF
ADMINISTRATIVE SPACE	1,500 SF
Private Offices, Nurse's Office, Shared Teacher Workspace	
STORAGE / UTILITIES	1,500 SF
Instrument Storage, Bathrooms	.,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,,
TOTAL > building site	approximately 53,000 SF
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To be located within expanded site:	
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Bus Dropoff / Loading Dock	1,500 SF 1,500 SF
Bus Dropoil / Loading Dock	1,500 SF
OPEN SPACE	7,000 SF
Playground	2,000 SF
Playing Field (optional)	5,000 SF
TOTAL > expanded site	approximately 8,500 SF
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RESOURCES

Innovation District

www.innovationdistrict.org

100 Acres Plan

www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.com/planning/PlanningInitsIndividual.asp?action=ViewInit&InitID=33

Fort Point Channel Landmark District

www.cityofboston.gov/landmarks/historic/fpc.asp

Conservatory Lab Charter School

conservatorylab.org

Harbor Walk / Harbor Trail

www.southbaytrail.com www.bostonharborwalk.com

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The presentation is limited to four (4) 30" x 36" mounted boards displayed side-by-side vertically. No projections from the boards are permitted. Your drawings should be clearly labeled and a descriptive text provided outlining the conceptual framework, goals and a basic description of the proposed design not to exceed 200 words. Be sure to include your full name on each board. The following drawings are the minimum documentation required:

SITE PLAN (scale: 1:500)

- showing proposal and connection to Fort Point neighborhood

GROUND FLOOR PLAN (scale: 1/16" = 1'-0")

- showing expanded site, public and school circulation including entry and dropoff/loading, and open space

TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN (scale: 1/16" = 1'-0")

- showing typical floor with classrooms, core, common space

FLOOR PLANS (scale: 1/32" = 1'-0")

- showing all floors with basic layout

TYPICAL SECTIONS (2 minimum, scale: 1/16" = 1'-0")

- showing vertical organization of the school and cores
- showing connections to the public waterfront promenade and green corridor

AERIAL PERSPECTIVE

- showing the school in the context of the Fort Point neighborhood

PERSPECTIVE VIEWS (3 minimum)

- eye-level perspectives showing building exteriors and site context
- eye-level perspectives showing building interiors, including classrooms and public spaces

DIAGRAMS / STRATEGY NOTATION (3 minimum)

- programmatic distribution
- vertical circulation sequences, both for the public and the school
- vertical utility cores

CONCEPTUAL EXPLODED AXONOMETRIC

- diagrammatic drawing showing design concept