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Preserving Places, Making Spaces in Baltimore: Seeing the Connections of Research, Teaching, and Service as Justice

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Abstract

Effective place-based learning challenges the traditional understanding of academic service. The present article demonstrates that students and scholars can engage and collaborate with communities to identify, analyze, and respond to pressing social problems. Service, in this context, is integrated with teaching and research. This article traces the development of an applied research course at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. Students and professors conducted research on the neighborhoods that compose Baybrook, an industrial community in the southern corner of Baltimore City. The course demonstrates that public history methods can create dynamic social spaces in which scholars and residents work together to frame questions, conduct research, and preserve urban places.

Keywords

urban history, deindustrialization, Baltimore City, civic engagement, environmental justice

On Saturday May 19, 2011, Catherine Benicewicz arrived at the Polish Home Hall, a place she knows well. Her family came from Poland to Curtis Bay, a factory town across the river from Baltimore City, in 1910. She was born in 1918 as Curtis Bay was on the cusp of being annexed from Anne Arundel County into the city of Baltimore. Her family moved to Filbert Street, where the Polish Home Hall is located, in 1922 when she was just four years old. In 1925, Benicewicz's father, Anthony Tarnowski, and other Polish residents of Curtis Bay banded together to purchase the Polish Home Hall as a community space.[1] The building, built in 1905 in the vernacular Beaux Arts style popular during the period, is conveniently located just a few blocks from St. Athanasius Catholic Church.[2] Benicewicz has fond memories of going to school in the Polish Home Hall as a child, learning both English and Polish along with a host of other subjects. Benicewicz recalls dances at the Polish Home Hall where children would eat ice cream as the adults drank beer to Polish music. This was a time before babysitters became the norm for working-class Americans and the children would fall asleep in the large double-seat benches in the hall until their parents were done with the festivities and carried them home.

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The United Polish Societies of Curtis Bay held oyster roasts and parties to pay for the hall and secure a space for the Polish community of Curtis Bay and surrounding areas to come together and build a sense of place in the United States of America. The Polish community worked hard in the surrounding industries and valued their church and their hall as spaces for celebration and camaraderie. Benicewicz and her husband were the caretakers of the Polish Home Hall until the 1980s when it became too much for them and they handed the duty over to another Polish organization that did not take care of the historic building.

The Curtis Bay Benicewicz knew as a young girl had greatly changed by the 1980s. Industry fled the area and a postindustrial period of disinvestment and decline had affected the community and the Polish Home Hall. The twenty-first century brought hope as the Baybrook Coalition, a non-profit community development corporation, sought to revive the area. Carol Eshelman, director of the Coalition from 2002 until 2010, researched the deed of the dilapidated building and found Catherine Benicewicz. A beautiful friendship and impressive rehabilitation endeavor began with Benicewicz deeding the building to the Coalition. The Polish Home Hall was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 2007 when it reopened. Benicewicz calls Eshelman a "guardian angel" for the work she has done to revive the place so central to her heart and the heart of the community.[3]

We were not sure if Benicewicz, at a spry ninety-three, would be able to make it to the "Bridging Baybrook: Preserving the Past, Developing the Future" community-based public history event my undergraduate students had organized on that Saturday in May in 2011 at the Polish Home Hall. When she entered the building, which she had not seen in almost two years, I welcomed her and went to find the student who had worked on transcribing my oral history interview with Benicewicz and who had used this interview as the beginning of his research into the history of the Polish Home Hall. The history panel he designed hung on the wall. I asked the student if he would like to meet Catherine Benicewicz. He looked at me with the awe and admiration people in their early twenties usually reserve for rock stars or celebrities and said, "Is she really here?" When I nodded in affirmation he responded, "Yes. I'd love to meet her. I can't believe she actually came." It was one of those moments when I love what I do—a moment of tangible connections.

As a university professor, research, teaching, and service are my main duties; however, they rarely come together so well as they have in the past five years since I designed the "Preserving Places, Making Spaces in Baltimore" course ("Preserving Places") as a new assistant professor at UMBC (University of Maryland, Baltimore County). In the context of my professorial duties, service often means committee meetings and often-tedious duties that rarely produce transformative moments like that one at the Polish Home Hall.[4] However, urban history courses based in civic engagement shift the meaning of service from your department, university, and field to incorporate an expanded meaning of service that includes the communities that surround the university. This expanded perspective on service influences our teaching and research best when focused on specific places while being connected to broad issues such as industrialization, capitalism, justice, and the environment. From the "Preserving Places" course, I have developed a renewed sense of the relevance of urban history inside and outside of the academy. This article argues for a new interpretation of service within the academy—one that moves beyond the walls of the classroom and the university into the community and uses teaching and research to better understand, analyze, and engage urban communities.

A central theme of the course and the resulting research is that preserving places through interpretation and public history programming creates social space—the room for people and perspectives to come together. The course expands the traditional preservation model of rehab and adaptive reuse to include small interventions and events that bring attention to historic but overlooked places while also encouraging dialogue and discussion. The "Preserving Places" course and the research presented here are inspired by the complex relationship between place

and space. Cultural geographer Yi-Fu Tuan describes place as the physical embodiment of the attachments of past use and the residuals of human experience. Space, on the other hand, expresses freedom and openness—movement, which includes how places change and connect to shifting meaning over time. For Tuan, these are integrative relationships; the pause of place only derives meaning in relation to the movement of space.[5] In the context of the course I designed, to preserve places is to recognize their histories and the relationships people have formed with the built environment over time and to see how to connect these places to larger issues. Analyzing place requires combining the methods of cultural landscape studies with oral history.[6] In the most basic sense, to preserve the past stories of overlooked places is to open up the room to see urban space and history in new ways.

As this article moves from a pedagogical discussion into research, the issue of connecting place and space (like teaching and research) is central. The subject of this article, the Greater Baybrook area of Baltimore City, is an industrial community that has served as an urban dumping ground since the nineteenth century. Yet the community has maintained a connection to nature and green space. Baybrook is geographically isolated from Baltimore's urban core by the Patapsco River, and while this area in the southernmost tip of Baltimore is often overlooked, we are all connected to Baybrook because our waste goes to this area and our toxic chemicals have been produced and stored there. Baybrook's story should inform our thinking about future urban development.

I use the term "community" to signify the shared history and interests of the entire Greater Baybrook area and use "neighborhood" to reflect the distinct subcommunities of residents closely connected by geography, character, and often race or ethnicity.[7] I refer to this entire community of extreme south Baltimore that is cut off from downtown by the Patapsco River as Greater Baybrook—a merging of the names of the main two remaining neighborhoods in the community, Brooklyn and Curtis Bay.[8] The Greater Baybrook area includes the past and present neighborhoods of Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, Fairfield, Hawkin's Point, Masonville, and Wagner's Point. Through building relationships with local residents, nonprofits, businesses, and other organizations, the "Preserving Places" project strives to develop methods for envisioning society's connections to industrial space and provide a map to navigate the tensions of preservation and development for the future.

Preserving Places: From Classroom to Community

In 2008, I received a $1,500 Faculty Innovation Grant funded by the Kauffman Foundation and managed by the UMBC's Alex. Brown Center for Entrepreneurship to use as seed money for the development of an undergraduate course titled "Preserving Places, Making Spaces in Baltimore." This upper-level applied research course uses Dolores Hayden's *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* as well as the edited collections *The Baltimore Book: New Views on History* and *Baltimore 68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City* as models for place-based public history projects.[9] The course readings and assignments train students to complete historical research and develop related public programming. In addition, students work with and volunteer on various projects currently underway in the community.[10] Students develop a budget to use the grant's seed money to fund their project in a way that is designed to produce revenue (and thereby sustain the course for future semesters). Once the seed money is replenished, all profits go to a local nonprofit organization. Students think and act as social entrepreneurs, individuals who recognize social problems and work with others to use entrepreneurial principles to organize, create, and manage a venture to effect social change.[11] The culmination of the course is a public history event held in the community. Students use the seed money to produce revenue through endeavors such as designing and selling T-shirts or buttons based on community history, selling tickets to the final event, having silent auctions or raffles at the event, selling ads to local

businesses to fund the production of the event program, and planning fundraisers at the university campus.

In spring 2009, the first class project focused on Brooklyn's Club 4100. Dating to 1958, this iconic restaurant and sports bar was a space where legendary Baltimore Colts football players, such as Johnny Unitas, congregated with the local community. The Colts left Baltimore during the cover of night in 1984—in the midst of a citywide downturn tied to postindustrialization. These losses proved to be a major psychological blow to city residents. Club 4100, which still has the look and feel of Colts-era Baltimore, represents an earlier time when sports legends were a part of the local community. Students organized a community celebration and sports social at Club 4100 consisting of public history programming, auctions and raffles for sports memorabilia, sports icon signings (including ex-Colts), storytelling, entertainment, and food. The profits ($900) from the event were donated to Concerned Citizens for a Better Brooklyn (CCBB), a local nonprofit neighborhood group. Originally, I envisioned that the class would focus on a different neighborhood each time it was taught; however, I realized that this was more than a class. "Preserving Places" is a project based on building long-term relationships and partnerships with a community.

In spring 2011, the course expanded to examine the entire Greater Baybrook community, where Brooklyn is located, and began to develop a focus on environmental justice.[12] This struggling community is a mix of diverse but connected neighborhoods all shaped physically, economically, and socially by urban industrial development. My students participated in various community events and also volunteered time in local afterschool programs focused on using art to get local students to visualize their "sense of place" in Baybrook. The class organized a successful public history event, "Bridging Baybrook: Preserving the Past, Developing the Future," at the Polish Home Hall. The programming featured history panels, a large map of the area where the community could linger and tell stories, environmentally focused projects for children, and a silent auction of place-based art created by the students from local schools. The event brought the community together to discuss its past while enjoying food and entertainment.[13] The profits from the event (over $400) were donated to the Baybrook Coalition. Following the 2011 course, I began to focus my own research agenda on the "lost neighborhoods" of Baybrook (Masonville, Fairfield, and Wagner's Point—all located on the industrial peninsula, all which have been recently demolished as part of the complex "city shrinkage" movement and industrial redevelopment plans).[14]

In summer 2011, Visual Arts professor Steve Bradley and I received a university fellowship to develop a digital mapping website for visualizing research on Baybrook (mine in cultural history and his on art as a social change agent). The Mapping Baybrook prototype was designed by the Imaging Research Center, which supports interdisciplinary collaboration among artists, researchers, partners, and students in creating technologically advanced media works that communicate to and resonate with the general public. The idea for a map derived from the complexity of connections and boundaries between the various neighborhoods in Baybrook as well as the theory that the public often understands spatial stories better if they are visualized and include the stories of residents.[15]

In fall 2012, I taught the "Preserving Places" course, for a third time in connection with Steve Bradley's "Imaging Research Fellows" course, a unique fellowship designed to recognize, reward, and encourage students who have displayed exceptional artistic talent and skill in computer technology during their first two years as undergraduate art majors. This collaboration was funded by a Breaking Ground grant, which enabled our two classes to work together on the project.[16] "Preserving Places" and "Imaging Research Fellows" were two separate courses from different departments and disciplines taught on different days by different professors that worked collaboratively on the similar outcomes—populating the Mapping Baybrook website with content and planning an event where the website and other class projects debuted in the community at the Polish Home Hall.[17] Early in the semester, my students learned the methods of oral history

and place-based cultural documentation. In addition, students attend community meetings and events that push them to interact with the people living and working in the area we study. Taking the lead from residents is essential for a successful project.

Once students become familiar with the methods of documentation and the community, they develop a theme for the class project. In 2012, students focused on the historic main streets—Patapsco Avenue in Brooklyn and Pennington Avenue in Curtis Bay.[18] Once we had a focus, students worked to develop a name for the project—Mapping Baybrook: From Main Street to the Harbor—and producing a mission statement, strategic plan, committee structure, and a budget. Students used city directories, criss cross directories, Sanborn maps, and other primary resources to collect information on each main street block. Then they researched the stories behind these places and did site visits. Student research is archived on the website https://mappingbaybrook.org/.

Bradley's art students worked with local high school students and a group of seniors to create collaborative art projects focused on the sense of place in Baybrook. The American studies and visual arts students worked within their own disciplines while also collaborating on our end-of-the-semester event at the Polish Home Hall. Throughout the semester, the visual arts students did design work for the American studies students, who functioned as clients. For example, American studies students described a logo they wanted designed for the project and a visual arts student executed it. The logo was used on the T-shirts and buttons the "Preserving Places" students sold.

On the day of the event, the first floor of the Polish Home Hall was filled with music, food, public history projects, and the sounds of over one hundred people gathered to socialize and celebrate Baybrook's history. The second floor provided a space for quiet reflection for people to view the art exhibition organized by the visual arts class. The event raised $1,200 (our best fundraiser yet) to donate to the Baybrook Coalition for the continued preservation of the Polish Home Hall. Even more important than the money raised, the event successfully brought people together. Old friends and even long lost loves were reunited at the event. The most successful pedagogical aspect of the course is that it pushes undergraduate students to think about the intangibles of culture in a very tangible way.

The idea of collaboration—between different fields, departments, classes, and community partners—serves as a model for expanding urban history education and civic engagement. Service becomes more directly integrated into teaching and research. For the class to productively move forward, I needed to research and construct a narrative based in the course theme of urban history and environmental justice that could offer context and a jumping off point for my students. While the course works with the extant communities of Brooklyn and Curtis Bay, my research focuses on the "lost neighborhoods" that no longer physically exist. What has been destroyed is deeply connected to what remains. What follows is the story of those connections.

Mapping Baybrook: Environmental Justice in Industrial South Baltimore

In 1976, Fairfield was the last neighborhood in Baltimore City to receive public sewer lines.[19] An almost entirely African American neighborhood by 1970, Fairfield's residents still used outhouses and some homes even lacked running water.[20] This late arrival of public sewers in Fairfield is made more absurd considering that for thirty-five years, since 1941, the City of Baltimore's Bureau of Sewers operated the Patapsco Wastewater Treatment Plant less than one mile from Fairfield.[21] Fairfield's residents struggled without basic services while also sustaining a rich social life in their isolated industrial enclave. Despite encroaching industrial pollution, residents still maintained impressive community gardens, a public ball field, and various churches, while suffering the smells and pollution of the sewage treatment plant without any of the benefits. This sewer story illustrates how Baybrook's industrial peninsula has functioned as an overlooked and forgotten corner of Baltimore.

For the purposes of this narrative, I am focusing on the "lost neighborhoods" of the industrial peninsula of Baybrook—Masonville, Fairfield, and Wagner's Point.[22] The industrial peninsula where these neighborhoods were located is also referred to simply as "the point" or the "the peninsula" because, unlike Brooklyn and Curtis Bay, they protrude out into the waters of the river and the bay.[23] These neighborhoods no longer physically exist, yet they offer important stories that illustrate the trajectory of urban industrial development and connect this specific story to the social and economic development of Baltimore and other postindustrial port cities.

Analyzing the lost neighborhoods of Baybrook as specific places located in the larger space of Greater Baybrook exemplifies the connections within the urban-industrial landscape. Jeremy Korr's discussion of cultural landscapes as a relationship between people, places, and, the often-overlooked aspect, nature is useful when applied to the lost neighborhoods. As Matthew Klingle writes, "Space itself has a history that emerges from how humans wield power over one another with nature as their instrument. It is this insight, best developed by social and historical geographers, that holds great promise in reconciling various explanations of urban environmental change. Spatial histories can reveal how social relations, cultural ideas, and material changes intertwine through time *and* space."[24] The story of the lost neighborhoods of Baybrook reflects the tragedy of boom and bust urban industrial development and the tenacity of a community striving for environmental justice and equilibrium between development and preservation. Environmental justice is the "analytical framework that examines how race and class affect environmental issues," which focuses on the "fair treatment" and "meaningful involvement" of all people on issues of environmental policy.[25] The story of the lost neighborhoods and their struggle for environmental justice encompasses both the outside businessmen who developed the area and those who helped build and lived in these communities—the working-class residents. The residents of the community are an often-forgotten part of the narrative of industrial development as well as its decline.

Early Development: The City Center Absorbs the Hinterlands for Profit

Physical and social boundaries of places are constantly changing.[26] The development of Baybrook exemplifies the connections William Cronon discusses in *Nature's Metropolis*: "In economic and environmental terms, we should think of a city and its hinterland not as two clearly defined and easily recognizable places but as a multitude of overlapping markets and resource regions."[27] The wealthy developers living in the center of Baltimore City in the nineteenth century understood this connection as they planned to develop the Baybrook area composed of bucolic farms and waterside resorts into an urban industrial complex.

During the mid-seventeenth century, the second Lord Baltimore received a charter from King Charles I and made land grants to "gentlemen-speculators" in the area that is now Baybrook. In the eighteenth century, the Cromwell family owned much of the rich farmland that turned into Baybrook's industrial peninsula.[28] By the nineteenth century, while still part of Anne Arundel County, the area functioned dually as farms and "pleasure resorts" for many weekend trips from the city to the county where restrictions on weekend amusements such as gambling and drinking were more lax.[29] Beginning in the 1840s, recreational spaces such as Jack Flood's Park, Acton's Park, and the Walnut Spring Hotel grew up along the water in Baybrook. These spots were "gambling houses and political hangouts," which involved booze and vaudeville performances.[30] The geography and legal aspects of Baybrook's location across the river from the city were essential to its spatial story.

During the 1910s, public sentiments against drinking and gambling along with the desire of landowners to further develop industry along the water pushed many of the pleasure resorts out of business. When those uses came to an end, the Baybrook territory began its status as the city's

dumping ground. During the nineteenth century, the Crisp family became major landowners on the peninsula. In 1845, the City of Baltimore purchased twenty acres from the Crisp family for a Marine Hospital just past the line of quarantine recently established by the City.[31] The hospital originally tended to sick immigrants or sailors, but when the smallpox epidemic of 1871 hit Baltimore, the site was used as a pest house and cemetery, where the sick and contagious were isolated and then disposed of away from the populous urban core. The hospital was not well maintained and was reported in 1884 by the Baltimore City Board of Health to be in a "miserable condition."[32] Mrs. William Potts, who moved to Fairfield in 1884, told a *Baltimore Sun* reporter in 1941, "In those days a marine hospital occupied the site now being developed into the biggest shipyard on the Atlantic seaboard. . . . It was known far and wide for the great number of victims of dreaded smallpox that were sent there from the city to die, and its great cemetery was a sight never to be forgotten."[33] The City later had the structure burned and attempted to sell the land. However, the land was vacant until 1897 when the City hired a laborer by the name of William Helmstetter to take care of Baltimore's only recorded case of leprosy at the spot of the old pest house. The leper was a poor Italian immigrant named Mary Sansone.[34] The peninsula was close enough to the city to serve as a dumping ground for the sick but far enough away to escape laws and contagion. Dubious recreation and waste disposal are aspects of urban life that elite city leaders often attempt to hide, or at least keep distant from their own neighborhoods, enclaves, and business districts.[35]

Residents often challenged these types of questionable land uses. By 1878, the Crisp family had formed the Fairfield Improvement Company to develop Fairfield as a residential community, but the City's placement of the leper Mary Sansone on the spot of the old pest house pushed the Fairfield Improvement Company to sue the City of Baltimore as a way to protect their investment. In 1898, the Fairfield Improvement Company won a "perpetual injunction against the City's reuse of the land for pest house purposes," an early example of the hinterlands battling the city over questionable land use issues.[36]

The Fairfield Improvement Association was not the first organization formed to develop the Greater Baybrook area. In 1853, businessmen formed the Patapsco Company, a realty corporation to develop the area.[37] In 1856, the Cromwell and Crisp families constructed the Light Street toll bridge, which connected Baybrook to the city.[38] In 1874 the Patapsco Company was reorganized and incorporated as the Patapsco Land Company (PLC). The PLC was composed of prominent Baltimoreans who resided in elite residential neighborhoods near downtown Baltimore, not Baybrook, and who composed a grandiose plan to develop the area as an industrial hub blended with residential communities.[39] The lack of better transportation options again hampered the realization of this vision. However, in 1878, the state purchased the Light Street Bridge and lifted the toll, making the area better connected to the city. Yet again, in 1882, the PLC was reorganized as the **S**outh Baltimore Harbor and Improvement Company (SBHIC), which brought the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad to the community in 1882 and lured more factories to settle in the area.[40] The Baltimore and Curtis Bay Railway opened its first electric streetcar line across the Light Street Bridge in 1892 and created an even better environment for development.[41] Grand visions of a "quaint bedroom community" across the river were replaced with heavy industry and simple housing for immigrant workers.[42]

In the 1880s and 1890s industrial growth began to take off and the lost neighborhoods began to develop their own individual identities. Industrial plants—mostly chemical and fertilizer factories—spread throughout the area along with nearby housing for recent immigrants to provide cheap labor.[43] Industry and immigration patterns were intricately connected to the development of Greater Baybrook.[44] The *Baltimore Sun* reported, "Once dotted with 'shores'—summer houses of city folks, waterfront resorts and beer gardens of the horse and buggy days. . . . These early industries changed the whole face of the territory."[45] The metropolis was consuming the hinterlands and a new spatial story was emerging.

Life on the Industrial Peninsula: Masonville, Fairfield, and Wagner's Point

Masonville, essentially a small railroad town, developed after 1882 when the B&O came to town. James D. Mason, the namesake of the neighborhood, was a prominent Baltimore businessman. He owned a successful cake and cracker business located on Stiles and President streets in the east part of downtown.[46] Mason's residential development follows the trend of center city elite speculating in the untapped hinterlands of Baybrook, now made more accessible by better transportation networks. Yet these speculative endeavors often produced strong working-class neighborhoods and a sense of community for newly arrived immigrants.

Masonville was a tight-knit neighborhood of white ethnic immigrants (primarily German) who labored in local factories and for the railroad. Most families were related by blood or marriage. There were fifty-two houses (mostly two-story, three-bedroom clapboard structures) and three streets in Masonville—Matson, Marvin, and Holly (listed on some maps as Hollins). The memories of Masonville have been researched and recorded by Horton McCormick, who was born in Masonville in 1929.[47]

McCormick recalls playing on the sand piles of the Arundel Sand and Gravel Company by the water of the Masonville Cove as a young boy where natural and industrial space mingled together as a playground for the local youth:

> We would spend a lot of time down in the woods or at the cove. We would fish. We would crab. We would hunt and swim. And one of the kinda funny things about it was that there was a Brooklyn Chemical Company up on 9th Street close to Patapsco Avenue that would discharge some of their chemicals into the storm drain and the storm drain would eventually end up down in the Masonville Cove. And there were traces of copper on the bottom of the river. And for those who had blond hair and would go swimming they would come out and their hair would be chartreuse.[48]

Catherine Benicewicz, who has lived her entire life in Curtis Bay, recalls Masonville Cove, "That was our Miami Beach. . . . They had a sand and gravel nearby. So we got this white sand. You gotta be careful because there'd be a drop, you know. But all kinds of people from Brooklyn and Curtis Bay would walk over there in the summer time. And have their, you know have your bathing suit on under your clothes."[49] Residents took advantage of the industrial manipulations of nature going on in the area to create communal spaces for recreation.

The residential Masonville tract bordered the large land holdings of Frank Furst, a prominent businessman and political player in Baltimore who owned the Arundel Corporation. His business interests spanned from sand and gravel, dredging, public works (garbage, sewage), building dams, and general land development. McCormick remembers the construction of Frankfurst Avenue, named for the wealthy Furst after his 1934 death: "I remember as a youngster watching the construction company workmen as they graded the fields, marshes, and woods for the new road. The workmen unearthed a large graveyard and there were lots of human bones and skulls on the ground. Some of the workmen put bones and skulls on their trucks and tractors. It was a scary site."[50] The construction workers were perhaps discovering the mass graves of smallpox victims, who were the first in a long line of discarded remains on the industrial peninsula.

Like many Masonville boys, McCormick joined the Air Force to fight in the Korean War in 1951. Little did he know that when he left it would be the last time he would see Masonville. The small neighborhood was torn down in 1952 to accommodate the expansion of the B&O railroad. Even as the keeper of the historical memory of the lost neighborhood of Masonville, McCormick is not overly romantic or nostalgic about where he grew up. When I asked, "How did that feel, going off to fight in a war? Then, when you come back the community you grew up in is gone." McCormick replied, "Well, Masonville was nice, we had a good time there but the people . . . as soon as they got of age, they normally left to Brooklyn and better things. So it wasn't a big thing.

I only came to really appreciate Masonville as I got older and I started telling about it and hearing the stories."[51] However, when McCormick went to visit his good friend Bill Johnson in a nursing home right before Johnson died, he asked his friend, "Bill, if you had one thing to live over, what would it be?" Bill Johnson replied, "I'd like to have one more week in Masonville."[52] At the recently built Masonville Cove Environmental Education Center off of Frankfurst Avenue, local school children learn about the natural environmental of the Cove. But if they look to their left once they enter the "green building," there is a plague with articles on the history of the Masonville neighborhood donated by Horton McCormick.[53]

Masonville's history is a short and simple story compared to Fairfield. Throughout its history, Fairfield blended qualities of both urban and rural space. Fairfield began in the 1880s with houses built by mostly German immigrants who labored in the area's rich soil and later worked in the burgeoning industries on the peninsula. In the early twentieth century, African Americans from the South migrated to Fairfield. Describing the lack of housing opportunities for blacks in Baltimore during the Great Migration, Sherry Olson writes, "There were also shanties built by industry or tolerated on industrial land adjoining the fertilizer and chemical factories as at Fairfield. But it was virtually impossible for black dealers to buy land or for white developers to buy land to build houses for blacks. The only option was secondhand housing, and any expansion of the total housing supply for blacks depended on some turnover of communities."[54] The houses African Americans bought in Fairfield in the early and mid-twentieth century were not really "shanties" and the racial turnover in Fairfield was initially very slow. Fairfield functioned as a rare integrated community in the Baltimore area into the 1960s.[55] The reasons were perhaps the area's isolation, the industrial nature of the community, and the fact that residents were recent immigrants from Europe and black workers. Fairfield's racial dynamics are similar to the neighborhood's complex overlap of urban and rural qualities. Residents in Fairfield raised animals and had impressive gardens but were surrounded by the industrial plants that provided work—work that was segregated by race. However, the story of John Widgeon illustrates that Fairfield offered benefits for African Americans.

Widgeon was born in 1850 to slave parents on the Eastern Shore of Virginia and at the age of twenty came to Baltimore.[56] He was eventually hired as a custodian at the Maryland Academy of Sciences, the state's oldest scientific institution, which dated to 1797 and is now part of the Maryland Science Center. Because of his hard work and personal collection of various species, Widgeon eventually secured a regular position doing collecting for the Academy in addition to his custodial duties. Widgeon traveled to the West Indies to obtain specimens, surveyed Indian sites in Maryland, and collected a rare whale skeleton for the Academy. Widgeon often lived at the Academy and in the nineteenth century lived primarily in the center of Baltimore City.[57]

In the early twentieth century, Widgeon moved to Fairfield and built the First Baptist Church of Fairfield, which opened in 1908 at the corner of Brady Avenue and Fairfield Road.[58] A scientist and pastor, Widgeon also wrote essays, which were published in the *Baltimore Sun* in 1908, on the condition of civil rights. Widgeon wrote about civil rights in the guise of natural history—using the raccoon (playing on the derogatory term "coon" for African Americans) and the crow (playing on Jim Crow laws).[59] Widgeon's wife Lucy was also the postmaster of Fairfield for many years.[60] In 1921, the Academy awarded Widgeon an honorary Master of Science degree at a ceremony in the First Baptist Church of Fairfield.[61]

As a young boy, John Jeffries knew John Widgeon and explained that Fairfield residents referred to Widgeon as "Pap."[62] Jeffries was born in Fairfield in 1924 and lived at 3306 Weedon Street. His family migrated from North Carolina to Fairfield and then resettled in West Baltimore, near Franklin Square, in the 1940s when industry began to encroach on the community. When asked about the origins of the unusual integrated dynamics of Fairfield, Jeffries replied, "I heard it said that, to start off Fairfield was established by Germans, Polish, and Dutch. . . . When we were youngsters we had quite a few white neighbors. But my father bought that house around

when I was about six years old. From a man his name was Kahl. He was a German. And my father bought the house. This is around the time that Fairfield, when blacks began to move into Fairfield. But the details I can't help you cause I was too young to know about it."[63] Jeffries also pointed out that most, but not all, businesses in the Fairfield of his youth were owned by whites.[64]

A theme throughout my interview with Jeffries was that life was very tough for African Americans in Fairfield. He referred to it as "Baltimore's forgotten corner." When I asked for his fondest memory of Fairfield, he half-joked that it was "when my father and mother decided to leave Fairfield." However, Jeffries did not really fit in with the city life in West Baltimore where his family moved in the 1940s, and he spent most of his leisure time returning to Fairfield to visit family and old friends. He also made new friends, including his wife of over sixty years, whom he met in Fairfield after he had already moved to West Baltimore. Jeffries describes the difficulties of life in Fairfield:

> Where the boys from Fairfield were concerned they got the unwanted jobs. Sort of like the last hired, the first fired. Most were never hired. But the fertilizer factories, were dusty and dirty work. The coal pier, the scrap yards. The oil companies you couldn't work there. Ship yards. No. Where the ship building dry dock, when the ship was coming for repairs, they would hire the African American boys over to clean the doors of the ship to go in the hole and clean all to get all the filthy oil out of the ship. Clean up the building room, and when that's done, out they go. So it wasn't easy. It wasn't easy for us down there. . . . These are hardships we had to endure because of our race. So now I'm going to say this, we made the best of it.[65]

Jeffries recalled the impressive vegetable and flower gardens Fairfield residents built and that "Arabers," fruit vendors with horses and wagons, often traveled out to Fairfield. He explained how geographic isolation and racism from surrounding communities also produced a network of connections for residents:

> We lived so far from the real markets, like the closest market was in South Baltimore. And we wasn't allowed too much shopping in Brooklyn, but they had a meat market in Brooklyn named Hawkin's Meat Market. . . . But we didn't do too much travelling in Brooklyn or Curtis Bay. We weren't welcomed there. So on the weekends those of us who had a little transportation would rally the neighbors. . . . They would pool neighbors and do their shopping in South Baltimore around Cross Street Market. Up and down Light Street or Cross Street and Charles Street. . . . We also had some of those merchants in South Baltimore would come to Fairfield and take orders and deliver them. Browns Meat Market was one that used to come to Fairfield. They would take orders and deliver them. Take orders and bring them to us. Like I said, not everybody was able to get there. Pooling their resources.[66]

The sense of community for African Americans out on the industrial peninsula endured for generations.

Jimmy Drake, who was born in Fairfield in 1951 and whose family purchased the Jeffries house in the 1940s, represents the last generation of Fairfield residents.[67] Even though his family ran a garage to work on cars, they also raised animals and trapped raccoons and muskrats.[68] Loraine Curtis, a friend of the Jeffries and Drake families, was born in 1932 and moved to Fairfield in 1939. Reflecting on the sense of place in Fairfield, Curtis recalled her mother's prize geese and a certain chicken that she held dear:

> You couldn't get near my house. You couldn't get up that part of the street. My mother had one, a goose, whose name was Billy. He used to run behind my mother while she'd feed him. He'd grab her dress and pinch her. And she'd say, "Get away, Billy. Stop." But when she went to the hospital she told my uncle to kill one of the geese. He killed Billy. My mother had a fit. . . . We also had a chicken who used to come in the house. We named the chicken Loraine. And she would come in the house and she would go and walk around then go back in the yard. My mother got tired and she said, "I'm

> gonna kill you." And she caught him and put his head on the chopping block, got the hatchet and went to crack his head. She killed that chicken. My name was Loraine. My grandmother's name was Loraine. I named that chicken Loraine. And my sister Jean wouldn't eat that chicken.[69]

Loraine Curtis also recalled, "Fairfield was real family oriented. There were a lot of families and extended families who moved in. . . . If you got mixed up with one of them, you got mixed up with all of them."[70]

As in all the lost neighborhoods, residents of Fairfield worked hard and built communal places for recreation. Jeffries, Drake, and Curtis all recall the baseball games, festivals, and parties that brought together generations of Fairfield residents; however, the real social life of Fairfield revolved around church functions. In addition to the First Baptist Church of Fairfield there were also A.M.E. and Apostolic churches. There were also numerous black Catholics who had to travel a mile to the Catholic church in Wagner's Point, where they had to sit in the back and be last in line for communion.[71]

Wagner's Point was a company town built by Martin Wagner for the employees in his oyster and fruit packing plant.[72] In 1883, Wagner relocated his canning plant from East Baltimore to the industrial peninsula of Baybrook. He later added a wooden box factory, a tin can plant, and built one hundred East Baltimore–style row houses for his employees, primarily Polish immigrants.[73] The community had St. Adalbert's Catholic Church, funded partly by Mr. Wagner, and a parochial school. The church offered mass in both Polish and English. Wagner's business was a self-sustaining industrial development with all aspects of production and labor located in a small piece of the peninsula, previously referred to simply as East Brooklyn. In 1897, Wagner's Point had just over six hundred residents, a hotel, restaurant, general store, and its own postmaster. The neighborhood was a six-block area of crushed shell streets, flanked by Poplar trees in every yard—the Wagner Company whitewashed their trunks each year. In the first decade of the twentieth century, the Wagner's Point population grew to almost two thousand.[74]

In 1913, Wagner's cannery burned down, resulting in over four hundred workers forced out of a job. In 1920, a devastating fire at the United States Asphalt Refining Company broke out when two oil drums exploded after being struck by lightning. Flaming oil flooded the streets and thirty-two homes were destroyed, leaving one hundred people homeless.[75] Wagner's sons continued the can and box plant, which remained successful and was later renamed the Eastern Box Company. With the rise of the war industries in the 1940s, the neighborhood added new residents, mostly from Appalachia. In the 1960s, the Wagner family sold much of the surrounding land to various oil and chemical companies. This shift to oil and chemicals companies and industrial accidents—such as a nine-alarm fire in a local chemical company in 1966—began the slow downturn of Wagner's Point.[76]

Pat Bruchalski's father-in-law Benny owned a corner store in Wagner's Point during the mid-twentieth century. She explains, "Well I married to a family that, my husband was from Wagner's Point. The family owned a grocery store and the restaurant. I just helped out in the restaurant. Well, it was a kitchen then it had about six tables. Oh yeah, guys from the oil company would come. And not get one but two or three hamburgers; thirty cents a hamburger. I made them, they were good . . . we were all cousins, each one had an aunt that lived there. You know it was like a big family." Like in the earlier days of Wagner's cannery, the company town was also a self-sustaining operation with everything available in the small neighborhood. Bruchalski explains:

> Just row houses, and uh like I say, the factory, people worked in the factory. It's just like, you know like the movie, *How Green Is My Valley*, everybody just walked to work. That's what it was like, beautiful. It was like a park. And they all were very happy there. They didn't even have to leave Wagner's Point. Just stay there and go to work. We had a store for food. We had a bar on the corner. Well, they could drink on the corner because they just walked home. Nobody had to drink and drive. Those were the people that worked hard and played hard.[77]

The culture of the isolated village of Wagner's Point was integrally tied to the urban industrial model—even as the model itself changed over time.

Despite the potential danger posed by nearby industry, the point maintained a small-town atmosphere, but one in slow decline following World War II. As the oil tanks multiplied and the sewage treatment plant next door expanded numerous times, Wagner's Point began to lose its tight-knit Polish/Appalachian community as residents died or moved away. St. Adalbert's Catholic Church was closed in 1967, and the building burned down the following year.

Betty Thomas came to Wagner's Point in the 1980s when the postindustrial decline had already begun to take its toll on the community, but she still found the small-town feel appealing and describes the remnants of the company town model of previous eras:

> I lived in Wagner's Point for thirteen years. And I have to say so many marvelous things that no one ever knew that went on in Wagner's Point. I was on a couple committees, no one ever went hungry, no one ever went without the electric paid, or gas lights or mortgage. They would come to me, I would go to the companies, they would write the check out and it would be paid. I can't express how great it was to live in that community. You could walk out at night; you could walk around the block. We had the playground there for the kids and no one bothered anyone. We had no crime. And it was very nice to be able to walk out and leave your doors open. And if one of the neighbors got sick, we was around to help 'em with whatever they needed . . . when we moved from Wagner's Point we moved to Brooklyn. I like it there but its not like Wagner's Point. I don't think there will ever be another Wagner's Point. It was just like something you see on TV. And you know it's not real.[78]

From the Bruchalski to the Thomas eras of Wagner's Point, much more had changed than just the area diversifying beyond a company town. The military-industrial complex was primarily responsible for the peninsula's boom and bust.

Boom, Bust, and Relocation: How the Neighborhoods Became Lost

On the peninsula, World War I accelerated industrial development and growth. In 1917, the Hanover Street Bridge replaced the old Light Street Bridge better connecting Baybrook to downtown Baltimore.[79] Schemes to annex the entire Baybrook community intensified during the wartime era, spurred mostly by the growth of profitable industrial developments and the desires of Baltimore's elite business class to compete with the population of other growing urban areas and increase the city's tax base. The residents of the peninsula resisted annexation; however, because of complex legal maneuvers the residents had no say. There would be no referendum, no challenge to the Annexation Act of 1918 by the very residents affected. On January 1, 1919, Baybrook officially became part of Baltimore City.[80] Brenda Bratton Blom writes about the annexation, "The lack of consultation, almost disregard, for their [residents] presence would be played out again and again over time."[81] Yet the most detrimental occurrence for residents on the point was in 1931 when the city zoned the entire peninsula W-3 heavy industry. As a result of that designation, residents on the point were unable to request city upgrades such as paved roads, trash collection, sidewalks, and, in Fairfield's case, even public water and sewage.[82]

When the United States entered World War II, the peninsula became home to the Bethlehem-Fairfield shipyards, the largest and most productive shipyard on the East Coast during the war. Under the pressures of war production, the federal government was able to defy the zoning ordinance and build more residential units in an area zoned for heavy industry. As a result, the population on the peninsula increased from 1,634 in 1940 to 4,017 in 1950. The Bethlehem-Fairfield shipyards had around 40,000 employees at its peak and produced nearly five hundred jumbo Liberty and Victory ships for the war effort.[83] These developments changed the social fabric of the peninsula (and the entire Baybrook community), provided work, and lured new migrants,

often from the U.S. South, to the area. In 1943, the federal government opened Fairfield Homes, government-subsidized housing for white defense workers and their families. After Fairfield Homes was constructed, the preexisting residential community was referred to as "Old Fairfield." Fairfield Homes was designed to be turned over to city government and become public housing after the war. Black wartime workers were provided inferior housing in the Banneker Homes, which were located closer to the water in a swampy area.[84] After the war, industries were returned to the original business owners, Bethlehem Steel and the federal government left, and the area became an amalgamation of various polluting industries, such as shipbreaking instead of shipbuilding. In less than seventy years, these conditions would lead to the neighborhoods on the industrial peninsula being lost.

Masonville was torn down in 1952, less than a decade after the end of World War II, with the expansion of the railroad. The quick demise of Masonville is in stark contrast to the slow decay of Fairfield and Wagner's Point. As the United States entered a postindustrial period, the remaining residents suffered from disinvestment in their neighborhood by city officials, pollution from the oil and chemical companies, and the growing trash from shipbreaking, salvage yards, and dumps. The postwar peninsula also experienced some dramatic demographic shifts. The Banneker Homes, temporary wartime housing for blacks, were torn down in the early 1950s. In 1953, Fairfield Homes, now public housing, began the shift from serving whites to blacks (public housing and education in Baltimore were still primarily segregated).[85] The Victory Elementary School was established in 1943 during the war effort as a white school, but it shifted to a black school in the 1950s following the racial shift in the public housing complex. The 1970 U.S. Census shows that the population of Fairfield was 99.5 percent black with 1,445 residents (1,157 people in public housing and 288 in Old Fairfield).

In 1971, Fairfield was designated an Urban Renewal Area by the city and the Neighborhood Design Center, a nonprofit group of designers offering assistance to disadvantaged areas, began to work with the residents of Fairfield to change the M-3 heavy industry zoning but were unsuccessful in their endeavors. The NDC blamed the deterioration of Fairfield on "the contradictory and indecisive actions of the city during the period since the war."[86] The emerging idea of environmental racism, the "disproportionate effects of environmental pollutions on racial minorities," was used to argue for relocation of Fairfield residents from the industrial peninsula; however, the white residents of Wagner's Point were not a focus at this time.[87] Many Fairfield residents, like Jennie Fischer, the President of the Fairfield Improvement Association, did not want to leave.[88] The option of moving into public housing for African Americans in inner city Baltimore was seen as more of a "death sentence" than industry by some. Furthermore, in 1972, the last access to water was cut off for residents of the industrial peninsula, and therefore the entire Baybrook community, with another expansion of the Patapsco Waste Water Treatment Plant. A 1972 image in the *Baltimore Sun* shows children from Wagner's Point protesting with fishing poles and a sign that reads, "Open those little 'ol gates!"[89]

More controversy arose on the peninsula in the 1970s. In 1972, the *Baltimore Sun* exposed busing practices in Baybrook that perpetuated now illegal school segregation. White students from Wagner's Point were bused past the all-black Victory Elementary School to a white school in Curtis Bay and black residents of Hawkin's Point were bused past the school in Curtis Bay to Victory Elementary.[90] It took until 1974 for the problem to be solved by busing sixty white students from Wagner's Point to Victory Elementary.[91] Fairfield did receive public sewer service in 1976, but just three years later, a CSX railroad car carrying nine thousand gallons of highly concentrated sulfuric acid overturned and the Fairfield Homes public housing complex was temporarily evacuated. The same year, there was an explosion at British Petroleum (BP) Oil Company that set off a seven-alarm fire.[92] During the 1980s, the school closed and many residents moved because of pollution, dumping, and pressure to relocate. Fairfield's residential community began to recede from the landscape.[93] The city relocated all of the residents of the Fairfield Homes

public housing complex in 1987 and, after a voluntary city buyout of Old Fairfield in 1988-1989, few residents remained.[94]

The 1990 U.S. Census shows only 613 residents on the peninsula (split between Wagner's Point and Old Fairfield), 273 (44 percent) living below the poverty line. By this time, most of the residents no longer worked in the shrinking number of industrial jobs available on the point. With the rise of the suburbs and American car culture, workers did not need to live close to their places of employment—it was wise not to when your employer dealt in hazardous chemicals. The company town model had died as a national model for urban areas as it withered on the industrial peninsula. Or, as a *Baltimore Sun* journalist framed it, "Wagner's Point is a company town which has lost its company."[95]

Then in 1995 when, following an application submitted by Governor William Donald Schaefer and Mayor Kurt Schmoke, Fairfield was designated one of three Baltimore neighborhoods that formed an Empowerment Zone (EZ), a President Clinton–era urban renewal program that invested millions of dollars in an attempt to revive floundering urban areas. An "ecological industrial park" was planned for the peninsula but never materialized. From the start, the EZ was not really concerned with the residents on the point, only the development potential of the land. The EZ did provide residents with one essential service—legal representation.[96]

In 1996, residents of Fairfield and Wagner's Point formed the Fairfield/Wagner's Point Neighborhood Coalition and signed a retainer with the University of Maryland School of Law Clinical Program through the Empowerment Legal Services, Inc., a nonprofit organization designed to provide legal services to community-based organizations within the EZ. In the words of Brenda Blom, University of Maryland law professor and part of the legal counsel for residents, the neighborhoods were "engulfed" by industry.[97] Working with their lawyers, a majority of residents decided that relocation was their best option to achieve some sense of justice. The leader of the relocation effort, Jeannette Skrzecz, was a major community activist from Wagner's Point who had been working on environmental issues in the area for years. In 1998 in the midst of the protracted fight for relocation, Skrzecz was diagnosed with terminal cancer (common on the point) and died later that year. This sad event further galvanized the residents to seek justice through relocation. Shortly after losing their impassioned leader, residents picketed City Hall and then received their first official meeting with the mayor on the buyout. Blom succinctly describes the success of the relocation effort as based in the residents' "unwillingness to remain invisible," which shows that a new way to see the people and places of urban industrial space is essential to achieving justice.[98] The more inclusive model of "environmental justice" was more effective than the 1970s' more limited focus on "environmental racism," which kept the residents of Wagner's Point and Fairfield separate rather than working together as a multiracial coalition.[99]

Support for the Fairfield and Wagner's Point buyouts came from federal, state, city, and private industry. In October 1998, Senator Barbara Mikulski secured $750,000 in federal funds for relocation of the residents of the point. Just days later, an explosion, fireball, and three-alarm fire resulted from malfunctioning equipment at a chemical plant operated by Condea Vista. Five workers were severely injured at the plant. The explosion was heard from miles away and shattered windows in the neighborhoods. Most residents, even previous holdouts, were amenable to relocation after the explosion. With all of the attention, including the ongoing coverage of the residents' plight by *Baltimore Sun* journalist Joe Mathews, the general public was beginning to see the problems of the point.[100]

By the end of 1998, the Neighborhood Coalition finally received a commitment from the city for relocation, and, in early 1999, the deal was struck for Wagner's Point residents. To their credit, the leaders of the Wagner's Point relocation worked with local industries to get a buyout for the last residents of Fairfield as well. Condea Vista and FMC put together a proposal to match a city offer for relocation in Fairfield. Available to every resident on the peninsula were the following:

> (1) fair market value for all homes, with instructions to the appraiser to appraise as if no industry was present; (2) relocation benefits for homeowner occupants, up to $22,500 and for renters and boarders, up to $5,250 per household [these payments were excluded from income for the purpose of income taxes]; (3) special relocation assistance from the companies of $5,000 per occupant and $2,500 per property for absentee property owner, with release required; (4) low interest loans provided to those who qualified, with special counseling available without cost for homeownership opportunities for all (5) low bono [*sic*] legal assistance for residents; and (6) moving costs of up to $1,500 per household.[101]

The hard-won relocation package provided residents of the industrial peninsula with the hope of remaining homeowners and living free of industrial pollution and the fear of a cataclysmic industrial accident. However, the moment was bittersweet because residents had formed a tight sense of community out on the peninsula and it was the only life many people knew. Some holdouts clung to their territory on the peninsula well into the twenty-first century, but that is another story.

In 1997, the long uninhabited Fairfield Homes public housing complex was demolished. In 2001, the Wagner's Point row houses were torn down. Many past residents returned to watch the demolition with a resigned nostalgia. In 2007, the First Baptist Church of Fairfield was torn down one year shy of its 100th anniversary, while parishioners watched and lamented the end of almost a century of community and communion on the point. Today, if you arrive at the corner of Brady and Fairfield Streets where the church once stood, all that remains is a mangled street sign as heavy machinery stacks and crushes old cars and other debris in the background. The last two residents of the peninsula, Jimmy Drake and Debbie Mitchell, were relocated in March of 2011 and their home at 3306 Weedon Street in Fairfield was torn down a few months later. The house that was built in the midst of farmland and burgeoning industry during the early twentieth century by German immigrants, inhabited by the Jeffries family until they left fearing the encroachment of heavy industry, and finally shepherded into its final years by the Drake family, was wiped from the landscape along with the imprint of the Fairfield community.[102]

All that remains of the lost neighborhoods of Baybrook are a few crumbling structures and the memories of its residents. Yet the stories of the ravages of boom and bust development and later invisibility of residents on the peninsula offer important lessons about urban industrial development, environmental justice, and most centrally, learning to see industrial communities as important places within the fabric of urban space.[103]

In Conclusion

To see the connections between the past and the future is one of the great benefits of teaching urban history. Recognizing these connections enhances the potential of both transformative civic engagement and environmental justice. The narrative of the lost neighborhoods that I have presented here is used in the classroom as a starting point to get students to see our connections to places that no longer exist in physical form and how these spatial stories affect the places that still do exist. I encourage students to find an original research topic that fits with their specific interests but one that connects to the class themes of urban history and environmental justice. Because students know they will present their work to the residents of the community at the end of the semester, they work harder and smarter. When research, teaching, and service in urban history are grounded in civic engagement, the potential for connections are limitless and the possibility for justice enhanced. In the "Preserving Places" course, we look to the past, act in the present, and contemplate the future.

Dedication

This article is dedicated to Catherine L. Benicewicz (1918-2013).

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Notes

1. The various Polish societies (referred to as the United Polish Societies of Curtis Bay), including Thaddeus Kosciuszko Society, St. Stanislaus Society, Polish National Alliance Society, and the Holy Rosary Society, purchased the Polish Home Hall for $14,000 in 1925. The loan was secured from the Cabin Branch Bank and included donations from residents of Curtis Bay and Wagner's Point. "The First One Hundred Years: St. Athanasius Church, Curtis Bay, Maryland, 1891-1991," 144–45. This is a church-produced history. Author possesses a copy provided by Carol Eshelman of the Baybrook Coalition.
2. The building that became the Polish Home Hall in 1925 was built circa 1905 as Curtis Bay's town hall and home of the volunteer fire company. Various community functions were hosted in the building. The Wise brothers later purchased the building for use as a sewing factory making sail cloth for the shipping industries emerging in the area beginning circa 1919, when Curtis Bay was annexed into Baltimore. The recent rehab was funded by a bond issue spearheaded by House Representative Brian McHale and State Senator George W. Della Jr. and supplemented by funds from the Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation in addition to donations from local citizens and businesses. The architect for the renovation was Donald Kann. "The Hammers," local craftsmen volunteers, completed much of the work on the building. "The First One Hundred Years: St. Athanasius Church, Curtis Bay, Maryland, 1891-1991," 144–45; Robbie Whelan, "Polish Home Hall Opens Its Doors Again," [Baltimore, MD] *Daily Record*, June 2, 2009; Maryland Historical Trust, "Polish Home Hall, Baltimore City," http://www.mht.maryland.gov/
3. Details from the first three paragraphs from: Catherine Benicewicz, interviewed by author, November 10, 2010. Benicewicz passed away on August 3, 2013. Frederick N. Rasmussem, "Catherine L. Benicewicz: Daughter of immigrants sought to keep alive the history of the Poles who lived in Curtis Bay and Brooklyn," *Baltimore Sun*, August 6, 2013.
4. Traditional university service is, of course, an important aspect of the work of university professors. I am not arguing to replace the traditional notion of university service but to expand the definition. This expansion also entails counting community-based civic engagement as part of university service for promotion and tenure.
5. Yi-Fu Tuan, *Place and Space: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977).
6. The methods based in studying the relationships of people, places (artifacts in Korr's wording), and nature and the methods of oral history interviews allow research on the built environment to be connected to the stories people tell. Together they present a comprehensive picture of the narrative aspect of culture, which Jay Mechling defines as "those stories American tell one another to make sense of their lives." Jay Mechling, "An American Culture Grid with Texts," *American Studies International* 27 (1989):2–12. Also see Jeremy Korr, "A Proposed Model for Cultural Landscape Study," *Material Culture*, Fall (1997):1–18; Mary Corbin Sies, "Toward a Performance Theory of the Suburban Ideal, 1877-1917," in *Perspectives in Vernacular Architecture* IV, ed. Thomas Carter and Bernard L. Herman (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1991), 197–207; and Linda Shopes, "Oral History and Community Involvement: The Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project," in *Presenting the Past: Essays on History and the Public*, ed. Susan Porter Benson, Stephen Brier, and Roy Rosenzweig (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986).

7. My usage of the term *community* is similar to the idea of a "sense of place," while *neighborhood* is a more geographic term overlaid with social implications. As in my discussion of place and space, community and neighborhood depend upon one another for definition while also delineating difference.
8. The creation of the term Baybrook is not mine. It was first used by the Farring-Baybrook Park, which sits in the middle of Brooklyn and Curtis Bay uniting the two communities with green space, as well as the Baybrook Coalition, a nonprofit community development corporation attempting to unite the main remaining communities of Brooklyn and Curtis Bay in redevelopment and improvement projects. According to the U.S. Census of 2010, the population of Brooklyn and Curtis Bay is 14,243, and the population of Baltimore is 616,802.
9. Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997); Linda Shopes, *The Baltimore Book: New Views on History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1999); and *Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, ed. Jessica Elfenbein, Thomas L. Hollowak, and Elizabeth M. Nix (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011). Before the *Baltimore '68* edited collection was published, I used a special edition of *The Public Historian* 31, no. 4 (November 2009), that had various articles all on the "Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth" project at the University of Baltimore.
10. "Underway" is a key word in this sentence. When working in struggling urban communities, it is essential for professors and students to be aware of and focus on what is already happening on the ground in the community. For example, in the 2009 course when my students and I were just building relationships in the community, we scheduled our event at Club 4100 on the same day that the annual Baybrook Coalition Bullroast, a major fund raiser for the organization. Of course, we rescheduled our event for the following Saturday, but if we had not been in communication with the local organizations, we would have undercut our own event by competing with a community event. Instead we used the Baybrook Coalition Bullroast to make connections, promote our event, and sell tickets. The course strives to work with and provide support for people who already have active projects underway, such as the community gardening, afterschool programs, community gatherings, and park cleanups.
11. Students not only learn the basic skills of feasibility studies, business plans, making budgets, and working together in committees throughout the course, they engage with the growing focus of the current generation on social entrepreneurship. Recent discussions of social entrepreneurship as a generational movement include Ian Sparina's article, "For This Generation, Vocations of Service: Recent College Grads Forgo Traditional Careers, Money to Start Nonprofits Focused on Outreach," *Washington Post*, October 14, 2008, and a section in the *New York Times* from March 8, 2008, profiling the "faces of social entrepreneurship." The *Times* article quotes Kyle Taylor, a twenty-three-year-old advocate for the social entrepreneurship movement: "Our generation is replacing signs and protests with individual actions. This is our civil rights movement and what will define our generation." While equating social entrepreneurship with the civil rights movement may be an overreach, numerous graduates that took the "Preserving Places" course have completed internships with me after the course and later obtained jobs in nonprofit work, in places such as the Baybrook Coalition, Parks & People Foundation, Blue Water Baltimore, and the South Baltimore Learning Center. The course is designed to expose and train students for the nonprofit world while also providing generally useful skills in management, organization, critical thinking, and empathy.
12. Students attended events and organized projects with Curtis Bay community gardener and Open Society Institute fellow Jason Reed and participated in community cleanups at Farring-Baybrook Park. The community's focus on sustaining and growing green space was adopted by the students and led to the project's focus on the environmental justice.
13. On the request of the neighborhood associations, our event was also the retirement party for Carol Eshelman. Residents gave speeches and gifts to Eshelman as part of the program.
14. Michael Anft, "Let's Get Small: After decades of chronic population loss, some Rust Belt cities have begun to embrace a radical new development strategy: shrinking. Should we give up on mostly vacant neighborhoods to save money and make way for a better, tinier Baltimore?" [Baltimore, MD] *Urbanite*, October 1, 2009; Karina Pallagst, "Shrinking Cities in the United States of America: Three Cases, Three Places," in *The Future of Shrinking Cities: Problems, Patters and Strategies of Urban Transformation in a Global Context* (Berkeley, CA: IURD Monograph Series, Institute of Urban Regional Development, 2009), 81–88.

15. The Mapping Baybrook website prototype debuted in the Baybrook community at the student-organized event in November 2012 and made its public debut as part of the Oasis Places Exhibition at Maryland Art Place in May 2013; http://mappingbaybrook.org/.
16. Breaking Ground is at the forefront of a vibrant, new movement toward increased campus and community engagement—a movement that is now gaining ground nationally. For more information, see http://umbcbreakingground.wordpress.com/.
17. The IRC fellows class worked with students at Benjamin Franklin High School @ Masonville Cove (BFHS@MC), a community school that is just four years old and the first high school ever in Baybrook to teach media arts and design techniques to students. BFHS@MC. The "Imaging Research Fellows" class explored how art can make interventions in a community and affect social change while "Preserving Places" examines the role the past and memory can play in developing a better future.
18. Patapsco Avenue in Brooklyn is part of Baltimore Main Streets, "an approach to commercial revitalization introduced by the Mayor's Office in 2000. Baltimore Main Streets uses a model developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation's National Main Street Center, which has been implemented in over 1,500 communities since 1980. In developing this strategy, Baltimore Main Streets uses the Main Street Four-Point Approach in working with each designated neighborhood business district. The four points are Design, Organization, Promotion and Economic Restructuring." http://www.baltimoremainstreets.com/.
19. "Although a few isolated homes in the city (some involved in right-of-way disputes) have no municipal service, Mr. Prussing [John Prussing, principal engineer in the city's division of wastewater] said, Old Fairfield 'is the last community that lacked sewers.'" Mike Bowler, "And now? Old Fairfield Will Finally Get Its Sewers," *Baltimore Sun*, March 13, 1976. 1976 is the same year the Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee produced "A History of Brooklyn-Curtis Bay." As part of the Nation's Bicentennial Anniversary, Baltimore Mayor William Donald Schafer had an initiative to support communities in Baltimore in writing their own local histories. The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay history has one page on Fairfield that describes the history of the area in the traditional narrative of the area's growth—farms, industry, wartime boom, decline. The author laments, "How unfortunate, that the most lovely of hamlets [Fairfield] is today the least attractive, long neglected and overlooked by the city fathers." While true, the community history fails to mention Fairfield's rich African American heritage dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century. The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee, *A History of Brooklyn-Curtis Bay* (Baltimore: J.C. O'Donovan & Co., 1976), 40.
20. Fifty-three dwellings (which used outhouses and septic tanks) were connected to the sewer service in 1976. In 1970, one in six homes in Fairfield used outhouses. Mike Bowler, "And Now? Old Fairfield Will Finally Get Its Sewers," *Baltimore Sun*, March 13, 1976; Mary Potorti, "Planning for the People: The Early Years of Baltimore's Neighborhood Design Center," in *Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, 238.
21. Once the area was annexed into the city, plans began to deal with the fact that raw sewage was dumped into the Patapsco River; however, construction of the sewage treatment plant did not begin until 1937 and the plant went into operation on November 12, 1940. Phil Diamond and Garrett Power, "History of Fairfield and Wagner's Point" (research paper, University of Maryland School of Law, 1999, obtained by author from Garrett Power, 2012): 72–78; Requardt Whitman and Associates, engineers, "Master Plan Report: Back River Wastewater Treatment Plant and Patapsco Wastewater Treatment Plant, Baltimore, MD 97 (1969)" (unpublished report to the Regional Planning Council, Department of Public Works, Baltimore City and Baltimore County, on file with the Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD).
22. Hawkin's Point is another "lost neighborhood" in Greater Baybrook; however, it is geographically segregated from the industrial peninsula by water, an arm of the Curtis Bay.
23. The peninsula where the lost neighborhoods are located encompasses 1,270 acres extending south and southeast from of the heart of Baltimore City. The peninsula is bounded on the north and east by the Patapsco River and to the south by Curtis Bay. The residential communities of Brooklyn and Curtis Bay are more inland and west of the industrial peninsula (also referred to as the point). Brenda Bratton Blom, "How Close to Justice? A Case Study of the Relocation of Residents from Fairfield and Wagner's Point" (PhD dissertation, University of Maryland Baltimore County, UMBC, 2002), 67.
24. Matthew Klingle, "Changing Spaces: Nature, Property, and Power in Seattle, 1880-1945," *Journal of Urban History* 32, no. 2 (January 2006): 197–230, 198–99.

25. Here I am blending aspects of Julie Sze's definition of environmental justice in *Noxious New York: The Racial Politics of Urban Health and Environmental Justice* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2007), 13, with the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) 2009 definition of environmental justice. For Sze's full discussion of environmental justice, see pages 12–22. For more on the EPA definition, see the organization's website: http://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/.
26. For the physical changes of the coastline of the industrial peninsula, see the work of Fred Scharmen and Eric Leshinsky, "Soft Site: Four Case Studies on the Middle Branch" and accompanying maps (research paper presented at the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture [ACSA] Annual Meeting, Montreal, 2011). Author possesses a copy.
27. William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: Norton, 1991), 278.
28. "Settlement and Suits (Cromwells and Crisps, 17th-mid19th c.)" in Diamond and Power, "History of Fairfield and Wagner's Point," 6–15; *Baltimore News-Post*, "Early Fairfield," July 2, 1941.
29. At the time, alcoholic beverages could not be sold in Baltimore City on Sundays.
30. "Curtis Bay Once Aspired to Put Baltimore out of Business," *Baltimore Sun*, March 7, 1909; Gerald Griffin, "Baltimore's Spreading Suburbs VII," *Baltimore Sun*, January 8, 1933; "Industrial Growth Is Brooklyn History," *Baltimore American*, April 20, 1958; Commission for Historic and Architectural Preservation (CHAP), "City of Baltimore Neighborhood Study: Hawkins Point/Wagner's Point/Curtis Bay," circa 1976, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD.
31. The marine hospital/smallpox hospital are shown on maps in *Atlas of 15 miles around Baltimore including Anne Arundel County, Maryland*, 1878, in Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD; Diamond and Powers, "An Environmental History of Fairfield/Wagner's Point," 16–19 [Note: the report lists 20 acres but points out another listing of 125 acres. Regardless of the exact acreage, the pest house—"a place isolated from the City where people with often fatal contagious diseases could be housed"—was located in the region that later became the residential communities of Fairfield and Wagner's Point.]
32. Diamond and Powers, "An Environmental History of Fairfield/Wagner's Point," 19; Sidney Heiskell, Annual Report of the Board of Health to the Mayor and the City Council of Baltimore for the Year ending December 31, 1884 (City Printer, Baltimore, MD, 1885): 173.
33. "Fairfield Reminiscences: Industrial Area Looks Back on Its Almost Pastoral Past," *Baltimore Sun*, June 26, 1941.
34. Diamond and Powers, "An Environmental History of Fairfield/Wagner's Point," 33–35. In a note on page 44, Diamond and Powers write, "The laborer appears to be William Helmstetter, who, ironically enough, bought two properties from the Fairfield Improvement Company in 1891 and 1893. . . . The unfortunate immigrant with leprosy was Mary Sansone, who was probably the mother of Joseph Sansone, who had immigrated to the U.S. from Italy in 1892. Mr. Sansone was a poor fruit dealer who rented a house in Baltimore City. He spoke no English and could not read or write. It is not known what happened to Mary Sansone. She may have been sent to one of the leprosariums between New Orleans and Boston." There is a small road in Brooklyn named Helmstetter St. (perhaps unrelated). The mystery of Helmstetter and Sansone is ripe for further investigation.
35. The connection between industrial zoning and "questionable" recreational spaces, such as strip clubs, tattoo parlors, drug paraphernalia shops, and the like, still occurs in many urban areas, including Baybrook.
36. Diamond and Powers, "An Environmental History of Fairfield/Wagner's Point," 16–19, 26, 33–35; 87 Md. 352, 39 Atl. Reporter 1081, *Mayor etc. of City of Baltimore vs. Fairfield Imp. Co. of Baltimore City*, 87 Md. 352 (1898).
37. The Patapsco Company began to develop the neighborhood that became Brooklyn and attempted to sell residential lots, but the area did not take off immediately as a money-making venture because of poor transportation options—a cumbersome ferry—and more than questionable land use issues. By 1866, there were only forty houses in Brooklyn, mostly German truck farmers and tradesmen. Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee, "A History of Brooklyn Curtis Bay," 1976; Vertical file on Patapsco Company, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD.
38. The early bridge was named Light Street Bridge, and was also known as Brooklyn Bridge or Long Bridge; however, the toll was considered excessive and residential development did not gain much traction. CHAP, "City of Baltimore Neighborhood Study: Hawkins Point/Wagner's Point/Curtis Bay," circa 1976, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD; "Industrial Growth

Is Brooklyn History," *Baltimore American*, April 20, 1958; The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee, "A History of Brooklyn-Curtis Bay," 1976.

39. The names listed on the charter are Joseph Wilcox Jenkins (no. 97 Monument St.), Hiram Kaufman (no. 432 Pennsylvania Ave.), Joshua Hartshorne (no. 86 Cathedral St.), William Soloman Rayner (no. 316 Madison Ave.) [father of Isidor Rayner, Maryland politician and later U.S. Senator] and William C. Pennington (no. 36 West Eager St) [president of the development venture]. Published under the auspices of the Patapsco Land Company of Baltimore City, "Curtis' Bay: The Deep Water Harbor of Baltimore City" (Baltimore, MD: John Murphy & Co., 1874), Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD; "Curtis Bay Once Aspired to Put Baltimore out of Business."
40. CHAP, "City of Baltimore Neighborhood Study: Hawkins Point/Wagner's Point/Curtis Bay," circa 1976; "Industrial Growth Is Brooklyn History," *Baltimore American*, April 20, 1958; The Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee, "A History of Brooklyn-Curtis Bay," 1976.
41. "Curtis Bay Once Aspired to Put Baltimore out of Business."
42. Brooklyn, Baltimore, received its name because of connection similar to Manhattan and Brooklyn in New York City—such as its industrial nature, immigrant population, and location across the river from downtown. The PLC wanted to call the area Pennington (after the corporation's president); however, the name Brooklyn (given by an employee of the corporation) stuck.
43. For example, the *Baltimore Sun* wrote on April 5, 1890: "Industry comes to the rural bucolic area of farms and a residential community is developed in Fairfield. There were nine factories in the area including Raision [Raisin] Chemical Company, Baltimore Chrome Works, and the Monumental Acid Works."
44. An example is the Baltimore Sugar Refinery, a "landmark to voyagers up and down the Patapsco." The sugar plant was an economic engine for the community, but it burned in 1896. The plant was rebuilt but never reopened. This tragedy led to a shift in the area's demographics because many Irish parishioners of St. Athanasius Catholic Church worked in the sugar refinery and were forced to leave and seek work elsewhere. The 1991 church history explains, "After being rebuilt, the greater sugar plants of Philadelphia, fearing the prosperity of their younger brother, soon forced it out of existence. Its failure was a severe blow to Curtis Bay, for most of the English-speaking resident were forced to seek employment elsewhere. As the English-speaking parishioners moved out, a great influx of Poles and small numbers of Lithuanians, Bohemians, Slovaks, Slovenes and Ukrainians moved in. This shifted the identity of the church and the Rev. Thomas E. Gallagher left the parish because of a breakdown of communication with his parishioners due to a language barrier" and Rev. Andrew A. Dusynski and Rev. Paul J. Sandalgi succeeded the Irish priest and were successful in part because of their vast knowledge of many foreign languages." St. Athanasius Church, "The First One Hundred Years, 1891-1991." For more on the Polish connection to Baybrook see: "Baltimore's Poles are Landlovers," *Baltimore Sun*, March 29, 1925.
45. I have rearranged the order of this quote for clarity. "Curtis Bay Once Aspired to Put Baltimore Out of Business."
46. For more information on Masonville, see Horton McCormick's website, "Masonville Maryland," http://www.masonvillemd.com/; 1910 US Census; 1936 Sanborn Fire and Insurance Maps, and Md. Map X914, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD.
47. Among the highlights of the community was the Five Sisters Tavern, a well-known recreational spot for workers and sailors laboring in the area. A nondenominational, fundamentalist sect called "The Brethren," founded three centuries ago in Germany, built the Masonville Church of God in the town and also built a school. For more on The Brethren's work in Baltimore, see Jessica I. Elfenbein, "'Church People Work on the Integration Problem': The Brethren's Interracial Work in Baltimore, 1949-1972," in *Baltimore '68: Riots and Rebirth in an American City*, 103–21. Horton McCormick, interviewed by author, June 29, 2011; Horton McCormick's website, "Masonville Maryland," http://www.masonvillemd.com/; Brooklyn-Curtis Bay Historical Committee, "Masonville," in "A History of Brooklyn Curtis Bay," 1976, 38-39; 1910 US Census; 1936 Sanborn Fire and Insurance Maps, and Md. Map X914 in the Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD.
48. Horton McCormick, interviewed by author, June 29, 2011.
49. Catherine Benicewicz, interviewed by author, November 10, 2010.
50. Horton McCormick's website, "Masonville Maryland," http://www.masonvillemd.com/.
51. Horton McCormick, interviewed by author, June 29, 2011. Many residents refer to Brooklyn as the "big time" neighborhood in the community with the less developed Curtis Bay as its more rural cousin.

The lost neighborhoods were smaller and less elite—though the entire community possessed a working-class identity.

52. Horton McCormick, interviewed by author, June 29, 2011.
53. Masonville Cove website: http://www.masonvillecove.org/.
54. Sherry H. Olson, *Baltimore: The Building of an American City* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), 276.
55. A 1911 article in the *Evening Sun* described the race relations of Fairfield: "The blacks call the whites by their first names and the whites, fraternally, greet the black in the same spirit. They eat together and live together. Fairfield makes its own laws, settles its own disputes, cleans up its own bloody sawdust and ignores civilization." In 1993, Fairfield resident Jennie Fincher, who moved to Fairfield in 1914 from Virginia, told a journalist, "It was a mixed neighborhood. Whites and blacks lived together, everybody got along, and there was no trouble at all." Patrick A. McGuire, "Miss Jennie's Crusade," *Baltimore Sun*, March 28, 1993. However, the racial picture is not without strife. An October 20, 1924, report in the *Baltimore Sun* describes a "street fight" in Fairfield where "25 men, whites and negroes, took part."
56. Widgeon is often referred to as ex-slave in newspaper articles; however, notes he wrote on his life story for the Maryland Academy of Sciences tell a different and more complex story: "I was born July 28th, 1850, on Eastern Shore, Northampton County, Virginia, in a log cabin, on a farm. My mother and father were slaves. The women that were slaves were set free when they were 31, and all the children they had before they were set free had to be slaves too. My mother had eight children and five of them were born dead. I had one sister who was burnt up one day when her house caught on fire and one brother who was a slave until he was 31. I was born a little later and was not a slave. My father was never set free from his master. My great grandmother was a full blooded Indian." "John Widgeon," September 22, 1936, Maryland Academy of Sciences, CHAP file on John Widgeon. CHAP created a file on Widgeon after the Fairfield Improvement Association president, Jennie Fincher, requested a historical marker in Fairfield to honor Widgeon. This did not happen; however, Widgeon does appear on a historical marker in downtown Baltimore at the corner of Cathedral and Franklin Streets, near the area where the Maryland Academy of Sciences once stood.
57. Widgeon came to Baltimore in 1870 at the age of twenty. He worked various menial jobs until securing a position as custodian at the Maryland Academy of Sciences around 1872 and within a year began working as a collector under the mentorship of the Academy's president Dr. Philip R. Uhler. When the Academy fell upon bad times and closed in 1876, Widgeon went to work for Sharp & Dohme as a chemist's assistant for sixteen years. In 1892, Widgeon returned to the Academy, where he worked until December 1, 1930, when he officially retired; however, he continued receiving half pay and assisting at the Academy until his death in 1937. Two years before his death, Widgeon, who only had two or three years of formal education as a boy, was awarded a Master of Science degree by the Maryland Academy of Sciences at a ceremony in his beloved First Baptist Church of Fairfield, which he built and founded in 1908. Maryland Academy of Sciences, CHAP file on John Widgeon; "About the City," [Baltimore, MD] *Afro-American*, April 1, 1905; "John Widgeon, Scientist, and His Battle Upwards," *Baltimore Sun*, December 15, 1907; "Mr. Widgeon Home From West Indies," *Afro-American*, September 21, 1911; "Widgeon Gets Life Membership," *Afro-American*, March 13, 1915; "John Widgeon, 70 Years Old," *Afro-American*, July 23, 1920; Sophia Poolsky, "Negro Fossil Hunter 85 Years Old Today," *Baltimore Sun*, July 28, 1935; "John Widgeon," September 22, 1936; "Science Academy Loses Famed Negro Collector," *Baltimore Sun*, March 8, 1937; Frank W. Porter III, "John Widgeon: Naturalist, Curator and Philosopher," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 79, no. 4 (Winter 1984): 325–31.
58. In the surviving documents, John Widgeon never discusses why he moved out to Fairfield; however, the rural qualities of the area in 1908 may have provided an interesting environment for a collector of natural history. It would be quite interesting to know Widgeon's reflections on the encroachment of industry in Fairfield during the early twentieth century. Widgeon and his wife also had a daughter and then a son, John W. Widgeon Jr., who was born in 1908. Widgeon Jr. passed away in 1988. He was referred to as "Uncle Johnny" and ran a "West Baltimore nitery called Rigg's Lounge." *Afro-American*, December 3, 1988.
59. These two newspaper articles are both complex philosophical ruminations on race relations and natural history. However, the editors at the paper include introductions that are condescending in their

admiration of Widgeon's skills and intellect. "Crows in Feathers and Crows in Human Guise: John Widgeon, The Afro-American Virchow, On the Sorrows of His Race," *Baltimore Sun*, February 2, 1908; "John Widgeon, Afro-American Scientist, On Wild and Domestic Coons," *Baltimore Sun*, November 15, 1908.

60. Widgeon writes, "My wife has a political job. She is post-mistress. She runs the post office in Fairfield. She is now 40 years old. Being a colored woman they did not think she would hold it but she has been running it for 8 years. The man who had it before she got it was a Democrat. He was a nice man too but he was too easy and they took advantage of him and the government took nearly all he had because of a shortage at the post office. My wife got the appointment from the Governor." "John Widgeon," September 22, 1936, Maryland Academy of Sciences, CHAP file on John Widgeon.
61. "Md. Academy Honors Its Curator," *Afro-American*, June 29, 1921.
62. When I asked Jeffries if he knew John Widgeon, he replied, "Yes indeed. Yes I knew John Widgeon. Everybody in Fairfield knew Reverend John Widgeon. Actually, I didn't know much about his background, of course, at that time I was a youngster. When I first met Reverend Widgeons, I guess I was about three or four years old. And Reverend Widgeon not too long after, I can't remember all the dates or the times. But when Reverend Widgeon became too old to perform, my father recommended Reverend Ernest Wesley Williams as the next pastor. Reverend Williams was a member of that baseball team I mentioned to you, but his religion, the way he was brought up, his family wouldn't allow him to play baseball on Sunday. That's why he's not in the picture I'm going to show you [of the Fairfield Giants baseball team]." John Jeffries, interviewed by the author, June 7, 2011.
63. John Jeffries, interviewed by the author, June 7, 2011. Land deeds reveal that in 1899, Oswald William Fleisher deeded the land to Ferdinand Kahl, a widower who in 1910 built the house that stood at the address until demolition in 2011. In 1922, Kahl sold the house to John Henry and Isadora Jeffries. The Jeffries were an African American family from North Carolina. In 1948, the Jeffries sold the house to another family of African American migrants from North Carolina, James and Delia Ann Drake. In 1987 upon James Drakes's death, the house went to the Drake heirs, Delia A. Harris, Lucille Henderson, John Edwards Drake, and Mary Francis Villarreal. Jimmy Drake, grandson of James Drake lived in the house until the condemnation of the property by the City of Baltimore in the twenty-first century.
64. Jeffries explained: "Yes, we had Freshmen Brothers' Grocery Store, Joseph Aberson, Abe Ruth's confectionary. I can't think of Goldstein's first name, but we had Goldstein's confectionary and meat market. . . . And we also had an African American store owned by Paul Alton." John Jeffries, interviewed by author, June 7, 2011.
65. John Jeffries, interviewed by the author, June 7, 2011. Jeffries's views on the segregation of industrial work on the peninsula are supported by various articles in the *Baltimore Sun* and *Afro-American* during the period.
66. John Jeffries, interviewed by the author, June 7, 2011.
67. John Jeffries recalled that his family sold the house in 1943 but deed records show the house legally changed handed in 1948. However, there may have been a rent to own situation with the Drakes moving in before they owned the house outright.
68. Jimmy Drake, interviewed by author, July 19, 2011.
69. Loraine Curtis interviewed by author, July 19, 2011. Note: Old friends like Jeffries, Drake, and Mitchell still refer to Loraine by her maiden name of Curtis (even though she has been married). Curtis was used in discussion and therefore has been used in this article. Fairfield is a neighborhood of nicknames: John Jeffries's nickname is Snake; Jimmy Drake is called Petro [allusion to a petroleum tank near his home in Fairfield]; and Loraine's maiden named is used.
70. Loraine Curtis, interviewed by author, July 19, 2011. Benjamin "Popeye" Curtis was Loraine's father. He was Vice President of the Black International Longshoremen's Association and lived in Fairfield until the day he died.
71. Fairfield resident Loraine Curtis recalled, "[Wagner's Point] was really segregated. All the African Americans had to sit in the back. When we took communion, we'd be the last ones." Loraine Curtis, interviewed by author, July 19, 2011.
72. Wagner was the son of German immigrants and was born in Baltimore in 1848.
73. In Wagner's Point, the houses were set up along a hierarchy of class. "Anglo-born managers" lived on the first and largest row of houses on 4th Street, referred to as "Silk Stocking Row." Moving back

the houses became smaller based on the lower position of workers. Patrick Gilbert, "Wagner's Point: Front-Steps Kind of Neighborhood," *Baltimore Sun*, June 14, 1979.

74. Earl C. May, *The Canning Clan: A Pageant of Pioneering Americans* (New York: Stratford Press, 1937); Gilbert, "Wagner's Point: Front-Steps"; David Brown, "Life in Wagner's Point: Cut Off But Happy," *Baltimore Sun*, December 26, 1982; Diamond and Powers, "An Environmental History of Fairfield/Wagner's Point," and Brenda Blom, "How Close to Justice," 67–93.
75. "Hundreds Flee in Panic When Flaming Oil Fires Houses in East Brooklyn," *Baltimore Sun*, July 20, 1920.
76. David Brown, "Life in Wagner's Point: Cut Off but Happy," *Baltimore Sun*, December 26, 1982.
77. Pat Bruchalski, interviewed by author, January 10, 2011.
78. Betty Thomas, interviewed by author, January 10, 2011. Thomas (stage name Betty Willy) has worked as an extra in various Baltimore films and TV shows, such as Jon Waters's *Cry Baby* (1990) and David Simon's *The Wire* (2002–2008).
79. "Contract Awarded for Big Army Depot: Smith, Hauser & McIsaac Company to Erect Plant below Baltimore," *Philadelphia Public Ledger*, October 28, 1917.
80. "Annexation in a Nutshell," *Baltimore Sun*, March 22, 1918. This article simply summarizes the annexation agreement. The *Sun* has dozens of articles in the preceding years discussing the pros and cons of annexation from various perspectives.
81. Brenda Bratton Blom, "How Close to Justice?," 70–71.
82. Diamond and Powers, "An Environmental History of Fairfield/Wagner's Point," 58. Brooklyn and Curtis Bay were primarily zoned residential. The zoning ordinance created a geographic, legal, and social barrier between the various neighborhoods of Baybrook.
83. J. Fred Essary, "To Build 50 Ships Here for Defense," *Baltimore Sun*, January 14, 1941; "13-Way Shipyard Given 'Go' Signal," *Baltimore Sun*, February 11, 1941; "Bethlehem Steel Firm to do Shipbreaking at Fairfield," January 4, 1946; four vertical files on Bethlehem-Fairfield shipyards in the Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD.
84. For a discussion of the racial politics of defense/public housing in Baltimore see Rhonda Y. William, *The Politics of Public Housing: Black Women's Struggles Against Urban Inequality* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004): on Fairfield Homes see 57, 111, 176–78, 184, 225, 238. Williams rarely mentions the Banneker Homes (named for noted Maryland astronomer and almanac writer Benjamin Banneker, 1731–1806). I first heard the Banneker Homes were on the peninsula during my interview with John Jeffries. I was unable to find documentation until I came across a vertical file on public housing in the Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, I found a map with information on the public housing in the area just after World War II: Baltimore Housing Authority, "Public Housing Program, 1952," Public Housing Vertical File, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD. The document includes a list and map of the nine war-housing projects (now public housing). On the peninsula, there are Fairfield Homes (white), March 31, 1942, 300 dwelling units; Banneker Homes (Negro), October 11, 1943, 245 dwelling units. Williams reprints a similar document and map from 1952 on pages 99–100 in *The Politics of Public Housing*.
85. American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), "Brief on the Racial Shift of Fairfield Homes," CHAP files on Fairfield, 1952. Copy in author's possession. The ACLU was in favor of the shift.
86. Potorti, "Planning for the People," 226–45. For Potorti's discussion of the NDC's work with Fairfield, see pages 238–40. Also see: James D. Dilts, "Medium-density zoning in Fairfield gets support from planning panel," *Baltimore Sun*, May 12, 1972;
87. Sze, *Noxious New York*, 13; Fred Barbash, "Fairfield, City's Junkyard, Fights Industry," *Baltimore Sun*, February 13, 1972; Fred Barbash, "Fairfield Takes Plea for City Services to Bias Unit," *Baltimore Sun*, July 20, 1972.
88. The NDC did a survey that showed ninety percent of Fairfield residents wanted to stay in their community. Portorti, "Planning for the People," 238; Barbash, "Fairfield Takes Plea."
89. Photographs in Wagner's Point folder, *Baltimore Sun*, 1972, UMBC Special Collections.
90. Fred Barbash, "Busing Perpetuates Segregation in 2 South Baltimore Schools," *Baltimore Sun*, May 31, 1972; Fred Barbash, "City Busing Is Believed to Be Illegal," *Baltimore Sun*, June 1, 1972. Before Victory became an all-black school, African Americans attended a small school in Fairfield simply referred to as #154. John Jeffries discusses the long legacy of racist busing practices extending back to the days of school #154: "My mother had a first cousin that lived in Hawkin's Point, Joseph Hall.

By Hawkin's Point being still in the city, they were bused from Hawkin's Point to Fairfield. So all the young people in Hawkin's Point went to school in Fairfield. They had a bus that use to transport the white children to Brooklyn and Curtis Bay and the children in Fairfield was always last to be picked up and taken home. Sometimes, some of us would be out at home doing our chores around home, and some of them would still be waiting for the bus to come pick them up. So like I said, it wasn't too easy for us down there." John Jeffries, interviewed by the author, June 7, 2011.

91. "And Now? Integration Applauded at Victory," *Baltimore Sun*, March 27, 1976. In 1975, Victory Elementary was the poorest school in Maryland with a median family income of $2,703 but performed above expectations in language and math. Mike Bowler, "Status, Wealth Linked to School Achievement," *Baltimore Sun*, January 30, 1975.
92. CSX (Chessie System) had by the 1970s bought out numerous regional rail companies, including the B&O. Allegra Bennett, "700 Persons Evacuated as Tank Car Overturns: Acid, Chlorine, Alcohol on Train," *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 1979; Catherine A. Strott, "Residents Outraged," *Baltimore Sun*, May 10, 1979; Patrick Gilbert, "You Better Get Dressed, the Sky's on Fire," *Baltimore Sun*, July 23, 1979.
93. Sheridan Lyons, "Fairfield School Hit by Vandals," *Baltimore Sun*, February 22, 1984; Kathy Lally, "As Bureaucrats Tote Up the Figures, Neighbors Rally for School's Survival," *Baltimore Sun*, December 30, 1984.
94. Martin C. Evans, "Fairfield Tenants to Be Moved Out of Danger Area," *Baltimore Sun*, January 31, 1989; Patrick A. McGuire, "Miss Jennie's Crusade," *Baltimore Sun*, March 28, 1993. Most of the residents who left Fairfield were relocated into public housing in the core of Baltimore City rather than given a relocations package that enable them to own their own homes.
95. Gilbert, "Wagner's Point: Front-Steps."
96. "A New Future for Fairfield," *Baltimore Sun*, May 26, 1995; Van Smith, "EZ Money: Empowerment Zone Fever Takes Hold in Fairfield," [Baltimore, MD] *City Paper*, May 17–24, 1995; Empowerment Zone vertical file, Maryland Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, MD; HOH Associates, Inc. "Fairfield Ecological Industrial Park: Master Plan," 1996 (copy given to author by Larissa Salamacha of the Baltimore Development Corporation, 2011); Blom, "How Close to Justice?" 95–106.
97. Blom defines the "significance of being engulfed" on page 4 of "How Close to Justice?": "All across America, there are communities that have been engulfed. These communities may or may not have been built as company towns, but their primary characteristics include that they: (1) are surrounded by industrial development (primarily chemical, petrochemical or hazardous waste); (2) face serious issues of emergency access; and (3) suffered a restriction or decrease of city services. Industrially engulfed communities, both urban and rural, all across the country and around the globe are facing similar situations."
98. Blom's unpublished dissertation is an astute insider's perspective on the relocation process that focused not only on the legal aspects of the case but also the social and personal lives of residents.
99. I am in no way implying that environmental racism is not a useful framework to combat pollution and other environmental injustices in other situations. In the context of this community, Wagner's Point and Fairfield needed to work together to achieve a fair buyout for their homes.
100. For a detailed, almost day-by-day, account of the buyout of Wagner's Point and Fairfield, see Blom, "How Close to Justice?" especially pages 115–251. Also see articles by Joe Mathews in the *Baltimore Sun* during the late 1990s.
101. Blom, "How Close to Justice?" 213. For a more detailed discussion of the relocation package see pages 202–13.
102. Yaganeh June Torbati, "Last Residents' Move from Fairfield Completes Industrialization of the Area," *Baltimore Sun*, March 10, 2011.
103. With no residents on the point, the amount of day-to-day scrutiny of industrial pollution dramatically decreased. And in 2008 when FMC moved its operations from Baltimore to Asia, the final contamination monitor on the peninsula also disappeared. For the most recent report on the environmental conditions of the Baybrook community, see the Environmental Integrity Project, Washington, DC, "Air Quality Profile of Curtis Bay, Brooklyn, and Hawkin's Point, Maryland," 2012. Author is in possession of a copy.

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