A Decent Place To Live

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Chronology

1630 Puritan settlers land on Columbia Point, a site called “Mat-taponnock” by native Americans. The peninsula is used as a calf pasture for the town of Dorchester until 1869, a year before Dorchester is annexed by the city of Boston.

1878 Mount Vernon Street, also known as the “Mile Road,” is built.

1884 The pumping station opens at the end of the Mile Road.

1928 Old Colony Boulevard opens; it will be renamed Morrissey Boulevard in the 1950s.

1934 The National Housing Act creates the Federal Housing Administration.

1937 The United States Housing Act creates the United States Housing Authority for low-rent housing and slum clearance projects; the Boston Housing Authority is established.

1942 Camp McKay is built as a prisoner-of-war camp for Italian prisoners.

1946 Camp McKay is converted to public housing known as Columbia Village.

1950 Boston College High School moves from the South End to the Columbia Point peninsula.

1951 Mayor John B. Hynes presides over the groundbreaking ceremony for the 1,504-unit Columbia Point public housing project.

1954 The Columbia Point public housing project opens and the first families move in.

1957 The Paul E. Dever Elementary School and St. Christopher’s Church are built on the Columbia Point peninsula.

1958 The Boston Globe moves from downtown Boston to Morrissey Boulevard, directly across the street from Boston College High School.

1959 The Southeast Expressway opens.

1959 John F. Collins is elected mayor in Boston, beating Senate President John E. Powers in the general election.

1962 Six-year-old Laura Ann Ewing is killed by a dump truck on Mount Vernon Street; Columbia Point residents mobilize. The city is finally forced to close its dump.

1962 Edward F. Logue is named administrator of the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

1963 President Lyndon B. Johnson declares “War on Poverty” on November 24, two days after the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

1965 The John W. McCormack Middle School is built.

1966 The Columbia Point Health Center opens; it is the first community health center in the country.

1966 Construction begins on the Bayside Mall.

1967 Kevin H. White is elected mayor, beating Louise Day Hicks in the general election.

1968 The trustees of the University of Massachusetts decide to locate its new Boston campus on the Columbia Point peninsula.

1968 The Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) is created to spur the development of low-income housing throughout the state.

1971 Construction of the University of Massachusetts at Boston begins on the peninsula.


1974 Court-ordered busing—the school desegregation plan ordered by Federal District Court Judge W. Arthur Garrity—begins in September.

1975 Tenants in several public housing projects file suit against the Boston Housing Authority.

1976 The trustees of the John F. Kennedy Library announce that the presidential library, to be designed by architect I. M. Pei, will be located on the Columbia Point peninsula.

1976 Public housing tenants file a motion in Judge Paul F. Garrity’s court to put the Boston Housing Authority into receivership.

1977 Judge Paul F. Garrity issues a consent decree specifying actions to be taken by the BHA to fulfill its statutory obligations to residents of the city’s public housing projects.

1978 The Columbia Point Community Task Force (CPCTF) is formally incorporated to work with the Boston Housing Authority and the Boston Redevelopment Authority to decide how to spend a $10 million federal grant for improvements at the public housing project.

1979 The CPCTF, the BRA, and the BHA in February sign a redevelopment agreement calling for the complete
overhaul of Columbia Point. The task force will participate as partners in the new development.

1979 Judge Garrity orders the BHA into receivership in July.
1979 The Kennedy Library is formally dedicated in October. President Jimmy Carter and a host of dignitaries join the Kennedy family on the Columbia Point peninsula for the ceremony.

1980 Judge Garrity names Lewis H. Spence, former director of the Somerville and Cambridge housing authorities, as receiver for the Boston Housing Authority in February.
1982 The Columbia Point Community Task Force, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and the Boston Housing Authority jointly issue a Request for Proposals for the redevelopment of Columbia Point.
1983 Three development teams submit proposals in February. Corcoran, Mullins, Jennison and Columbia Associates receive tentative designation as Peninsula Partners, the new development team for Columbia Point in October. CMJ is named the managing partner.
1983 Raymond L. Flynn is elected mayor in November, beating Melvin King in the general election.
1984 The receivership of the Boston Housing Authority ends.
1984 Corcoran, Mullins, Jennison takes over the management of Columbia Point, initiating a major cleanup and intensive maintenance improvements.
1985 Some Columbia Point residents are temporarily relocated and selective demolition begins in July.
1985 The Massachusetts Archives opens in November.
1986 The Tax Reform Act threatens the financing package for Harbor Point, but a last-minute compromise brokered by Senator Edward M. Kennedy is signed into law in October.
1986 Construction of Harbor Point begins in December.
1987 The dedication of Harbor Point in January brings dignitaries to the Columbia Point peninsula to mark the occasion with tenants and developers.
1988 Residents move into the first of the new units at Harbor Point. The no-pets policy stirs controversy across the city.
1990 Construction of Harbor Point is completed.
1992 Old Harbor Park, the Metropolitan District Commission's new six-and-a-half-acre waterfront park, is dedicated.
1992 The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development initiates the HOPE VI program—based on the mixed-income model pioneered at Harbor Point—to revitalize severely distressed public housing.
1993 After President Clinton names Boston Mayor Ray Flynn as the U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, city council president Tom Menino takes over as acting mayor in July; Menino defeats state representative Jim Brett in the general election in November.
1998 Harbor Point achieves 99 percent occupancy and celebrates its tenth anniversary as a mixed-income community.