

The Assessment of the Socioeconomic Impact of Historical Designation on National Register Districts in the City of Boston

An Interactive Qualifying Project

Sponsored by:
The Boston Landmarks Commission

Liaison:
Colleen Meagher

<http://users.wpi.edu/~bprivett/BLC/>

Patrick Chrzanowski

Jim Duggan

Sheila Ginés

Ben Privett

February 27, 2003



WPI Faculty Advisors:
Professor Angel Rivera
Professor Fabio Carrera

This project is submitted in fulfillment of degree requirements of Worcester Polytechnic Institute.
The views and opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of
Worcester Polytechnic Institute or the Boston Landmarks Commission.

Abstract

This Interactive Qualifying Project studied historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the City of Boston in order to assess the socioeconomic impact that historic designation has on designated neighborhoods. Using undesignated areas of the city as a control, various economic, social, and population indicators were studied to gauge the impact of national register designation. The study concluded that there was a positive socioeconomic impact on designated districts and areas directly surrounding the districts.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Historic buildings, a key part of our architectural heritage, are often destroyed in favor of newer, more profitable buildings or are neglected and left to perish. Historic preservationists emerged to preserve this heritage against modern developers and people who have little regard for conservation and preservation. Historic preservation is the maintenance of historic sites and the recognition of their significance and importance to the people, culture and surroundings. It is based on the value of retaining and restoring, instead of destroying and demolishing. Cities throughout this nation are currently attempting to implement historic preservation activities.

Due to the growing importance and need for historic preservation, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was passed on October 15, 1966 and it was last amended in 2000. This act was passed due to the inadequate efforts and actions taken towards preservation by governmental and private preservation agencies in a time of increasing expansion, urbanization, and development.

When drafting and passing the Act, Congress felt and still feels that “the spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and



Figure 1: The Dorchester Heights Monument

reflected in its historical heritage [...] the historical and cultural foundation of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give sense of orientation to the American people.”¹ This and more were reasons for passing the Act in 1966.

The City of Boston is no stranger to the act of preservation. Boston has a rich heritage immersed in a diverse culture and a turbulent history, one that is more than worthy of preservation. The architecture of Boston and its structures hold true to this heritage having a unique culture and history of their own. During the 1950s, 60s, and 70s the city went through a turbulent era of urban renewal, which had both a positive and a negative impact on the City of Boston. The city emerged as a new leader in industry, commerce, and residential prestige. However, urban renewal destroyed much of Boston Proper and its heritage. Urban renewal ended when the residents of Boston’s neighborhoods stood up and put a stop to it, thus beginning a process of historic preservation in Boston.

As a result the Boston Landmarks Commission was created in 1975 by the state legislation, as the Boston’s city-wide historic preservation agency. In conjunction with the Historic District Commission, they are considered to be the protectors of the city’s historic buildings, places, and neighborhoods.

“A designated Boston Landmark is a property or site with historic, social, cultural, architectural or aesthetic significance to the City and the commonwealth, the New England region, or the nation.”²

The BLC determines whether a property has any historic value, and if so, what type of protection and regulations it requires. It also provides some level of review on projects that involve physical and or architectural changes. National Register Districts, however, are districts or properties worthy of preservation, but only hold an honorary designation with no real restriction on any changes made to the property.

¹ National Historic Preservation Act – 1966, As amended through 2000. 16 U.S.C. 470 Section 1.b.2.

² City of Boston. Boston Landmarks Commission – BLC.

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/landmarks.asp>, 2003. last visited 2/10/03.

Boston Landmarks Commission believes that historic designation has a socioeconomic impact on designated districts and the surrounding areas. However, it was unknown whether or not historic designation actually had a socioeconomic impact, and if so, to what extent. There was a need to determine this impact on landmarks and city districts. Prior to this project, the BLC lacked the information necessary to demonstrate the socioeconomic impact of designation.

This project was a pioneering effort for Boston and the socioeconomic impact assessment of designation in the city. In Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Historic Commission conducted a study of the economic impact of designation to the city as a whole; they researched tourism and cash flow. Various states, including Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, Maryland, and Virginia have conducted similar studies involving locally designated districts and their impact on property values. The methodology of all these previous studies and research were important and useful to this project, although the scope of this project goes beyond just property value. The conclusions of these studies have been unanimous; historical designation dramatically increased property values and property sale prices, providing a positive economic impact. However, a study and research of this nature has never been conducted in Boston. Furthermore, a few studies have examined National Register Districts over locally designated districts, making this project more pertinent to the city.

The goal of this project was to recognize and understand the socioeconomic impact of designation on historic districts and the surrounding areas. Our team worked with the BLC to determine whether or not there is a correlation between designation of historic sites with various socioeconomic indicators. We provided a socioeconomic analysis that identified the socioeconomic impact of designation on Boston historic districts.

In addition to completing a socioeconomic impact assessment, we developed a standardized process for assessing socioeconomic impact. Our methodology included four major objectives to remedy the lack of information pertaining to socioeconomic indicators and their impact on the designated area.

The primary goal of our study was to analyze specific socioeconomic indicators from 1990 to the present. The initial objective was to select the study areas.

We focused on two National Register Districts that were recently designated: Eagle Hill in East Boston and Dorchester Heights in South Boston. We then selected four sample study areas within the districts and four sample areas outside the districts to perform our analysis.



Figure 2: A View from the East Boston Piers

Data was collected on each indicator and was analyzed using a comparison technique. A conclusion was then made on each individual indicator. Once completed, a final conclusion was made to determine the socioeconomic impact by reviewing the conclusions made on each

socioeconomic indicator.

Our results show that designation has a different impact on each of our socioeconomic indicators. A positive impact was noticed in the area of private investment, especially in the years leading up to designation. However, it was found that designation had no impact on public investment in historic districts. It was also found that national register designation had a positive effect on assessed property values and real estate values. Our results and analyses also showed that the neighborhood within the district is more stable in regards to neglect, vacancy, owner occupancy, and crime levels. A final analysis into whether designation has an impact on the population of the district was conducted and it was found that there is not a negative impact and possibly a positive one.

It was concluded that national historic designation does indeed have a positive socioeconomic impact. We do, however, recommend that further research should be carried out on the topic. A more in depth study should be conducted comparing more nationally designated districts and more random undesignated areas throughout the

city while taking into consideration a larger time frame. We also recommend including more socioeconomic indicators. In addition we recommend that the City of Boston improve and standardize the storage and accessibility of its data.

AUTHORSHIP PAGE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	PC/SG
INTRODUCTION	BP/PC
BACKGROUND	BP/PC
Architectural Heritage	BP/JD/SG
Urban Development	PC/JD
Economics of Historic Preservation	SG
Historic Preservation in the United States	SG
METHODOLOGY	ALL
RESULTS	PC
Economic Impact Indicators	BP/PC/SG
Social Impact Indicators	PC/SG
ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS	PC
Economic Impact	BP/PC/SG
Social Impact	PC/SG
Population Impact	PC
The Socioeconomic Impact of Historic Designation	PC
RECOMMENDATIONS	JD/BP
BIBLIOGRAPHY	ALL
APPENDIX 1-ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY	ALL

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	2
<p>This Interactive Qualifying Project studied historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places in the City of Boston in order to assess the socioeconomic impact that historic designation has on designated neighborhoods. Using undesignated areas of the city as a control, various economic, social, and population indicators were studied to gauge the impact of national register designation. The study concluded that there was a positive socioeconomic impact on designated districts and areas directly surrounding the districts.</p>	
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	3
Table of Figures	11
1. Introduction	13
2. Background	15
2.1. Architectural Heritage	16
2.1.1. Early Boston Architecture	16
2.1.2. The Neck of South Boston	19
2.1.2.1. Dorchester Heights District	20
2.1.3. The Neighborhood of East Boston	22
2.1.3.1. The Eagle Hill District	23
2.2. The Social Economics of Urban Development	24
2.2.1. Social Economics	24
2.2.1.1. Neighborhood Stability Indicators	24
2.2.1.2. Neglect	25
2.2.2. Urban Economics	25
2.2.2.1. Public Investment	26
2.2.2.2. Private Investment	26
2.2.2.3. Values	27
2.2.2.4. Zoning	27
2.2.2.5. Overlay Zoning	30
2.2.3. Urban Renewal in Boston	31
2.3. Historic Preservation in the United States	34
2.3.1. National Historic Preservation Act	35
2.3.2. Historic Preservation in Boston	36
3. Methodology	39
3.1. Selecting the study areas	40
3.2. Obtain existing data of socioeconomic indicators	42
3.2.1. Private Investment	43
3.2.2. Public Investment	44
3.2.3. Property and Land Value (Assessed Values)	44
3.2.4. Real Estate Transactions	44
3.2.5. Neglect	45
3.2.6. Vacancy Rates	46
3.2.7. Owner Occupancy	47
3.2.8. Crime Statistics	47
3.2.9. Demographic data	48

3.3.	Establish baselines for socioeconomic impact and Standardize Data	48
3.3.1.	Pre-designation	49
3.3.2.	Post-designation	49
3.4.	Determine socioeconomic impact	49
3.4.1.	Past v. Present	49
3.4.2.	Districts v. surrounding areas	50
4.	Results	51
4.1.	Economic Impact Indicators	51
4.1.1.	Public Investment	51
4.1.2.	Private Investment	51
4.1.3.	Assessed Values	52
4.1.4.	Real Estate Value	55
4.2.	Social Impact Indicators	56
4.2.1.	Neglect	56
4.2.2.	Vacancy	57
4.2.3.	Owner Occupancy	61
4.2.4.	Crime Statistics	62
4.3.	Population Impact Indicators	66
4.3.1.	Gender	67
4.3.2.	Race	67
4.3.3.	Education Attainment	71
4.3.4.	Median Income	73
4.3.5.	Number of Households	73
5.	Analysis and Conclusions	75
5.1.	Economic Impact	75
5.1.1.	Public Investment	75
5.1.2.	Private Investment	76
5.1.3.	Assessed Values	76
5.1.4.	Real Estate Value	77
5.2.	Social Impact	77
5.2.1.	Neglect	77
5.2.2.	Vacancy	77
5.2.3.	Owner Occupancy	78
5.2.4.	Crime Statistics	78
5.3.	Population Impact	79
5.3.1.	Gender	79
5.3.2.	Race	79
5.3.3.	Education Attainment	79
5.3.4.	Median Income	80
5.3.5.	Number of Households	80
5.4.	The Socioeconomic Impact of Historic Designation	80
6.	Recommendations	82
7.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	83
	APPENDIX 1 – Annotated Bibliography	86

Table of Figures

Figure 1: The Dorchester Heights Monument	3
Figure 2: A View from the East Boston Piers.....	6
Figure 3: A Circa 1778 Map of Boston	15
Figure 4: Mansard-Style Roofs in Boston	17
Figure 5: Trinity Church	18
Figure 6: Dorchester Heights District Map.....	21
Figure 7: A Map of Eagle Hill District	23
Figure 8: Boston's West End Pre-1960	31
Figure 9: Boston's West End Circa 1960-1961	31
Figure 10: Boston City Plan of the West End.....	32
Figure 11: Boston City Plan for New West End Labeled "And a New Plan"	33
Figure 12: Dorchester Heights Sample Blocks.....	40
Figure 13: Eagle Hill Sample Blocks.....	42
Figure 14: A Park Bench in Eagle Hill	43
Figure 15: A Sign in Dorchester Heights.....	44
Figure 16: A Notice on a Condemned House	46
Figure 17: A Vacant Home in Eagle Hill.....	47
Figure 18: Total investment per ft2 per year in Dorchester Heights and its surrounding area.....	52
Figure 19: Total investment per ft2 per year in eagle Hill and its surrounding area ..	52
Figure 20: Dorchester Heights and Surrounding Areas Total Value	53
Figure 21: Eagle Hill and Surrounding Areas Total Value.....	54
Figure 22: Difference in total value per sq. ft., Dorchester Heights v. Surrounding Area.....	54
Figure 23: Difference in total value per sq. ft., Eagle Hill v. Surrounding Area.....	55
Figure 24: Total Real Estate Value (per sq. ft.)	55
Figure 25: Percentage of Neglect Cases Per Sq. Ft.	56
Figure 26: Percentage of Neglect Cases Per Sq. Ft.	57
Figure 27: Total Building Neglect Violations	57
Figure 28: Number of Days Vacant in Eagle Hill Area.....	58
Figure 29: Number of Days Vacant in the Dorchester Heights Area	59
Figure 30: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation.....	59
Figure 31: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation.....	60
Figure 32: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation.....	60
Figure 33: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation.....	61
Figure 34: Percentage of Owner Occupancy	62
Figure 35: Number of Violent Crimes (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area	63
Figure 36: Number of Violent Crimes (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area.....	63
Figure 37: Number of Property Crimes (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area	64
Figure 38: Number of Property Crimes (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area.....	64

Figure 39: Number of Vandalism (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area....	65
Figure 40: Number of Vandalism (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area.....	65
Figure 41: Total Number of Crimes (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area	66
Figure 42: Total Number of Crimes (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area.....	66
Figure 43: Gender over a Decade	67
Figure 44: Percentages of Race in Dorchester Heights 1990	68
Figure 45: Percentages of Race in Dorchester Heights 2000	68
Figure 46: Percentages of Race in the surrounding South Boston area 1990	69
Figure 47: Percentages of Race in the surrounding South Boston area 2000	69
Figure 48: Percentages of Race in Eagle Hill 1990	70
Figure 49: Percentages of Race in Eagle Hill 2000	70
Figure 50: Percentages of Race in the surrounding East Boston area 1990	71
Figure 51: Percentages of Race in the surrounding East Boston area 2000	71
Figure 52: Education Attainment Dorchester Heights vs. the surrounding South Boston area.....	72
Figure 53: Education Attainment Eagle Hill vs. the surrounding East Boston area...	72
Figure 54: Median Income Per Capita	73
Figure 55: Number of Household Per Capita	74

1. Introduction

As a nation, our national heritage is of the utmost importance. America's ancestors fought to establish this country, and now strive to preserve its heritage. Historic buildings, a key part of our architectural heritage, are often destroyed in favor of newer, more profitable buildings. Historic preservationists are constantly pitted against modern developers, who have little regard for conservation, to maintain this valuable record of our history. The tool used by these people is preservation. By definition, historic preservation is the act of retaining and restoring rather than destroying and demolishing. Cities throughout this nation are currently attempting to implement historic preservation activities.

The City of Boston is no stranger to this phenomenon and is very familiar with the tool of preservation. Boston has a rich heritage immersed in a diverse culture and a turbulent history, one that is more than worthy of preservation. The architecture of Boston and its structures hold true to this heritage having a unique culture and history of their own. During the 1950s, 60s, and 70s the city went through a turbulent era of urban renewal. Although the city would emerge as a new leader in industry, commerce, and residential prestige because of urban renewal, much of Boston Proper's heritage was destroyed during the renewal process. The destruction would only end when the residents of Boston's neighborhoods stood up and put a stop to urban renewal, thus starting a process of historic preservation in Boston. In 1975, the City of Boston established the Boston Landmarks Commission to identify, designate, and oversee historic districts and landmarks in the city.

Previous studies on the economic impact of locally designated districts have been conducted in many states, including Georgia, North Carolina, Maryland and Virginia. The conclusions of these studies have been unanimous; historical designation dramatically increases private and public investment, as well as property values and property sale prices. However, a study of this nature would be a pioneering effort for the City of Boston. Furthermore, few studies have examined National Register Districts over locally designated districts, making our project even more pertinent to the city.

The Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) believes that historic designation has an economic impact on the designated district and the surrounding areas. However, it is unknown whether or not historic designation of a district has an economic impact, and if so, to what extent. There is a need to determine this impact on landmarks and city districts. A study in this area would be vital in assisting the BLC in furthering preservation efforts with property owners if an economic impact could be proven. We are focusing on two National Register Districts that have been recently designated to determine this impact. The two study areas are Eagle Hill and Dorchester Heights along with their surrounding areas.

Our team will work with the BLC to determine whether or not there is a correlation between the designation of historic sites with construction activity, real estate, public investment, vacancy rates, and architecture. We will provide socioeconomic analysis and research to conclude the economic impact that designated Boston historic districts have on the surrounding community.

2. Background

Boston's history is that of constant renewal, a city constantly changing and reinventing itself to suit the times. In its earliest stages, Boston was a small peninsula, surrounded by wharves and built on the maritime industry. As the 1900's approached, and the City began to expand and change, surrounding land was annexed and filled, until Boston was the size and shape that we see today. After the last land was filled, and subsequently developed, Bostonians realized that they could no longer expand outward; it was time to build inward.

To return to the status that Boston once held as a leading city in the country, it needed to repair the damage to its economy and its infrastructure and revitalize itself. However, undeveloped land was becoming more and more scarce. Already

a popular phenomenon in the country, the idea of Urban Renewal enticed the city of Boston in the 1950's, and control of the city for the next two decades. Urban development led to the much destruction in the city, including the complete demolition of Boston's historic West End, to make way for more profitable, modern buildings, but it also led to the renovation and revitalization of the city to its former prestige. Although the loss of these historic buildings was a necessity, Bostonians became fearful of the impending loss of its history, and from these roots the historic preservation movement was born.

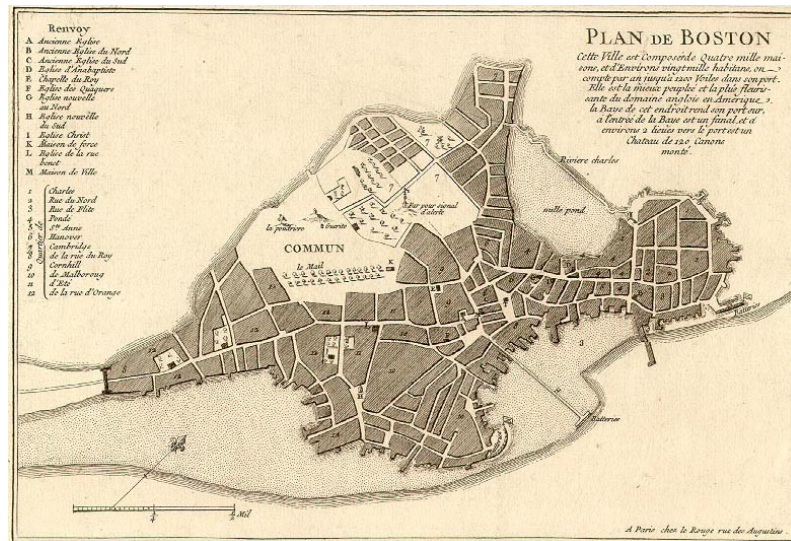


Figure 3: A Circa 1778 Map of Boston

To understand the economic impacts of historic preservation, it's important to understand the events that led to its inception in Boston. A brief history of Boston's Architectural Heritage, as well as the history of the two districts that will be observed in this study is presented to understand what it is that is being preserved. Next, there is a section on urban development which includes the urban renewal of Boston and a subsection on urban economics, which includes an introduction to private and public investment, economic values, and various economic factors that are important to the assessment of economic impact. Lastly, there is history of preservation in the United States and Boston so that we might better understand what is threatening our heritage.

2.1. *Architectural Heritage*

The City of Boston has a rich architectural heritage, which is a combination of old and new architecture. It is important to learn and understand about the architecture in Boston because it is a part of the identity and culture of the city and its people. Boston's early architecture is important for the understanding of Boston's legacy and the reasoning for historic designation and preservation. Districts in the City of Boston have been designated because of their rich historic cultural resources; these resources are the buildings and architecture. Districts such as Eagle Hill and Dorchester Heights have been designated because of their architectural heritage and the need to protect them. Boston's architecture is very diverse and unique.

2.1.1. Early Boston Architecture

A combination of the old and the new, the architecture of Boston is as interesting and diverse as the city itself. Many beautiful buildings were constructed in the 1700's by British architects, and later by early colonial house-wrights. Among those still standing are the Old State House, Old North Church, and the Revere House. However, a history of destructive fires has erased most of the architecture that pre-dates the 1800's. Due to the 1803 ordinance, every building over ten feet in height in Boston built after that year was to be made of brick or stone, and covered with a non-combustible material such as slate or tile. Fortunately, as a result of this law, many of these buildings remain intact.

Boston's first native architect was Charles Bulfinch; his designs and plans shaped the look of the entire city. Most notable of Bulfinch's designs are the State House and the redesigned Faneuil Hall. Bulfinch and his contemporaries constructed buildings in what is known as a Federalist style, exemplified by the State House and Faneuil Hall. By the 1820's Boston inhabitants were growing tired of the red brick of the Federalist style, they looked to a new generation of architects to bring change to Boston's architecture.



Figure 4: Mansard-Style Roofs in Boston

Greek revival was already sweeping through the country, most notably in New York (as evidenced by the names of new cities of the time such as Ithaca, Utica, Syracuse, Athens, and Troy) and cities in Massachusetts such as Worcester and New Bedford. Boston incorporated this style more slowly, but eventually adopted it in full force, building many mansions and town houses throughout the city in this style. One of the first public buildings built in the Greek Revival style is Quincy Market; its large columns are some of the earliest of their kind in Boston. This style was continued by many architects, notably Alexander Parris, Solomon Willard, and Ammi Young. Many of the buildings conceived by these men still stand and are still in use. Parris' design for the David Sears house is used as the Somerset Club, Willard, who assisted Parris on the Sears house, conceived and constructed the Bunker Hill memorial. The most notable and finest of the Greek Revival style in Boston was the Custom House, constructed by Ammi Young, which was one of the costliest public buildings of its time. Unfortunately, this beautiful building was later overshadowed by the addition of the Custom House Tower, Boston's first high-rise, and little of the original design can still be seen.

From about 1840-1850 Boston briefly flirted with the American Gothic style. These buildings featured large “battlements” or were modeled after quaint cottages in Britain. Prominent among this style were the old Masonic Temples, both of which burned to the ground early in their life. Due to the poor choices of construction material, as well as the short span of time this style was employed, American Gothic was not a lasting style in Boston.

Following the American Gothic phase, Boston employed what is known as the Plain American style, most famous of this also short-lived style are the Athenaeum and the State Street Block. Unfortunately the State Street Block has been altered extensively from the originals.



Figure 5: Trinity Church

Around the time that the major expansions and fills in Boston were occurring, a style known as Victorian Gothic swept through Boston. Copley square, with its Art Museum, Library, Trinity Church, and the New Old South, became the architectural center of the country; no other city had such a large group of notable and progressive buildings in all of the United States. Though many changes have occurred in Copley Square, it is still an important example of American architecture.

Around the end of the Civil War, another architectural style swept through Boston in much the same way that Greek Revival had earlier in the century. Romanesque architecture is prominent throughout Boston to this day, and many major buildings, including the Mission Church on Tremont Street, as well as Harvard Law School and Sever Hall. Concurrent with this style was the Queen Anne movement, a short-lived form that can still be found on many of the city row houses.

The last of the major styles that occurred in Boston in the 1800’s, before steel frame architecture came into vogue, was the Renaissance style. Taken from Italian renaissance mansions and palaces, the first notable building of this type in Boston was the City Library.

This marked the last major architecture style before the “completion” of Boston, that is, the last major fill and new development. Boston continued to evolve architecturally through the 20th century, but for purposes of historical preservation, this was the last relevant historical style.³

2.1.2. The Neck of South Boston

The Dorchester Neck would not become South Boston until 1804, when state legislature annexed the neck from the town of Dorchester. Before the annexation of the neck, South Boston, like Boston proper was originally just a peninsula with good grazing land and a few rolling hills.

In 1725, South Boston was sparsely populated, with only seven families having built homes and residing on the neck. It would stay this way until 1776 when the British attacked the neck and burned several of the houses down, leaving standing only those they thought were Tory houses. The residents of the Dorchester Neck fled back to the safety of Boston abandoning the peninsula. It was at this point that General Washington and three thousand American troops stationed themselves upon the summit at Dorchester Heights. Washington’s military action on the summit ended the siege by the British, and forced Britain to abandon its ten year occupation of Boston.

The development of South Boston did not begin until after the neck was annexed in 1804. The whole reason the Dorchester Neck became South Boston was because of a Federal Era development ploy created by Joseph Woodward. He was able to convince several wealthy and politically influential people to invest in the peninsula. These investors were able to arrange the annexation of the neck into Boston through legislature after the citizens of Dorchester refused to sell the neck. As part of the legislature, Woodward and his investors were required to build a bridge connecting Boston to South Boston. The bridge was constructed in 1805 as a toll bridge that did not connect to the city center, impeding investment and development.

Upon completion of the bridge, a grid system was laid out for South Boston and over the next twenty years the neck slowly developed. During these years, the

³ Kilham, Walter A. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; 1972. pp. 3-87

northern portion of South Boston was filled and several industries including shipbuilding, iron works, and glass works moved into the area. A second, toll free and direct bridge was built in 1828 which prompted an increase in the population from 2,500 to 10,000.

Once the waterfront was industrialized and the peninsula settled, South Boston remained relatively unchanged until after World War II when the marine industries began to decline. In recent years, however, investors and developers have begun to look at South Boston as a prime target for renewal both commercially and residentially. At this time, a major overhaul and renovation is scheduled for the Fort Point waterfront. This project will encourage major growth for South Boston in all aspects.⁴

Currently, there are 30,000 people living in South Boston broken down into about 6,000 families. The median age is 35 years old and the population is roughly 55 percent female and 45 percent male. The population is mostly white with 90 percent of South Boston's residents coming from Caucasian roots, and the remaining 10 percent spread over the Asian, Black, and Hispanic cultures.⁵

2.1.2.1. Dorchester Heights District

The historic district of Dorchester Heights is located on South Boston's summit and was once part of the town of Dorchester. The district remained relatively untouched far after the annexation of the peninsula into Boston because of its difficult terrain. In 1847, however, the people of South Boston demanded that the city develop the Dorchester Heights area.

By 1850, the City of Boston had undertaken the task of transforming the land and creating an infrastructure in the district. Dorchester Heights began to take shape in the 1850s as an attractive middle-class neighborhood. The Civil War only helped to accelerate the development of the Heights as South Boston's industries dramatically increased production during the war.

⁴ Boston Landmarks Commission. Dorchester Heights Homeowner Handbook. Boston: Boston Landmarks Commission, 2001.

⁵ City of Boston. Boston Redevelopment Authority. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra> 2003.

The northern side of the district was developed first during the third quarter of the 19th century while the southern side developed second during the last quarter of the century. Due to the difference in development times, the slopes took on very different appearances. The northern side followed a formal uniform development plan which included single family, double family and row house designs. The development plan for the southern side was much less formal creating a disorganized look to the slope. At the top of the summit, around Thomas Park, large villas were built on sizable lots. The rest of the southern slope was developed using multifamily houses with the working class in mind. The development of the Dorchester Heights district did not end until the 1920s.

In the middle of the district lie Thomas Park, the Dorchester Heights Monument, and South Boston High School. The South Boston High School was built in 1894 to fulfill the need for a high school in South Boston. It was built in the neoclassical fashion and received high praise upon its completion. Next to the high school lies the Dorchester Heights Monument built in 1902 to

honor the actions of General George Washington during the Revolutionary War. By the 1970s the park and monument had fallen into disarray and the property was transferred over to the National Park Service in 1978 for restoration. The restoration of Thomas Park commenced in 1996 and the rebirth of the National Historic Landmark was completed in 1997. Currently, the Dorchester Heights Historic District is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is a National Historic Park site under the National Park Service. The Dorchester Heights district is rich in history as well as in early Boston architecture making it an ideal area for historical

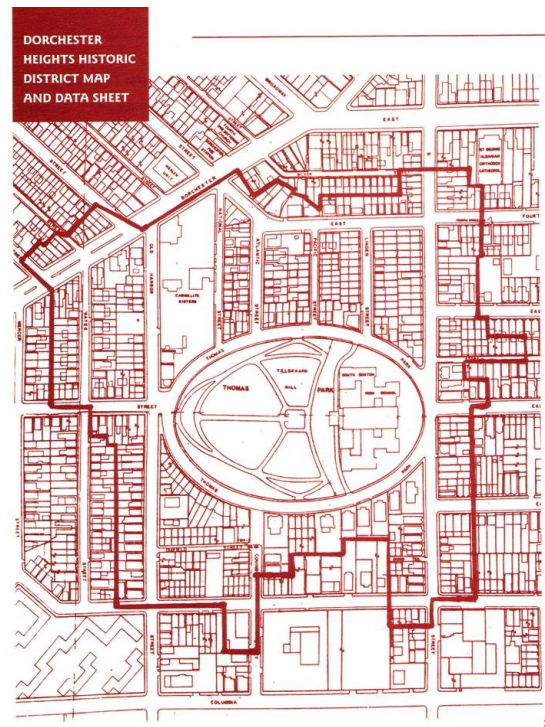


Figure 6: Dorchester Heights District Map

designation. Both preservation and restoration of the houses in the district is underway today.⁶

2.1.3. The Neighborhood of East Boston

In 1833, General Sumner formed the East Boston Company in order to develop a community from the five islands of East Boston. Sumner and his developers envisioned a community with a formal plan that consisted of residential, commercial, and industrial sectors. The East Boston neighborhood originally consisted of Noddle's Island, Hog or Breed's Island, Governor's Island, Apple Island, and Bird Island. The East Boston Company controlled this community for nearly a century, turning the islands into one large island known now as East Boston.

The community soon developed into an industrial marine center, focusing mostly on shipbuilding, but also working in a few other marine service industries. During the era of Clipper ships, the East Boston waterfront grew and prospered turning Boston into one of the leading ports in the country. Even after the days of wooden vessels, East Boston remained in the marine industries, specializing in repair and conversions.

With East Boston being a thriving international port, it attracted many immigrants during the latter half of the 19th century and into the early 20th century. Many immigrants from each wave settled in East Boston to work in the flourishing marine industries creating a very large and diverse population. By 1915, the East Boston neighborhood had Irish, Canadian, Russian, Eastern European, and Italian residents.⁷

Today, East Boston economically relies heavily on the General Edward Lawrence Logan International Airport. The population of East Boston is about 38,000 with nearly 9,000 families. East Boston is split nearly equally between male and female, and the median age is 32. The neighborhood continues its tradition of

⁶ Boston Landmarks Commission. Dorchester Heights Homeowner Handbook. Boston: Boston Landmarks Commission, 2001.

⁷ East Boston Online. East Boston: An Overview. <http://www.eastboston.com/histoc.htm> 2003.

diversity with 70 percent of its residents stemming from Caucasian backgrounds, 2 percent from Asian backgrounds, and roughly 25 percent from Latino backgrounds.⁸

2.1.3.1. The Eagle Hill District

In the neighborhood of East Boston, lies the historic district of Eagle Hill, which is located on the northern section of what was once Noddle's Island. The district was originally created when General Sumner divided the island into three sections. The development of Eagle Hill coincided with the development of the marine industries in East Boston starting in 1834.

The first houses were built in the 1830s and were designed as single family homes. Most of these houses were owned by shipyard owners and skilled artisans working in the marine industries. Eagle Hill continued to grow as immigrants began to settle in East Boston starting in the 1850s. By the turn of the century, many single family homes were subdivided as multifamily housing needs increased with the continued inflow of immigrants to East Boston.

A notable historic landmark on Eagle Hill is the Trinity House. The house was built in 1847 as a residence for a prominent local business man. In 1917, the Trinity House came under the control of the Trinity Church in Boston and became the host for a Day Nursery program. In recent years, the house has been modified as a housing unit for elderly residents of Eagle Hill.

Map of Eagle Hill National Register District



Figure 7: A Map of Eagle Hill District

⁸ City of Boston. Boston Redevelopment Authority. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra> 2003.

The Eagle Hill district is home to several important historic building and is a pinnacle of architectural heritage for Boston. In addition, East Boston played an important role in Boston's history during the time of mass immigration. Both of these factors make Eagle Hill a prime example of a historic district. Currently, Eagle Hill consists of a diverse array of housing types and styles. Most of the homes are already or are being historically preserved, there is very little renovation taking place in the Eagle Hill district.⁹

2.2. *The Social Economics of Urban Development*

Urban development plays a key role in the socioeconomics and preservation of a city. This fact holds true to the City of Boston and its development. Urban development by definition is the continuous process of construction and renovation in a city. Construction and renovation in residential areas have both social and economic influences on neighborhoods. In this section, we will introduce the social and economic sides of the development cycle. Below is an introduction and explanation to Social Economics and its indicators important to this project. That is followed by an explanation of Urban Economics, which is the factors and the tools used in urban development, renewal, and preservation. Lastly, there is a brief overview of the urban renewal that occurred in Boston. Urban renewal had immense social and economic effects on Boston, both negative and positive, which in turn led to the birth of historic preservation in the city.

2.2.1. Social Economics

Economics is a social science, and social economics is the study of the social aspects of economics. The indicators relevant to this study include vacancy, neglect, crime levels, and owner versus renter occupation statistics.

2.2.1.1. Neighborhood Stability Indicators

Neighborhood stability indicators include crime levels, vacancy, and owner versus renter occupation. The level of crime in a neighborhood and the type of crimes

⁹ Boston Landmarks Commission. Eagle Hill Homeowner Handbook. Boston: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1997.

committed can have various impacts on the area. Negatively, crime affects not only the stability of a neighborhood, but it can also lower property values, lower the amount people are willing to pay for a home, and can increase the vacancy rate. Positively, it does the opposite and draws people into neighborhoods and increases the value of the neighborhood.

Vacancy is defined as being empty or without occupants. Vacancy rates can also affect property values, real estate values, and the level of crime. Although high crime levels increase vacancy, vacancy itself tends to promote crime in neighborhood. Vacancy lowers both property values and real estate values, however, on the positive side it entices investors to buy a vacant home and renovate it, bringing new life to a neighborhood.

Owner versus renter is another indicator of stability. When owners live in the neighborhood it indicates that they feel the neighborhood is more than an investment; that the area is a place to raise a family or dwell in for many years.

2.2.1.2. Neglect

Neglect is defined as the lack of necessary attention and care for properties or public spaces. Neglect is a social aspect of economics because it defines the character of a neighborhood. When owners neglect their properties, it has a negative impact on property and real estate values.

2.2.2. Urban Economics

Urban economics is the study of the location choices of firms and households. It is a field that looks at the prices of space and land, often referred to as rents. This topic covers a wide range of subtopics that factor into the system which urban economics deals with. An urbanized area is generally defined as a city with greater than 1,000 people per acre in the central city, and a total population of 50,000 people.¹⁰ With land value being a main focus in urban economics, certain economic factors need to be addressed and defined, for example, zoning and land use, real estate, property values and local investment.

¹⁰Goodman, Allen C. What is Urban Economics?
www.econ.wayne.edu/~agoodman/5800/week1/580_11.ppt Last visited: 18 Feb. 2003.

2.2.2.1. Public Investment

Public investment involves the renovations, construction, and demolition of public areas in a neighborhood. Public investment deals with the beautification of an area, such as parks, schools, public buildings, benches, sidewalks, etc. Public investments are generally made by the government be it: local, state, or federal. Understanding public investment in an area would require the knowledge of construction, renovation, and demolition done to the area.

Lately in the past decade, Boston has seen some significant plans and projects that are developing the city. The City has implemented a “boulevards program” to improve the streetscape and urban design of the city's streets. Boston has plans for and is developing new transit lines such as the Silver Line, the Urban Ring and plans for remodeling stations are underway including several Red Line stations in Dorchester, Yawkey Station in the Fenway, and Airport Station in East Boston.¹¹

2.2.2.2. Private Investment

Private investment is the renovations or remodeling made to a property by landowners or private sectors. These renovations and remodeling can be anything from putting in new plumbing, preserving or reworking the exterior, gentrification of the entire estate, etc. Private investment also includes private sectors or investors, such as small businesses, entrepreneurs, and corporations. The determination of private investments in an area would require knowing the costs of construction, renovation, and demolition made to an area and its buildings.

Recently Boston has seen a great demand for housing, increasing private investment to many areas. This strong demand all over the city offers new possibilities for increasing density near transit stations that is necessary to increase “ridership” and support local businesses. Business districts will prosper from this as retail options within areas that have been long overlooked are starting to rise; this is evident in Dorchester Heights and many other districts about the city.¹²

¹¹ Boston is a city of neighborhoods. <http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/boston400/pdfs/ch2.pdf> last visited: 20 Feb. 2003.

¹² Boston is a city of neighborhoods. <http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/boston400/pdfs/ch2.pdf> last visited: 20 Feb. 2003.

2.2.2.3. Values

The values of land, property, and real estate are all important factors in urban economics. Property value deals with the value of the estate, what has been done to it, and will be done to it. There are two main types of land use when speaking of property values, residential use, where families reside, and non-residential use, where business and organizations operate. Property value has a great influence on real estate value. With residential land, land value is a function of accessibility, topography, residential income, the amount of developable space around the land, and the neighborhood amenities. Non-residential land, also known as commercial land, is very valuable if it is located near a major intersection, highway, or in an urbanized area. For example, industrial property is most expensive if it is near and has access to a highway, railroad, or airport. Land values affect both property values and real estates values.

Real estate is defined as the land and all natural resources and buildings on it. Real estate has to do with its monetary value as well as the value someone is willing to pay or does pay for a property. Real estate would be considered a business and the land it is situated upon, or even a family's home and shed or barn that were on the property owned by that family.

In order to measure the impact that a specific development has in certain places, two common techniques are generally used. The comparative approach evaluates a pair of similar properties with all but one aspect in common. The regression technique is a much more in depth research process that may take much more time, data analysis, and money to complete. It evaluates land values based on different pertinent characteristics such as location with regards to accessibility, distance from the Central Business District (CBD), income of residents in the area, etc.

2.2.2.4. Zoning

Zoning is a process used by governments to control the physical development of land and the kinds of uses to which each individual property may be put. Zoning is used as a tool for land use and values. There are a few characteristics to the rational planning process in terms of land use. Planning is future oriented in that it attempts to make decisions that will combat foreseeable problematic conditions. For this reason,

planning is continuous since circumstances change and not all conditions may be initially recognized. Planning is also comprehensive; it attempts to cover all bases and be very detailed when making decisions on the proper use of land.

The practice of zoning is land use control. Zoning regulations are imposed in almost all cities and towns in the United States. They are based upon the concept of “external diseconomies,” that is, certain buildings and land developments can either increase or decrease the land value of surrounding and neighboring properties. It is zoning laws that regulate these inequalities. The regulations and rules zoning encompasses are generally designed to promote safety, health, morals, general welfare of the community, and preservation of people’s property value. Similar to zoning, only at a more site-specific level, are housing codes. “The goal of building and housing codes is to ensure buildings are safe, sanitary, and increasingly convenient and efficient.”¹³ The power to enforce zoning is delegated to the police officials, and the “power to zone is the delegated to the legislative bodies of local governments.”¹⁴

It is the local governments that make the decisions on what the zoning laws, regulations, and jurisdiction are for that particular area. Those who may initiate amendments to these regulations are the legislative body, government officials, or the property owner. People who desire to make changes to zoning regulations, often known as developers, may go through the legislative body and appeal to change zoning maps, or they may apply for special permits. This process may be lengthy and difficult as neighbors can disagree with the developers, showing cause for concern that the new development to the land would infringe on their rights or neighborhood amenities. Zoning exists to protect the neighborhoods from the developments that do not fit into the context of a neighborhood. These may be buildings or places that bring increased traffic, noise or pollution, or they may be constructed at a height that does not work for the neighborhood.

The City of Boston Zoning Code is designed to be a planning board for small projects by private owners. The latest city code was enacted in 1964 and revised

¹³ Juergensmeyer, Julian C., Roberts, Thomas G. Land Use Planning and Control Law. West Group, St. Paul, MN 1998. p. 45.

¹⁴ Juergensmeyer, p. 384

many times since. There are currently fourteen similar specific neighborhood codes along with eighteen different codes for the downtown and the waterfront areas of Boston.¹⁵ The Board of Appeal hears individual cases and grants for variances in the Zoning Code, after it deems it is appropriate to allow deviations from code restrictions in a certain area.¹⁶

The City of Boston's Inspectional Services Department assists property owners in obtaining the permits and licenses necessary for developing or improving upon land, as well as building and modifying housing in Boston. Its mission is "to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all Boston residents, as well as the quality of the City's services, professional reviews, fair inspections, and enforcement that is respectful, timely, and predictable."¹⁷

In efforts to aid the citizens of Boston in obtaining permits and variances, Mayor Thomas M. Menino's Housing 2000 Fast Track Program the city is making the permitting process, easy, more accessible, and more efficient. The program assists people who wish to build new housing with the permitting process. It is comprised of zoning clinics and seminars specifically designed to educate applicants on the application and permitting process. Also, color-coded permits, caseworkers, expedited design review, and expedited appeals hearings were instituted to streamline this process.¹⁸

After citizens complete the application and appeals process, the building and developing may begin. The agency responsible for overseeing these projects is the Boston Building Department (BBD). Its nearly two hundred employees supervise private construction in the city. Public safety is the department's prime objective. As

¹⁵Zoning Board of Appeals. Oct. 2000.

http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/BOA/pdfs/Zoning_Booklet.pdf last visited 20 Feb. 2003.

¹⁶City of Boston Zoning Board of Appeal: A guide on how to apply to the Board of Appeal. 5 Sept. 1998. <http://www.eastboston.com/Archives/zba.htm> last visited 20 Feb. 2003.

¹⁷City of Boston Inspectional Services Department. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/default.asp> last visited 20 Feb. 2003.

¹⁸City of Boston Zoning Board of Appeal. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/BOA/fasttrack.asp> last visited 20 Feb. 2003.

the officials of the building process, the BBD scrutinizes the design, construction, and operation of buildings to make sure they comply with the legislated codes.¹⁹

2.2.2.5. Overlay Zoning

Traditional zoning in general does not adequately address the concerns of economic, social, environmental, cultural, and real estate market changes. A way in which this is dealt with is to produce overlay zones. Overlay zoning is a process that enables specific public interests to be recognized when they do not coincide with or adhere to the original zoning in that geographical area. It is basically an additional mapped out layer, not necessarily following the underlying or original zone, that provides restrictions in addition to or less than those set forth by the original zone.

Overlay zoning is used as an alternative to creating an entirely new zoning category. Traditional underlying zones generally dictate permitted land uses in an area while overlay zones could provide design restrictions, additional setbacks, or other exceptions to the district's regulations. Design restrictions could include putting up a fence or siding a home. An additional setback often used is a demolition waiting period. This waiting period is an overlay zoning restriction that makes sure that careful assessment of the demolition plans is carried out. This will help ensure that rash destruction to a historic building does not take place without careful consideration.

Overlay zoning is often used to protect natural resources or to promote economic development and other specific plans. However, it is very commonly used to promote historic preservation. Under this heading, architectural criteria are developed to address design, materials, and special uses to enhance or protect historic districts or culturally significant areas. Compliance difficulties arise with the more overlay zones an area has.²⁰

¹⁹Visual Communications in Building Technology Project.
http://www.mit.edu/afs/athena/dept/libdata/libdepts/i/www_annex1/rvc_annex1/building-technology/60-27maj.html last visited 20 Feb. 2003.

²⁰ Common Questions about Planning in Arizona.
<http://www.commerce.state.az.us/pdf/commasst/cqiss18.pdf> last visited 26 Mar. 2003

2.2.3. Urban Renewal in Boston

Urban renewal came to life in the City of Boston when a group of young veterans returned home after the Allied victory in World War II. These men returned from a world ravaged by war to find that their own city was faring just as bad. Instead of being ravaged by war, however, Boston was being ravaged by ethnic and political rivalries which resulted in years of neglect. The world these veterans came from was also a world where modern technology accomplished many great deeds. These men had witnessed this and felt they could use this technology to build a new Boston, revitalize its industries, and repair the damage that had been done. These men would, however, cause much turmoil of their own to accomplish their goal of creating a new Boston.

The election of John B. Hynes in 1949 reflected the thirst for change in the city and signified the start of a new era. This era of urban renewal can be separated into three phases. Hynes governed for ten years during the initial transitional phase of the renewal process. During this transition, Hynes went ahead with his plans for the city while he acted to help the city recover from years of political turmoil. Although he had grand ideas for the city, Hynes was held back not only by his own personal limited resources in the political arena, but also by the crippled state Boston was left in by previous political rivalries and social divisions. He did, however, manage to begin pieces of the process of urban



Figure 8: Boston's West End Pre-1960



Figure 9: Boston's West End Circa 1960-1961

renewal by creating an industrial area in a section of the South End, and at the end of his term began the complete renovation of the West End. At the time, the West End was a low income clustered neighborhood dominated by various ethnic groups with nearly inaccessible streets. Hynes and the Boston Redevelopment Authority saw the West End as a fire hazard and blight on the city. Subsequently, in 1959 they leveled the entire neighborhood displacing all of its inhabitants and replaced the neighborhood with high income housing that none of these inhabitants could afford. This action nearly put an end to urban renewal in Boston.²¹

In 1960, John B. Hynes was replaced by John F. Collins as the new mayor of Boston. Collins vowed to continue the urban renewal, but in a controlled and humane manner. Collins set out to establish a strong political base to combine with his already influential ties with the downtown financial leaders. Once completed, Collins used his base to bring together all of Hynes' pieces of urban renewal into one concise project. He then called upon Edward J. Logue, a developer, to direct the renewal process. At this point urban renewal progressed into the second phase: the actual construction of a new Boston. During this phase, Collins and Logue completed many old projects including the Prudential Center, and

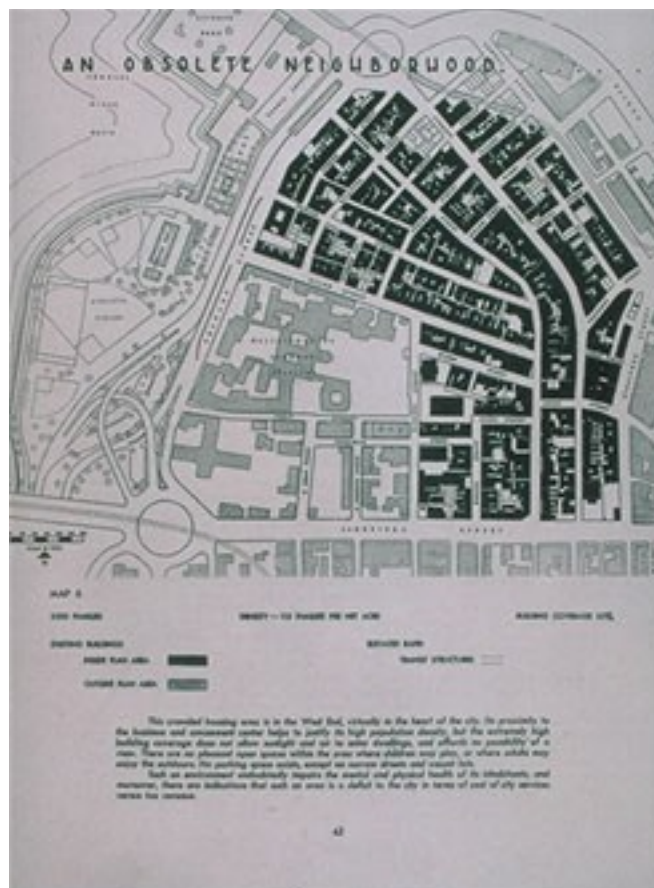


Figure 10: Boston City Plan of the West End, Labeled "An Obsolete Neighborhood"

²¹ O'Connor, Thomas H. Building a New Boston. Boston: Northeastern University Press; 1993.

the War Memorial Auditorium as well as new projects such as Government Center. In addition, Collins and Logue were able to form alliances and bridge the gap between the public and private sectors bringing many private investors into the city that would not before. The duo had now created an attractive and striking city dominated by glass, metal, and stone; a new leader on the national level.²²

The second phase of renewal created a new center of culture, finance, and government out of the old downtown; however, it neglected the native people of Boston's neighborhoods. Boston Proper was now a place where highly educated and highly paid residents worked and lived, which once again forced out the older, poorer residents of the neighborhoods. When Collins and Logue attempted to branch out of Boston Proper, the residents of these ethnic neighborhoods stood in their way, disliking and fearing what urban renewal



Figure 11: Boston City Plan for New West End Labeled "And a New Plan"

stood for. The second phase gave way to the third phase of urban renewal in Boston. Collins and Logue also gave way to a new mayor who would carry out the third and final phase of renewal in the city.²³

In 1968, Kevin White took over as the Mayor of Boston, the new Boston. White would continue the projects left to be completed and would direct the

²² O'Connor, Thomas H. *Building a New Boston*. Boston: Northeastern University Press; 1993.

²³ O'Connor, Thomas H. *Building a New Boston*. Boston: Northeastern University Press; 1993.

renovation and revitalization of Quincy Market into the Faneuil Hall Marketplace. However, White would focus more on the communities and people of Boston. The third phase of renewal in city was introducing the new Boston to its residents and making it work. White accomplished the third phase quite well and was able to calm social tensions within the city.²⁴

2.3. *Historic Preservation in the United States*

When thinking about historic preservation, think about the protection of endangered species. Once a historic structure is gone, it is gone forever just like endangered species.²⁵ Historic preservation is “the careful management of a community’s historic resources; avoidance of wasted resources by careful planning and use; the thrifty use of those resources. To use and manage those historic resources with thrift or prudence; to avoid their waste of needless expenditure; to reduce expenses through the use of those historic resources.”

There are positive and negative aspects of historic preservation such as the advantages and disadvantages to them. Important facts and issues of historic preservation are aesthetic, cultural, social, political, historic, and economic issues. Advantages include education, recreation, inspiration, and economic and ecological uses. The negative aspect of historic preservation includes that too many historic buildings are being saved when they can possibly be museums; not enough tax money to save all buildings worthy of preservation; and most historic buildings are not owned by historic preservationist.²⁶ Nevertheless, historic preservation occurs and leads to protection and restoration of landmarks and sites, which are historically and architecturally valuable sites. The preservation of these sites leads to the designation of historic landmarks and districts.

Landmarks and districts are designated, protected and recognized as important parts of their society and culture because of historic preservation. There are various levels of designation: global, national, state, and local. The highest level of

²⁴ O’Connor, Thomas H. *Building a New Boston*. Boston: Northeastern University Press; 1993.

²⁵ William, Norman; Kellogg, Edmund; Gilbert, Frank. Reading in Historic Preservation. New Brunswick, New Jersey, 1983.

²⁶ Rypkema, Donovan D. The Economics of Historic Preservation: A Community Leader’s Guide. Washington, D.C., 1994.

designation is global designation, which is a landmark that is defined as important to mankind. There are no global landmarks or districts in the City of Boston. However, there are many national, state and local landmarks in the City of Boston. National landmark and district preservation in Boston is due to its rich history, which is important to the United States. US history has left many important places in the City of Boston, which have been designated at a national, state, and local level. However, there are differences in the various levels of designation, especially between local and national. National designation is mainly an honorary designation, when local designation provides some level of review of architectural changes to a building.

2.3.1. National Historic Preservation Act

Historic preservation is very important to the nation, it is also necessary to know about and understand historic preservation in the United States and the qualifications for designation. Due to the growing importance and need for historic preservation, the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) was passed on October 15, 1966 and last amended in 2000. This act was passed because of the inadequate efforts and action taken towards preservation by government and private preservation agencies, in a time of increasing expansion, urbanization, and development.

When drafting and passing the Act, Congress felt and still feels that “the spirit and direction of the Nation are founded upon and reflected in its historical heritage...the historical and cultural foundation of the Nation should be preserved as a living part of our community life and development in order to give sense of orientation to the American people.”²⁷ This and more were reasons for passing the Act in 1966.

The purpose of the Act is primarily driven by historic preservation, it contains policies and criteria for historic designation at a National level, federal policies, the establishment of the National Register of Historic Places, responsibility of state preservation agencies, specifics on grant and loan programs for historic preservation and the requirements for such, description of the National Advisory Council for Historic Preservation; and definitions.

²⁷ National Historic Preservation Act – 1966, As amended through 2000. 16 U.S.C. 470 Section 1.b.2.

The NHPA established the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), which is an official list of American landmarks and districts worthy of preservation. The United States Department of Interior Park Service maintains the NRHP. The NRHP is composed of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects significant to history, architecture, engineering, and culture. Multiple Boston landmarks are in the NRHP list including our study areas. Nevertheless, there are specific criteria and a process to make it to the NRHP list. Criteria can be found in Appendix 3.

The Act declares specific policies that must be followed by the Federal government in partnership with other governmental and private preservation agencies. It must foster conditions under which prehistoric and historic resources can coincide with modern society, provide leadership in the preservation US cultural resources, administer resources of present and future generations, contribute and encourage the preservation of nonfederal resources, encourage private and public reservation, and assist the various agencies and organizations to expand and accelerate their historic preservation programs and activities.²⁸ The City of Boston works hard to attain to these policies, and as a result they created the Boston Landmarks Commission.

2.3.2. Historic Preservation in Boston

The Boston Government consists of the Major's Office, then the Chief Operating Officer who is responsible of managing the seven departments in the city, and among these departments is the Environmental Department. The Environment Department is a major City Department, which is managed by the City's Mayor and the City Council. Its mission is to enhance the quality of life in Boston by protecting air, water, and land resources, and to preserve and improve the integrity of Boston's architectural and historical resources.²⁹ The Environmental Department has various commissions within its command and supervision; these commissions were set to separate the wide spectrum of environmental topics that the department has to work on. One of the commissions operating under the Environment Department is the Boston Landmarks Commission.

²⁸ National Historic Preservation Act – 1966, As amended through 2000. 16 U.S.C. 470 Section 1.b.2.

²⁹ City of Boston. Environmental Review/Impact Assessment Process. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/environment/review.asp 2003>. last visited 2/10/03.

Boston's historic cultural resource is very rich probably making Boston the wealthiest American city in historic resources, resulting in the need for historic preservation agencies to protect the rich historic resources of the city. The Boston Landmarks Commission was created in 1975 by the state legislation, as the Boston's city-wide historic preservation agency. In conjunction with the Historic District Commission, they are considered to be the protectors of the city's historic buildings, places, and neighborhoods. The BLC provides information and assistance pertaining to historic preservation in general, such as regulatory process, preservation planning, historical information and technical assistance. The Historic District Commission administers the designation of historical properties and landmarks in the City of Boston. It reviews property renovation in specific districts and strives to maintain and preserve the historical nature of the area and the character of the community.³⁰

The BLC determines whether a property has any historic value, if so, what type of protection and regulations it requires. Duties of the BLC include; identifying and preserving historic properties, reviewing proposed development and demolition activities, providing public information and assistance about historic preservation, and providing staff support to local historic districts. The BLC also administers the City Demolition Delay process, as part of the Zoning Code for the city.

“A designated Boston Landmark is a property or site with historical, social, cultural, architectural or aesthetic significance to the City and the commonwealth, the New England region, or the nation.”³¹

The designation process is a formal process where a petition initiates the designation process; the petition is then brought before the BLC, goes through a hearing, and is voted upon. If accepted, the petition goes on a list of pending designation and then a study of the area is performed. A formal designation hearing will be held when the study reports are completed. Finally, for designation to become official, the BLC, City Council, and the Mayor must approve the petition.

³⁰ City of Boston. Boston Landmarks Commission – BLC. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/landmarks.asp>, 2003. last visited 2/10/03.

³¹ City of Boston. Boston Landmarks Commission – BLC. <http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/landmarks.asp>, 2003. last visited 2/10/03.

For a Boston Landmarks to be added to the NRHP there is a multi-step process, eligibility evaluation, preparation of official nomination form, and approval by the BLC, MHC, and the National Parks Service. District nomination requires additional steps: public process of notification, education, and opportunity to objection.

3. Methodology

The goal of this project was to recognize and understand the socioeconomic impact of designation on historic districts and the surrounding areas. Prior to this project, the BLC lacked the information necessary to demonstrate the socioeconomic impact of designation. Our team worked with the BLC to determine whether or not there is a correlation between the designations of historic sites with various socioeconomic indicators. We provided a socioeconomic analysis and research that identified the socioeconomic impact of designated historic districts in Boston due to their designation.

The main purpose of this project was to assess socioeconomic impact of designation on historic districts in the City of Boston and to produce a standardized process for socioeconomic impact assessment. Our methodology included four major objectives to remedy the lack of information pertaining to socioeconomic indicators and their impact on a designated area. These objectives were:

- Selecting the study areas
- Obtaining existing data of various socioeconomic indicators of the studied areas
- To establish baselines for economic impact assessment and standardize the obtained data into a quantified analytical form
- To determine socioeconomic impact

All the gathered data and information was organized in a database in order to assess the socioeconomic impact. Graphs, tables and maps were constructed from the database and used to evaluate as well as demonstrate the socioeconomic impact. Geographic Information System (GIS) layers were created of the specific socioeconomic indicators that affect the designated districts and surrounding areas. Together these analytical tools were used to better demonstrate the impact of the socioeconomic indicators.

The Boston Landmarks Commission and the Redevelopment Authority can use this project as a basis for future development, by incorporating and realizing the

impact of socioeconomic indicators in recognition and designation. This project also produced a standardized process of economic impact assessment that would allow the City of Boston and the BLC to understand what impact designation has on an area, especially the designated area itself. A conclusion was formulated on whether or not there is an impact and whether designation is detrimental or helpful to the economy.

3.1. Selecting the study areas

In this project we focused on two newly designated National Register Districts as specified by the BLC. National Register District are properties that are worthy of designation; however, there are more restrictions over local districts; they have a review level over physical and architectural changes. The BLC preferred to stay away from the local districts, the restrictions and review levels that they consist of. Eagle Hill in East Boston was selected by the BLC, and as a team we selected Dorchester Heights in South Boston as our second study area. We chose to select a second study area so we could have more of a comparison to main in the study and to broaden the study “horizon.” Then we selected four sample study block within the districts (two for each district) and four sample study blocks outside the districts (two for each district) to perform our analysis. The blocks were chosen based on location in the districts and outside the districts and because they were all on separate census tracts,

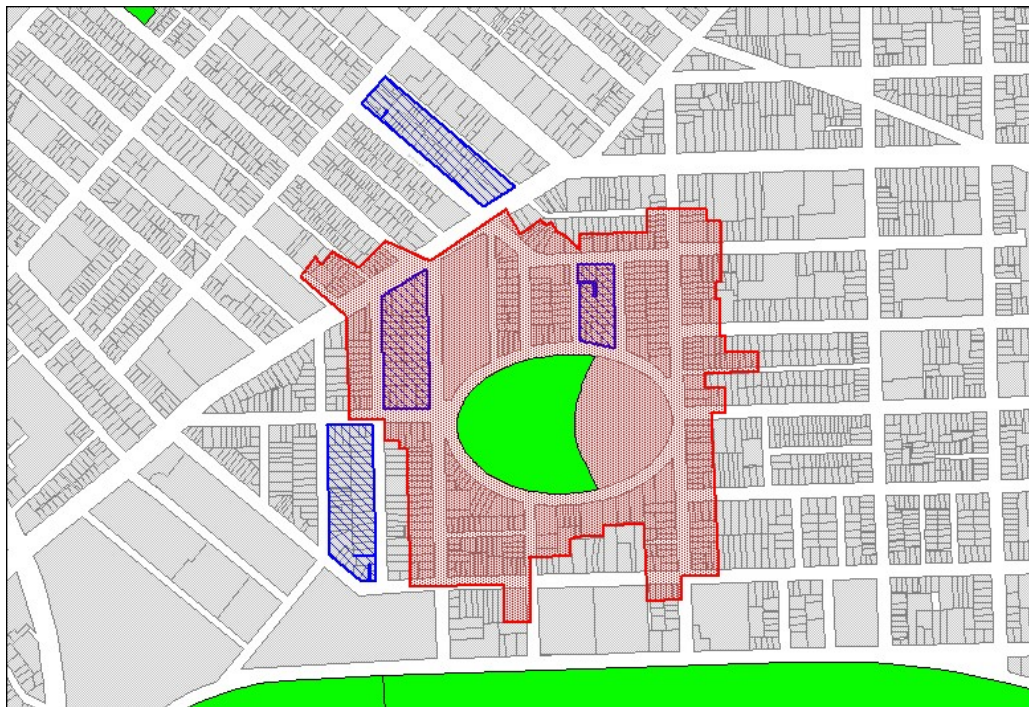


Figure 12: Dorchester Heights Sample Blocks

plus they accurately represented the districts and the surrounding areas.

After the blocks were chosen we did some fieldwork to confirm the addresses of the blocks with that of GIS. We went to the districts with a map of the district and separate maps of the study blocks. When confirming the addresses, we wrote down the address number in the appropriate building. Then the obtained addresses from the field was compared and confirmed to that of GIS. See Figure 12: Dorchester Heights

Sample Blocks and

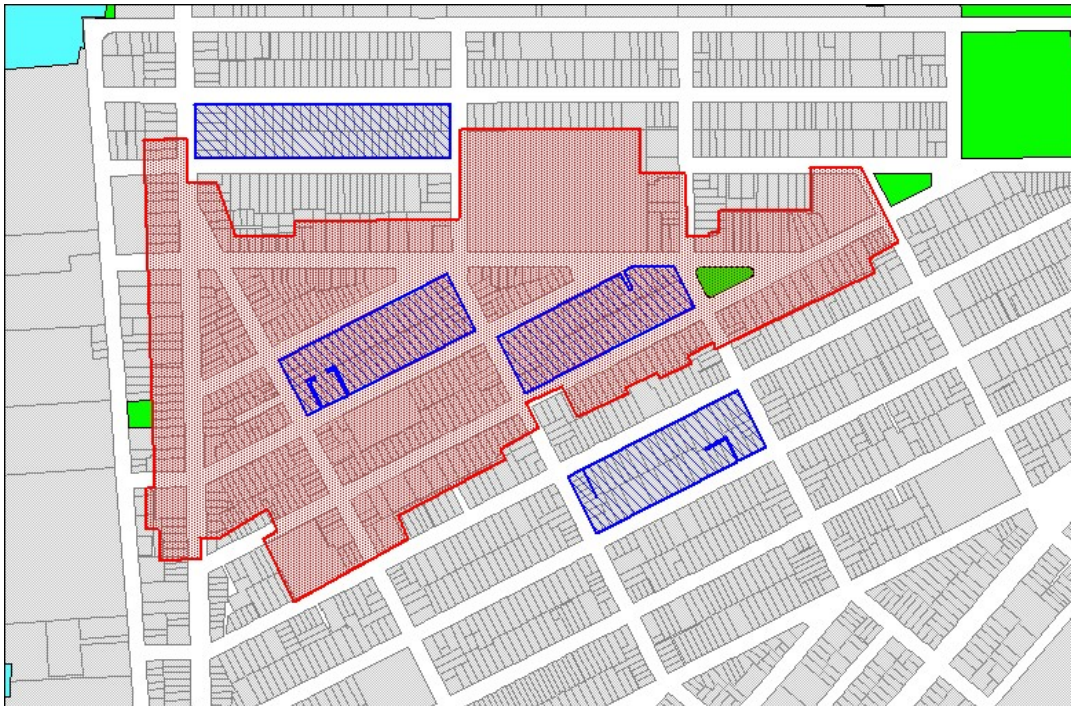


Figure 13: Eagle Hill Sample Blocks for maps of the selected districts.

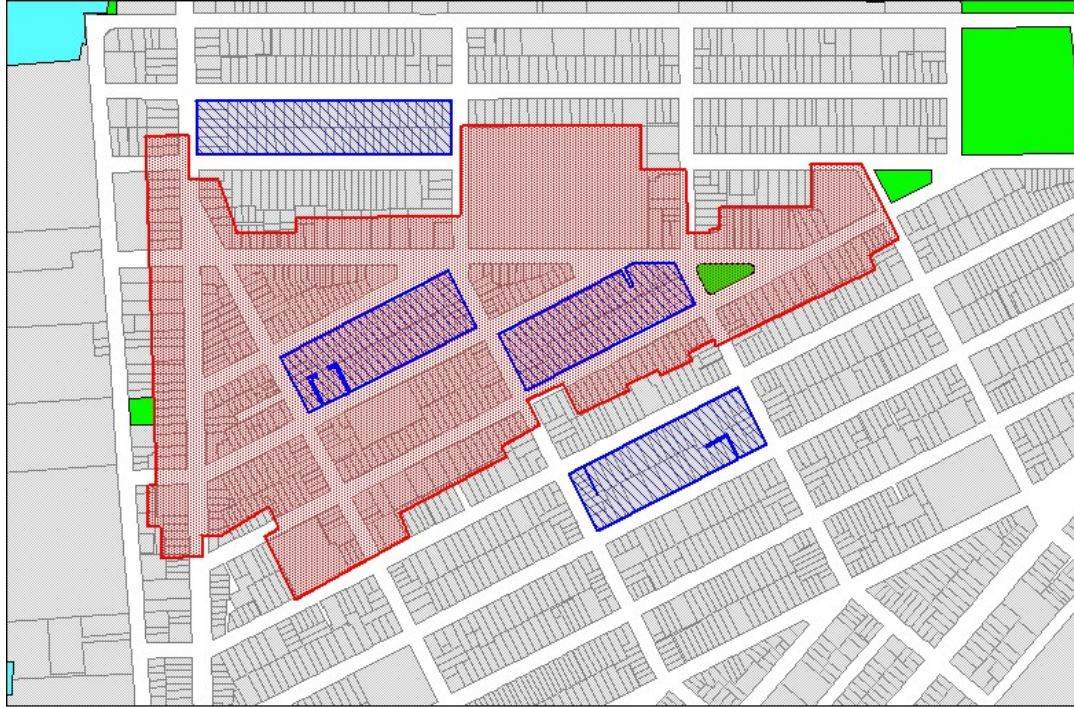


Figure 13: Eagle Hill Sample Blocks

3.2. Obtain existing data of socioeconomic indicators

The main goal of this objective was to obtain existing data of specific socioeconomic indicators in the studied areas. These indicators that were researched and studied in this project were: public and private investment, property and land value, real estate values and real estate transactions. These indicators were chosen based on both previous studies and what we believed would visually demonstrate socioeconomic impact in our study areas. The negative socioeconomic aspects we studied were building neglect, vacancy rates, crime statistics, and owner occupancy levels in the specified neighborhoods. Our study and research pertained to the potential socioeconomic indicators in the areas and their changes from 1990-present. The basic goal of this objective was to gather information and data to complete the socioeconomic impact assessment.

3.2.1. Private Investment

Private investment is any physical or structural changes done to one's private property, home, business or corporations. Building permits and work permits were obtained and reviewed for the properties in the study areas to identify how much money was invested into these private properties. These documents were requested from the Inspectional Service Department (ISD). A list of the specific addresses of the selected study blocks was faxed to the ISD Document Room requesting the pertinent files. The ISD pulled out the jackets of the specific buildings we requested. The face of the jackets consisted of the building addresses, district and ward numbers. The jackets contained various documents including permit applications, code violations and zoning variance appeals dating as far back as the late 1800's and early 1900's. (See sample ISD documents in Appendix)



Figure 14: A Park Bench in Eagle Hill

We checked all the jackets to find documents pertaining to the years 1990-2003 and pulled these documents aside. We then read through these documents and looked for ones pertinent to our study, those being building permits applications, electric work applications, plumbing work applications, gas fitting applications, and code violations. We took the pertinent information that related to private investment from these documents and put them into a database. Information that we looked for included date when permit was issued, change of family dwelling, estimated cost of the intended work plan, and size of building (this was important because throughout time buildings change which in turn changes the dollar per square foot amount of investment).

Permit applications for gas fittings, electrical work, and plumbing work sometimes did not have the estimated cost of the work performed. We were unable to report the monetary investments made for such jobs. However, we can assume that additional investments were made because of these jobs, but have no actual monetary data to support this.

All the private investment data obtained from the ISD was put into the database, processed and later analyzed to show its socioeconomic impact.

3.2.2. Public Investment

Public investment is construction or renovation done to a public area, such as parks, buildings, benches, sidewalks, etc. The neighborhood, city, or government usually performs these changes. We interviewed people from the neighborhood organizations of Dorchester Heights and Eagle Hill and found that the only public improvement worth noting was a \$4.5 million renovation to done Thomas Park.

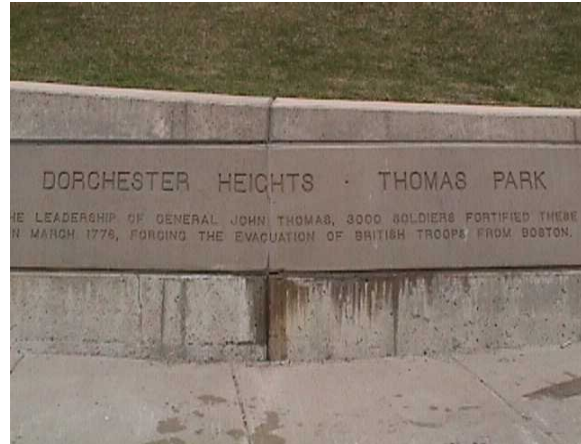


Figure 15: A Sign in Dorchester Heights

This neighborhood also has been requesting brick paved sidewalks for years but don't believe they will receive them due to city and statewide budget cuts.

3.2.3. Property and Land Value (Assessed Values)

Property value is the assessed value of the land and buildings on that land. Property values and land values were obtained for the fiscal years 1995-2003. To view these values, we requested the information and obtained it from the Assessing Department at the Boston City Hall. We received the assessed values for 1998-2003 on a CD, and personally looked up the information for 1995-1997 on the Assessing Department's backlog database.

3.2.4. Real Estate Transactions

We decided as a team that it would be beneficial to the study if we analyzed real estate transactions. This would enable us to get a feel for peoples' willingness to pay for certain properties within the designated districts. We wanted to look at all transactions made between 1990 and the present.

Initially, we attempted to gain access to these records through the Multiple Listing Service. This proved impossible. We were denied usage due to the fact that no

one on our team is a registered real estate agent. We attempted to have a registered agent obtain this information for us, but this was not feasible with the amount of addresses we had to research. We then contacted the Greater Boston Real Estate Board (GBREB) with hopes of better luck.

From the GBREB, we eventually found that an agency known as the Warren Group kept records of all real estate transactions in Boston for the past fifteen years on their web site, <http://www.thewarrengroup.com>. We currently had three hundred and sixty-eight addresses for which we wanted to look up transactions over the past thirteen years. Had we signed up for individual memberships, this would have cost us each eighty dollars for one month's access. However, funds did not permit us to go this route, and we only needed access for a few short hours to download all the information.

After contacting their office personally, we learned that The Warren Group had a twenty-four hour promotion where we could get five free searches and downloads for free as long as we searched within that time period. This was how we obtained our real estate transaction records for the past thirteen years. We were also given owner information, property information, assessed values, and mortgage values. Among the four of us, the twenty total searches we were allotted were sufficient to obtain all necessary information on our specified study streets and properties. However, ten to fifteen properties on a few small side streets had to be omitted, as there were too many streets. We found these properties to be negligible and that they would have little to no impact on our overall results. The obtained real estate transactions were then processed into a database to produce illustrations of the impact that this factor exerts on these districts.

3.2.5. Neglect

Neglect is a lack of necessary attention and care for properties and public spaces. This shows a lack of investment in an area. Neglect is both a socioeconomic indicator and a neighborhood stability indicator; neglect was viewed as a negative indicator in both cases in our study.

The files that were pulled out for us by the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) contained code violation documents in them. The code violations included such

things as building neglect violations, zoning code violations, family dwelling violations, or violations for failing to apply for a permit when making changes to their building. We looked specifically at building neglect violations that occurred between 1990-present and documented them in a database including the type of violation.

Building neglect violation included; staircase not having a handrail and being unstable to use, falling rooftop, broken doors and/or windows, and unsafe exit way. All this data was collected and put into a database and later analyzed.

3.2.6. Vacancy Rates

Vacancy is the state of being empty, without any occupants. Vacancy rates were necessary to incorporate in assessing property and real estate values in our study. From these rates we got a preliminary sense of desirability to live in the neighborhoods. This factor was also an indicator of neighborhood stability. We wanted to know what buildings were vacant between the years 1990 and the present.

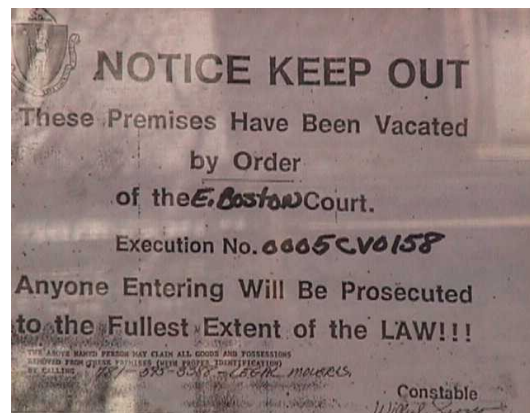


Figure 16: A Notice on a Condemned House

We took a few approaches for coming up with the desired information of vacant buildings. Initially we downloaded census data which gave us *specific data* for the census tracts in which our study areas were located. This did not give us the specific addresses that were vacant, and for how long they were vacant. Next, we conducted a visual assessment and looked for buildings that appeared vacant or that had posted signs indicating vacancy in the study areas. However, this did not give us how long these buildings were vacant, or if they or others were vacant in the past.

To combat the issue of obtaining vacancy information for specific addresses coupled with the histories of their vacancies, we needed a different approach. We then decided to obtain the vacancy information by looking at utility consumption by property. We chose to use water usage as an indicator of whether a building was

occupied or not. We wanted to find out if a bill was being assessed at certain times to specific properties in our study areas.

Our next step was to contact the Boston Water and Sewage Department. We faxed this department our three hundred and sixty-eight address list and asked if they could find out when a bill was sent to those addresses and when one was not sent. They faxed us back the results, which gave us the dates that a building was not billed and we then entered the obtained data into a database.

3.2.7. Owner Occupancy

Whether or not a building's owner resided in the neighborhood of his or her building(s) was used as an indicator of the stability of the neighborhood. Information for residencies of building owners was obtained from GIS layers downloaded from the Boston Redevelopment Authority website, <http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra>. However, only information for 2002 was secured from this route.

In order to obtain past information for owner occupancy, we needed to contact the already mentioned Assessing Department. This department was able to give us a CD containing the necessary information for the years 1998-2003. We were only able to obtain enough pertinent information, pre- and post-designation, for Dorchester Heights. For this reason, we decided to only collect and assess the data for the Dorchester Heights historical district.



Figure 17: A Vacant Home in Eagle Hill

3.2.8. Crime Statistics

Midway through our research, we decided to add social factors of impact in neighborhoods to our study. One such factor was crime levels and statistics. We decided to look at specific crimes that occurred in our study areas, Eagle Hill in East Boston, and Dorchester Heights in South Boston.

To find the necessary information, we contacted the Media Relations Department at the Boston Police Headquarters. We faxed a list of streets and addresses for where we wanted the crime information. A request for statistics on specific crimes was also sent. The crimes included were violent crimes, such as murder, suicide, and assault, etc.; burglary and breaking and entering; domestic violence and disputes; auto theft and burglary; robbery; and property crimes and vandalism. (See Appendix for a copy of letter) We obtained all this information, as we requested, separated into two specific data sets corresponding to the districts in which the crime was committed. We then realized this information was not specific enough. We wanted to be able to compare crimes that occurred within the districts with those that occurred in the surrounding areas for each district. In order to accomplish this, we needed to submit a new list with the addresses separated into four distinct groups. These groups were the streets inside the Eagle Hill district, specific streets in its surrounding areas, streets in the Dorchester Heights district, and specific streets in its surrounding areas. We obtained another set of results for the specific areas we requested. All this data was put into an Excel spreadsheet and analyzed.

3.2.9. Demographic data

The demographic data used for this study was obtained through census information. First, data on age, race, gender, education attainment, median household income, and number of households was downloaded from the Census Bureau's website for the 1990 and 2000 censuses. The information was entered into an Access database and broken down to per capita. The tables were then imported into an Excel spreadsheet and analyzed.

3.3. *Establish baselines for socioeconomic impact and Standardize Data*

The main goal of this objective was to analyze the procured documents and data from previous steps and create the appropriate pre- and post-designation baselines for the districts and their surrounding areas. The initial problem we faced was comparing disparate elements, for example, comparing the monetary value of construction

activity to the value of real estate properties. This was difficult to do without standardization. As a solution, the data obtained was standardized into a form that was quantified and easily comparable. Compiling our information into a standard unit measured in dollars per square foot enabled us to compare seemingly unrelated quantitative measurements. After all the data was standardized, appropriate pre- and post-designation baseline for the districts and surrounding areas were created. In this objective all the gathered data and information previously obtained was organized into Access database. GIS layers were then created using MapInfo and the databases. Then all the gathered information was converted into graphs, tables, and maps.

3.3.1. Pre-designation

Two pre-designation baselines were created; a pre-designation baseline for the districts and a pre-designation baseline for the surrounding areas. Pre-designation for Eagle Hill and East Boston is 1990-1995, and pre-designation for Dorchester Heights and South Boston is 1990-1999.

3.3.2. Post-designation

Two post-designation baselines were created; a post-designation baseline for the districts and a post-designation baseline for the surrounding areas. Post-designation for Eagle Hill and East Boston is 1996-present, and post-designation for Dorchester Heights and South Boston is 2000-present.

3.4. Determine socioeconomic impact

The main goal of this final objective was to determine the value and weight of each socioeconomic indicator and its impact due to designation. We analyzed the previously created baselines and made quantitative comparison of the socioeconomic indicators, and we also made an analysis of the impact designation has on historic districts and their surrounding areas.

3.4.1. Past v. Present

The pre- and post-designation baselines for each district were compared to determine socioeconomic impact.

3.4.2. Districts v. surrounding areas

Baselines for the districts were compared to baselines for surrounding areas to further clarify the existence of a positive or negative socioeconomic impact.

4. Results

The results section of our paper divides the socioeconomic indicators studied in our project into three subsections to better display the results of our data collection. The first subsection will cover the indicators that had an economic impact on the historic districts and their surrounding areas. The second subsection includes the indicators that demonstrated a social impact, and the third subsection covers the indicators that had an impact on the population of our study areas.

4.1. *Economic Impact Indicators*

This first section displays our results for the socioeconomic indicators that had an economic impact. The indicators include public investment, private investment, assessed property values, and real estate values.

4.1.1. Public Investment

We were unable to collect quantitative data because of limitations in the data storage system. Qualitative data was collected through several interviews, which our conclusions are based on and presented in the next section of this paper.

4.1.2. Private Investment

Private investment was formulated and calculated by taking the amount of money invested divided it by the legal area (ft²) of the unit. (Legal area was obtained from the assessor's data). Then the total money invested per square foot each year was graphed and analyzed.

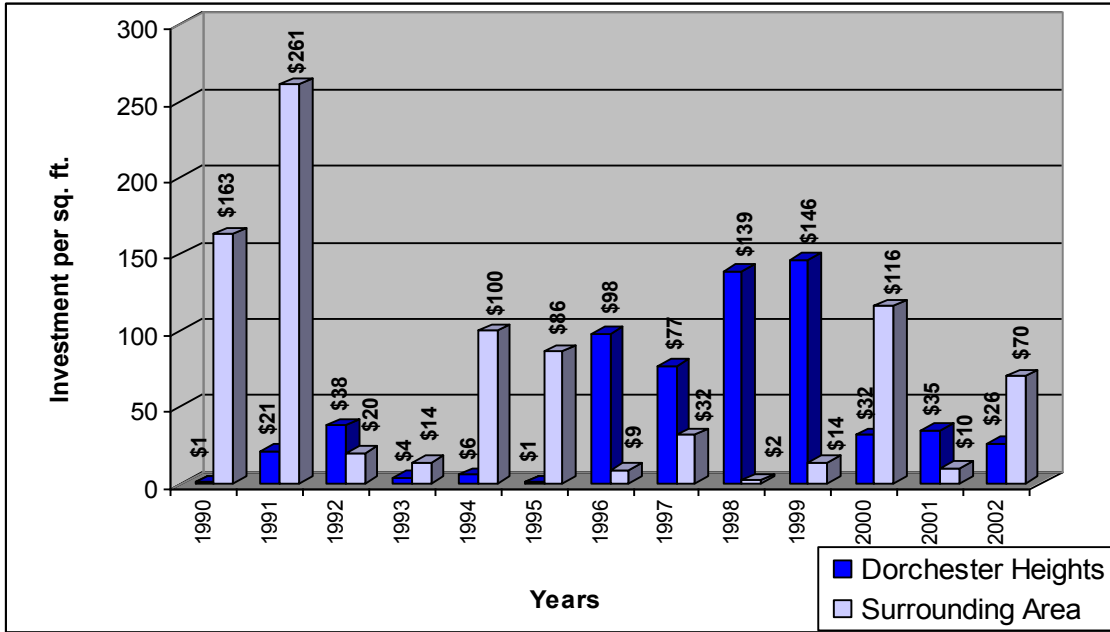


Figure 18: Total investment per ft2 per year in Dorchester Heights and its surrounding area

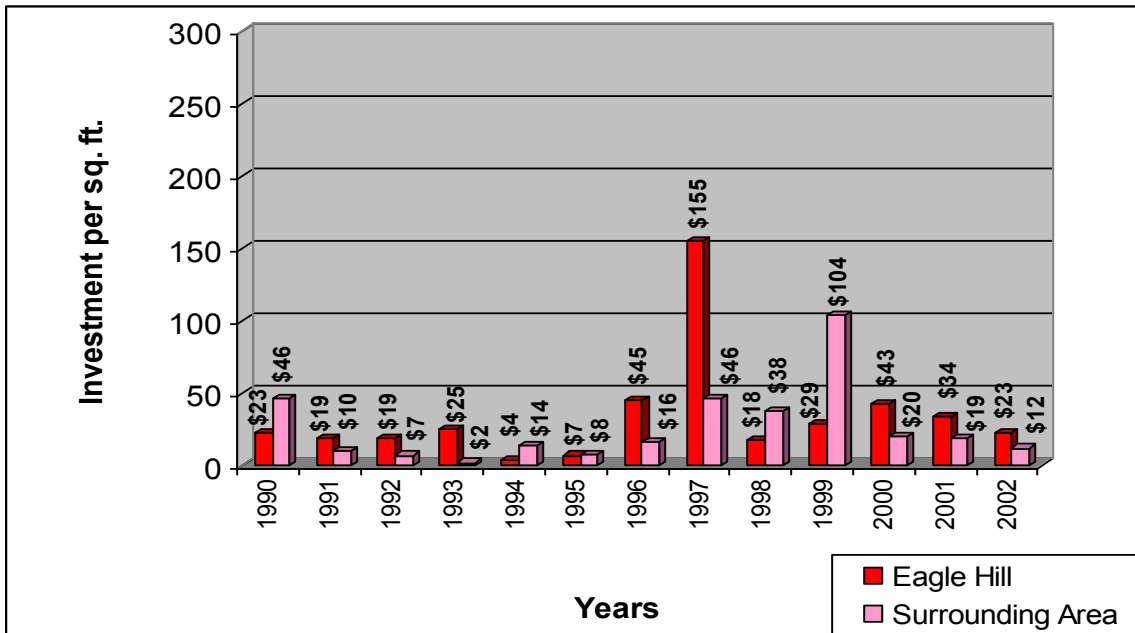


Figure 19: Total investment per ft2 per year in eagle Hill and its surrounding area

4.1.3. Assessed Values

The data presented here is assessed values from 1995 through 2003. The information collected contained two values, an assessed property value, and an

assessed land value. Property value is the value of the structure or structures standing on the land parcel, land value indicate the value of the land if it were completely clear of structures. Both of these values can be considered a reasonable indicator of desirability. Total value refers to the sum of these two values.

Figure 20 represents the total value of Dorchester Heights as compared to the total value of its surrounding areas (South Boston). Figure 21 represents the total value of Eagle Hill as compared to the total value of its surrounding areas (East Boston). Figure 22 and Figure 23 represent the difference between the total values of the districts versus their surrounding areas, calculated by simply subtracting the total value for the surrounding areas from the total value for the districts.

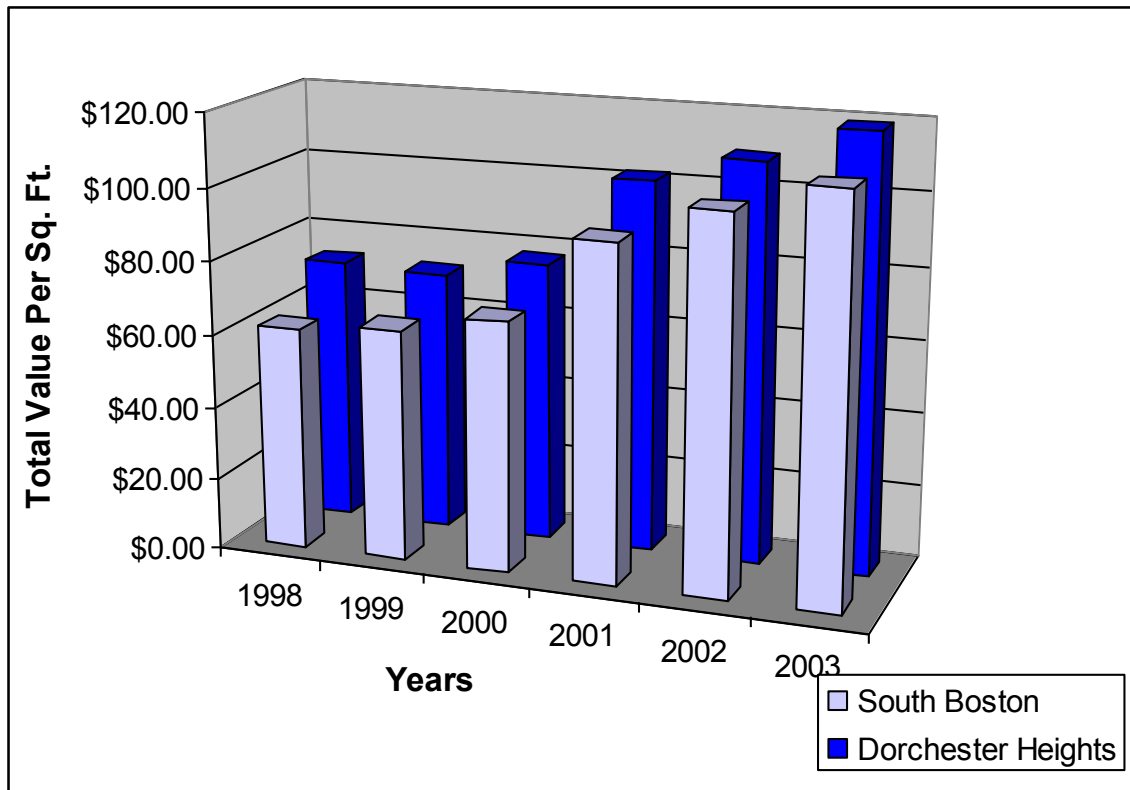


Figure 20: Dorchester Heights and Surrounding Areas Total Value

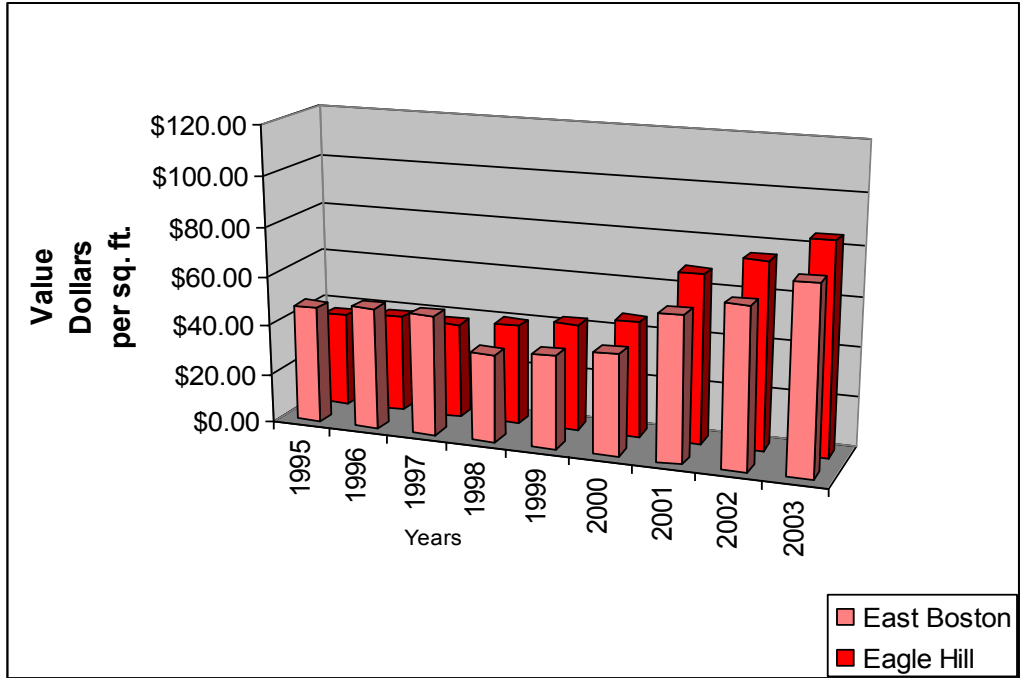


Figure 21: Eagle Hill and Surrounding Areas Total Value

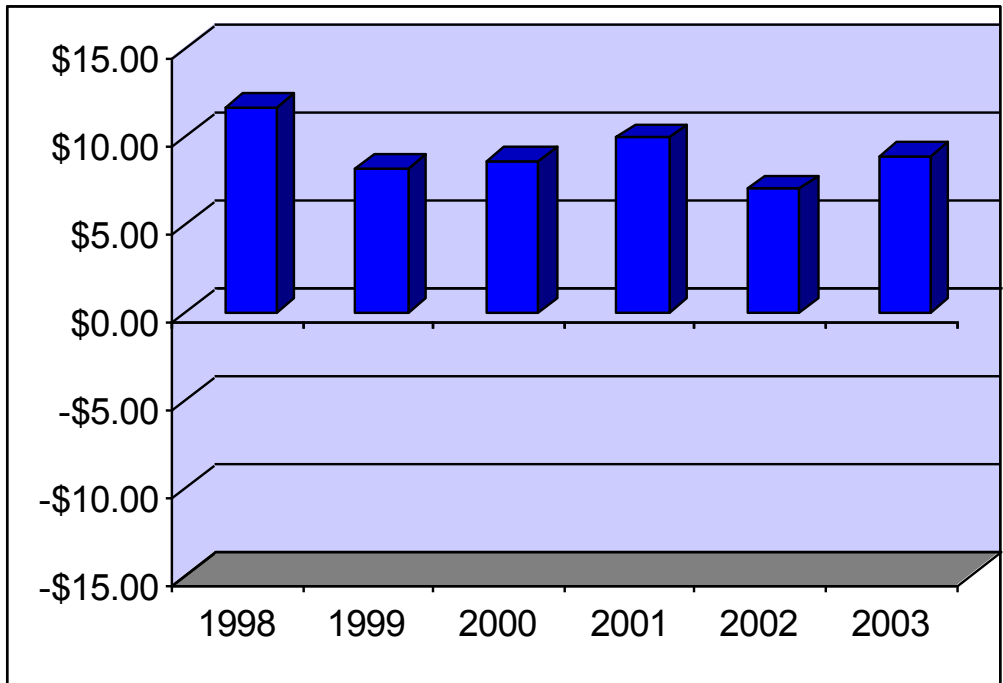


Figure 22: Difference in total value per sq. ft., Dorchester Heights v. Surrounding Area

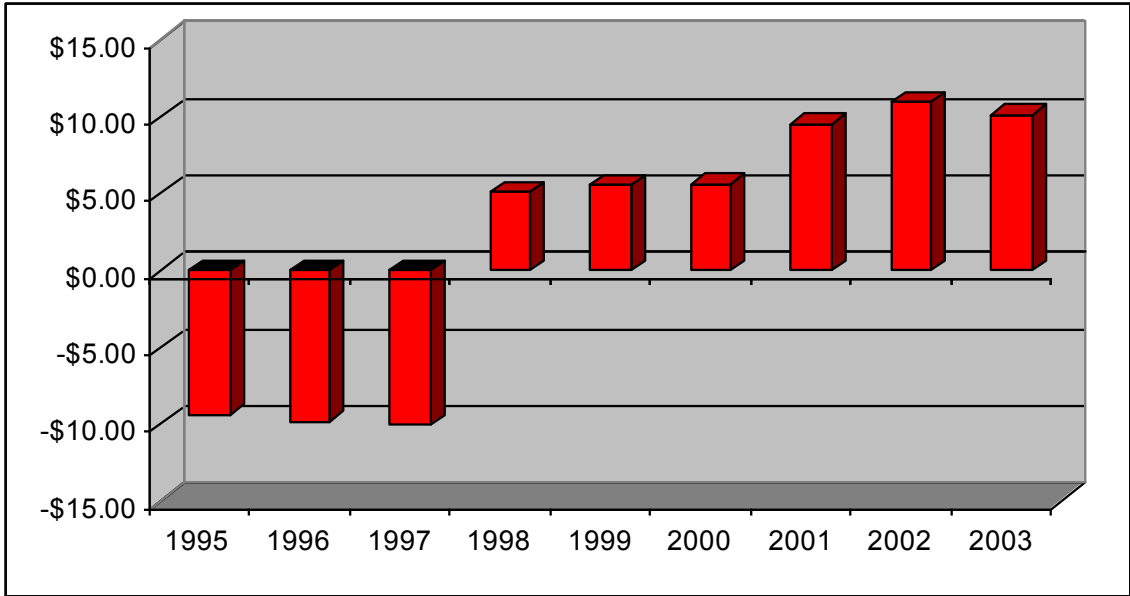


Figure 23: Difference in total value per sq. ft., Eagle Hill v. Surrounding Area

4.1.4. Real Estate Value

Real estate transactions for the past 15 years were collected for our eight sample blocks from The Warren Group, a premium real estate information web site. Figure 24 shows the total real estate value per square foot for the districts and their surrounding areas.

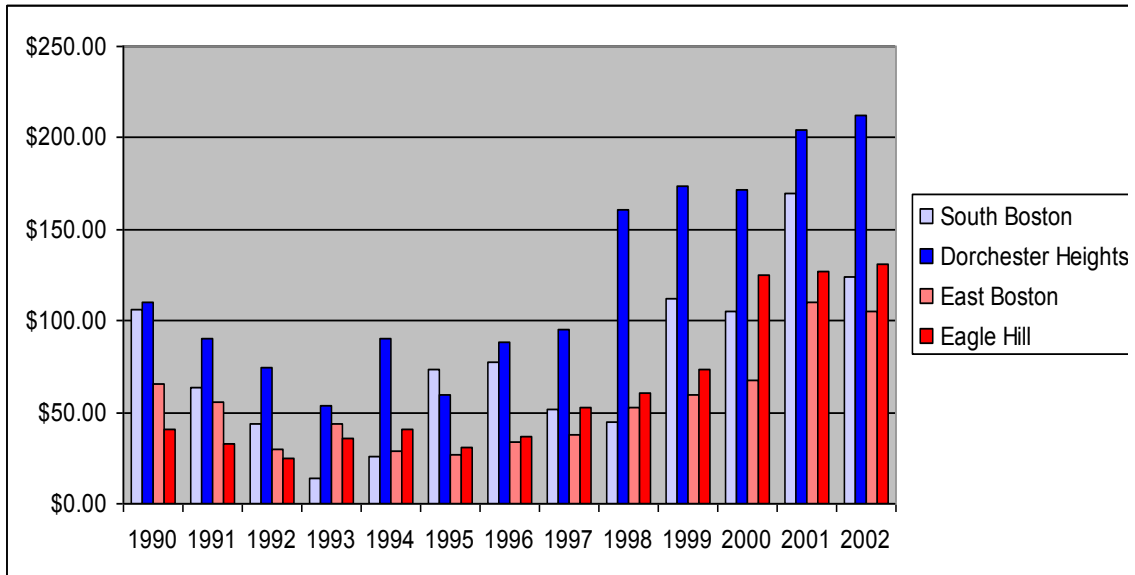


Figure 24: Total Real Estate Value (per sq. ft.)

4.2. Social Impact Indicators

The indicators covered in this section are indicators believed to have a social impact on our study areas. These socioeconomic indicators are designated as neighborhood stability indicators and include building neglect, vacancy, owner occupancy, and crime levels within our studied neighborhoods.

4.2.1. Neglect

Code violations reflecting building neglect in our sample blocks were collected from 1990 to 2002 from the Inspectional Services Department. Results were first formulated by taking the total legal (ft²) of the neglected units and dividing it by the total legal area of the entire area, such as Dorchester Heights, its surrounding area, Eagle Hill, or its surrounding area. This gave us a percentage of neglected buildings per ft², and we did this for each year.

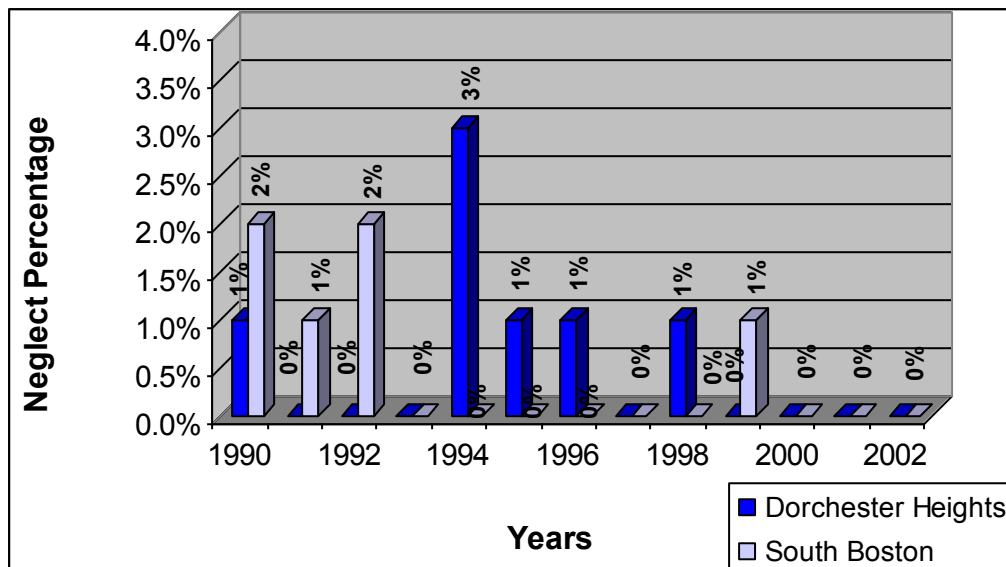


Figure 25: Percentage of Neglect Cases Per Sq. Ft.

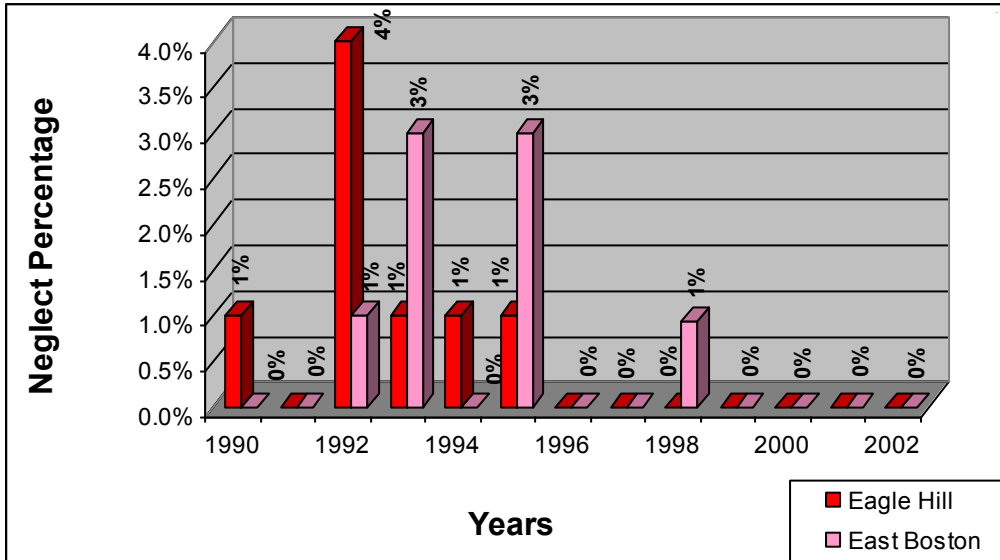


Figure 26: Percentage of Neglect Cases Per Sq. Ft.

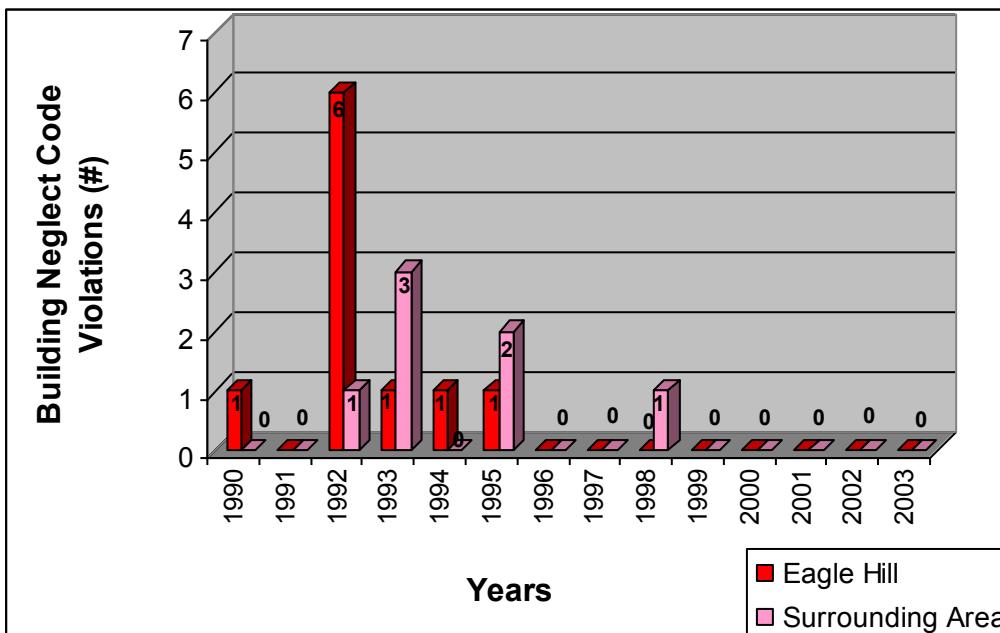


Figure 27: Total Building Neglect Violations

4.2.2. Vacancy

The results presented in this section on vacancy were compiled from data gathered from Boston Water and Sewerage for 1990 through 2003. The data is displayed in various forms to represent the data in the best way.

The first two figures displayed are thematic maps displaying the number of days that residences were vacant in five different ranges. The first map displays the vacancies in Eagle Hill and surrounding area. The second map shows the Dorchester Heights and surrounding area.

The next four figures are pie charts each displaying the percentage of vacancies that occurred pre designation and post-designation in our four study areas.

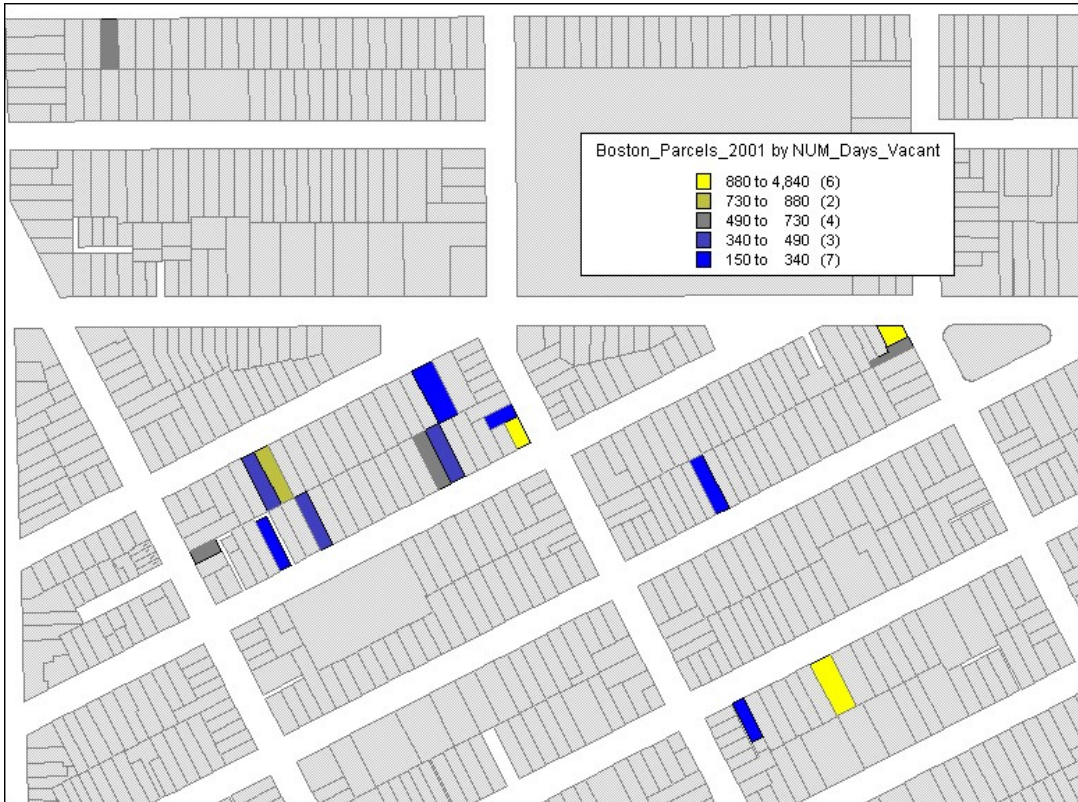


Figure 28: Number of Days Vacant in Eagle Hill Area



Figure 29: Number of Days Vacant in the Dorchester Heights Area

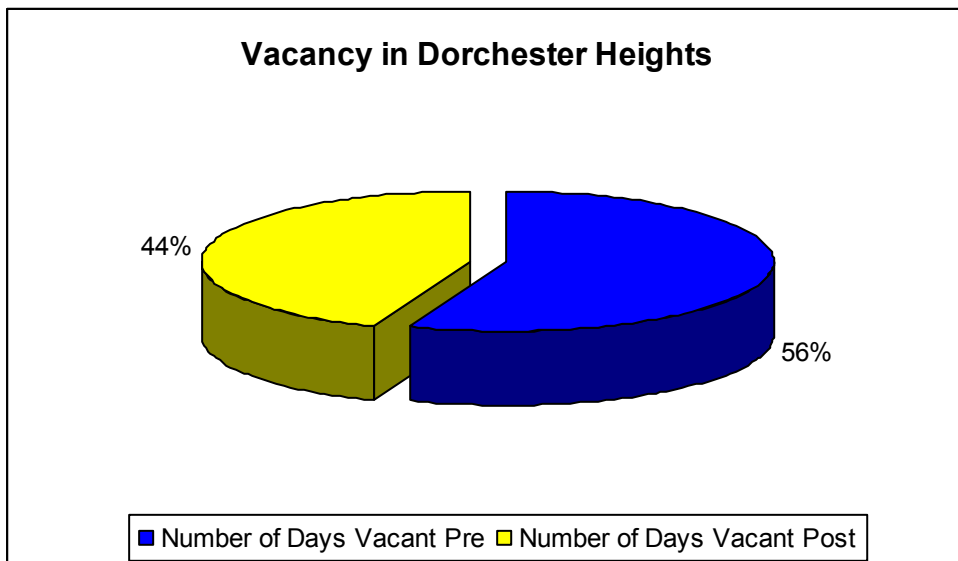


Figure 30: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation

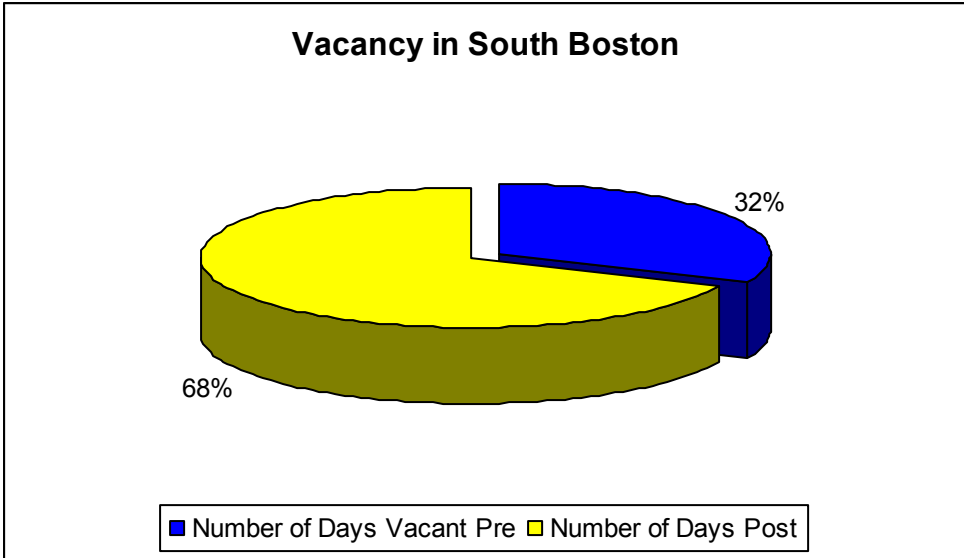


Figure 31: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation

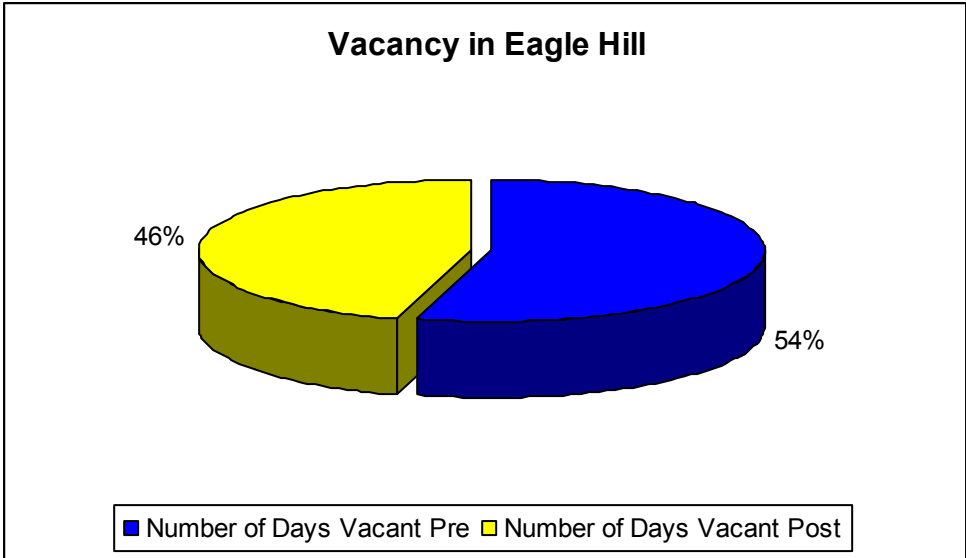


Figure 32: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation

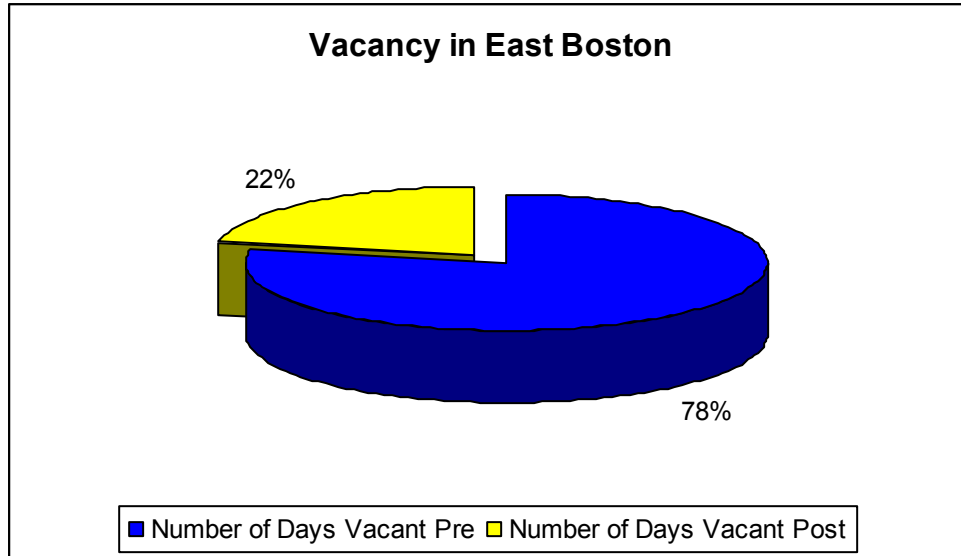


Figure 33: Percentage of Vacancies Occurring Pre and Post-Designation

4.2.3. Owner Occupancy

Owner occupancy data is information on whether the owner of a residence resides at the residence or rents it out. This information was collected for the homes in our sample blocks in Dorchester Heights and its surrounding area from 1998 to 2003. The owner occupancy information was obtained from the Assessors Office. Results were formulated by taking the number of owner occupants in the area and divided it by the total units in the area, and this was done for each year. Due to information limitations, an analysis of owner occupancy was conducted only in Dorchester Heights and its surrounding area.

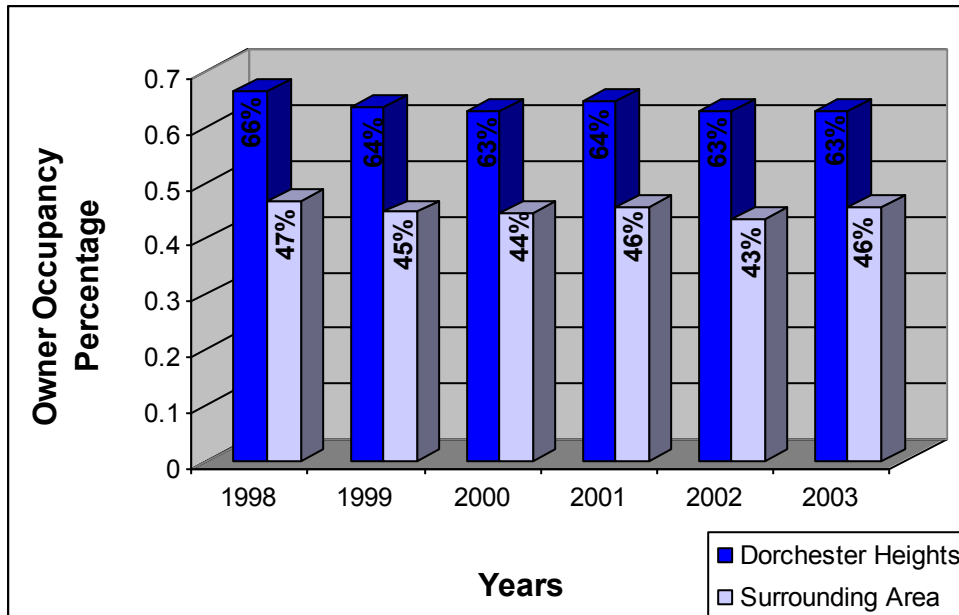


Figure 34: Percentage of Owner Occupancy

4.2.4. Crime Statistics

Crime statistics on various crimes committed on the streets of our sample blocks were obtained from the Media Department of the Boston Police Department from 1990 to 2002. The crimes included in the statistics that were given to us from the Media Department were: rape and attempted rape, robbery and attempted robbery, aggravated assault, burglary and burglary, larceny and attempted larceny, vehicle theft and attempted vehicle theft, and vandalism. Crime results were formulated per capita, the number of crimes in an area was divided by the total population of the area. We separated the crime results by, violent crimes, property crimes, vandalism, and total crime.

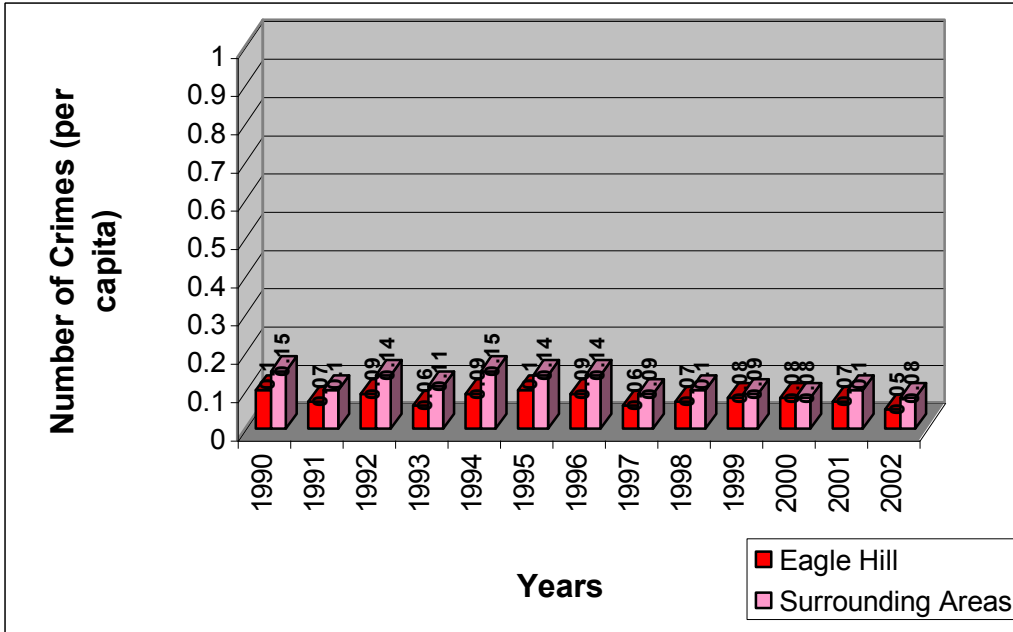


Figure 35: Number of Violent Crimes (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area

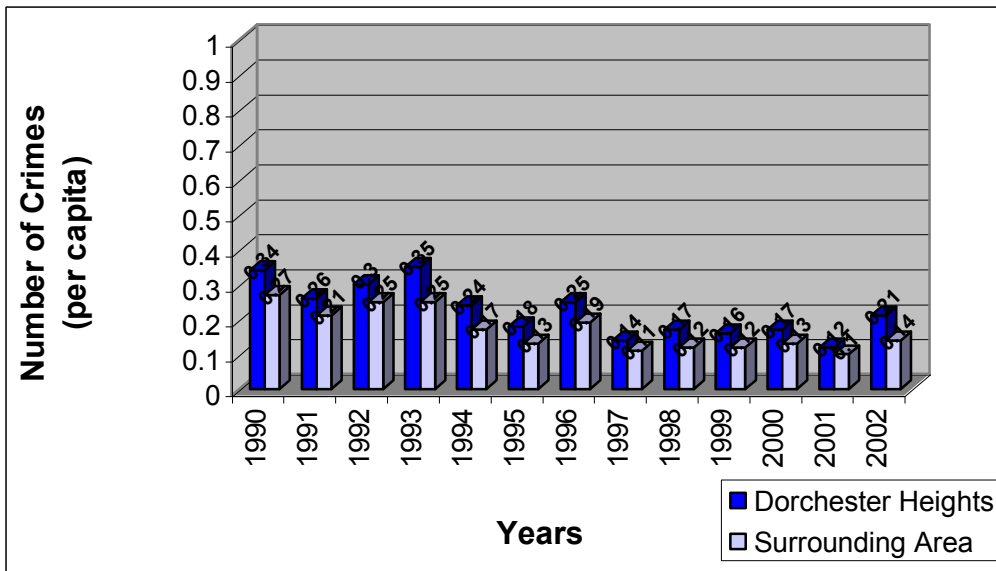


Figure 36: Number of Violent Crimes (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area

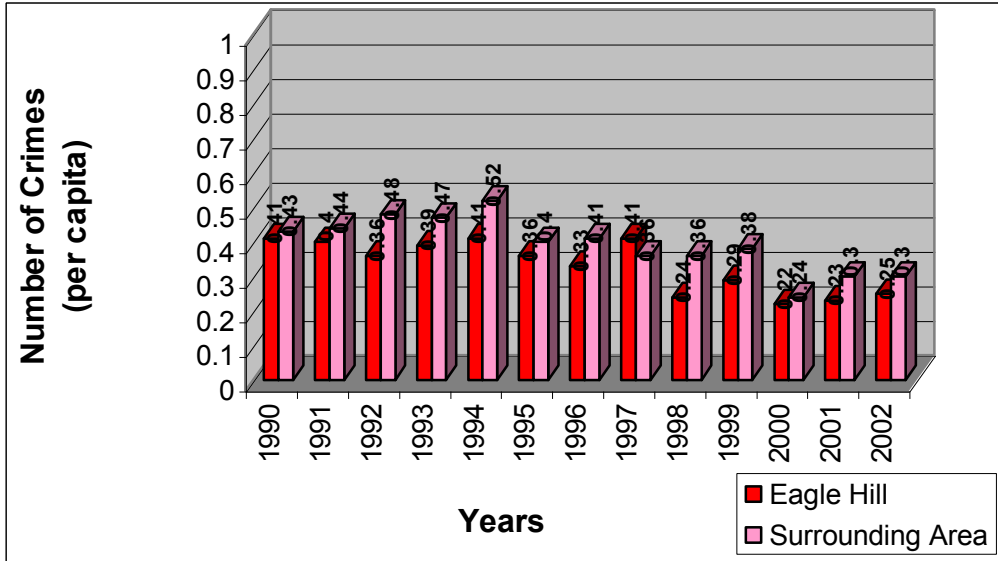


Figure 37: Number of Property Crimes (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area

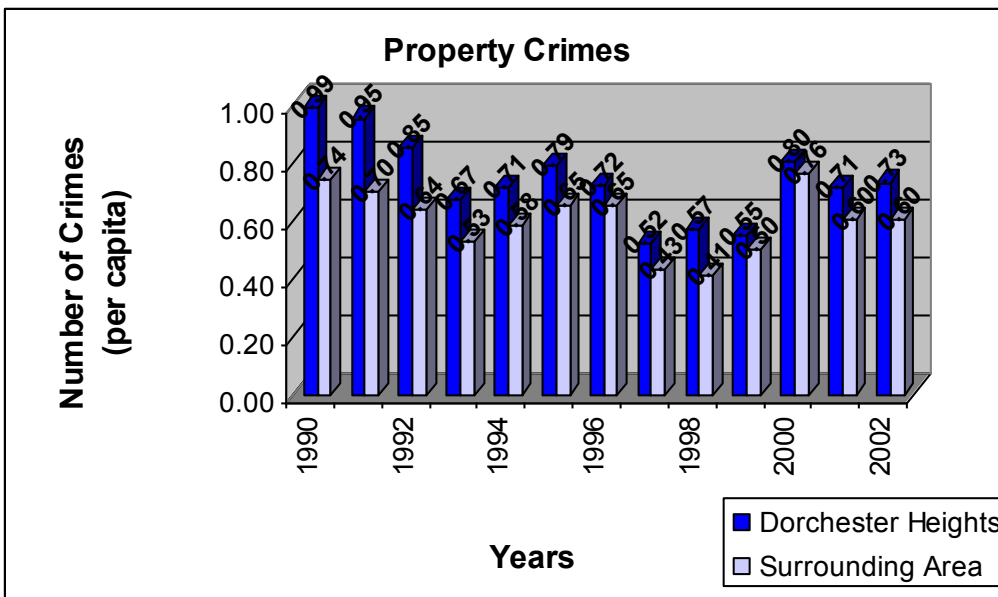


Figure 38: Number of Property Crimes (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area

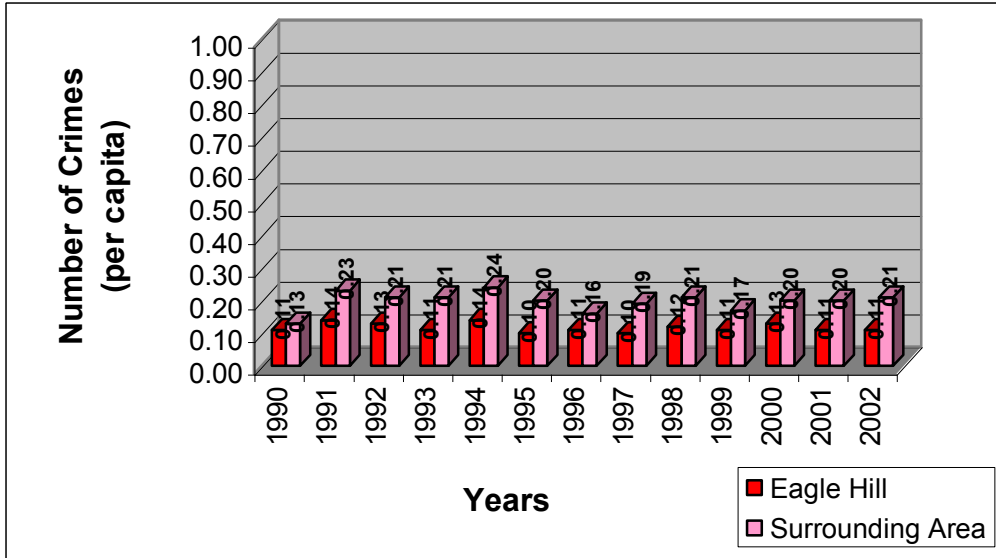


Figure 39: Number of Vandalism (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area

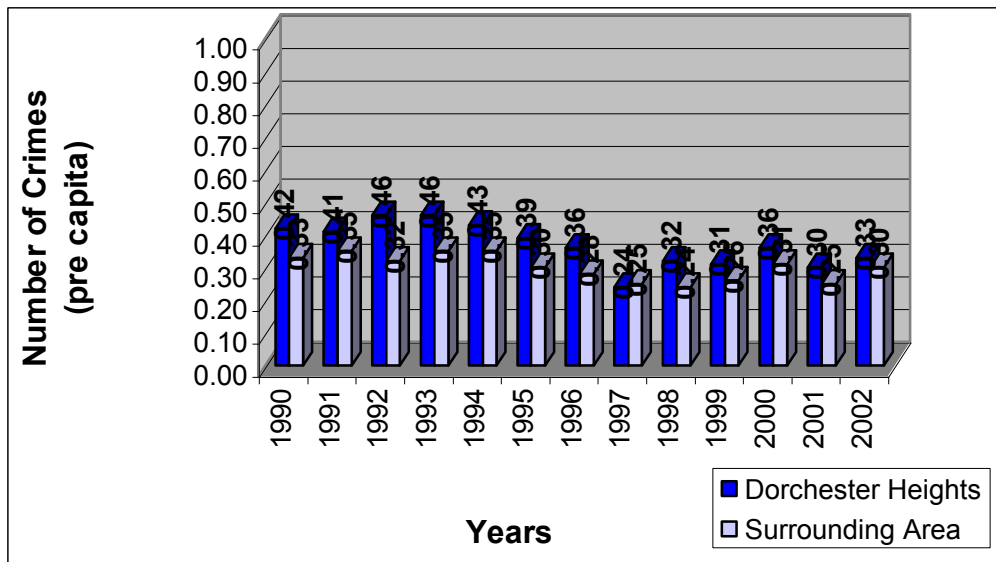


Figure 40: Number of Vandalism (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area

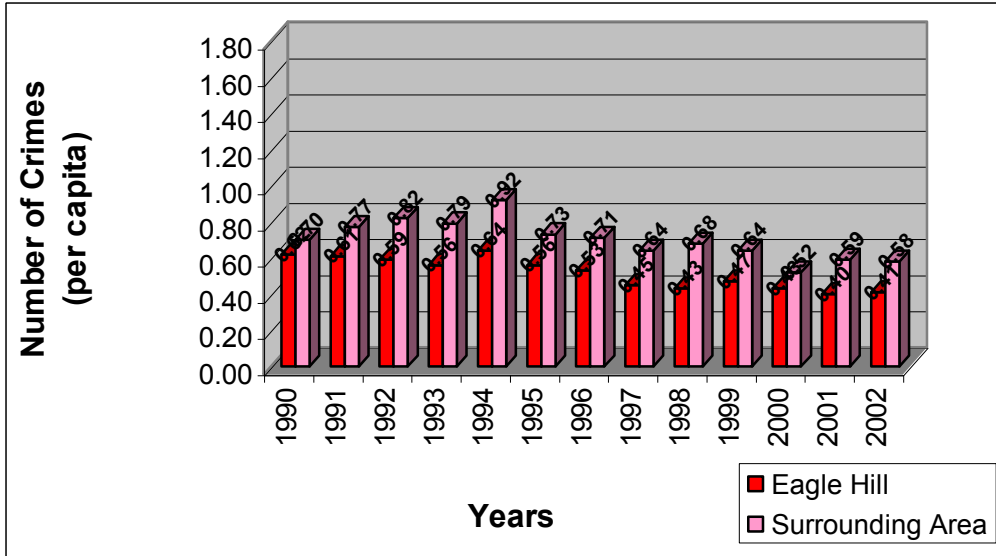


Figure 41: Total Number of Crimes (per capita) in Eagle Hill and surrounding area

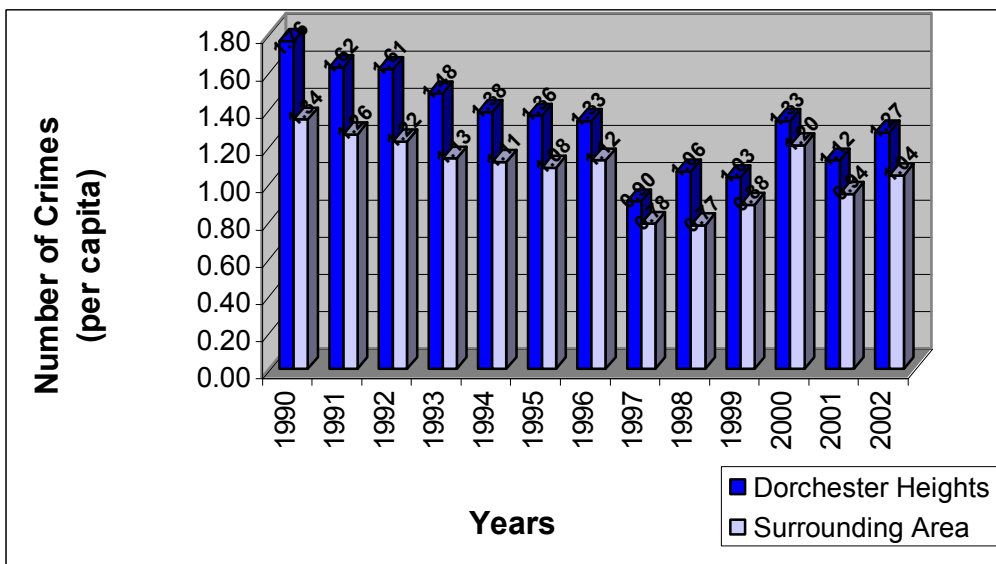


Figure 42: Total Number of Crimes (per capita) in Dorchester Heights and surrounding area

4.3. Population Impact Indicators

The last section covers socioeconomic indicators that have an impact on the overall make up or population of Dorchester Heights, Eagle Hill, and the surrounding areas. The indicators include gender, race, education attainment per capita, median household income per capita, and the number of households per capita in our studied areas.

4.3.1. Gender

The following graph displays the percentage of males and females in each of our study areas over the course of a decade.

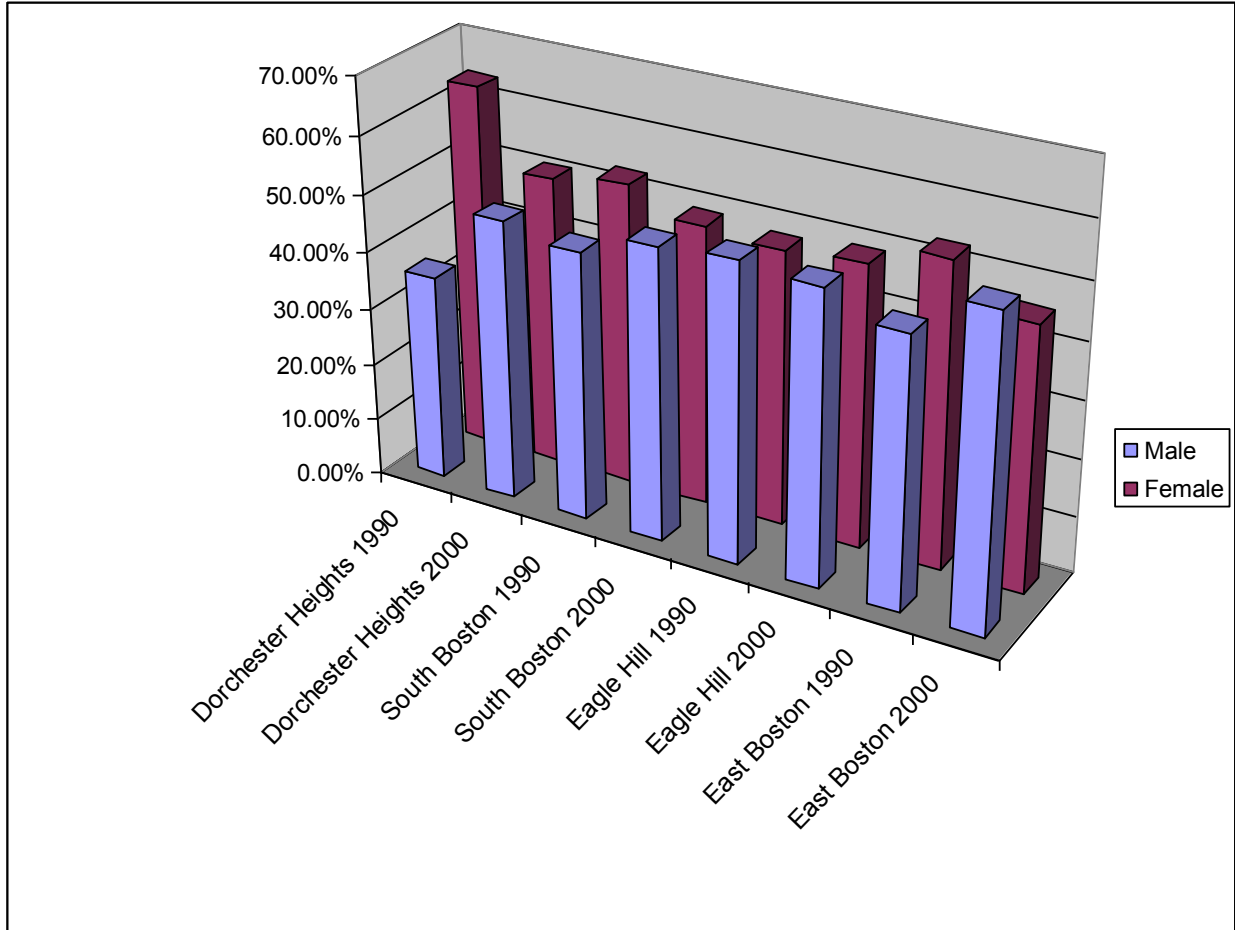


Figure 43: Gender over a Decade

4.3.2. Race

The following pie charts display the break down of races in each of our study areas over the course of ten years. The first two charts present the results per capita for Dorchester Heights in 1990 and 2000.

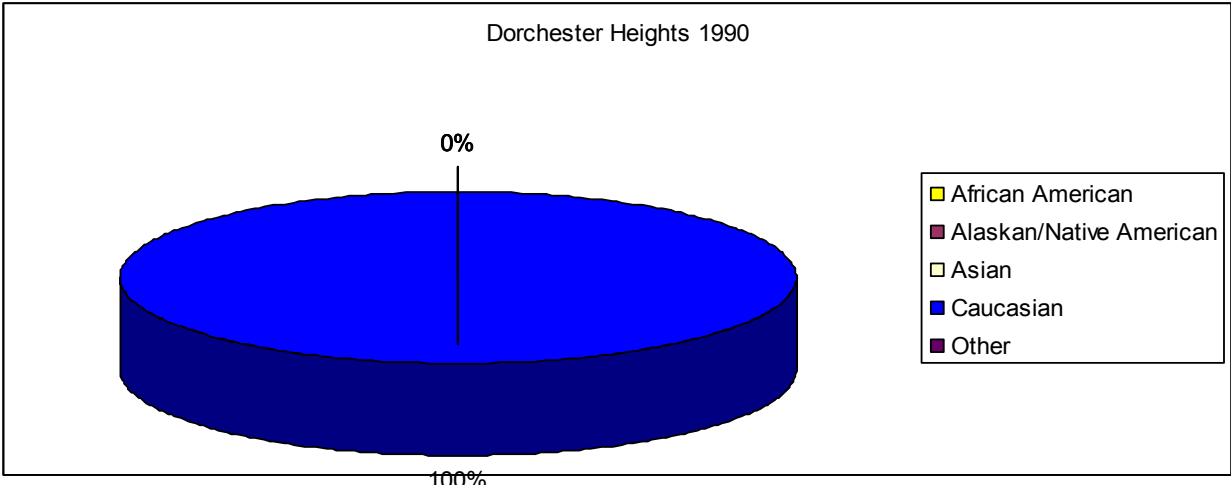


Figure 44: Percentages of Race in Dorchester Heights 1990

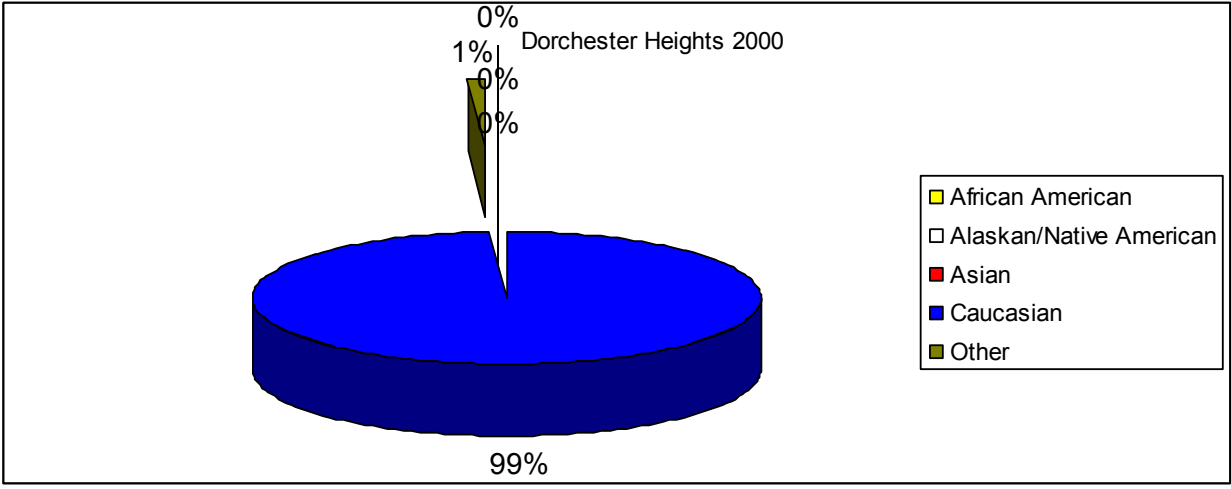


Figure 45: Percentages of Race in Dorchester Heights 2000

The next two figures represent the results of race breakdown per capita for the surrounding South Boston areas in 1990 and 2000.

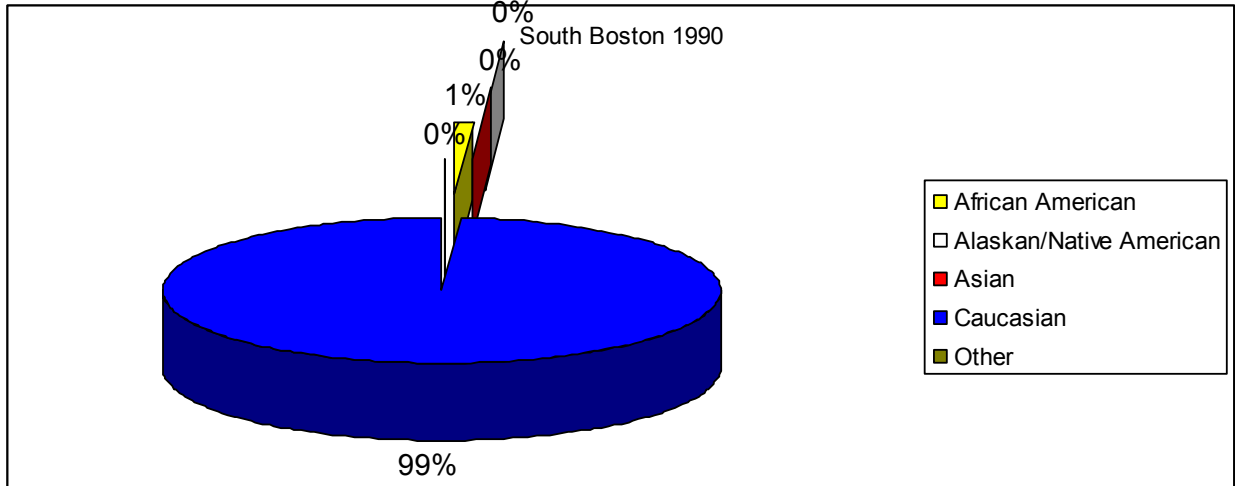


Figure 46: Percentages of Race in the surrounding South Boston area 1990

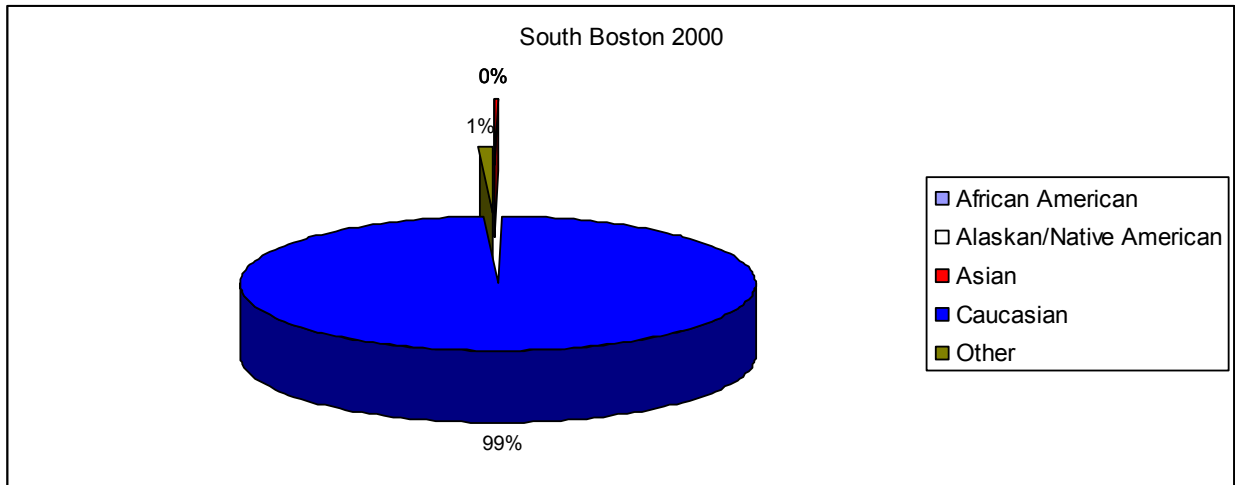


Figure 47: Percentages of Race in the surrounding South Boston area 2000

The following pie charts display the race breakdown per capita for Eagle Hill in 1990 and 2000.

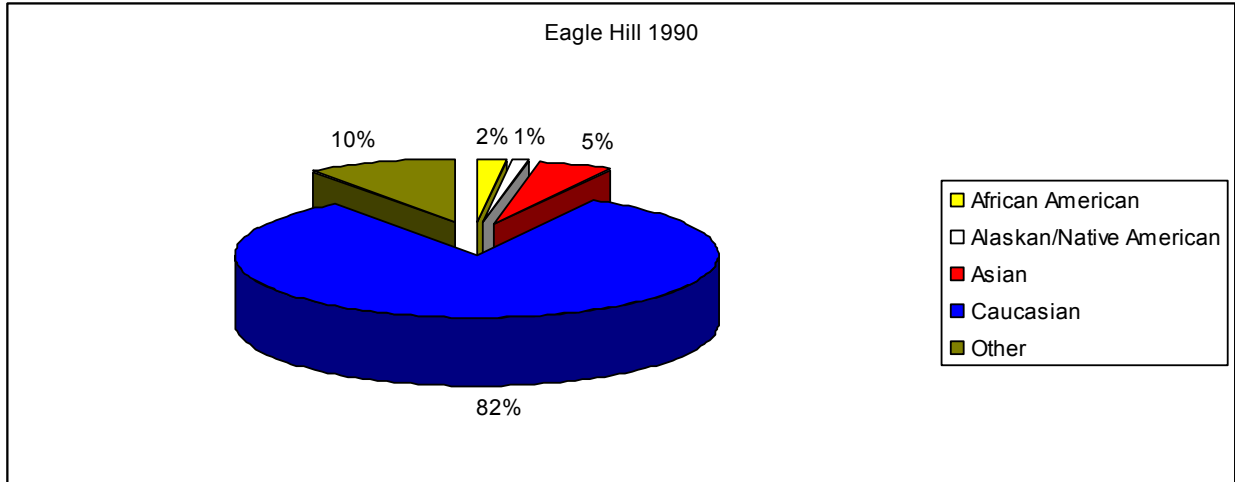


Figure 48: Percentages of Race in Eagle Hill 1990

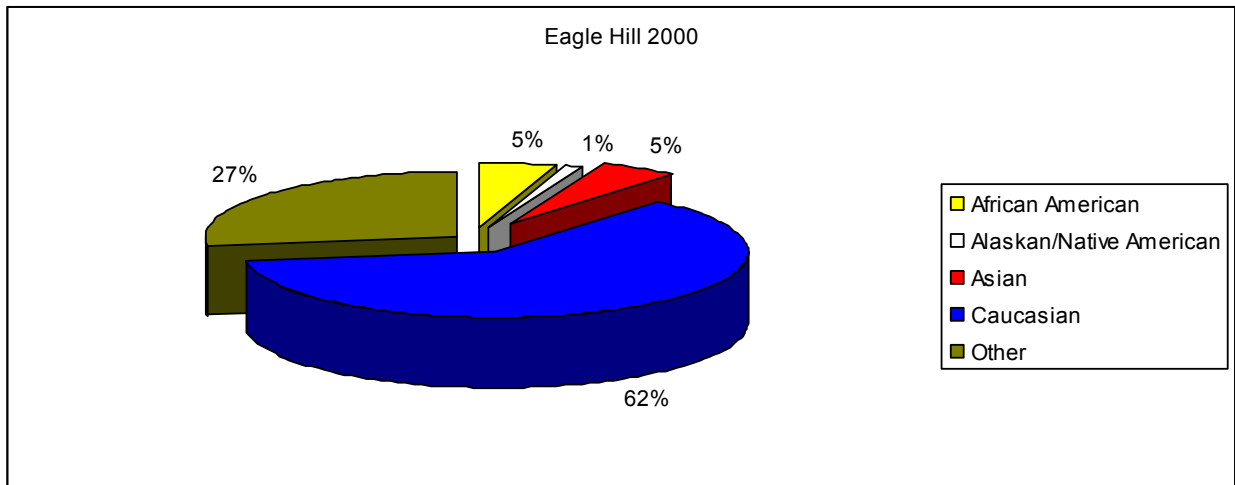


Figure 49: Percentages of Race in Eagle Hill 2000

The last two pie charts represent the race breakdown per capita for the surrounding East Boston study areas in 1990 and 2000.

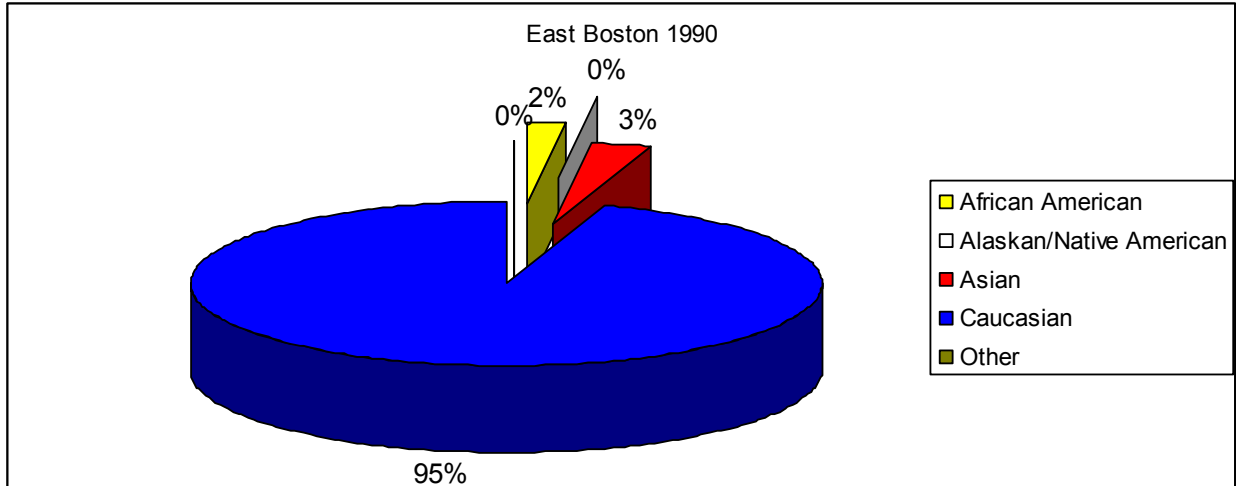


Figure 50: Percentages of Race in the surrounding East Boston area 1990

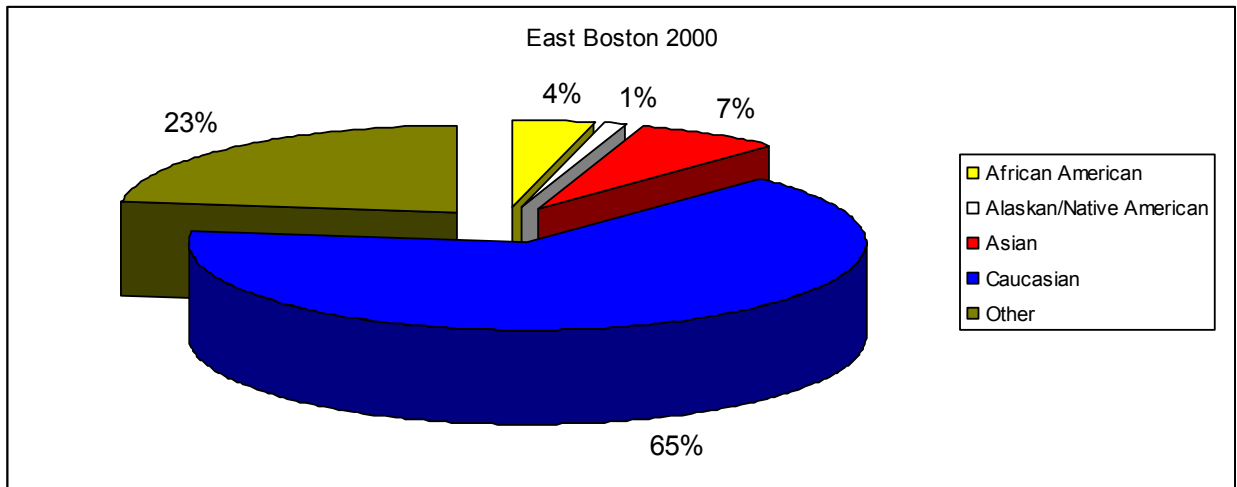


Figure 51: Percentages of Race in the surrounding East Boston area 2000

4.3.3. Education Attainment

The following graphs represent the highest level of education attained per capita by the population in each of our study areas that are the age of 25 or higher. The first graph displays the results for Dorchester Heights and the surrounding area over the course of a decade. The second graph displays the results for Eagle Hill and the surrounding area.

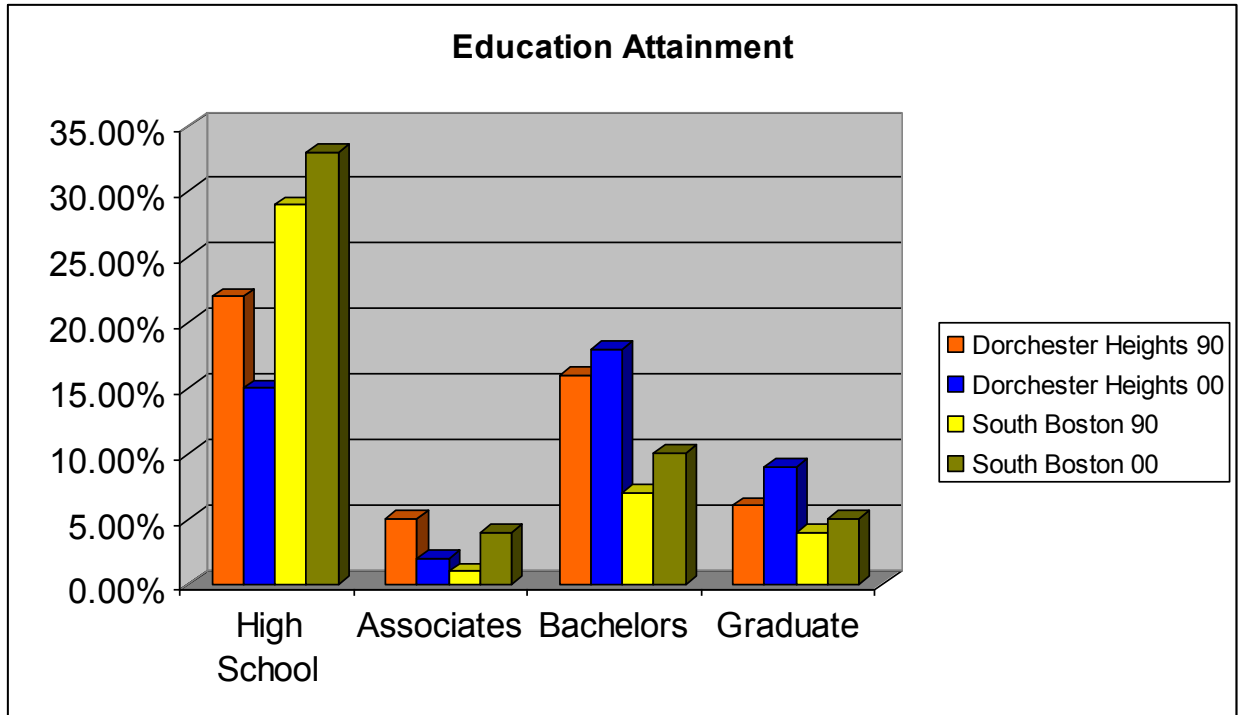


Figure 52: Education Attainment Dorchester Heights vs. the surrounding South Boston area

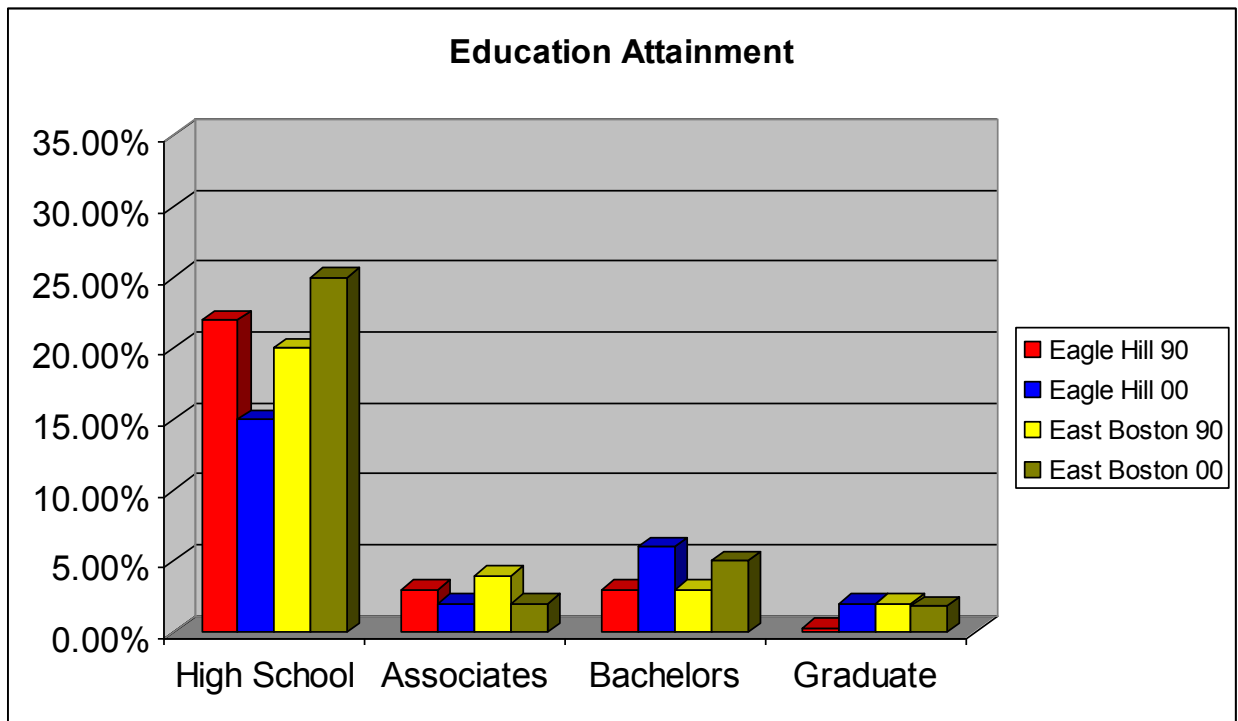


Figure 53: Education Attainment Eagle Hill vs. the surrounding East Boston area

4.3.4. Median Income

The next population impact indicator is the median household income per capita. The following graph presents the median household income per capita for each of our study areas over the course of ten years starting in 1990.

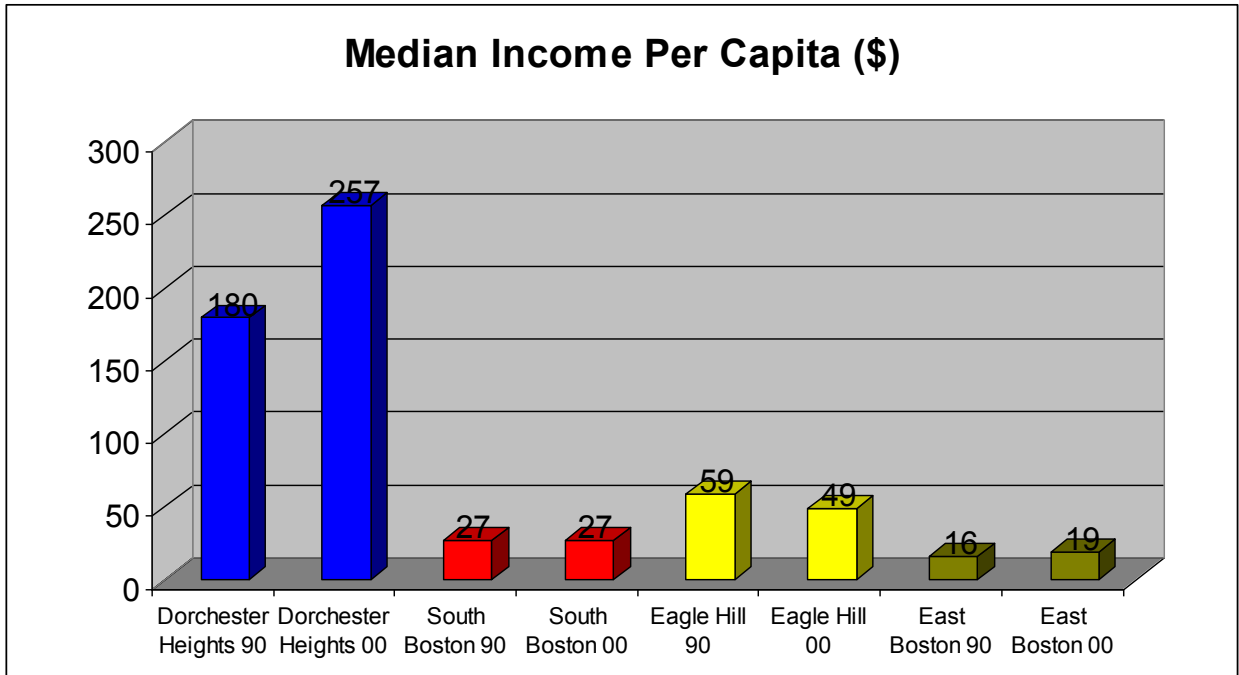


Figure 54: Median Income Per Capita

4.3.5. Number of Households

The final population indicator is the number of households per capita in each of our study areas. The following graph displays this indicator for our study areas in 1990 and 2000.

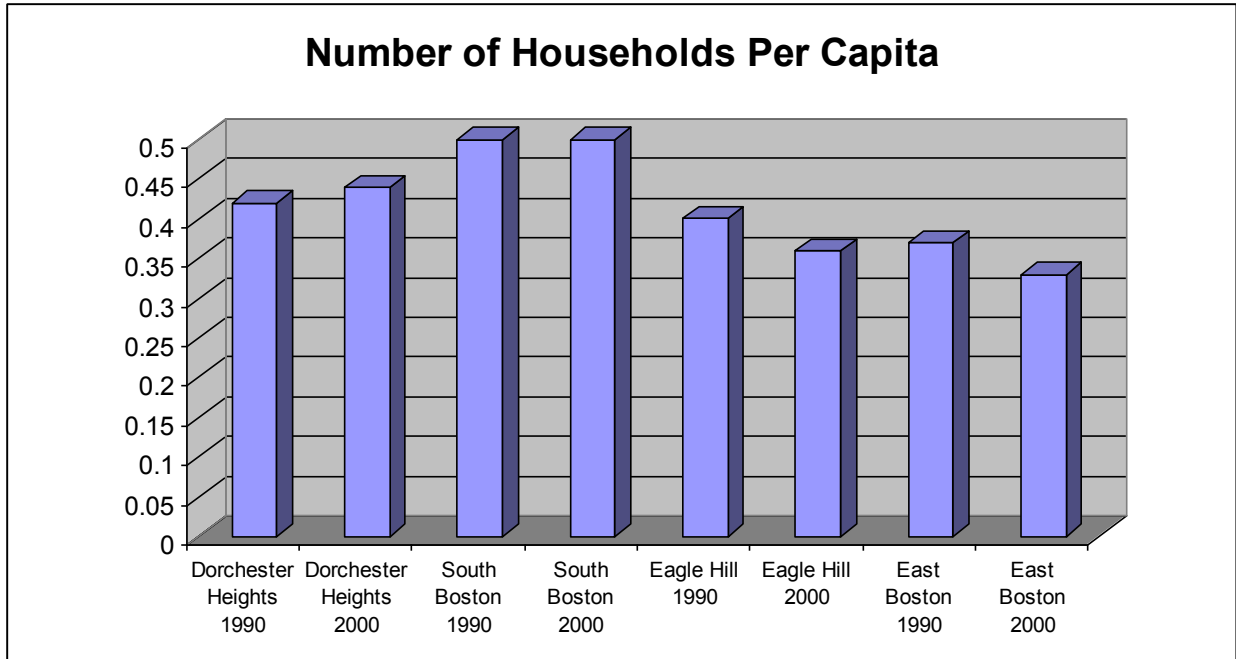


Figure 55: Number of Household Per Capita

5. Analysis and Conclusions

In order to make a conclusion and in turn determine the socioeconomic impact of historic designation, our team had to do both quantitative and qualitative analyses. In these analyses, we took the previously compiled data and performed comparisons on several levels. We used uniform analyses on our indicators for pre and post-designation comparing our sample blocks inside the historic districts to the sample blocks outside the historic districts, our sample blocks to themselves, and our sample blocks inside the historic districts to one another. Our conclusions were made based on the patterns we found during our analyses of the results of our data collection. In determining the impact of historic designation, we looked to see if the patterns in the data indicated a positive impact, a negative impact, or no impact at all on the areas studied in our project. As in the last chapter, we have divided our analyses and conclusions into three subsections breaking the indicators up into those with an economic impact, a social impact, and an impact on the population.

5.1. *Economic Impact*

This first subsection contains all the indicators that demonstrated an economic impact on our study areas. Due to the economic nature of the indicators, the analyses in this section are all quantitative in nature with the exception of public investment.

5.1.1. Public Investment

A quantitative analysis was not performed on public investment because of the limitations in the availability of quantitative data. A qualitative analysis was able to be performed using data obtained through interviews. We concluded that there is not an increase in public investment in historic districts, nor do historic districts get preferential treatment when it comes to public improvements. We did, however, find that the neighborhood associations in the historic districts request additional funding and improvements within their districts after designation.

5.1.2. Private Investment

When analyzing all the data obtained for private investment, a cycle became apparent. Prior to 1995, investment in the surrounding areas was higher than investment in the districts. Two years prior to designation, investment greatly increased within the districts. This may be because the residents felt that their neighborhood was worthy or in need of designation, therefore taking it upon themselves to make their neighborhood live up to its historical heritage. Then after designation, investment in the districts was higher than in the surrounding area. However, investment slightly decreased once most of the renovations were made to the neighborhoods. This was all observed from Figure..... in section 4.1.2 in the Results Chapter.

Based on the results and the analysis made, we believe that historic designation has a positive influence and effect on private investment in the historically designated districts. Designation increases awareness and personal involvement in a neighborhood, causing private homeowners to invest in the renovation of their homes for reason of preservation.

5.1.3. Assessed Values

After obtaining a sufficient amount of data to analyze the affect of designation on property value, a clear trend emerged. The values of the properties in the historical districts, compared to the surrounding districts to eliminate any changes in the market as factors, increased dramatically the year of historic designation. Most clearly shown in (INSERT FIGURE REFERENCE EAGLE HILL DIFFERENCES), but also seen in the (AGAIN), the value difference is clear. Eagle Hill goes from being worth approximately ten dollars less per square foot than its surrounding areas a year before designation, to being worth five dollars more a year after.

From this data and analysis, we conclude that designation has a positive affect on property value, increasing the value of the property compared to the non-designated areas in the vicinity. As assessed value is considered a desirability indicator, this should indicate an increase in the desirability of the neighborhood due to designation.

5.1.4. Real Estate Value

Real estate data was used to further support the conclusions drawn from the assessed values. Due to the smaller size of the data set we were able to obtain from real estate records, we considered this data less reliable than the assessment data, which contained a value for every house and every year. Real estate value was significantly higher than assessed value, as was expected, yet it followed the same trend and proved the same conclusions as the assessed values. This served as further proof of our hypothesis regarding the impact of historic designation on value, designation seems to increase the desirability of a neighborhood almost immediately.

5.2. *Social Impact*

The section subsection in this chapter covers all indicators that displayed a social impact on the studied areas inside and outside our historic districts. All of the analyses conducted on the social indicators were quantitative in their nature.

5.2.1. Neglect

After analyzing all the information and looking through the results, we concluded that building neglect decreased after designation in both the districts and the surrounding adjacent areas. We believe designation allowed the residents of the neighborhoods to realize the true value of their properties, and as a result pay more attention these properties. This indicator shows that designation has a positive impact on the neighborhood's stability.

5.2.2. Vacancy

In our analysis of our vacancy data collected, it was concluded that designation has had a positive impact on vacancy. As indicated by the thematic maps under vacancy in the results chapter, there are relatively few vacancies in the districts over a ten year span, and few that stay vacant for a substantial amount of time. Overall, there have been 22 vacancies out of 368 properties in our study areas. Out of the two vacancies in Dorchester Heights, only one was vacant after designation, and

out of the thirteen vacancies in Eagle Hill, only four were vacant after designation. The pie charts in that section also displayed that the number of days that residencies are vacant decrease in both Dorchester Heights and Eagle Hill. The only increase in the number of days vacant was in our sample blocks in the surrounding South Boston area.

5.2.3. Owner Occupancy

Based on the data analysis, designation had no conclusive effect on owner occupancy. In Dorchester Heights, owner occupancy remained at 63-66%, and its surrounding areas remained at 43-47%. The owner occupancy in the districts was higher than that in the surrounding areas; however, there was no change in owner occupancy pre- and post-designation to show a negative or positive impact. For us to come to a definitive conclusion we would have needed to look at a longer time span of property ownership. There was limited information available to us about this subject during this study. Therefore, we can conclude that there is not a negative effect on our study areas, but we cannot conclude that there is a positive effect on the areas.

5.2.4. Crime Statistics

Our crime analysis was a per capita analysis. We observed that property crime had the greatest number of crimes per capita, followed by violent crimes, and then vandalism. In Eagle Hill, crime rates were higher in the surrounding areas than in the district, while, in Dorchester Heights, crime rates were higher in the district than in the surrounding areas. Violent crimes in the districts slightly decreased after designation, though it was a very small decrease. For Eagle Hill, property crime decreased after designation, which also affected the surrounding areas. For Dorchester Heights and its surrounding areas, property crime fluctuated; it decreased, then it increased again over time. With vandalism, there was no conclusive change in number of crimes due to designation.

Eagle Hill showed a small decrease in crime due to designation, but in Dorchester Heights, crime fluctuated. Crime in Dorchester Heights was higher than in its surrounding areas, and crime in Eagle Hill was lower than in its surrounding area.

Overall crime in Dorchester Heights and its surrounding areas was higher than overall crime in Eagle Hill and its surrounding area.

Based on our analysis, there is no conclusive evidence leading us to believe that designation had either a positive or negative effect on crime in the districts.

5.3. *Population Impact*

The last subsection of this chapter includes all indicators that create an impact on the population of our historic districts and the surrounding areas. The analyses performed here were qualitative using quantitative data. From the analyses and minor conclusions shown below, designation does not have a negative impact on the population of a designated area, and points to having an overall positive impact.

5.3.1. Gender

The pattern indicated from our results is that designation levels out the male to female ratio in our study areas bringing it to nearly 1 to 1. The chart in the corresponding subsection in the results chapter indicates this pattern as can be seen in Dorchester Heights, the surrounding South Boston area, and the surrounding East Boston area as the male to female ratio evens out between 1990 and 2000.

5.3.2. Race

The overall pattern observed in our study areas was diversification amongst race. Although there was only a little diversification in Dorchester Heights and the surrounding South Boston area, Eagle Hill and the surrounding East Boston area became much more diverse. The pie charts in the results show that there was only a one percent move towards diversification in Dorchester Heights and the surrounding South Boston area leaving both areas heavily Caucasian. The pie charts also show a twenty percent change in race for Eagle Hill and a thirty percent change for East Boston.

5.3.3. Education Attainment

The most interesting pattern was observed during the analysis of education attainment for our historic districts and their surrounding areas. In the surrounding

South Boston area there was an increase in education on all levels, in the surrounding East Boston area there were mixed results for each level of education. In both districts, however, there was an increase in higher levels of education such as bachelors and graduate degrees as the lower levels of education including associates and high school degrees decreased. This can all be seen in the graphs located in the results chapter under educations attainment.

5.3.4. Median Income

The median household income was completely different for every one of our study areas; however, both districts median income levels were higher in both 1990 and 2000. In Dorchester Heights, the median income increased over the past ten years, but in Eagle Hill it has decreased. In the surrounding South Boston area the median income has actually stayed the same as the surrounding East Boston's median income has slightly increased. The data is displayed under the median income section in the results chapter.

5.3.5. Number of Households

The number of households also varied amongst our four study areas. The number of households in Dorchester Heights increased as they stayed the same in the surrounding area of South Boston. In both Eagle Hill and the surrounding East Boston area, the number of households decreased. This pattern is evident in the graph displayed in the results chapter. This data, however, did not take into effect the change of single households to condominiums, so it is not overly conclusive what effect designation has on this.

5.4. *The Socioeconomic Impact of Historic Designation*

After conducting analyses on the impact created by our economic, social, and population indicators and making conclusions on each, we were able to determine the overall impact felt by the historic districts. Our study fortified the existence of the assumed benefits of historic designation, and has also uncovered a ripple effect created by historic designation. We found that the areas directly surrounding our

historic districts benefit from the same advantages that the districts themselves benefit from. Taking both of these facts into consideration, and reviewing each indicator to see where it promoted a positive effect, a negative effect, or no effect at all, we have determined that there is indeed a positive impact felt on historic districts through national register designation.

6. Recommendations

After completing our assessment, we were able to determine some improvements that could be made on our methods to further the goals of this project. We suggest comparing national register districts to local districts. We feel this would make for an interesting comparison as these two types of designation carry with them different rules and restrictions as far as investment, improvement, and funding.

Repeating this project with more national register districts may make the study more informative, and using more comparison areas and not just the immediately surrounding areas would make for a better control. Lastly a larger time span would increase the ability to draw solid conclusions from gathered data.

Another way to improve this study would be to add and assess further other socioeconomic indicators. Factors such as tourism, cash flow, commercial properties, low income housing, and many others were deemed outside of the scope of our project, and not feasible within the given time span. A future study could examine these factors for a different perspective on the designation process and its results.

One of the major difficulties in completing this project was gathering data from different sources within the City of Boston government. We would propose a standard storage method for public information, such as XML or a specific database format. We feel a public server with such a data format could facilitate data sharing between departments, and improve the public's ability to access pertinent information.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Boston is a city of neighborhoods.
<http://www.ci.boston.ma.us/boston400/pdfs/ch2.pdf> last visited:
20 Feb. 2003.
2. Boston Landmarks Commission. Eagle Hill Homeowner Handbook: A Guide to the History and Care of Houses in the Eagle Hill Neighborhood of Boston. Boston, Massachusetts: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1997.
3. Boston Landmarks Commission. Dorchester Heights Homeowner Handbook: A Guide to the History and Care of Houses in the Dorchester Heights Neighborhood of Boston. Boston, Massachusetts: Boston Landmarks Commission, 2001.
4. Burchell, Robert W., David Listokin, et al. Development Impact: Assessment Handbook. Washington D.C.: ULI-Urban Land Institute, 1994
5. City of Boston. Boston Landmarks Commission – BLC.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/landmarks.asp> 2003.
6. City of Boston. Boston Redevelopment Authority.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/bra> 2003.
7. City of Boston. Environmental Review/Impact Assessment Process.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/environment/review.asp> 2003.
8. City of Boston. Historic District Commission.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/historic.asp> 2003
9. City of Boston. Historic Preservation Activity.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/historicbldgs.asp>
2003.
10. City of Boston Inspectional Services Department.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/default.asp> last visited 20 Feb. 2003.
11. City of Boston Zoning Board of Appeal: A guide on how to apply to the Board of Appeal. 5 Sept. 1998.

- <http://www.eastboston.com/Archives/zba.htm> last visited 20 Feb. 2003.
12. Cooper, James R., Gunterman, Karl L. Real Estate and Urban Land Analysis. Lexington, Massachusetts. DC Heath and Company. 1974.
 13. Delaney, Julie. Geographical Information Systems: An Introduction. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
 14. East Boston Online. East Boston: An Overview.
<http://www.eastboston.com/histoc.htm> 2003.
 15. Fischel, William. The Economics of Zoning Laws: A Property Rights Approach to American Land Use Controls. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.
 16. Goodman, Allen C. What is Urban Economics?
www.econ.wayne.edu/~agoodman/5800/week1/580_11.ppt Last visited: 18 Feb. 2003.
 17. Goody, Joan E. New Architecture in Boston. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1965.
 18. Juergensmeyer, Julian C., Roberts, Thomas G. Land Use Planning and Control Law. West Group, St. Paul, MN 1998. p. 45.
 19. Kilham, Walter H. Boston After Bulfinch: An account of its Architecture. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1946.
 20. Kirker, Harold. Bulfinch's Boston, 1787-1817. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.
 21. Miller, Naomi and Morgan, Keith. Boston Architecture 1975-1990. New York, NY: Neus Publishing Company, 1990.
 22. Muller, Thomas. Economic Impacts of Land Development: Employment, Housing and Property Values. The Urban Institute. Washington D.C. 1976.
 23. Nelson, Robert H. Zoning and Property Rights: An Analysis of the American System of Land-Use Regulation. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1977.
 24. O'Connor, Thomas H. Building a New Boston. Boston: Northeastern

- University Press, 1993.
25. Shand-Tucci, Douglass. Built in Boston: city and suburb, 1800-1950. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1978.
 26. Whitehill, Walter Muir. Boston; a topographical history. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959.
 27. Vanderwarker, Peter. Boston then & now: 59 Boston sites photographed in the past and present. New York: Dover Publications, 1982.
 28. Visual Communications in Building Technology Project.
http://www.mit.edu/afs/athena/dept/libdata/libdepts/i/www_annex1/rvc_annex1/building-technology/60-27maj.html last visited 20 Feb. 2003.
 29. Zoning Board of Appeals. Oct. 2000.
http://www.cityofboston.gov/isd/BOA/pdfs/Zoning_Booklet.pdf
last visited 20 Feb. 2003.

APPENDIX 1 – Annotated Bibliography

1. Boston Landmarks Commission. Eagle Hill Homeowner Handbook: A Guide to the History and Care of Houses in the Eagle Hill Neighborhood of Boston. Boston, Massachusetts: Boston Landmarks Commission, 1997.

This handbook contains a lot of useful information specific to the Eagle Hill district of Boston. This information is very useful for our project.

2. Burchell, Robert W., David Listokin, et al. Development Impact: Assessment Handbook. Washington D.C.: ULI-Urban Land Institute, 1994

This book is well written and easy to understand and provides pertinent models and information on topics necessary to our project such as physical land planning and it's social and environmental impact.

3. City of Boston. Boston Landmarks Commission – BLC.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/landmarks.asp> 2003.

This is the web page for the Boston Landmark Commission; it contains its mission and basic information about the department.

4. City of Boston. Environmental Agencies.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/agencies.asp> 2003.

This web page contains a list and contact information of various related agencies and organizations in the City of Boston.

5. City of Boston. Environmental Review/Impact Assessment Process.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/environment/review.asp> 2003

This web page talks about the Environment Department and the purpose of the department.

6. City of Boston. Historic District Commission.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/historic.asp> 2003

This is the Historic District Commission web page for the City of Boston. This web page gives answers to the most common, frequent questions asked about historic districts.

7. City of Boston. Historic Preservation Activity.
<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/historicbldgs.asp> 2003.

This is the Historic District Commission web page for the City of Boston. This web page gives answers to the most common, frequent questions asked about historic districts.

8. City of Boston. Historic Preservation Activity.

<http://www.cityofboston.gov/Environment/historicbldgs.asp> 2003.

This web page is a link in the Boston Landmark Commission web page; it shows historic preservation activities in various locations in the City of Boston. For each historic site that is being observed, it gives a brief description on what is taking place in that site.

9. Cooper, James R., Gunterman, Karl L. Real Estate and Urban Land Analysis. Lexington, Massachusetts. DC Heath and Company. 1974.

This book is a collection of authors on certain topics that may be of great use to our study in the areas of urban land use, the theory or urban land market, location of economic activities in cities, urban commuting, the legal system of urban land use and property rights, urban redevelopment, and other topics which may become useful at a later date. It is a concern that this resource may be slightly outdated for this project.

10. Delaney, Julie. Geographical Information Systems: An Introduction. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

This book contains introductory and relevant information regarding the Geographical Information System. Since GIS is a large part of our project, this book is very relevant.

11. Diehl, Janet. The Conservation Easement Handbook. Land Trust Exchange and the Trust for Public Land. USA. 1988.

12. Fischel, William. The Economics of Zoning Laws: A Property Rights Approach to American Land Use Controls. Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.

This book is a very detailed and involved account of zoning laws and economics. While it may contain some valuable information, it is a very involved, dense text that is targeted to economists and will take some time to digest.

13. Goody, Joan E. New Architecture in Boston. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1965.

This book contains information regarding new and modern architecture in Boston. Due to the historical nature of our project this book is not applicable to our particular project.

14. Kilham, Walter H. Boston After Bulfinch: An account of its Architecture. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1946.

This book contains information on Boston architecture from 1700 up to 1900. While the book itself is a little outdated, since it is a historical account it is still applicable.

15. Kirker, Harold. Bulfinch's Boston, 1787-1817. New York: Oxford University Press, 1964.

This book is a combination of a history and architecture book during the time of Charles Bulfinch. It is a good resource that focuses on the work he did for Boston, and how he helped to reshape the city.

16. Miller, Naomi and Morgan, Keith. Boston Architecture 1975-1990. New York, NY: Neus Publishing Company, 1990.

This book is an illustrated and annotated guide to Boston's architecture. It contains a section by section guide to notable buildings in the City of Boston.

17. Muller, Thomas. Economic Impacts of Land Development: Employment, Housing and Property Values. The Urban Institute. Washington D.C. 1976.

This book was helpful with background research on land development, property values, housing, and community employment.

18. Nelson, Robert H. Zoning and Property Rights: An Analysis of the American System of Land-Use Regulation. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press, 1977.

This book is a very involved description of American property rights. The information contained is applicable to our project, but the text is written for an economist or real estate expert, so it is rather hard for the layman to understand.

19. O'Connor, Thomas H. The hub: Boston past and present. Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2001.

I found this book to be quite useful in giving a general overview of the city of Boston and its history. This book covers the time span from when the colonization ships left England to the start of the Big Dig.

20. Shand-Tucci, Douglass. Built in Boston: city and suburb, 1800-1950. Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1978.

This is a good book which gives an overview of the architectural history of Boston and its surrounding suburbs.

21. Whitehill, Walter Muir. Boston; a topographical history. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1959.

I found this book useful in two regards. This book also gave a decent history of Boston, but as it was intended to be, it was very useful in giving a history of the changes in the land layout of Boston and its transformation from a small peninsula to what it is today.

22. Vanderwarker, Peter. Boston then & now: 59 Boston sites photographed in the past and present. New York: Dover Publications, 1982.

This is only a good resource for pictures. The small information blurbs are almost useless when trying to talk about the architecture or history.