Starting From Ecotone
Reconnecting Fragmented Mission Hill

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Abstract

This thesis aims to address the spatial fragmentation of Mission Hill. As an old, crowded and chaotic neighborhood in Boston, Mission Hill is a microcosm of Boston’s history. Four hundred years ago, Mission Hill was an ecological ecotone which consisted of a series of transitional landscapes, located on the border of a peninsula surrounded by salt marshes. Today, the history of ecotone has been hidden. Landfill, segregation, gentrification, and climate change have caused fragmented spaces, weak connections, and poor accessibility. Meanwhile, the fragmentation of public open areas has also disrupted people’s interaction with one another, and the spatial spirit of the community is lost as a result.

This thesis explores the new possibility of Mission Hill community development based on ecotone research and develops a full-scale spatial framework. Incorporating evidence from historical documents and field observations, Mission Hill’s existing public open space exists as a reminder of its history as an ecotone. Research on ecotones demonstrates that different species and substances can co-exist and will be transferred efficiently because of the excellent connectivity inside the ecotone. Mission Hill’s past as an ecotone creates the possibility of its future as the renewed ecotone. Through reconnecting fragmented open spaces, we can reactivate the history of Mission Hill and rewild Mission Hill to be a new ecotone. Inclusion, integrity and efficiency of ecotones can also be applied to the open areas of Mission Hill to enhance this new spatial system. By returning to the ecotone, Mission Hill can reorganize fragmented spaces, enhance connectivity and accessibility between spaces, activate hidden histories, evoke distant shared memories, and ultimately alleviate the emotional and physical trauma experienced by entire communities since segregation, gentrification, and climate change.

Keywords: Ecotone, Connectivity, Community Planning, Mission Hill
Mission Hill is an old church neighborhood in Boston. Generally, people regarded Mission Hill as the epitome of Boston’s culture and history. It has witnessed many historical events, such as the Initial colonist landing, the bloom of industries and transportation, the Back Bay landfill project, the Great Depression, the Muddy River rerouting project, Segregation, and urban renewal. By the 1940s, Mission Hill had built many public housing units but abandoned them. Wealthy universities and hospitals continued purchasing the surrounding land, eventually forcing people out of their homes. Every crucial historical event in Mission Hill has witnessed the rise of some new groups and the fall and displacement of others. During this cycle, spaces of Mission Hill have been divided into different parts and belonged to different owners. All the people struggled in the tumultuous and continuous change, expecting to protect their homes.

Last year, One of Mission Hill K-8 schools was forced to close due to the high assault crime index. Conflicts accumulate and eventually erupt in this day-to-day isolation. The existing condition today and fragmentation of Mission Hill are a direct result of the history of segregation, gentrification and inequitable policy in the neighborhood. Furthermore, Mission Hill’s current pattern of broken public spaces is a testament and catalyst to these events. When strolling through Mission Hill, most of the land here has been developed as residential areas, leaving only a few scattered open spaces to serve the public. These spaces are undeveloped for a surprising reason: their unique landscape character is a testament to Mission Hill’s once-ecological and geological history as ecotone zones. Mission Hill and the nearby Roxbury share the same bedrock.

Figure 2. Mission Hill and Mission Church

1 Mission Hill and the miracle of Boston. DVD. Boston: Cine Research, in cooperation with CD Film Workshop, 1980.
rock called the Roxbury Conglomerate, which came from tectonic plate movement and volcanic activity four billion years ago and was later shaped by rivers and deposit ed at the bottom of Boston harbor, where they eventually formed hard rock and became the ideal foundation for future salt marsh growth. The salt marsh was not filled in until 400 years ago to become the northern part of what is today Back Bay and Mission Hill. The southern part of Mission Hill was squeezed by plate movement to form a steep, mountainous area. It is not hard to imagine what a dynamic and abundant ecological history the salt marshes of Mission Hill have experienced. As a series of typical ecotone zones, mountain, salt marsh, and ocean together form the ecological basis of Mission Hill. The complex geological movements and the series of historical events that Mission Hill has experienced have created relative chaos in the development process. The most geologically distinct parcels of land are the most difficult to develop, and are often left as open spaces. Surrounded by dense housing, these spaces are separate, fragmented, and unconnected. These spaces are like the relationship between the residents of Mission Hill today. They are isolated from each other and lack opportunities for communication and common topics. An “invisible wall” still remains in the collective minds, even though the segregation act has been repealed for years, the memory of the past could be the link that reconnects people in the future. However, no matter how great a gulf that culture, politics, law, and prejudice have created in people’s hearts, all residents can be reminded of their shared ecological history when they touch the magnificent rocks of Mission Hill.

History has proven that on a larger geographic scale, Mission Hill is part of an ecological ecotone. Since the European settlers landed in Boston in the 17th century, this ecotone zone has become more complex because humans exploited the land at different times with different methods. Much of the once ecological ecotone zone has been covered by areas of human development. However, we can still find evidence of the ecotone zone’s former existence in the crevices of these areas, and they still influence the activities of people throughout the site. Mission Hill is still an ecotone today. The remains of the original ecological ecotone zone and the various areas of current human development are intertwined to form a broader meaning of ecotone today.

The research on ecotones in the ecological field demonstrates that ecotone helps different species and substances co-exist, cooperate, and to be transported or transformed efficiently. Meanwhile, ecotone can protect surrounding

Figure 3. New England Salt Marsh
Salt marsh used to be the iconic landscape of Mission Hill

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communities by serving as a buffer zone. The existence of ecotone ensures the stability of the entire ecosystem. Although ecological ecotone zones of Mission Hill have been drastically changed because of human activities, they still have the potential to be rebuilt and adapted to a more complex human community environment. Eventually, new ecotone zones will promote community collaboration and repair relationships among people, and provide a solid physical barrier to help Mission Hill cope with more significant future challenges, such as the extreme heat of climate change and the squeeze on housing and living space for low-income people brought on by gentrification.

This thesis will focus on erecting a new community spatial framework plan based on the Mission Hill's ecological and geological history. The plan will create a new green public spaces system through reconnecting current broken public spaces to rewild Mission Hill. Finally, all people have the opportunity and convenience to be connected to this green space system and to learn about the long ecological and geological history of Mission Hill in a reconstructed ecotone landscape. Community services are also integrated into the system, people will have more opportunities to interact and get to know each other, and the community's collective voice will be strengthened. Although Mission Hill 2016 Land Planning 8, FIXING BOSTON'S BROKEN DEVELOPMENT PROCESS 9, and Boston Climate Change Resilience Planning 11 have provided some plans and proposals on land use and resilience, they still lack specific reflection on the current dilemma of weak connections and segregation. They also don't realize the value of Mission Hill's unique geological landscape and the connection potential it can provide. The thesis will consist of four main parts: the current dilemma of Mission Hill; an analysis of Mission Hill's history as an ecotone; a solution for how the ecotone can help solve the current issues; and a result: the new framework plan for Mission Hill and detailed design proposal on one of specific sites.


Figure 4. In 1910, Back Bay from Parker Hill Reservoir.
Ecotone

ecotone, a transitional area of vegetation between two different plant communities, such as forest and grassland. It has some of the characteristics of each bordering biological community and often contains species not found in the overlapping communities. An ecotone may exist along a broad belt or in a small pocket, such as a forest clearing, where two local communities blend together. The influence of the two bordering communities on each other is known as the edge effect.

Gentrification

The process in which low price of land attracts high-income people to settle in some communities and continue to develop the community, forcing the community’s original residents to leave. In this process, many of the characteristics of the original neighborhoods are changed, and many people are forced to leave their neighborhoods. This process is unstoppable but also brings new resources and opportunities to the community and enhances the living experience of the residents left behind.

Alienation

In the process of gentrification, some of the original characteristics of the community were erased, and some of the former ways of life and traditional customs had to be abandoned in the massive urbanization. People were involved in endless industrial labor, all for the sake of economic profit. People’s spirits and unique identities were flattened, and thus people were alienated.

Co-Exist

In any ecological zone of intersection, species can have the opportunity to coexist. They can share the area in different ways and at different times. In cities, the intersecting zones are more complex. Human communities and natural communities also share the same place in different ways and therefore achieve coexistence.

Segregation

It refers specifically to the Apartheid Act. Since its implementation, the Act has had a significant negative impact on people’s lives and has hurt them emotionally and spiritually. This negative impact continues to this day and affects the communication and cooperation among the residents of Mission Hill.

Boundary

Boundary refers to social boundaries. Due to the implementation of the Mission Hill Apartheid Act and the impact of long-standing unequal community policies and gentrification, there are social boundaries at Mission Hill that prevent people from coming together.

Transformation

The material entering the ecotone zone may be transformed to enter another community. This transformation may be a reduction in velocity or mass or produce a new chemical reaction that generates an unknown substance.

Permeability

Ecotone zones do not exist in isolation. They can form a whole system between single individuals. This system is allowed to grow slowly, and its position is not fixed. When the environment changes, this system can be expanded and become a series of stepping stones to connect to other systems, eventually allowing the entire system to expand its control range. This process is called permeation.

Identity

What can represent a community’s identity is what has happened in that community, the people, the unique landscape, resources, etc. Together, they form a community’s story and identity, forming the community’s spirit and influencing every community resident.

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Mission Hill was named for the establishment of the Mission Church. The Redemptorists built the church on the Roxbury bedrock in 1870 as a base camp for ministers traveling to the neighboring area. Today, many people visit the church, which has become Boston’s center of religious activity. In addition to Mission Church, Mission Hill has many features that make it unique among Boston’s many neighborhoods. The land north of Mission Hill has been purchased primarily by wealthy universities, including Northeastern University, Harvard University, and the Massachusetts College of Art. South of Mission Hill is Roxbury, Boston’s prominent neighborhood of color. Hence, affluent students have competed with white-collar groups and residents from nearby low-income communities for potential housing opportunities and land since the Mission Hill public housing project began in the 1940s. The final result of the competition is that low-income groups are clustered in the public housing areas in the north of Mission Hill and on the


Where is Mission Hill

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In terms of the urban scale, Boston has several landmarks from downtown toward Mission Hill. The electrical tram system connects these constructions and places and runs north to south through one side of Mission Hill. Therefore, Mission Hill is an important stop in Boston’s historical and cultural landscape system.

When people talk about Mission Hill today, apart from its unique demographic composition, religious culture, tram system, and landmarks, what is even more impressive is the steep, complex topography of Mission Hill. The existence of Parker Hill made the development of Mission Hill difficult, and people had to carefully choose the proper foundation to meet the growing demand for housing. As a result, today’s Mission Hill looks so crowded yet full of surprises. We always see remnants of Mission Hill’s original landscape in unexpected corners: magnificent Roxbury bedrock.

Residents’ impression of Mission Hill:
a diverse community built on a magnificent geological landscape,
where complex historical evolution is intertwined with ecological and geological processes, forming the unique scenery of Mission Hill today.
Real Estate Dealers invested land and built new houses. Lots of local houses were bought then demolished. Residents were force to leave for finding the affordable housing. Speculator, new residents: students, artists and white collars move here and businessmen in other industries are also attracted here. Affulent new residents continuously occupied housing marking which ought to belong to low-income families. Local natural landscape and history are broken during the rapid gentrifying process. Rising rents have also driven out local small businesses. In the last century, highway and railway are barriers to segregate affulent neighborhood and low-income neighborhood.

Opportunities

Figure 10: Gentrification and Opportunities

Gentrification is an inevitable challenge, and it cannot be stopped. Communities can only unite to use gentrification’s new resources to fight for new development opportunities. Today in Mission Hill, it is hard to ignore the force of gentrification. Living spaces belonging to lower-income groups are being squeezed, and speculators are constantly looking for new parcels of land to build upscale apartments to attract new residents. Wealthy new residents are bringing in new exclusive stores, and higher rents are evicting the former small, cheap retail stores.

In 1978, the Mission Hill and Roxbury residents formed a community group to demand that Harvard University redevelop the neighborhoods they had demolished and agreed not to purchase additional land in Mission Hill. Some other community organizations and cooperatives were formed to combat the adverse effects of gentrification.

It is worthwhile to learn from Roxbury’s response to gentrification. Roxbury formed a community organization to collect additional fees from investors who purchase land in the community’s name and reuse the money to invest in new public housing projects to ensure the housing needs of low-income groups. Another response to gentrification is to use the resources available in Mission Hill. Firstly, some industrial sites and old buildings within Mission Hill came from the last century’s beer brewing industry. Reusing these old industrial buildings could bring new opportunities to the community. Secondly, the tram passes through one side of Mission Hill, which creates many new spatial possibilities. A new pedestrian system can be made by combining the topography of Mission Hill with the tram. Thirdly, the magnificent geological landscape of Mission Hill is also an entry point, and its presence is a testament to the older history of Mission Hill and a new path to the future.

What Is Happening in Mission Hill


According to a community survey on Niche, some people do not consider Mission Hill a safe community. Mission Hill has a higher crime index than other surrounding communities and has had a vicious murder event in the last century. The type of crime is predominantly assault. The high incidence of crime in Mission Hill may be due to the severe racial conflict and the strict segregation laws in the last century. Crime location statistics show that crime occurs primarily in spaces lacking good connectivity. One elementary school in Mission Hill was forced to close last year due to recurring crime incidents, and students were moved to other elementary schools. Many residents expressed their sadness, regret, and concern over the incident.

Another concern is that although many residents understand that Mission Hill has a magnificent geological landscape, they must learn what that means. They only have a few opportunities to know what these rocks once were, and they need to understand how dramatically high urbanization has changed Mission Hill. Forests, Muddy River, and Parker Hill are covered under crowded buildings, with only the Roxbury Bedrock in the crevices and corners as a remnant to remind people. The busy city life makes people ignore the history and culture of Mission Hill, and when people start to forget the story of the place, they will eventually forget the place too. Hence, the identity of Mission Hill may be dying out if we don’t do something about it.

Climate change is also one thing that has to be mentioned. Although Mission Hill is at a higher elevation, it is temporarily unaffected by sea level rise. But the extreme heat is also overwhelming to residents. The high density of housing and confusing street orientation, and the blockage of Parker Hill, make it challenging to transport the heat flow out of the community. Continued development has consistently reduced the total tree canopy area of Mission Hill.

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The Roxbury Bedrock in the crevices and corners as a remnant to remind people.

The long natural history of Mission Hill is hidden beneath the surface of the human community.
Hill, which reinforces the adverse effects of global warming. At the same time, the Boston Park system near Mission Hill has slowed the continued rise in temperature by maintaining good openness and plenty of green spaces and trees.

The high crime index, forgotten landscape history, and extreme heat are problems that are caused by the weak connectivity and low accessibility within Mission Hill. People have always avoided sites that needed to be developed appropriately for topographic and geological reasons in their daily lives, so the overall continuity is disrupted. Many problems arise when entire communities become fragmented for complex historical and geological reasons and need a unified system to coordinate them.

Figure 16. Possible Connection in Mission Hill

Despite the crowded space inside Mission Hill, we can see the possibility of strengthening internal and external connections.
The Boston area has a long geological and ecological history. The Roxbury bedrock, also informally known as Roxbury puddingstone, that we see today at Mission Hill, originated from volcanic activity and glacial movement 600 million years ago. They have evolved for a highly long time; thus, they show variable appearances and textures. When William Blackstone, the first settler of Boston, landed in 1620, Boston was only a small peninsula. Mission Hill and Roxbury had continuous mountain ranges, and they were surrounded by the ocean and connected to the Boston peninsula by a very narrow land bridge. Before the arrival of the early settlers, the land of Mission Hill and Roxbury was covered by dense forests with tall paper birch and red cedar, and the seaside areas were massive salt marshes, which can be seen on old maps of the Mission Hill area until the 19th century. From the 1730s until the muddy river re-routing in the 1880s, there was a long...
process of land reclamation to create what we see today as Mission Hill. The forest was cut down, the salt marsh was filled in, the muddy river was re-routed, and nothing was left. All we see is the exposed Roxbury bedrock hidden in the urban crevices.

We can use the term ecotone to describe Mission Hill hundreds of years ago. Ecotone is a transitional area of vegetation between two different plant communities, such as a forest. It has some of the characteristics of each bordering biological community and often contains species not found in the overlapping communities. Parker Hill was densely forested, and the muddy river basin bred a vast salt marsh, forming a beautiful and vibrant ecotone zone in Mission Hill. Today only small patches of woods remain in Parker Hill, with the rest of the area occupied by multi-unit housing. The muddy river was diverted to the Boston Park system and filled in to become the current public housing area.

The study of New England’s landscape history can reveal the disturbance and impact of human activities on the original natural landscape over time and provide a basis for imagining what Mission Hill once looked like. At the same time, it makes us realize that the forest can be restored when human logging and livestock activities are reduced again. Mission Hill’s original forest system is confined to limited spaces, and all woodlands are protected by fences that prevent access. This is an understandable method to protect the few remaining forested areas strictly. However, for the forest system to be restored in the future and for residents to have the opportunity to enter the forests of Mission Hill again, more forest land is needed to form the new forest system.

The remains of the original ecological ecotone zone and the various areas of current human development are intertwined to form a broader meaning of ecotone zone.
Comparing the past and present landscape of Mission Hill reveals the past of Mission Hill as an ecotone zone.
To find out the reasons for the current chaos in Mission Hill, a review of the history of Mission Hill is necessary. Based on the analysis of old maps of Boston, some events played crucial roles in the development of Mission Hill. After the early settlers arrived in Boston, the vast land and natural beauty of Mission Hill attracted wealthy white families to build estates and country houses in the area. In the 1820s, many Irish and German immigrants arrived in Mission Hill, bringing about excellent brewing techniques and exploiting the high-quality groundwater resources of Mission Hill for beer brewing. During this period, Mission Hill became known throughout the Boston area for its quality beer, and Mission Hill enjoyed high economic profit and further commercial and urban growth.

Beginning in the twentieth century, Mission Hill’s abundant business opportunities and low land prices attracted many wealthy institutions to the area, especially hospitals, and universities. They purchased large amounts of land here, and Mission Hill became more prosperous. Soon, however, with the onset of the Great Depression, wealthy residents had to sell their properties in Mission Hill to find cheaper housing. Many properties were purchased, converted into multi-family housing, and rented to low-income families. More and more low-income families came to Mission Hill.
which caused a further exodus of wealthy white families from the community. From then on, Mission Hill gradually became a low-income neighborhood. By 1962, something even worse happened. During this period, the Boston government enforced strict segregation laws, and people of color were restricted to living in public housing in the northern part of Mission Hill, while other areas were only available to whites. This period caused severe trauma to many residents, and the segregation act is the root of the frequent conflicts today.¹

The overall development of Mission Hill didn’t have a unified goal and plan, and different organizations owned each site at different times; then, they were developed for other purposes. Eventually, Mission Hill became fragmented and chaotic after it was transformed to be a human neighborhood. Furthermore, issues such as high temperatures, crime, and hidden history have resulted. On a larger scale, gentrification has impacted all Boston neighborhoods consistently. The negative impact of these issues further undermines social equality and exacerbates the suffering of residents since the segregation act.

“MISSION HILL MIRACLE”

Mission Hill has undergone many dramatic changes over the twentieth century. Boston government has pushed forward with urban renewal, real estate developers have looked for more opportunities, and intense racial conflicts were never relieved. Mission Hill and the Miracle of Boston is a documentary that follows the struggles and efforts of Mission Hill in the face of these challenges. The documentary invited real estate developers, community residents, and spokespeople from community organizations who talked about their concerns about the development of Mission Hill and what they remember about their homes. The documentary also showcased strong community organizations in Mission Hill. People trust and love their community and are willing to stand together to fight to protect their community.

The composition of the residents of Mission Hill today has changed considerably, with many of the former residents having left the community. A large number of new residents are renting apartments and houses here. This is a real challenge because many new residents no longer see Mission Hill as their home. It is only a temporary station. But strong community organizations in Mission Hill are still working. They established a community foundation to organize social activities and ran several tiny community gardens. Because most Mission Hill residents are low-income and most of the old houses are damaged, they have set up a building materials recycling center and a furniture recycling center to help residents repair their homes at a lower cost. This method has already helped many residents. The community hopes to attract more new residents to join the community organization and have more activity spaces. Although many residents only live here temporarily, a more robust community organization can help them fight for more rights and lower the cost of living. There are still many community resources in Mission Hill that are worth investing in, such as old abandoned factories, magnificent geological landscapes, and beautiful forested landscapes. People are also looking to more influential community organizations for guidance and help.

“We are fighting together for Mission Hill!”

Figure 22: Mission Hill and the Miracle of Boston, Mission Hill and the Miracle of Boston is the story of urban renewal, racial conflict, and the struggle of a neighborhood to survive these changing times. Spokespeople include real estate developers, community activists, workers, and residents.
Forces from nature are changing the seemingly hard skin of Mission Hill. This is a process of fragmentation in another meaning. The study of the ecological history of Mission Hill reveals that Mission Hill was once an ecotone zone. Today, human activities have affected Mission Hill so extensively and profoundly. Yet, as we walk through Mission Hill, we still find remnants of ecotone zones. They are fragmented and discontinuous but still have a limited positive impact on the surrounding environment. One of the most remarkable points is their protective effect on the land. Speculators have had to abandon these lands because the relics’ presence makes artificial development more difficult. Finding and documenting the location and surroundings of these relics is a worthwhile endeavor.

In addition, the question that always needs to be pondered is whether Mission Hill today can still be called an ecotone. In the past, the definition of the ecotone was based on ecological considerations. However, this definition refers to two populations, which can also refer to natural plant populations and human populations. Today in Mission Hill, ecotones are more complex, which exist between nature and humans. Communities can be strengthened when people visit these ecotone zones and are reconnected by them. Starting From Ecotone
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Lifting the Surface
Exciting Discoveries in Mission Hill

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Cutting Mission Hill

Cutting through the surface of Mission Hill can help us see how the ecotone zone is changing today and how different today’s ecotone used to be.

Figure 29. Cutting Mission Hill

Today’s situation in the new ecotone zone is more complex than in the past. Human activities and natural communities are intertwined to form the new ecotone zone of Mission Hill.

Figure 30. Today’s New Ecotone

Today’s activities in the new ecotone zone are more complex than in the past. Human activities and natural communities are intertwined to form the new ecotone zone of Mission Hill.
The existence of ecotone zones is necessary. Especially between multiple communities, ecotone zones ensure each community’s relative independence and security. Ecotone zones themselves have transport and transformation functions, and they help to coordinate the functioning of the entire system and the flow of materials. Today in Mission Mountain, the presence of multiple ecotone zones helps to create a system of coordination and protection for the entire Mission Hill. This system helps to improve residents’ accessibility to developed spaces and to continuously protect all open spaces on Mission Hill from encroachment and destruction, even potentially increasing the number of available spaces.

In addition, the ecotone zone facilitates communication between species by creating a unique physical environment. There still needs to be more communication between people in Mission Hill today, as historical events that occurred here in the past and the fragmented space today continue to impact people’s perceptions and behaviors. In the unique environment of the ecotone zone, there is a new opportunity for people to come together and re-establish respect and confidence in the community and its members.

What Can Ecotone Teach Us

The existence of ecotone zones is necessary. Especially between multiple communities, ecotone zones ensure each community’s relative independence and security. Ecotone zones themselves have transport and transformation functions, and they help to coordinate the functioning of the entire system and the flow of materials. Today in Mission Mountain, the presence of multiple ecotone zones helps to create a system of coordination and protection for the entire Mission Hill. This system helps to improve residents’ accessibility to developed spaces and to continuously protect all open spaces on Mission Hill from encroachment and destruction, even potentially increasing the number of available spaces.

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How Can Mission Hill Reture to Ecotone

Figure 32. Connecting Strategy

Figure 33. Framework Plan

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Sections and Models of New Framework

Figure 34. Sections and Models

Site Plan: Community Ecotone Park

Figure 35. Site Plan
Bioswale Terrace

Dripping Stone Wall

Figure 36. Perspective 1

Figure 37. Perspective 2
Reflection
It was an unforgettable journey for me. Mission Hill is different from the previous sites I have worked on. When I first arrived here, I felt confused. As a landscape architect, I felt hard to pinpoint and definite the problem of Mission Hill. As my research progressed, I came to understand the site’s long history and development process, as well as the complex demographics. This was a community worth studying, and the past it had gone through and what it was about to go through was similar to many Boston neighborhoods, all of which were finding new directions for themselves. Mission Hill is facing complex economic issues and racial issues. Landscape architects are often powerless in the face of such problems, and all I can do is try to help them create spaces more conducive to communication. Observations at Mission Hill played a significant role. When I first learned about Mission Hill through the book, I could only sense that the community might face sharp conflicts. THE MAGNIFICENT GEOLOGICAL LANDSCAPE DEEPLY IMPRESSED ME when I arrived at the site. At the same time, I realized there might be some connection between community conflicts and the geological landscape, which became the entry point to my research.

I’ve been involved in urban-scale projects, but I needed to learn more about some policy and social issues at that time. Sometimes I didn’t understand the meaning of the proposal thoroughly. After my research on Mission Hill, I learned a great deal about the history and process of urban development in the U.S. They helped me to solve the confusion I had been having and gave me a new perception of the city.

I feel more about the significance of landscape, especially as a public landscape. It can help solve complex social problems and promote social equity. In Mission Hill, the fragmentation of public spaces has led to unequal access for everyone, a dilemma that will continue to affect residents if we don’t do anything.

During the research process, I started with a broad theme and ended up with a specific entry point, which was very torturous. But it helped me think more about the scope of what landscape architects are capable of, what we can do, and what impact we will have on our cities. We live in an era that has changed markedly from twenty years ago. There was a time when people chose careers and could do regular work until they were old. But we are now faced with more challenges than ever before, so what we do is constantly in flux, and we need to keep changing and challenging our ideas, all of which are always on the road and have no end in sight.

Acknowledgment
I have received positive encouragement and enthusiastic help from many people during the research and writing process. First and foremost, I am very grateful to several of my thesis advisors. Professor Suzanne Mathew provided comprehensive research guidance and always helped me to find information that I missed and helped me to refine and summarize my ideas promptly. Professor Nick De Pace was always active in providing precise guidance that enabled me to take the next step, and he always gave me good inspiration. I am also grateful to Prof. Ellen Garrett for her comprehensive writing guidance. Prof. Elizabeth Dean Hermann for providing me with many valuable directions and ideas during the initial stages of my research; her vast knowledge helped me realize that I still have tons of journeys, and her constant encouragement gave me the courage to face more challenges in the future.

In addition, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my friends and family. They have been my constant support and encouragement, brightened my day with their optimism, and guided me to persevere. Thank you to the people I have met over the past three years who have shown me the value of my work and helped me to strengthen my beliefs as a landscape architect.
Bibliography


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Image Citation

Figure 1. Mission Hill and Boston, Phat_Irish. Sunset over Mission Hill the other night. July 2022. https://www.reddit.com/r/boston/comments/wdhrng/sunset_over_mission_hill_the_other_night/.

Figure 2. Phat_Irish. Sunset over Mission Hill the other night. July 2022. https://www.reddit.com/r/boston/comments/wdhrng/sunset_over_mission_hill_the_other_night/.


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