

addressed maritime needs and community desires for greater waterfront accessibility. In addition, the aim of the plan was to rebuild public faith in the port.

As is the case in Boston, reaching consensus in San Francisco on any subject related to waterfront redevelopment is challenging. When it comes to consensus-based planning, what clearly is one of the city's greatest assets – its diverse, stimulating, well-educated and opinionated citizenry – is also one of its greatest challenges. This is especially true on the San Francisco waterfront where many were skeptical of the ability of the port to conduct an open and thoughtful planning process. To the surprise of watchdog groups, the port addressed these concerns head-on by taking the unprecedented step of creating a community-based waterfront planning process. The port first solicited applications for a 27-member Advisory Board with representatives from all walks of city and waterfront life. Members included representatives from the mayor's office, other elected officials and decision-makers, maritime, business, environmental, open space and urban design interests, and each neighborhood or district adjacent to port lands. The Advisory Board had the daunting task of independently recommending a waterfront plan for Port Commission consideration.

Port staff proposed, and the Advisory Board followed, a phased planning process which first focused on the port's complex regulatory environment and public trust responsibilities and included candid discussions of the port's history of failed projects. Next, with the help of expert panels, the Advisory Board thoroughly evaluated and reserved ample lands to meet the long-term needs of each of the maritime industries of the port. Only then did the Advisory Board broach the controversial topic of the extent to which non-water-dependent activities, such as commercial development, could be included in the plan to help activate the waterfront and subsidize maritime industries, public access and open spaces. The results of this unprecedented six-year public planning effort was a very flexible and award-winning Waterfront Plan which defines the acceptable uses, character, urban form and public amenities for the port-controlled waterfront, and which enjoys extremely widespread support.

Boston waterfront

The Boston Harbor is also a contested space. It includes a wide geography that has been dramatically altered over time. Indeed, the footprint of Boston today bears little resemblance to the original site of settlement. Today, the land added contains the wharf districts of the historic port, choice residential neighborhoods, the downtown waterfront, the modern seaport, Logan International Airport, and several of Boston's signature institutional and civic facilities. Ironically, today's waterfront policy debate reflects a deep-seated public resistance to further land filling and a passion for stewardship of those tidelands filled long ago.

As Bostonians demanded more space, tidelands filled. In addition to filling it, Bostonians have spent nearly four centuries doing one other thing to their harbor – making the water dirty and then cleaning it up. By 1980, Boston Harbor was desperately polluted and the target of parallel federal