

# No Building is an Island

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## Team Design Process

The GSD design team has benefitted from the contributions of a diverse group of students and experts. The process was led by Thaddeus Pawlowski (Harvard Loeb Fellow) who facilitated the project, supported student work and provided perspective on lessons learned from Sandy and NYC's rebuilding efforts.

After some initial fact finding and goals setting, we began the process by dividing the 20 interested GSD students into three interdisciplinary research groups and rotating through each of the three sites (Prince Building, Fort Point Channel, and Morrissey Boulevard), capturing impressions and data to share with the other research groups. Each week we had conversations about our understanding of the major issues and potential ways forward based on our site visits and background research. Throughout this process we engaged a wide range of experts including coastal ecologists, legal scholars, housing experts, artists, and designers. After all members had visited each of three sites, teams coalesced around each site to propose a design intervention. Supported by the collective work gathered in the earlier stages, each site team created a Phase I competition proposal that was intended to fit within a larger framework of climate resilience. This framework was largely driven by policy actions the public sector could take today to implement a variety of design interventions, and responded differently in the various locations to institutions and actors that have different motivations, concerns, and resources.

In January, Thaddeus conducted a research seminar that focused on future scenarios for each of the competitions sites. We walked through wetlands with ecologist Anamarija Frankic, poured over old maps with historian Nancy Seasholes, talked policy and panoramic models with BRA planner John Dalzell, toured the North End with journalist Matt Conti, looked at Art with Fort Point Artists, learned about citizen action with lawyer Peter Shelley, and were guided by the principles of design excellence, equity and social justice that drive the Loeb Fellowship program.

Moving into the semifinalist stage, we reformed a new student team around the Prince Building project and divided into three subgroups --- one focusing on policy and financing, another on building-scale architecture, and a third on neighborhood-level landscape and infrastructure. Drawing on the expertise within multiple disciplines (urban design, urban planning, landscape architecture, architecture, public policy, finance) we aspired to create a robust policy framework that could guide and incentivize building owners to pursue a set of desirable outcomes in the built environment, and then visualize the specific nature and design of those outcomes. While we were driven by policy, our conversations were also very much informed by outcomes in relation to urban design, architecture, public space, street-level interactions, and community engagement. All of the work produced was collaborative, often across disciplines, with multiple people working on individual diagrams, drawings, and renderings. We had feedback sessions with prominent faculty from the GSD, Kennedy school, Law School, and Business school, including Professors Alex Kreiger, Jim Stockard, Jerold Kayden, Pierre Belanger, Rosetta Elkin, Joyce Rosenthal Klein, Emily Lloyd, and more.

Although a few students were able to connect work completed for studios and theses with the Boston Living with Water competition, all work within the competition was unpaid, extra-curricular, and did not count towards any coursework or graduation requirements for students.

The Boston Harbor Association and the Boston Redevelopment authority has given us an invaluable learning experience. We admire most how they have openly embraced the spirit of collective learning in the way they conducted the competition. We are very honored to have been a part of this important public dialogue. We look forward to broadening and deepening this conversation.