

WORK SESSION

Cambridge Harbor

*From Community Vision to
Implementation*

CWDI & City Planning Commission
July 27, 2026



A Vision Built Over Time

Twenty Years of Community Planning

2011–2014

Vision Established

- State RFQ
- Waterfront Vision
- Declaration of Covenants

2018–2022

Organization & Planning

- CWDI formed
- Public engagement
- BCT survey
- Master Plan
- Property transfer

2022–2025

Planning & Design

- Design Guidelines
- Regulating Plan
- Development Agreement
- Infrastructure Design
- REOI

2026

Implementation

- Marketing
- Hotel negotiations
- Regulatory Framework
- Planning Commission

Environmental Stewardship

COMMUNITY VOICE

"Making the overall health of the Choptank a key feature. Environmental opportunities should be included as well as opportunities for water related activities such as kayaking."

WHAT WE DID

- Living shoreline and ecological restoration
- Native landscaping and habitat enhancements
- Public waterfront promenade
- Flood resilience integrated into planning
- Public access to the water
- Waterfront designed around both ecology and recreation



The waterfront was planned not just to protect the Choptank—but to celebrate it.

Learning from the Waterfront

COMMUNITY VOICE

"Richardson Museum has so much potential, and it could be a cornerstone attraction for this space. It needs significant investment and visionary thinking to go to the next level."

WHAT WE DID

- **Richardson Museum:** Preserved as a cornerstone.
- **Heritage Interpretation:** Will be integrated throughout the waterfront.
- **Storytelling Spaces:** Public areas designed to tell Cambridge's story.
- **Historical Connections:** Focus on Harriet Tubman and maritime heritage.
- **Cambridge Harbor Brand:** Developed to celebrate community identity.



The waterfront was envisioned not only as a destination—but as a place to learn, discover, and celebrate Cambridge's heritage.

Recreation for Everyone

COMMUNITY VOICE

"Definitely an extension (and widening) of the walkway...with some benches...and keep the open area park-like setting... It is lovely to stand there and look out over the Choptank."

WHAT WE DID

- Waterfront promenade
- Public greens
- Beach
- Events lawn
- Fishing pier
- Bike and pedestrian connections
- Active waterfront programming



The waterfront was designed to be experienced—not simply admired.

Community Vision & Action

Heritage Lives Here

Preserving Our Past. Investing in Tomorrow.

Community Voice

"A nod to the waterman town part of Cambridge with modern, clean design."

What We Did

Preserve Our Heritage

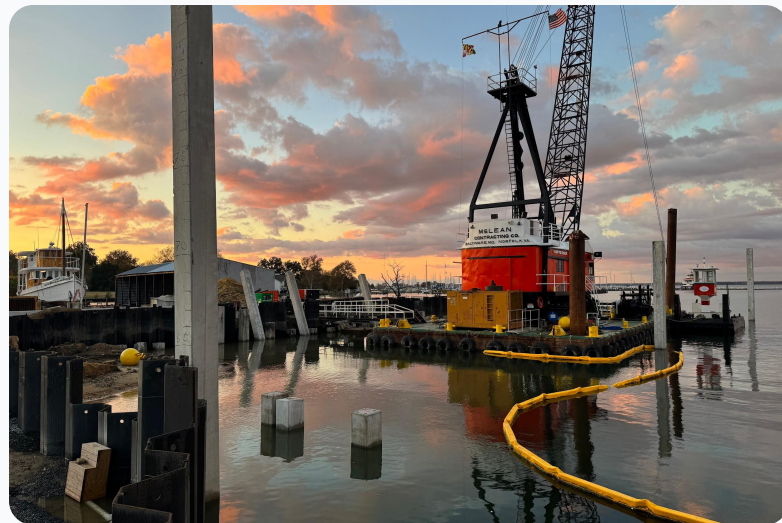
- Preserved Cambridge's maritime identity through the Master Plan and Design Guidelines.
- Retained the Richardson Maritime Museum as a defining waterfront landmark.

Invest in the Future

- Enabled the expansion of **Yacht Maintenance Company**, supporting a new marine facility and ~30 new jobs.
- Planned a new deep-water marina to expand recreational boating and tourism.

Strengthen the Working Waterfront

- Protected an active harbor where maritime industry, public access, and new investment thrive.



Cambridge Harbor is not preserving a memory of its maritime heritage—it is creating the next chapter of it.

Connecting Downtown & the Waterfront

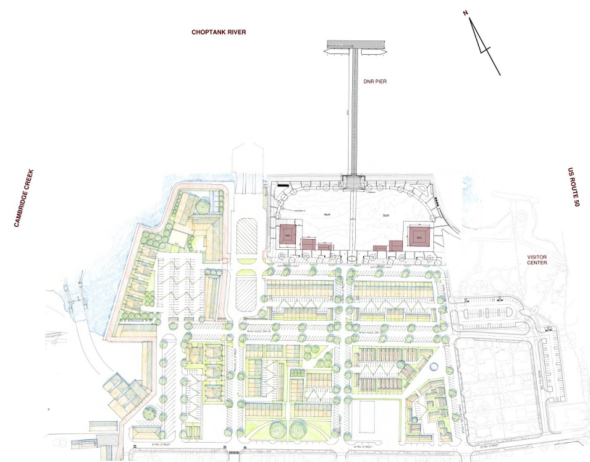
COMMUNITY VISION

“Residents identified safety, wayfinding, walkability, and stronger physical connections between downtown and the waterfront as essential improvements.”

WHAT WE DID

Reconnect the City

- Continuous public promenade connecting the waterfront and downtown.
- Streets designed to extend Cambridge's historic street network.
- Improved gateways and wayfinding.
- Walkable blocks encouraging natural movement.
- Mixed-use development designed to support Downtown.



The waterfront was never intended to become a separate destination. It was designed to become an extension of Downtown Cambridge.

From Vision to Implementation

COMMUNITY VISION

A Shared Direction

- Broad public engagement with nearly 1,500 survey responses.
- Community-driven planning to define a clear, shared roadmap.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The survey responses became the starting point for the Master Plan and future planning documents rather than a rigid mandate, integrating community desires with City policy and practical feasibility.

PROTECTING THE VISION

From Vision to Action

- 01 Master Plan**
- 02 Design Guidelines**
- 03 Regulating Plan**
- 04 Development Agreement**
- 05 Project Approval Process**

Good planning creates a vision. Great planning protects it.

A Shared Review Process

Planning Commission

Community Planning

- Code
- Land Use
- Development Envelope

Design Review Board

Community Design

- Architecture
- Public Realm
- Design Guidelines
- Character

Process Objective

The objective is not to duplicate review, but to ensure that each part of the process focuses on the responsibilities for which it is best suited.

Regulatory Process

One Coordinated Process

- 01 Developer
- 02 Pre-Application
- 03 CWDI Design Review Board
- 04 City Planning Commission
- 05 Administrative (Permit) Review
- 06 Construction

Coordinated Process

Each participant reviews the matters for which they are uniquely suited, creating a coordinated process that protects the community vision while providing clarity and predictability for future investment.

Working Together

Shared Goals

OVERARCHING GOAL

Protect the Community Vision

Good planning creates a vision. Great planning protects it.

01

Preserve Cambridge's Character

02

**Encourage High-Quality
Investment**

03

Work Together

Discussion

Questions & Feedback



Online Resources

Join the Conversation

Explore the Master Plan, view community feedback, and stay updated on local design guidelines.

www.cambridgeharbor.org