

environmental assessment



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**Roger
Williams**

National Memorial
Providence, Rhode Island
National Park Service

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5.12.2005

This planning publication has neither been approved nor disapproved. Its purpose is to provide information for consideration and discussion, and it may undergo revision.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF
DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT ALTERNATIVES
ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

Prepared by
North Atlantic Region
National Park Service
Department of the Interior

February 1977

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. P. Galvin', is written over a horizontal line.

Denis P. Galvin, Acting Regional Director
North Atlantic Region

Foreword

An Environmental Assessment is one step in the planning process conducted by the National Park Service. As a preliminary document to the draft General Management Plan for Roger Williams National Memorial, the purpose of this Environmental Assessment is threefold. First, it documents and records the various planning alternatives developed and considered by the planning team during their discussions with concerned groups from the community. Second, the Assessment analyzes the magnitude and controversy of actions which may be proposed within each alternative. Third, it provides an objective basis for environmental evaluation and selection of a specific planning alternative governing the site.

Following consideration and review of the Environmental Assessment by the Regional Director, a specific alternative will be recommended and a draft General Management Plan will be prepared. This draft Plan will be made available for further public review with comments and suggestions invited and considered.

Following either the issuance and review of an Environmental Statement or public notification that an Environmental Statement will not be prepared, the General Management Plan will be approved by the Regional Director. As a long-range planning document, the General Management Plan will provide direction and guidelines for the site's management, development, and use.

Summary

Roger Williams National Memorial was authorized by Congress in 1965 (Public Law 89-293, Section 1). The title to the 4.58-acre parcel located in the center of Providence, Rhode Island, was conveyed to the National Park Service in December 1974. It is currently a grassy lot occupied by one small building, a memorial garden, and a grove of trees. A Preliminary Master Plan delineating a series of development concept alternatives was presented at a public meeting in December 1975. Community response to the alternatives indicated the need for further study. Additional input was obtained from interested individuals and groups during spring 1976, and a new set of development concepts was developed. The new concepts are discussed in the Environmental Assessment of Development Concept Alternatives which follows.

The alternatives are divided into two areas of concern in the planning and design of Roger Williams National Memorial. The first examines proposals made for the physical development of the site. Four design alternatives are presented plus the alternative of "no action." The four design proposals are similar in their assumptions but differ in their design elements. Three propose specific designs while the fourth presents the option of a sculpture competition leaving the treatment of much of the site unresolved.

The second area of concern is the treatment of interpretive facilities. This issue is presented separately for clarity although it is an integral part of the planning for Roger Williams National Memorial. Any decisions about interpretive facilities will be carefully related to the overall development plan. The Antram-Gray Shop, the only building existing on the site, is currently undergoing minor renovations so that portions of it can be used as headquarters for the National Memorial. One alternative which is used as the "no action" alternative discusses the merits of using the Antram-Gray Shop alone to provide the interpretive, administrative, and maintenance requirements of the National Memorial. Another alternative presents the idea of using the Antram-Gray Shop plus a new structure to meet these requirements. The third discusses the possibility of removing the Antram-Gray Shop from the site and using a new structure to meet all building requirements.

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I. problem statement

A. Purpose

The Roger Williams National Memorial, administered by the National Park Service, was established to commemorate the outstanding contributions of Roger Williams to the development of the principles of freedom in this country (Public Law 89-293, Section 1, October 22, 1965).

B. Historical Significance

Roger Williams left England in 1630 for the Massachusetts Colony seeking personal and religious freedom. He discovered that the Colony was a theocracy which sought to master the individual conscience in both civil and religious matters. Rather than be deported back to England as a subversive for his "radical and disturbing" ideas, Roger Williams fled Massachusetts during the winter of 1635. He settled in the area known today as College Hill. The site was given to him by the Narraganset Indians, a gift extended directly from the friendship and influence he had established with them. This placed the settlement on a footing of security and permanence for many years, exempting it from Indian raids until King Philip's War of 1676.

The land was located by the Moshassuck River (see Figure 1), and a spring on the property provided the necessary fresh water. Zachariah Allen described the spring as it appeared in the beginning of the nineteenth century: "(it) gushed forth from the hillside in a copious stream, issuing from a shallow pool, and from boiling quicksands, and flowed down to the river." (Door, 1882)

Roger Williams was a man who expressed by courageous work and deed the advanced thought of his period. He deserves national recognition for his part in bringing about religious freedom in America and for his championship of the principle of separation of church and state at a time when such a separation seemed inconceivable to most people. The doctrines of liberty of conscience and popular sovereignty that Williams preached and their embodiment in the Providence settlement resulted in the establishment of the first civil government in the world to achieve complete religious freedom.

Today, the historic center of Providence is marked by the Roger Williams Spring Park, known also as the Hahn Memorial, a portion of the 4.58-acre Roger Williams National Memorial. In 1933, this small Memorial was established to commemorate the original fresh-water source of the Providence settlement.

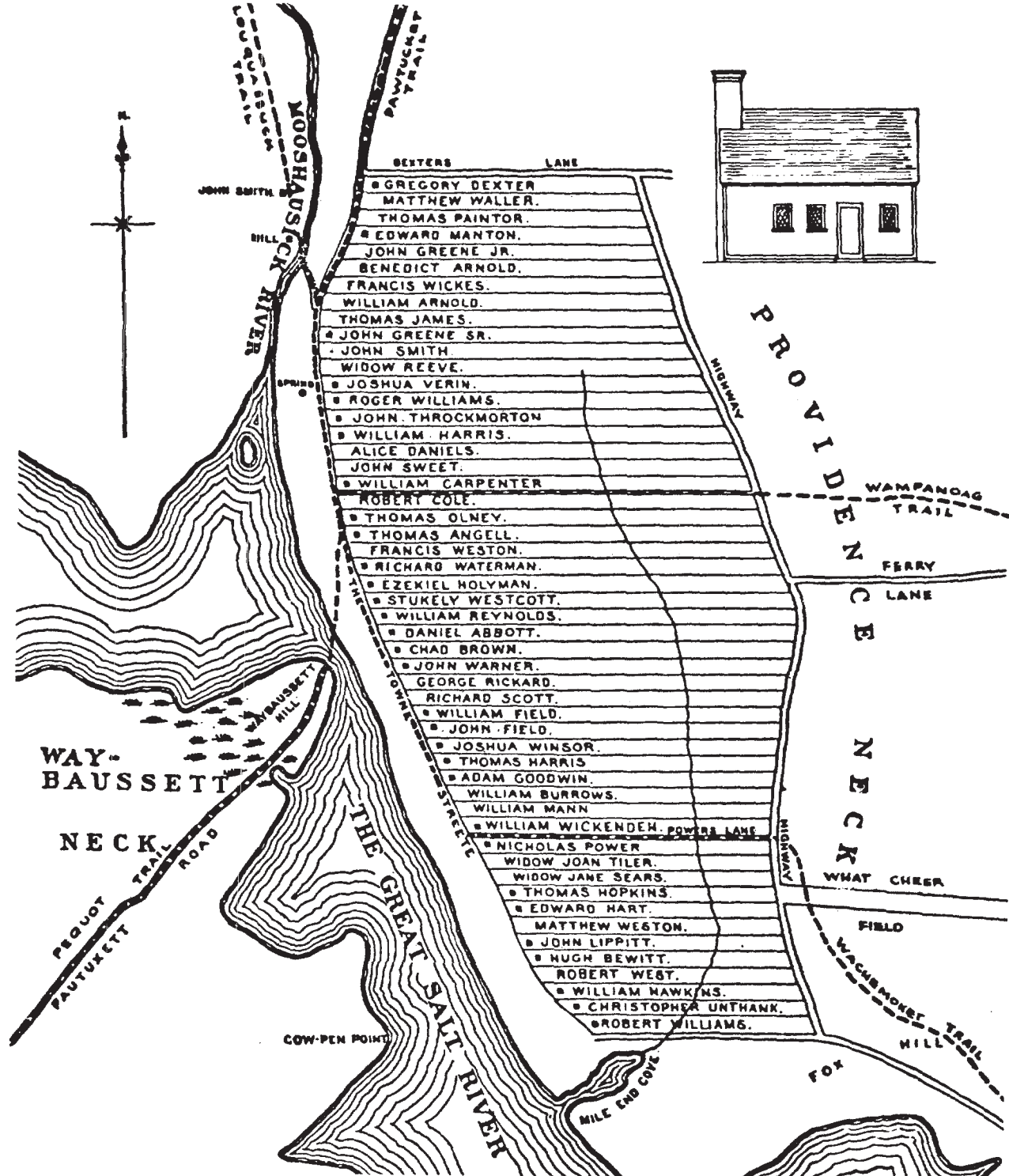


Figure 1

PROVIDENCE
circa 1650
ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL

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(Greene, 1886)

Roger Williams National Memorial recognizes and honors the unique and time-proven philosophies of Roger Williams, philosophies still relevant today, on the site where these ideals were planted, flourished, and disseminated.

C. Project History

Serious interest in establishing a national memorial to Roger Williams in Providence dates from 1959 when College Hill, a Demonstration Study of Historic Review, was published by the Providence City Plan Commission in cooperation with the Providence Preservation Society and the Housing and Home Finance Agency (Providence City Plan Commission, et al., 1967). Among the report's recommended steps was a proposal to develop an enlarged park at the site of the existing locally developed Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial. Given the historic significance of the town spring site and of the doctrines of liberty of conscience, popular sovereignty, and religious toleration that Roger Williams preached, this enlarged park was proposed as a national memorial.

During the summer of 1961, the Rhode Island Assembly passed State Senate Bill S.687 endorsing the concept of a national memorial to Roger Williams. An act providing for the establishment of Roger Williams National Memorial was passed by Congress and subsequently signed by President Johnson in October 1965 (Public Law 89-293, 1965).

The land for the Memorial was purchased by the Providence Redevelopment Authority under their urban renewal authority. The purchase price was agreed to on June 17, 1974; and the title to the land was conveyed to the Department of the Interior and the National Park Service on December 30, 1974. As per the agreement, the Providence Redevelopment Authority cleared the land of buildings, except for the Antram-Gray Shop, and rough-graded the property by August 1975. Today, the site is basically a vacant lot except for the Antram-Gray Shop, the Hahn Memorial, and the Bernon Grove.

A preliminary planning proposal was released by the National Park Service for review in January 1973. A Preliminary Draft Master Plan delineating a set of alternative designs was presented to the people of Providence in a public meeting on December 2, 1975. Community response indicated the need for re-evaluation of the alternative designs. Additional input was obtained by meeting with interested individuals and groups. Planning and design criteria gained from these meetings and the resulting analysis helped to determine the currently proposed alternative designs.

D. Legislative Constraints

Congress, in 1965, authorized the Secretary of the Interior to acquire a maximum of 5 acres of land for the Roger Williams National Memorial. Authorization was also made to appropriate \$700,000.00 for the acquisition of the land and the development of the Memorial (Public Law 89-293, Sections 1 and 4, 1965). As of June 30, 1976, \$150,000.00 was spent to acquire the land from the Providence Redevelopment Authority (\$149,300.00, land cost; \$700.00, title acquisition).

Although \$550,000.00 remains for development, the sum has only been authorized. After plans are completed, Congress must appropriate the necessary funds. If development costs exceed the authorized \$550,000.00, additional legislation will be required.

II.

description of the environment

A. Location

The 4.58-acre Roger Williams National Memorial is located in Providence, Rhode Island, at the foot of a mixed use residential and educational area known as College Hill (see Figures 2 and 3). The site is approximately one half mile from City Hall in the downtown area. The National Memorial is cleared of all structures except for the Antram-Gray Shop. Slight adjustments in the boundaries will be made with the proposed realignment of North Main Street and Canal Street and the widening of Smith Street and Lonsdale Street.

B. Population

Rhode Island is the nation's most highly industrialized and urbanized state. Providence, the state capital, is the second largest city in New England with a population of approximately 180,000. Other sizable Rhode Island cities are: Cranston, 72,000; Newport, 36,000; Pawtucket, 78,000; and Warwick, 78,000 (Geological Survey, 1970: 366-417). More than 3 million people reside within a one-hour drive of Providence.

C. Land Use

Roger Williams National Memorial is bordered to the west by the channelized Moshassuck River (Blackstone Canal) with rail-road lines, parking lots, and the State Capitol beyond. The area to the south is commercial--it being near the Central Business District. The East Side neighborhood forms the Memorial's eastern edge. Located here is College Hill, a predominantly residential and institutional area. Both Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design are located on College Hill. Old estates, single family dwellings, apartments, and rented rooms provide a mixture of housing on College Hill. Almost 70 percent of the dwellings are classified as single family residences.

In the late 1950s, urban renewal was proposed for the area. At that time, there were more than 300 houses built before 1830. To stop the decay and demolition that was stripping College Hill of its architectural heritage, the Providence Preservation Society was organized in 1956. With their support, the City Plan Commission secured a federal grant for a pilot study of urban renewal in an historic area (Downing, 1964). The study,

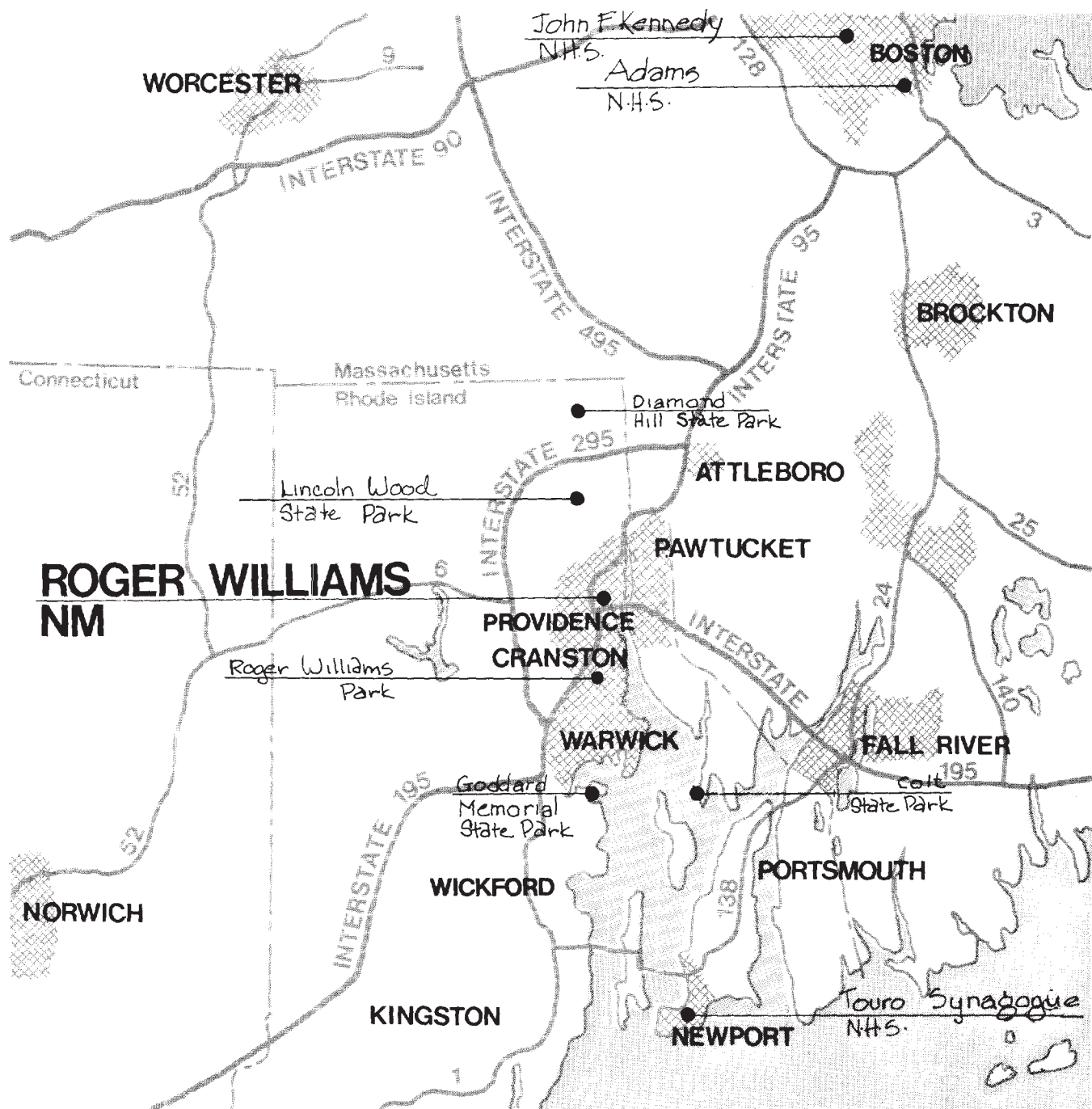


Figure 2

vicinity

ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL



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College Hill, A Demonstration Study of Historic Urban Renewal, serves as a guide for historic restoration in cities throughout the United States and specifically sets the stage for the accomplishment of the restoration program in Providence (Providence City Plan Commission, et al., 1967). Today, the area has experienced active restoration efforts from the private community.

D. Zoning and Easements

Current zoning of the National Memorial is multiple dwelling (R-4) which extends to the east along College Hill. The Downtown Commercial Zone (C-3) lies to the south and west of the site, the latter including some industrial areas. The area to the north is zoned General Industrial (M-1). Included in the R-4 zone is the requirement for off-street parking. One car space must be provided for each eight seats in places of public assembly. Where no fixed seating is used, each 20 square feet of public floor area equals one seat (Bernstein, 1972: 11-12). A 12-foot wide utility right of way easement crosses the site on the same alignment as Bowen Street. In addition, a utility easement is located on the National Memorial's boundary along North Main Street (Cartellucci, Galli Associates, March 11, 1976: 18-21).

E. Transportation

This section deals with transportation external to the site. Transportation within the site will be entirely pedestrian except for access to parking spaces.

1. Pedestrian

The Memorial is a 10-minute walk from the Central Business District (CBD). Workers on their lunch hour will probably approach the site via Memorial Square and Canal Street. Canal Street also forms a major pedestrian route between parking and the CBD (Howes, et al., 1974: 40-41). It is reasonable to expect that there will be a heavy pedestrian flow from the College Hill area.

Two problems may arise from pedestrian/vehicular conflicts. The traffic flows on North Main Street and Canal Street are fairly heavy and may present a hazard to pedestrians. Memorial Square, south of the site, exhibited a high pedestrian/vehicular accident rate in 1972 (Howes, et al., 1975: 43). At present, probably due to pending road realignment and resurfacing, the crosswalks are not very noticeable. Most marked crossings are located on North Main Street, and few are controlled by traffic signals. Additional crosswalks should be placed in areas of expected pedestrian flows.

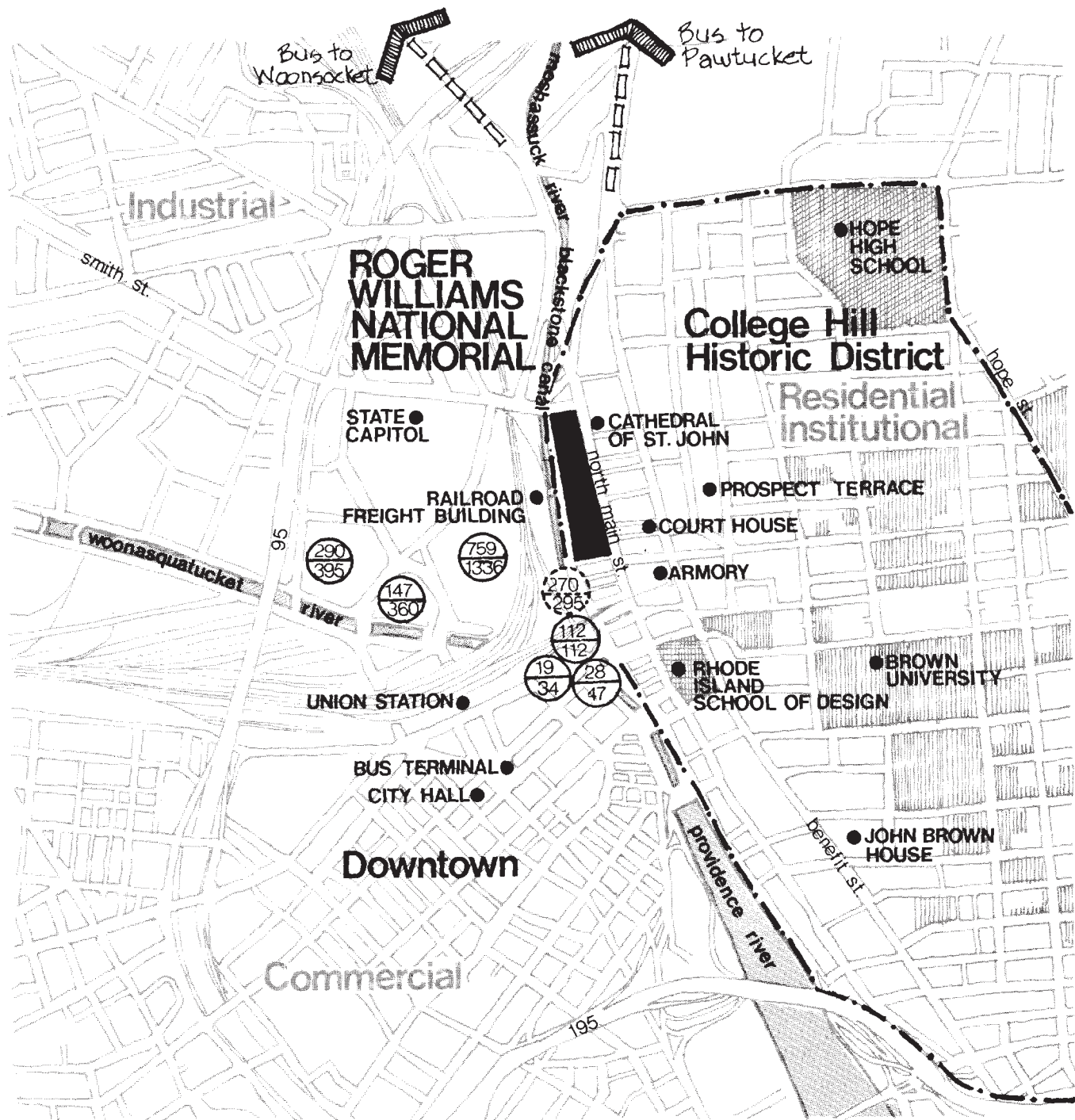


Figure 3

setting

ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL

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2. Public

The Rhode Island Public Transportation Authority (RIPTA) provides bus service by the National Memorial. Seven lines and three sublines pass by stopping across the street from the four corners of the site. The service operates from 5:00 a.m. to 1:20 a.m. with fares ranging from 20 cents for inner-city travel to 60 cents for outlying destinations. The service provides direct access from the main bus terminal downtown to the following locations with stops at the National Memorial: No. 52, Admiral Street and Mineral Spring Avenue; No. 52A, Valley View; No. 49, Camp Street; No. 51, Charles Street; No. 50, Douglas Avenue; No. 99A, Pawtucket-Pawtucket Avenue; No. 99B, Pawtucket-Main Street; No. 53, Smithfield-Saylesville; No. 53A, Smithfield-Woodlawn; No. 54, Woonsocket. Access from points south, west, and east is possible by using transfers (Wonson, 1972).

3. Vehicular

Roger Williams National Memorial is located on U. S. 44, 45 miles south of Boston, Massachusetts, and 104 miles northeast of New Haven, Connecticut. The primary vehicular access to the Memorial is via Exit 23 of Interstate I-95. Automobiles coming from the south pass through Market Square and arrive at the site via North Main Street (U. S. 44, north). Vehicles arriving from the north use Canal Street (U. S. 44, south). Heavy traffic on all sides of the National Memorial makes the site extremely noisy.

4. Train

Providence's Union Station is a major Amtrak stop on the Northeast Rail Corridor. The station also serves as the terminal for Commuter Rail. The facility is located on the fringe of the CBD only five blocks from the Memorial. Problems associated with pedestrian access to the Memorial from the train station are similar to those from the CBD.

5. Airlines

Airlines serve Providence from the T. F. Green Airport located approximately 10 miles south of the site. Few visitors are expected to arrive by air to visit the site.

6. Parking

An abundant amount of parking is located near the site. A parking area for 295 autos is located across Canal Street while approximately 1,300 more spaces are located near the State Capitol building (Howes, et al., 1975: D11). The latter requires a circuitous pedestrian route to the site due to the train corridor. These lots provide space for commuters working in the CBD. Parking across North Main Street in the College Hill area is at a minimum due to the steep topography, narrow streets, and general lack of private parking provided by the residences built before the impact of the automobile. Limited metered parking is presently provided on both sides of North Main and Canal Streets. Under current proposals, the parking around the perimeter of the park may be eliminated. A temporary parking area for the memorial staff and visitors will be located near the Antram-Gray Shop with access off Canal Street.

Since the parking lots are primarily used by commuters, they are not heavily used on weekends; and many are under-subscribed on the weekdays.

F. Visitation

It is difficult at this time to predict accurately the annual visitation to Roger Williams National Memorial. Comparable figures may be drawn locally and regionally. The John Brown House, a local museum house managed by the Rhode Island Historical Society, draws between 7,000 and 8,000 visitors a year (Fox, 1976). Also, the Providence Preservation Society conducts various historical tours through the year. The approximate number of participants in these tours for 1975 is as follows (Bilodeau, 1976):

	People
Walking Tours of College Hill	2,000
Historic Providence Tours	200
Tours for School Children	1,700
Special Guided Tours	<u>1,000</u>
TOTAL	4,900

Since the Historic Providence Tours only started this year and since the Walking Tours of College Hill more than doubled their 1973 figure, the total number of participants should increase in the future.

There are no National Park Service areas within Providence to use as an indication of the numbers of possible visitors to the Memorial. However, approximate visitor counts from three National Historic Sites (NHS) within the region provide some helpful data:

	1974	1975
Touro Synagogue NHS, Newport, RI (Lewis, 1976)	22,000	30,000
J. F. Kennedy NHS, Brookline, MA	28,000	29,000
Adams House NHS, Quincy, MA	23,000	31,000

These figures suggest that, if Roger Williams National Memorial has facilities similar to these three sites, the number of visitors may be between 20,000 and 30,000 annually.

It should be recognized that these figures represent visitations to historic structures. Greater numbers of visitors may be expected to visit the Memorial due to the expansive open space it provides in its urban setting. In addition, local and repeat visitation such as lunch hour users can be expected since the Memorial will also serve as a neighborhood park.

G. Recreation Resources

Providence is the hub of excellent vacation land. Within an hour's drive from Roger Williams National Memorial, visitors can see Cape Cod National Seashore, Minute Man National Historical Park, and the several national historical sites within the metropolitan Boston area. Public beaches and Newport are located to the south of Providence. Regional recreation resources include 400 miles of coastline, numerous lakes and streams, and large areas of woodland.

Several large state parks are close to Providence: Lincoln Wood (627 acres), Goddard Memorial (427 acres), Colt (470 acres), and Diamond Hill (373 acres). Providence itself has Roger Williams Park, which contains 453 acres of hills, a chain of lakes, roads throughout, a museum, a zoo, and an amusement park.

Open space in College Hill is limited. Adequate play fields for older children are to be found in the northern College Hill area, but few play fields are available for younger children. The several quadrangles of Brown University, the Court House Plaza, and Prospect Terrace provide College Hill residents with some open space for passive forms of recreation.

Prospect Terrace, three blocks east of the proposed National Memorial, was established in 1869 largely through the efforts of Isaac Hale. The park was subsequently enlarged between 1925 and 1927. In 1934, the state General Assembly incorporated a Roger Williams Memorial Association with authority to erect a monument on Prospect Terrace. A competition, attracting nationwide interest, was conducted during the summer of 1936 as part of the 300th anniversary of Providence. Leo Friedlander, winner of the commission, designed the 14-foot statue of Roger Williams that overlooks the city today.

H. Historic Resources

1. Regional and Local

Dozens of historic sites complement the natural recreation resources of Rhode Island. The towns of Westerly, Wickford, Kingston and North Kingston, East Greenwich, and Newport abound with early colonial buildings. Located in Newport are such outstanding examples as the Old Colony House (1738), where the Rhode Island Assembly held sessions and where governors were inaugurated until 1900, and the Touro Synagogue (1763), oldest synagogue in the country and a National Historic Site.

Providence also has a wealth of historic sites. The National Memorial is located within the College Hill Historic District and is now on the National Register of Historic Places. Any proposed work will be subject to the review of the President's Advisory Council for Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Officer.

Most of the earliest buildings in Providence are located in the College Hill area along Benefit and the adjacent streets. Benefit Street, laid out as the Back Street in 1753, was for nearly two centuries the social, intellectual, governmental, and artistic center of Providence. Today, the street and its traditions are still the pride of the city. The mile-long Benefit Street, originally an old Indian path one block east of and paralleling North Main Street, was the focus of early restoration activity on College Hill. Over 200 homes, some built as early as the mid-eighteenth century, have been restored to their original appearance. Outstanding colonial buildings include the Old Colony House/Court House (1762), which was the primary meeting place of the Rhode Island General Assembly until 1900; the First Baptist Meeting House (1775); the Sullivan Dorr House (1810); the Stephen Hopkins House (1707-1743); the John Brown House (1786); and the Joseph Nightingale House (1792).

Conspicuous to the west of the National Memorial is the State Capitol, built in 1900 after designs by McKim, Mead and White. Its marble dome is second in size only to that of St. Peter's in Rome.

2. Roger Williams National Memorial

The memorial site contains two smaller parks and a building, each with its own historical significance (see Figures 4 and 5).

a. Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial

Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial was established in 1933 to provide a formalized setting for the site of the original fresh water source of the Providence settlement. The property, approximately .10 acre, and the adjacent lot to the north were given to the city by Judge J. Jerome Hahn in memory of his father, the first citizen of Jewish faith to be elected to office by Providence voters. The broader implication is the recognition of the ideals of religious freedom expressed by Roger Williams in founding the Providence settlement.

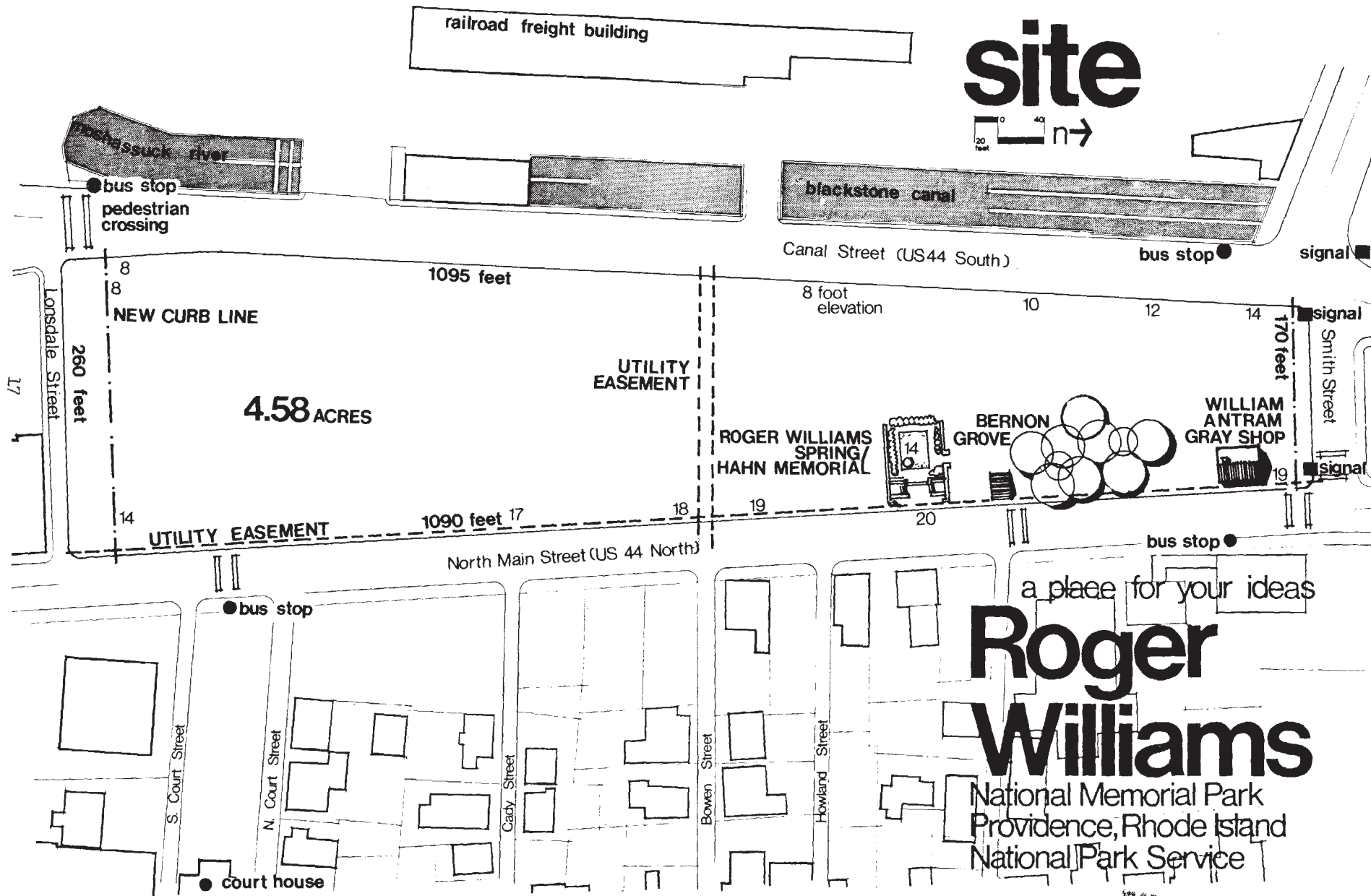
The small park designed by Norman Isham consists of a landscaped court, some 6 to 8 feet below street level, with a granite well set at its southeast corner (see Figure 5). The original spring is supposed to be located in this granite well although there is conflicting evidence as to the spring's exact location. Masonry walls capped by wrought iron fencing surround the courtyard. Two memorial plaques are attached to the walls at the park entrance. The well is currently dry.

Access to the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial is by way of the gated entry on North Main Street from which stairs descend to a landing overlooking the small landscaped court. Twin sets of stairs continue down to lower landings and then, at right angles, to the courtyard. The walls and stairs are in need of repair. The court consists of a small square lawn with a smaller bed of ivy at its center. A narrow flagstone walk encircles the lawn area. Evergreen shrubs, many of them overgrown and some virtually blocking the walk, are planted around the perimeter of the court.

The inward-looking formality of the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial was dictated to some extent by the character of the site. Until recently, it was closely hemmed-in by commercial buildings on two sides and by heavy traffic on another. Today, however, its context is quite different. Although heavy traffic still remains, all buildings, except for one, on the

Figure 4

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surrounding national memorial site have been demolished so that the Roger Williams/Hahn Memorial now faces onto a large open area.

b. Gabriel Bernon Grove

Gabriel Bernon Grove, named after an early citizen of Providence, occupies the property immediately west of North Main Street and north of the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial. The flat, grassy park shaded by maple trees, covers approximately .20 acre and is some 4 to 5 feet below the level of the abutting North Main Street sidewalk. A marker in the park is inscribed "Near this spot lived / GABRIEL BERNON / a Huguenot refugee / born Larocheville, France / 4/6/1644 / died Providence / 2/1/1736 / merchant, colonizer, churchman." Bernon was instrumental in establishing St. John's Episcopal Church in Providence. The small park was donated to the City of Providence by the Episcopal Diocese in 1946.

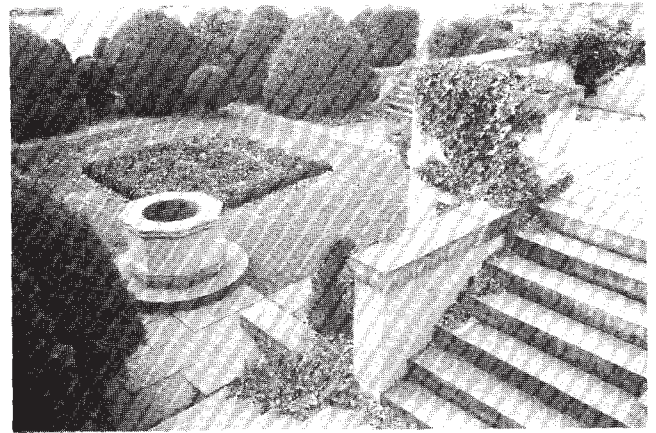
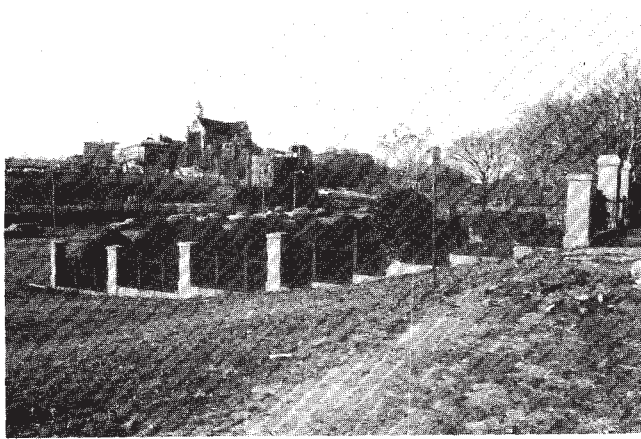
c. Antram-Gray Shop

The Antram-Gray Shop is the only structure remaining on the memorial site. Parts of it date back to between 1730 and 1750. The southern half of the building was added in the late 1790s, and the shop front was remodelled in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Earliest records of the building date to the time of William Antram. The most recent use was as the Gray Watch Shop.

During fall 1976, the National Park Service made plans to do minor renovations on the Antram-Gray Shop so that it could be used as headquarters for the National Memorial. The work includes interior modifications of the first floor and minor work on the west and south facades, the chimneys, and roof. A small shed for storage of maintenance equipment will be constructed on the west facade of the building. The work currently underway has been reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Office and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation as required by Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Any future modifications to the exterior of the Antram-Gray Shop will also be submitted for review.

d. Archaeological Investigation

Some archaeological work was done in conjunction with the moving of the Antram-Gray Shop. Test pits were dug in the new location of the structure, and further exploration was conducted to determine the size and location of



Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial



Bernon Grove



William Antram-Gray Shop

Figure 5
site elements
 ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL

possible past additions to the structure. Additional preliminary investigation of the national memorial site was undertaken by a student team from Brown University (Espinosa, et al., 1972).

Extensive disturbance has occurred on the site as a result of urban renewal. Test areas have revealed compacted landfill laden with brick, rocks, rubble, modern-day garbage, and everything else associated with the demolition of buildings. No further archaeological investigation of the site is anticipated.

I. Natural Resources

1. Climate

The Providence climate is best described as moderate. The mean monthly maximum temperature is 80 degrees Fahrenheit with the mean monthly low at 20 degrees Fahrenheit. Relative humidity averages 70 percent.

Providence averages 120 cloudy days annually with measurable precipitation (at least .01 inch) occurring some 135 days per year. Mean annual precipitation is 44 inches, which is distributed quite evenly throughout the year. Approximately 21 inches of rain fall during the expected national visitor season--April 1 through September 30. An exceptionally heavy storm may produce an intensity of 2½ inches of rainfall in a 24-hour period. Snowfall occurs an average of 25 days yearly with an accumulation of approximately 40 inches. Providence has an annual run-off of 20 to 25 inches. Any droughts that occur are of short duration.

Prevailing winds are from the northwest with the exception of the summer months when winds come from the southwest. Wind speed averages 10 to 12 miles per hour in Providence. The maximum expected winds, occurring at 50-year intervals, are 80 miles per hour.

2. Topography and Soils

Rhode Island landform consists of gently sloping hills and moderate local relief. The elevation of the inland portion of the state lies primarily between 300 and 500 feet. Approaching the shore, the land descends abruptly to sea level.

Intrusive granites of late Palaeozoic Age are the primary rocks underlying Rhode Island. Providence, however, lies principally on sedimentary rocks of the Pleistocene Age. Several glaciations, including the last, the Wisconsin, covered Rhode Island completely.

The elevation of the Roger Williams National Memorial varies from 7 to 20 feet above sea level. The most significant feature of the landform is the change in elevation from North Main Street down to Canal Street.

This varies from a 3-foot change in elevation at the north end of the site to an 11-foot change at the south end. There is also change in elevation from Smith Street south to Lonsdale Street varying from 6 feet along the eastern boundary to 10 feet along the western boundary. Because the north/south dimension of the park is far longer than the east/west, the visual effect of this change in elevation is less noticeable.

The site of the Roger Williams National Memorial is covered by fill. Until Canal Street was laid out during the early part of the nineteenth century, the western portion of the site was under water. Since that time, fill has obliterated the 1636 water line. In subsequent years, the contours of the national memorial property were remolded repeatedly so that its landform today is quite different from that at the time of settlement.

The last change in the landform took place in August 1975 when the larger debris from the razed buildings was removed by the Providence Redevelopment Authority. The area was rough-graded leaving old cellars filled with debris and the whole site covered with little or no topsoil. The approximate level of the water table is 12 feet below the existing grade.

3. Vegetation

The vegetation of the Roger Williams National Memorial is extremely limited since the site was previously occupied by commercial buildings and warehouses. The Gabriel Bernon Grove contains the only stand of trees. Nine large and two small Norway maple trees, Acer platanoides, cover .2 acre. The Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial contains ornamental evergreen shrubs as well as ivy and lawn area. The other existing trees on the memorial site are a few Ailanthus, spp., a common invader weed species. The entire memorial site was hydroseeded by the National Park Service in September 1975 to provide a temporary ground cover. The establishment of the grass seed has been extremely limited due to the poor soil conditions.

4. Fauna

An extensive and diverse animal population is precluded by the urban setting and the history of human disturbance. A variety of local birds periodically occupy the site including pigeons. An increased diversity of fauna should be expected in later years of the Memorial's development.



III. the alternatives

A. Approach to Alternatives

This section is divided into two areas of concern in the planning and design of Roger Williams National Memorial:

1. The National Memorial Site
2. The Interpretive Center

In each area of concern, the criteria used to develop the alternatives are defined; and the alternatives are presented. Each alternative is examined for its particular impacts and the means, when possible, of mitigating these impacts. In addition, any adverse effects which cannot be avoided are discussed. Short-term and long-term relationships of resources and commitments of resources that may be irreversible and irretrievable are also examined. The alternative concepts for the development of the national memorial site differ in design appearance and in some of the elements used. However, all share a similar spatial organization and, therefore, many similar impacts. To minimize repetition, the first alternative in each area of concern addresses all factors, while the remaining alternatives address only those factors unique to that particular alternative.

The intent of this part of the Environmental Assessment is to provide as objective an appraisal as possible to guide the decision-making process in the development of the Memorial. The concepts are meant to be discussed, analyzed, and altered where appropriate.

Although the alternatives are presented in two separate sections, the site and the interpretive center will be closely integrated into a single park unit for a more complete understanding of the significance of Roger Williams. The interpretive programs will spread onto the grounds. For example, the amphitheater could be used for interpretive programs oriented towards the role of Roger Williams in establishing the City of Providence; and landmarks surrounding the Memorial could be pointed out.

B. The National Memorial Site

This section examines proposals made for the physical development of the national memorial site. All elements are examined except for the interpretive center which is discussed separately. Five alternative concepts have been formulated. The first four concepts proposed physical alternatives to the existing site while the fifth explores the alternative of no action. Preliminary cost estimates indicate that the four design alternatives all exceed the funds authorized for the development of the National Memorial.

1. Criteria

National Park Service policy and public input helped formulate the planning and design criteria for the Memorial. Many of the ideas and comments received by the National Park Service express similar concerns with regard to the proposed planning and design. Refer to Part IV, "Consultation and Coordination With Others" and Appendix B, "Management Objectives" for further information about public involvement and management policies of the National Park Service regarding Roger Williams National Memorial.

a. Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial

The Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial will be retained and refurbished. The walls and stairs of the Memorial will be repaired. Vegetation, now overgrown, will be pruned back or removed and replaced. Water to the well will be restored if technically feasible without disturbing the Hahn Memorial. Since the Hahn Memorial is now facing onto the open space of the National Memorial, additional access from the west may be considered.

b. Bernon Grove

Bernon Grove, the only existing stand of trees on the site, will be preserved.

c. Small Outdoor Meeting Space

A small outdoor meeting space will be provided at the north end of the site for lectures and discussions. It is anticipated that the area will accommodate approximately 25 people. Management of the space will be controlled by National Park Service staff.

d. Amphitheater

An amphitheater will also be considered. It will accept a larger number of visitors than could be accommodated by the interpretive center and the small outdoor meeting area. Gatherings of up to 200 people may be expected for functions such as concerts. As with the small outdoor meeting space, use would be controlled by the National Park Service.

e. Parking

While it is recognized that there is a parking problem in the College Hill area, the memorial site could not support large numbers of parking spaces without seriously reducing the park grounds and compromising the quality of the visitor experience. However, approximately 20 spaces will be provided to facilitate use of the site by national visitors, the handicapped, and the elderly. Provision is also needed for bus drop-off and bus parking. Parking will be concentrated at the north end of the site.

f. Site Grading, Lawn, and Tree Cover

These elements are used in a variety of ways, but all treat the memorial grounds as simply as possible--reminiscent of the natural riverine environment of Roger Williams' time. Native vegetation will be used wherever feasible preferably that which is tolerant to the conditions existing on the site. The shapes and spaces should discourage active sports such as football and baseball and maximize the potential for restful seclusion and contemplation. Topsoil will have to be imported to provide suitable conditions for vegetation. Critical examination of the water table in relation to the proposed grading will help guide modifications in design and introduction of subgrade drainage where necessary.

g. Water Feature

Some sort of water feature is considered appropriate on the site to symbolically portray the original spring. This may be merely re-establishing water in the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial, or it may be a separate element. If a separate water feature is designed, it should be as simple as possible.

2. Alternative 1: Rolling Topography

a. General Description

In this alternative, the site is developed to provide a natural contrast to the urban environment (see Figure 6). Site grading is aesthetically and functionally employed. Earth mounds visually define space and separate distracting traffic. Near the south end of the park, a large informal lawn is envisioned as a natural amphitheater. A gentle lawn slopes down from an elevation of 15 feet near Main Street to an elevation of 4 feet towards the center of the park. Earth mounds are also utilized along Canal Street to screen surrounding uses. A simple water feature is centrally located between Lonsdale and Smith Streets on the axis of Bowen Street. Water flowing over a textured surface is proposed. The intention is to symbolically portray the original spring. No standing pools of water or elaborate sprays are envisioned, and the water would continuously circulate. The Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial is restored and refurbished. Additional access to it is provided from the west. A small outdoor meeting space is provided within the Bernon Grove. Parallel parking for 20 cars is provided along Canal Street. This area is separated from traffic flow by an island and serves as a safe location for unloading and loading buses. Planting is informal with several groves of trees.

b. Impacts

1. Refurbishing the Hahn Memorial will result in positive visual impacts. The calm, secluded quality of the space may be lost if the new entrance attracts too many visitors.
2. The Bernon Grove may experience heavy pedestrian traffic since it is in a busy portion of the site and the small outdoor meeting area is located there.
3. Large gatherings in the outdoor amphitheater may cause damage to the facilities and create noise and parking problems.
4. Pedestrians coming to and from the site will result in pedestrian/vehicular conflict.

5. Parking and bus unloading will create some visual impact on the site.
6. The fact that more parking spaces are not provided may discourage some people from visiting the National Memorial. Visitors may traverse the College Hill area and occupy what little parking is available.
7. Poor drainage may occur in certain low areas of the site.
8. The proposed water feature might collect debris or become a potential hazard.
9. Any changes to the site will have a visual impact on the surrounding College Hill Historic District.

c. Mitigating Measures

1. Alternative access to the National Memorial is located north of the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial. This will alleviate some pedestrian movement within the Hahn Memorial and help maintain its secluded atmosphere.
2. Careful design of the circulation system to allow maximum aeration of roots should protect the trees of the Bernon Grove. The provision of a major circulation path to the edge of the Grove should reduce through circulation in the Grove.
3. Careful management by National Park Service staff should mitigate the impacts of large gatherings in the amphitheater. A use permit would be required for special events.
4. Pedestrian/vehicular conflict will be reduced by the provision of controlled intersections. Review of pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows and the provision of ample and well-located crossings will help minimize the potential safety problem but will not eliminate it.
5. The parking area is somewhat screened from the west by trees and from the east by mounding and trees. This partially mitigates the visual impact of parking.

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6. The fact that more parking spaces are not provided on site is partially offset by the availability of parking elsewhere and accessibility by public transportation. Use of public transportation will be encouraged.
7. Thorough investigation of the ground water system in relation to proposed grading will help guide modifications in design and mitigate any potential drainage problems.
8. Careful design of the water feature should eliminate any impacts except the use of water and a small amount of electricity.
9. The final plans will be reviewed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the State Historic Preservation Officer as required by Section 106 by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided

The attraction of automobiles to the National Memorial and their accompanying negative impacts probably cannot be totally resolved.

There will be temporary disruption to the surrounding community during construction.

e. Short-Term/Long-Term Relationship of Resources

Since the land is federally owned, there has been a direct loss in local tax revenue although this may be offset by an indirect gain from an increase in the surrounding land values and tourist expenditures. The memorial grounds will be a local amenity providing much needed open space.

f. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

There appears to be no commitment of resources that is either irreversible or irretrievable other than the expenditure of funds.

3. Alternative 2: Granite Wall

a. General Description

In this alternative, the development of the site is seen as a complete sculptural statement (see Figure 7). The proposed landform is simple in concept, being composed of a turfed hill on the axis of the Old State House and a large bowl in the center of the site which will serve as an amphitheater. These two forms are connected by two relatively flat areas which are separated by a low, rough hewn granite wall. The wall is envisioned as a sculptural and functional element which integrates the composition and invites participation. It could be leaned against, sat on, or walked upon. A lawn and a double row of trees are proposed, creating a relatively formal atmosphere and reinforcing the overall sculptural effect. No water feature is proposed other than reactivating the existing well in the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial. The Hahn Memorial will be restored and refurbished. A small group meeting space is envisioned in the vicinity of Bernon Grove.

This alternative differs from Alternative 1 in the location of the parking spaces. In this proposal, 20 automobiles would park in a specially signed area along Canal Street occupying no memorial land. Buses, on the other hand, would load and unload in an area separated from Canal Street by a traffic island.

b. Impacts

The impacts for this alternative are the same as those for Alternative 1 with the following exceptions:

1. Automobile parking is partially screened from the east by plantings but is exposed to views from the west. Additional enforcement would be necessary to ensure that cars park only in the signed areas.
2. Special permission from the City of Providence would be necessary for on-street parking on the perimeter of the site.
3. No water feature is proposed in this alternative so Impact 8 in Alternative 1 would not occur.
4. The openness of the design may encourage active sports and disturb areas intended for quiet contemplation.

c. Mitigating Measures

These are the same as in Alternative 1 except that parking is not screened from the west. The mitigating measures for the water feature would not be required.

d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided

Same as Alternative 1.

e. Short-Term/Long-Term Relationship of Resources

Same as Alternative 1.

f. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Same as Alternative 1.

4. Alternative 3: Sculpture Competition

a. General Description

This alternative presents the site as a landscaped setting for a major work of sculpture leaving site grading, lawn, and tree cover unresolved for a major portion of the site (see Figure 8). At the south end of the park, along the axis of the Old State House, a large sculptural element is imagined. Proposals will be solicited from artists, landscape architects, and other environmental designers. Criteria for the selection of the sculpture will be developed by the National Park Service in consultation with local community representatives. North of the proposed sculpture, the site will be graded to create an open, relatively flat space. Nearby, a small group meeting space is provided. Along Canal Street, diagonal parking for 20 automobiles is planned. Planting is formal and clearly defines the park edges. The Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial will be restored.

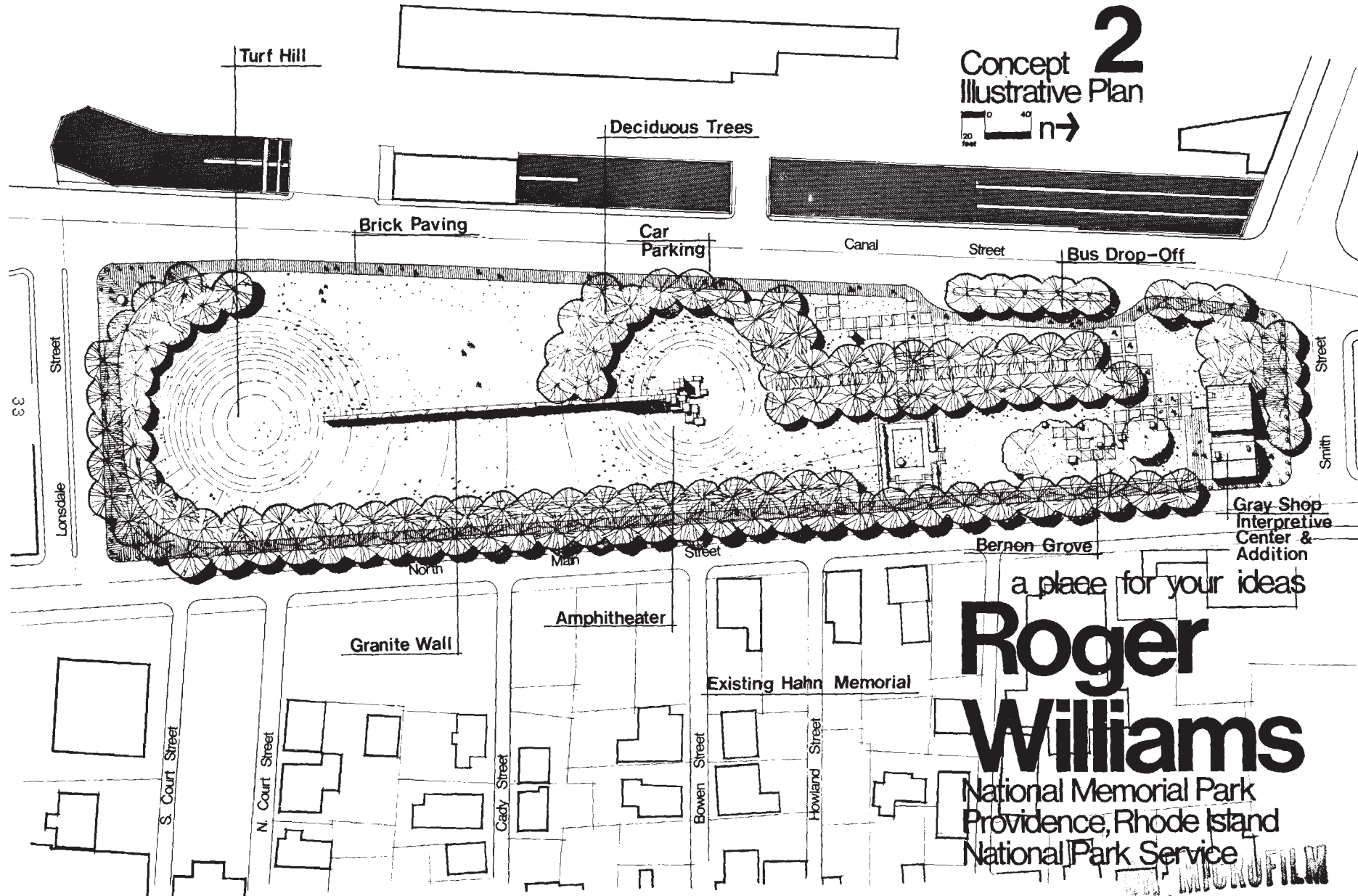
This alternative differs from Alternative 1 in that the Bernon Grove does not have a secondary walkway through it. Circulation is to the west of the Grove. In addition, the small outdoor meeting space is not directly within the Grove but off to the north.

At this time, no amphitheater or water feature is proposed although they may still be included as part of a competition entry.

Figure 7

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Concept Illustrative Plan **2**



This alternative also differs from Alternative 1 in the location of the parking spaces. Diagonal parking for 20 automobiles is proposed along Canal Street and is separated from moving traffic by an island planted with trees. Bus unloading and loading would occur here, providing a protected area for school children. Parking for two buses would be in a special signed curb area along Canal Street.

b. Impacts

The impacts associated with this alternative are the same as those for Alternative 1 with the following exceptions:

1. At this point, no amphitheater is proposed so Impact 4 does not apply.
2. Diagonal parking will occupy less space than the parallel parking shown in Alternative 1.
3. Site grading, lawn, and tree cover are undetermined for a major portion of the site so impacts cannot be fully assessed.
4. No water feature is proposed so Impact 8 does not apply.
5. In order to judge the sculpture competition, a longer time period would be necessary to implement the total proposal.

c. Mitigating Measures

The mitigating measures would be the same as for Alternative 1.

d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided

These would be the same as in Alternative 1 except that a longer time period would be required to complete the total project (see Impact 5 above).

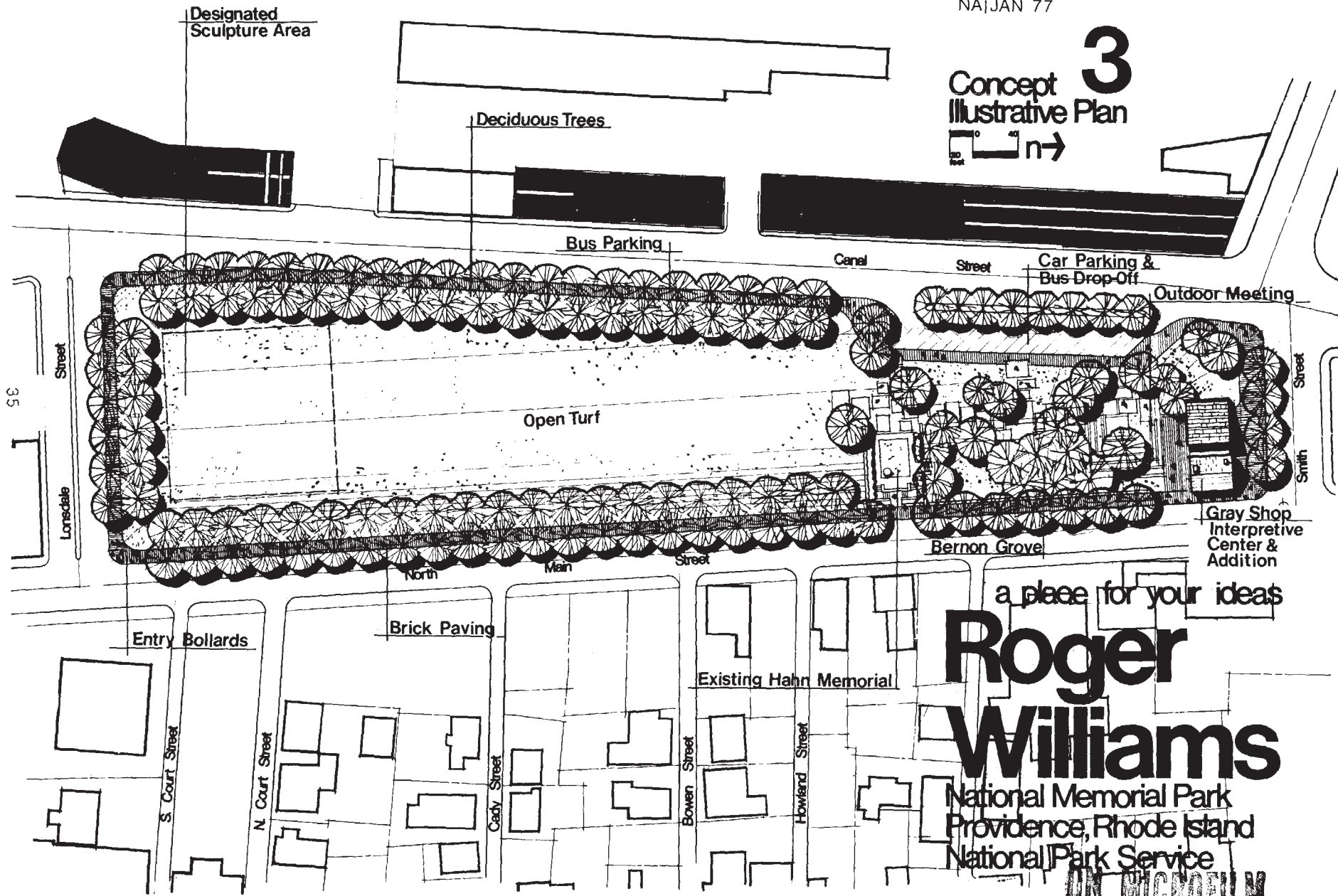
e. Short-Term/Long-Term Relationship of Resources

Same as Alternative 1.

Figure 8

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Concept Illustrative Plan **3**
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f. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

Same as Alternative 1.

5. Alternative 4: Lawn Terraces

a. General Description

This alternative envisions the park as a contemporary interpretation of an earlier natural landscape (see Figure 9). Symbolically, the site represents the interface between the river flood plain and the rocky hillside to the east. Gently terraced lawn areas occur throughout the park, creating both large and small spaces. An amphitheater is planned near the south end of the park. Granite steps denote terraces and function as sitting areas. In intimate areas, works of sculpture could be placed at focal points. A small group meeting space is suggested near the Antram-Gray Shop. Diagonal parking and a bus loading area are planned along Canal Street. Planting is very informal with several groves of evergreen and deciduous trees.

This alternative differs from Alternative 1 in that the Bernon Grove does not have a secondary walkway through it. Circulation is to the west of the Grove. In addition, the small outdoor meeting space is not centered within the Grove but off to the north.

The proposed amphitheater is similar to that in Alternative 1 except that this alternative calls for granite steps in terracing the landform. Use of granite may increase the capability of the amphitheater to accept large crowds. The use of granite also makes the appearance more rigid. No water feature is proposed other than reactivating the well in the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial.

b. Impacts

Impacts are the same as in Alternative 1 except that no water feature is proposed and the small group meeting area is adjacent to the Bernon Grove rather than within it.

c. Mitigating Measures

Same as Alternative 1 except that no water feature is proposed.

Figure 9

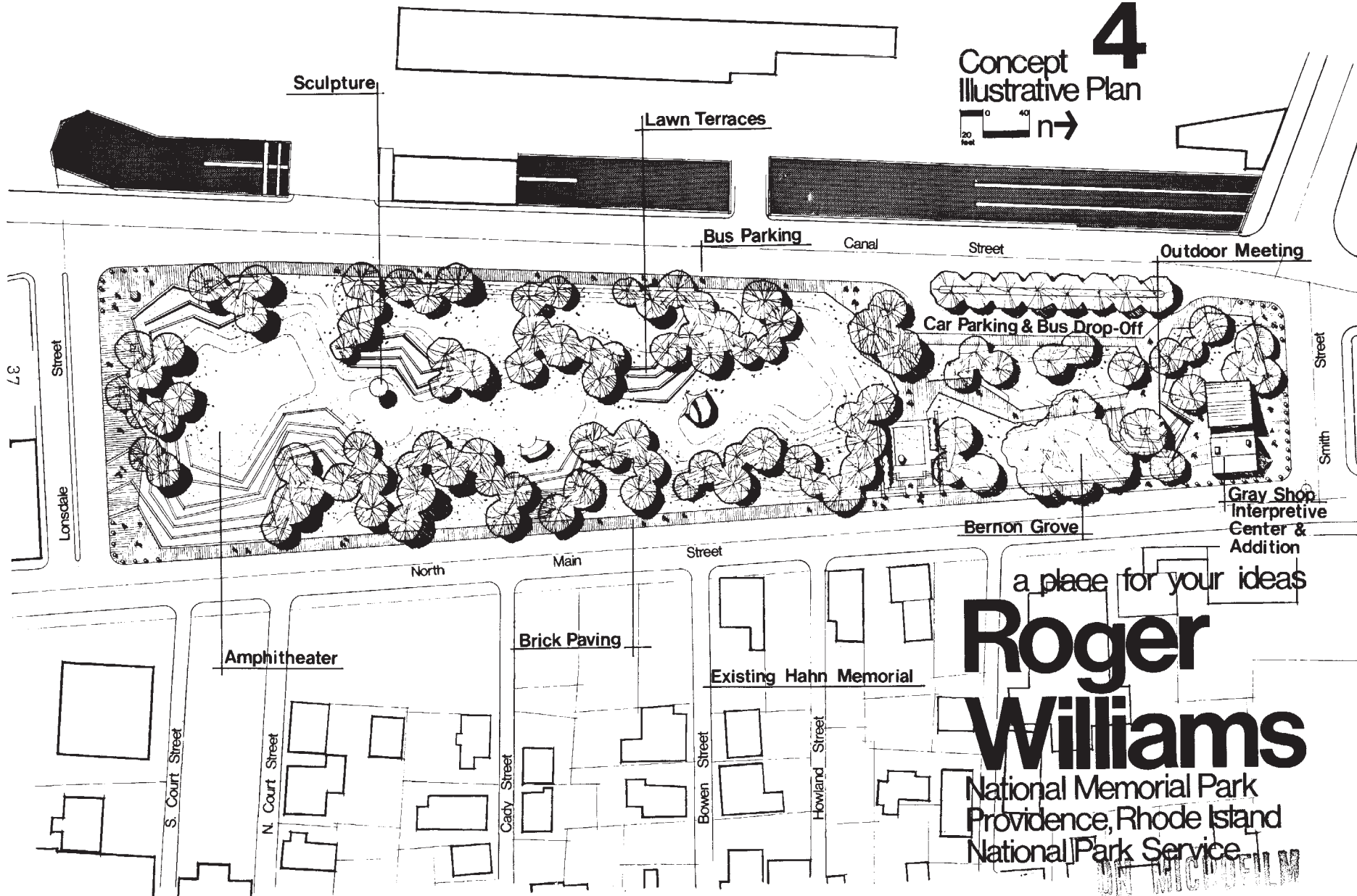
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Concept Illustrative Plan



4



a place for your ideas
Roger Williams

National Memorial Park
Providence, Rhode Island
National Park Service

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d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided

Same as Alternative 1.

6. Alternative 5: No Action

a. General Description

Under this alternative, no General Management Plan would be prepared. The National Memorial would continue to exist as basically a vacant lot with only a superintendent for staff. Minimal interpretive activities would occur. No resource improvement would take place (see Figure 4 for illustration of existing conditions).

b. Impacts

1. Deterioration of existing resources would occur.
2. Fewer visitors would be attracted to the National Memorial; therefore, parking problems would be minimal.
3. Less National Park Service personnel would be required.
4. Minimal funds would be required.
5. The site would not reflect the attitude of restoration and renewal found in the College Hill area.
6. The story of Roger Williams would not be fully expressed by the National Memorial.

c. Mitigating Measures

None would be undertaken.

d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided

If no additional action were taken, the Memorial's historic significance could be lost.

e. Short-Term/Long-Term Relationship of Resources

None.

f. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

None.

C. The Interpretive Center

1. Criteria

a. Interpretive Themes

Critical to the purpose and success of the Roger Williams National Memorial is the interpretation of his ideas to the American public. Roger Williams' advocacy of the separation of church and state was as unpopular in his time as the idea of integrating them would be today. In fact, his ideas were so radical that he was forced to establish his own society--one in which his beliefs were tolerable. He was a separatist seeking the true kingdom; and being delayed by civil matters, he asserted that the state had no rights in church affairs, that the search for truth was individual and no business of the state, that individual conscience was inviolable and no one had the right to impose his ideas on others, and that all men were equals. All of these beliefs are democratic ideals we hold in high esteem today but ideals for which Roger Williams was banished to the wilderness.

The legacy of Roger Williams is of national importance. The interpretation of his story should deal with his philosophies and, if at all possible, present his ideas in period context and in their contemporary expression. The themes are:

The Man (Primary Theme)

His Legacy: Inviolability of individual conscience
 Separation of church and state
 Religious diversity
 Equality for all people

The Period (Secondary Theme)

Old England: To purify the church (Puritan)
 The church beyond hope (separatist)
 The Separatist's Separatist, Roger
 Williams

New England: A new Israel
 Massachusetts Bay Colony
 Salem
 Plymouth
 Providence
 Pequot War
 Royal Charter
 "President"
 Later Years

The Present (Secondary Theme)

Providence: A shelter for persons distressed of
conscience
A progressive, contemporary expression
of Roger Williams' beliefs

It is proposed that the interpretive program accomplish
the following:

Set Roger Williams and his ideas in their period
context so that visitors will understand the
implications of his dissent.

Convey the legacy of his ideas to the visitors.

Present examples of contemporary expressions of
this legacy.

Cooperate with local groups to make the story of
Roger Williams fit into the development and pro-
gress of modern-day Providence.

It should be noted that the visitor's interpretive
experience will encompass the historical significance of
the nearby College Hill District as well as all of
Providence. The interpretive theme will serve as a
starting point to guide the visitor to the historical
resources of the city.

b. Facilities

In order to facilitate interpretive activities, certain
physical requirements should be provided in the proposed
interpretive center. The following identifies the
basic needs:

Information/Orientation/Publication Sales--The information
area should be within view of the main public entrance
to the visitor center. This area should accommodate
an information desk and publication sales and be within
easy access to the sales publication storage area.
The information desk would have National Park Service
staff to direct visitors to the various exhibits, to
answer specific questions, and to respond to incoming
telephone calls. The Gentle Radical: Roger Williams
by Covey and A Key into the Language of America by

Williams (Old England and New England themes respectively) are examples of the publications that would be sold. If at all possible, The Bloudy Tenet and similar writings would be reprinted and sold. A bibliography of publications about Roger Williams would be available on request. A free minifolder would contain a biographical sketch (visual and verbal) of Roger Williams and a map with text relating the Roger Williams National Memorial to the College Hill Historic District as well as to the City of Providence. It could also urge visitors to take public transportation.

Exhibits--The exhibit area could be part of or separate from the information/orientation/publication sales area. Exhibits may vary from wall graphics to individual units of free-standing displays.

Exhibition Preparation/Interpretive Work Space--This preparation/work area could be independent of the exhibit area. It would be used for preparing exhibit material and for researching and preparing additional interpretive matter. It can be thought of as having the same requirements as administrative office areas and might actually serve as an office/library for the interpretive staff. This need not be a separate space but may be located in conjunction with other uses such as the library and/or workshop.

Library--The requirements for a library space appear to be simple. Concern mainly lies in providing space for books, papers, etc., of Roger Williams and related subjects. The library need not be a separate space but may be part of another space such as the interpretive work space. This would be a staff library and would not be open to the general public.

Auditorium/Meeting/Audio-visuals--Interpretation will be directed to groups as well as individuals. Visitors will probably be comprised of individuals, families, commercial tours, and school groups. The largest single group to be expected will probably be comprised of school children. Providence Preservation Society walking tours now accommodate groups of up to 35 children. The possibility exists that two school classes or tour groups could arrive at one time. Rather than provide a space to accommodate these peak periods, it is recommended that the 35- to 50-person

capacity be maintained. Careful arrangement of visitation times should be made with the staff of the various organizations involved. Provisions should be made for audio-visual programs using slides, movie projectors or video tapes, and a meeting space for organizations interested in Roger Williams.

Administrative Offices--Office space will be needed for the administration of the National Memorial. It will accommodate items such as desks, file cabinets, etc., and will serve at a minimum as a space for the superintendent and a secretary. The maintenance staff can be given space in their workshop area.

Storage--Space will be needed for general storage. In addition, fireproof storage may be necessary for items of special interest. The fireproof storage may be used in conjunction with that needed by the library.

Maintenance Storage--The national memorial grounds will require maintenance such as mowing the lawn, irrigation, and rubbish collection. A space will be necessary to store the maintenance equipment such as mowers, hoses, and trash bins.

Workshop--It is anticipated that a small workshop will be necessary to accommodate common repairs to both the structures and grounds. This might be accommodated in a basement.

Comfort Stations--Laboratories are required for the memorial visitor. They should be easily accessible and located to allow surveillance and minimize vandalism. Storage for cleaning and supplies should be nearby.

Waysides--Small wayside exhibits can be used in the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial and perhaps other selected areas to provide information to the casual visitor. The information expressed would complement the exhibits on display in the interpretive center. Waysides could serve as a memorial to Williams' progressive philosophy, commemorate his contribution to the principles of individual freedom developed in this country, and discuss the historical significance of the spring site. The information could further complement the existing plaques dedicating the Memorial to Judge Hahn's father.

Small Outdoor Meeting Space and Amphitheater--Such areas are independent of the space requirements of the interpretive center structure(s). Refer to the criteria for the national memorial site.

Traveling Exhibit and/or Presentation--During the first three or four years of the Memorial's operation, a traveling exhibit could be developed to explain Roger Williams National Memorial, why it was set aside, why it is of national significance, who Roger Williams was, what he believed in, and what is currently happening on site. An exhibit and/or presentation could incorporate audio-visual materials that could be easily updated for programs with civic groups, school groups, historical societies, chambers of commerce, tourist boards, travel shows, etc. If possible, the presentation and/or exhibit should function both manually and automatically.

Personal Services--On-site personal service programs would vary depending on the time of year and the number of visitors. Development of these programs would depend on the creativity of the park staff and substantial input from local organizations using the area. Programs and activities should represent a broad range of expression as free as possible. Types of programs that might be tried are:

Lunchtime concerts from Bach to bluegrass by interested individuals or by a university music department.

Theosophical debates by school groups--one side representing Roger Williams' beliefs; the other, John Cotton's.

Open debates similar to those held on the steps of Federal Hall or Hyde Park Corner in London where a person can bring a soap box and speak; school/university debates of current "hot" topics, local and national.

Dramatic presentations.

Contemporary art shows including butcher paper hung on a wall for school children to illustrate their impressions of Roger Williams and his beliefs; professional and semi-professional art shows with "Providence today" as a theme; or graffiti wall with changeable panels to periodically provide a clean surface.

Arts and crafts programs.

Programs for specific groups, e.g., the elderly, ethnic groups, and the Providence Preservation Society.

Creative dance.

Children's programs.

Evening-on-the-grass concerts, dramatic programs, religious or commemorative services.

The park staff should be involved in both on-site and off-site cooperative activities such as providing assistance with Providence Preservation Society interpretive programs, the Recycled Building Festival, and other special programs offered by the city, universities, schools, and other nonprofit organizations.

The Antram-Gray Shop is not of sufficient size to accommodate all of the requirements previously discussed. To satisfy all needs, an additional structure would be necessary.

2. Alternatives Considered and Rejected

In the course of citizen input, several ideas were raised in regard to additional facilities. Some neighbors of the National Memorial object to the addition of any facilities on the site. They feel that the Antram-Gray Shop can provide the necessary service.

Those who agree that the Antram-Gray Shop is not adequate suggest utilizing an existing building off site but near the National Memorial. Three possibilities present themselves for off-site facilities:

- a. The Court House (Old State House) is one block east and looks down onto the memorial site. No visitor parking would be available, it would be difficult for out-of-town visitors to locate, and the necessary interior changes might conflict with the historic fabric of the building which is a National Historic Landmark.
- b. The Armory is one block east and slightly south of the National Memorial. It provides very limited parking and would be difficult for out-of-town visitors to find. The necessary interior changes might conflict with the historic fabric of the building.

- c. An old brick railroad freight building is located west of the memorial site just across Canal Street and the Blackstone Canal (Moshassuck River). It offers adequate parking, easy access, and the interior would probably be adaptable to National Park Service needs. Leasing could be difficult due to the multiple ownership of the railroad freight building.

The separation of a visitor facility from the national memorial site would be inefficient in the use of staff for operation and surveillance and would increase the number of pedestrian crossings on the busy streets. Current legislation also restricts the total acreage of the National Memorial to five acres. Therefore, acquisition of off-site facilities appears not to be a feasible approach.

An additional suggestion is the recreation of the Providence settlement of 1636 located around a resurrected flowing spring. There is, however, insufficient data available from which to reconstruct a Roger Williams house or village of 1636. Furthermore, the village of Providence was located across the street from the spring site. The spring area was largely reserved as "commons" until the squatting of Gabriel Bernon in 1717. In addition, this suggestion conflicts with National Park Service management policy which states "Reconstruction to provide 'typical' or 'commemorative' or 'suggestive' examples of historic structures, or intended primarily to serve as stages for demonstrations or other activities, are not permitted." (National Park Service, 1975: V-16)

There was a strong public commitment to the Antram-Gray Shop; and since the building existed on the site prior to the urban renewal program, it was allowed to become part of the National Memorial, an exception to traditional National Park Service Policy.

There appear to be three basic options for development of the interpretive center. The first suggests the use of only the Antram-Gray Shop. The second calls for an additional facility. The third is based on the possibility that the Antram-Gray Shop is found to be structurally unsuitable for long-term public use and presents the idea of a new structure only.

3. Alternative 1: Antram-Gray Shop Only (no action)

a. Description

This alternative addresses the use of the Antram-Gray Shop only. Based on previous discussion with concerned citizens and the need to provide a headquarters on site, the National Park Service has commenced with adaptive use of the structure. Completion of the project, which only involves the first floor and basement, is scheduled for spring 1977. Work on the second floor is contingent on the selection of an alternative. The uses described below represent a minimum commitment of the National Park Service and will therefore be used as the alternative of no action.

In this alternative, the first floor would accommodate all visitor uses: information, orientation, publication sales, exhibits, administrative offices, and comfort stations. The shed addition would be used for storage of maintenance equipment while the basement could be used as a shop and for further storage space. Eventually, library space and administrative offices could relocate upstairs to the second floor if it is determined to be structurally sound for such use.

This alternative presents the minimum requirement for additional space and maximizes the use of existing space.

b. Impacts

1. Since the Antram-Gray Shop is not large enough to accommodate all the interpretive requirements of the National Memorial, operation of the park would be limited by lack of space. The approximately 650 square feet of public space would accommodate only 15 visitors at a time. An audio-visual presentation would not be possible. Therefore, the number of people hearing the story of Roger Williams would be substantially reduced.
2. This amount of public space would require the provision of four on-site parking spaces for visitors in addition to those required for staff.
3. Minimal construction of facilities would be required, and the effort of designing a building sympathetic to the surrounding historic structures would be eliminated.

4. This alternative would be substantially less costly than any involving new construction.
5. Adaptive re-use of the Antram-Gray Shop will modify the character of the building.

c. Mitigating Measures

Space might be leased to accommodate certain functions off site.

d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided

The National Memorial would be unable to reach its full potential due to lack of space.

e. Short-Term/Long-Term Relationship of Resources

None.

f. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The expenditure of funds and modifications to the historic fabric of the Antram-Gray Shop are both permanent commitments of resources.

4. Alternative 2: Antram-Gray Shop Plus New Structure

a. Description

The Antram-Gray Shop would serve in the same capacity as described in Alternative 1. The only differences would be in the relocation of the offices to the second floor. The exterior would be restored, and the interior adapted for interpretive use.

A new structure would be constructed west of the Antram-Gray Shop. Its design would be sympathetic to, but not copy, the surrounding historic structures. The new structure would accommodate exhibits, audio-visuals, some storage, exhibit preparation, interpretive work space, and possibly the library. The audio-visual exhibit would accommodate 35 to 50 visitors. A mini-theater would utilize movable furniture for more flexibility in use of the facility. Seating might also be provided for the elderly. The total structure would not exceed the height of the Antram-Gray Shop.

b. Impacts

1. This alternative would facilitate the coordination and consolidation of uses within a structure specially designed for those uses.
2. Larger groups of visitors could be accommodated in this alternative than in Alternative 1.
3. Visitor services, administrative, and maintenance functions would be facilitated by adequate facilities.
4. This solution would be substantially more costly than Alternative 1.
5. The new structure, if not designed sympathetically to the community's historical context, could result in a negative visual impact.
6. On-site parking requirements would increase from four to ten spaces for visitors with the addition of approximately 900 square feet of public space.

c. Mitigating Measures

The new facility would be carefully designed to ensure that it will be compatible with its historical surroundings.

d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided.

This alternative would involve greater expenditure of funds than Alternative 1.

e. Short-Term/Long-Term Relationship of Resource

None.

f. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

None are seen at this time other than the expenditure of funds.

5. Alternative 3: New Structure Only

a. Description

Preservation of the Antram-Gray Shop has been a primary assumption in this phase of the planning for Roger

Williams National Memorial largely due to pressure from local residents. Recently, however, conflict has arisen as to the manner in which the building should be treated. This alternative presents the option of moving the William Antram-Gray Shop to another location where it could be preserved under private ownership. All Park Service activities at the National Memorial would be housed in a new building specifically designed to accommodate them.

b. Impacts

1. Removal of the Antram-Gray Shop would create greater flexibility in accommodating Park Service functions.
2. A larger building would be required than in Alternative 2.
3. This option would be more costly than either of the other alternatives.
4. The Antram-Gray Shop would not be part of the National Memorial. This would have a visual impact on the surrounding College Hill Historic District.
5. The Antram-Gray Shop might be better preserved under private ownership. An owner would have to be found for it. It might also be damaged in the process of moving it.

c. Mitigating Measures

The new facility would have to be designed with care to ensure that it will be compatible with the historical context of the surrounding area.

d. Adverse Effects Which Cannot be Avoided

The loss of the Antram-Gray Shop and temporary disruption due to construction are the only apparent adverse effects.

e. Short-Term/Long-Term Relationship of Resources

None.

f. Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitments of Resources

The Antram-Gray Shop would no longer be a part of the National Memorial.



IV. consultation and coordination

A. Efforts to Date

Since this phase of the planning and assessment process began in 1975, comments have been solicited from interested individuals and organizations. Letters were sent to numerous individuals and groups including:

- All members of the Rhode Island House of Representatives
- All members of the Rhode Island Senate
- General Officers of the State of Rhode Island
- All Rhode Island Senators in Congress
- All Rhode Island Representatives in Congress
- Mayor Vincent Cianci
- Members of the Providence City Council
- Administrator or City Council of all cities and towns in Rhode Island
- Additional concerned private individuals

The first major mailing went to approximately 300 individuals. Its purpose was to inform them of the December 2, 1975, public meeting and to solicit ideas and comments. (A copy of this letter is included in Appendix C.)

The second mailing went to approximately 400 interested parties. It was sent subsequent to the December 2, 1975, public meeting. Its purpose was to further clarify the purpose and problems of the Memorial and to solicit additional comments. (A copy is included in Appendix C.)

The most recent mailing (May 1975) went to approximately 450 individuals to further clarify the national importance of the Memorial. (A Copy is included in Appendix C.) Additional letters were sent and received during the preparation of this assessment.

In addition to this correspondence, many contacts were made with interested individuals and organizations. The major meetings are summarized below:

Providence Preservation Society: February 2 and 3, 1973; September 24, 1973; May 19, 1975; September 30, 1975. Representatives included: Frank Mauran III; Frederick L. Chase, Jr.; Antoinette Downing; and Mrs. Slater Allen. The Providence Preservation Society first introduced concepts for development in 1959 (Providence City Plan Commission, et al., 1967). Past and current concerns of the Society include:

1. Retention and incorporation of the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial.

2. Simple treatment of the park; keeping or indicating the location of the old lanes from North Main Street to Canal Street.
3. Respect the view from the Old State House (Court House) to the State Capitol.
4. Archaeologically research and excavate site.
5. Concentrate and conceal parking at north end of site.
6. Explore means of off-site parking.
7. Retain and use the William Antram-Gray Shop.
8. Minimize the use of other structures. Contemporary designs should not be considered.
9. Interpretive programs should encompass the City of Providence.
10. Do not design an elaborate water feature.
11. Specify native vegetation in the planting scheme.

Benefit Street Association: November 16, 1975; February 4, 1976; February 9, 1976; March 1, 1976. Representatives included: Robert Goff. Past and current concerns of the Association include:

1. Simple treatment of the park.
2. Parking should be provided off site.
3. Utilize the William Antram-Gray Shop in its present location (1976).
4. Maintain view from the Old State House and the State Capitol.
5. Leave the south end of the site free of any buildings.
6. Consider the park as a part of the surrounding area; the City of Providence is the real memorial that Roger Williams left. The Memorial should further reflect its unique setting--an area restored by and through its residents.
7. Explore and appraise the use of buildings adjacent to the park.

8. Define and make available government restrictions to the site.
9. Develop and make available a time schedule of the total development.
10. Retain the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial.
11. Acceptance of the design proposal made by Richard Fleishner, a local sculptor.

Roger Williams Family Association: February 8, 1976.

Representatives included: Mrs. Clifford Brown and Clinton Williams. Specific suggestions of the Association include:

1. Reactivate the spring without disturbing the remainder of the Roger Williams Spring/Hahn Memorial. Create a "babbling brook" by channeling the water west across the site to a small pond near Canal Street.
2. Use additional trees, making the area as natural in appearance as possible. Use native vegetation.
3. Use stone walls to identify use areas, traffic patterns, etc.
4. Provide meeting space within the administration building for historic groups.
5. Provide secure storage for the Roger Williams Family Association heirlooms.

A major public meeting was held on December 2, 1975. The purpose was to present four alternative concepts for development. Public reaction to the alternatives was generally negative and skeptical. The meeting revealed the need for:

1. Effective involvement with interested groups and individuals.
2. Sensitivity to local and national concerns.
3. Understanding the legislative mandate and limitations.
4. Re-evaluation of the alternatives.

Additional meetings held included the involvement of the following groups and individuals listed in alphabetical order:

1. Al Veri Associates.

H. Cushman Anthony, President, Concerned Citizens for the East Side.

3. Martha Bailey, Chief, Providence City Planning Department.
4. Benefit Street Association.
5. Board of Park Commissioners, City of Providence.
6. Business and Professional Women of the First Baptist Church, Providence, Rhode Island.
7. Vincent Cianci, Mayor of Providence, Rhode Island.
8. Daughters of the American Colonists.
9. Daughters of the American Revolution.
10. James Diamond, Superintendent, Providence City Parks Department.
11. Episcopal Diocese of Rhode Island and Saint John's Cathedral.
12. Richard Fleishner.
13. Dr. Seebert Goldowsky, Editor, R. I. Jewish Historical Notes.
14. Sanford Gorodesky, Providence City Council.
15. Greater Providence Group, Providence Chamber of Commerce.
16. Charlene Hall, Mayor's Office of Community Development, Providence.
17. Al Hawks, Director, Rhode Island Audubon Society.
18. Historic Eastside Association.
19. Home Builders of Matheson Methodist Church.
20. Netopian Club of Providence.
21. Honorable Claiborne deB. Pell, United States Senate.
22. Providence Inner City Arts Association.
23. Planning Division, Providence Police Department.
24. Providence Preservation Society, Deborah Neu, Executive Director.
25. Providence Redevelopment Agency.

26. Fred Puglia, Director, Providence Convention and Tourist Bureau.
27. Rhode Island Bicentennial Commission.
28. Rhode Island Department of Economic Development.
29. Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Commission.
30. Rhode Island State Historical Society, Albert Klyberg, Director.
31. Roger Williams Family Association.
32. William Ryan, Director, Rhode Island State Department of Parks and Recreation.
33. Sons of the American Revolution.
34. Various neighbors and residents of the College hill area.

The suggestions and concepts raised have been explored and analyzed. Their acceptance or rejection and the reasoning is discussed in Part III, Alternatives.

B. Future Efforts

Future efforts will include further contact with individuals and organizations previously consulted. Mailings will be made to announce public meetings and to solicit comments. This Environmental Assessment will be distributed and reactions to it will be documented, assessed, and incorporated where appropriate.

V.
appendixes

Appendix A. Legislation

8. Roger Williams

An Act to provide for the establishment of the Roger Williams National Memorial in the city of Providence, Rhode Island, and for other purposes. (79 Stat. 1069)

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior may acquire by gift, purchase with appropriated or donated funds, transfer from any Federal agency, exchange, or otherwise, not to exceed five acres of land (together with any buildings or other improvements thereon) and interests in land at the site of the old town spring, traditionally called Roger Williams Spring, in Providence, Rhode Island, for the purpose of establishing thereon a national memorial to Roger Williams in commemoration of his outstanding contributions to the development of the principles of freedom in this country: *Provided,* That property owned by the city of Providence or the Providence Redevelopment Agency may be acquired only with the consent of such owner.

SEC. 2. The property acquired pursuant to the first section of this Act shall be established as the Roger Williams National Memorial and the Secretary of the Interior shall publish notice of such establishment in the Federal Register. Such national Memorial shall be administered by the Secretary subject to the provisions of the Act entitled "An Act to establish a National Park Service, and for other purposes," approved August 25, 1916 (39 Stat. 535), as amended and supplemented, and the Act entitled "An Act to provide for the preservation of historic American sites, buildings, objects, and antiquities of national significance, and for other purposes," approved August 21, 1935 (49 Stat. 666).

SEC. 3. (a) The Secretary is authorized to cooperate with the city of Providence, local historical and preservation societies, and interested persons in the maintenance and operation of the Roger Williams National Memorial, and he may seek the assistance of and consult with such city, societies, and persons from time to time with respect to matters concerning the development and operation of the memorial.

(b) The Secretary may accept on behalf of the people of the United States gifts of historic objects and records pertaining to Roger Williams for appropriate display or other use in keeping with the commemoration of the founding of the principles of freedom in the United States and of the historical events that took place in the city of Providence in connection therewith.

SEC. 4. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated not more than \$700,000 for the acquisition of lands and interests in land and for the development of the Roger Williams National Memorial, as provided in this Act.

Approved October 22, 1965.

Legislative History

House Report No. 985 (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs).
Senate Report No. 764 accompanying S. 1855 (Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs).

Congressional Record, Vol. 111 (1965):

Sept. 23: S. 1855 considered and passed Senate.

Oct. 5: Passed House.

Oct. 9: Considered and passed Senate, in lieu of S. 1855.

Appendix B: Management Objectives

General Management

1. To manage the Memorial as a day use area year round.
2. To provide for the sale of educational material if such services are needed.

Resource Management

1. To participate in community planning to insure that the respective environmental needs of both the National Memorial and the community are mutually respected.

Visitor Services

1. To provide day-to-day informational and interpretive personal services; and where possible, coordinate with the Providence Preservation Society, the Rhode Island Historical Society, and similar groups and individuals.
2. To achieve a "living" quality regarding the Memorial in terms of dramatic programs, special religious and commemorative observances, children's activities and programs, and arts and craft programs related to the principles of freedom.
3. To provide interpretation which will be centered on Roger Williams and his contributions to the development of principles of freedom in this nation and their relevancy today.
4. To provide those appropriate services to the community and national visitor which will attempt to harmonize the memorial grounds and activities with the adjacent College Hill Historic District.
5. To make every reasonable attempt to facilitate use by the handicapped visitor.
6. To provide buildings and parking necessary for adequate management and visitor services.

November 1976

Appendix C: Correspondence

1. Letter announcing public meeting of December 2, 1975.
2. Letter sent subsequent to December 2, 1975, meeting:
 - a. To those who did attend.
 - b. To those who did not attend.
3. Letter sent in May 1976 to further clarify National Park Service policy.

1. Letter announcing public meeting of December 2, 1975.

Dear

Hopefully, you have noticed the recent landscaping efforts at the Roger Williams National Memorial on North Main and Smith Streets in Providence. The National Park Service, with offices currently at 24 Meeting Street, in Providence, has recently planted grass on the 4½-acre site and plans are underway for adaptive restoration of the Gray Watch Shop for use as an office and visitor contact facility.

The Park Service is now considering ideas for the future use and development of Roger Williams National Memorial established in 1965 to honor the founder of the Rhode Island Colony and pioneer of religious freedom.

It is essential that National Park Service planners receive your input and suggestions on the management and future of this historically significant area.

A public meeting is planned to discuss how the site can best serve the neighborhood, the community, and the national visitor. One specific question on which the Service would appreciate public response to is how best to tell the story of Roger Williams.

I am looking forward to meeting with you and other members of the community at this meeting scheduled on Tuesday, December 2, at 7:30 p.m., in the Barus-Holley Auditorium on the Brown University Campus. The auditorium entrance is on George Street.

If you should have any questions regarding the National Memorial, please contact me at 528-4881.

Sincerely yours,

Roy Weaver
Superintendent

2a. Letter sent to those who did attend the December 2, 1975, meeting.

Dear

Thank you for your participation in the Roger Williams National Memorial developmental meeting December 2, 1975. It was a lively meeting with many varied and meaningful ideas contributed throughout the course of the evening.

In light of suggestions made during and subsequent to the meeting, we are investigating alternate developmental ideas. I have met with several groups and individuals since the meeting who have volunteered plans reflecting their ideas for the park. These are helpful in considering the variety of ways to serve all park visitors and harmonize with the neighborhood. We have the notes of each group who participated in the public meeting workshop. We are still open to individual ideas from those of you who have yet to comment.

I am located in the Providence Preservation Society Headquarters at 24 Meeting Street; phone 528-4881. My mailing address is P. O. Box 367, Annex Station, Providence, Rhode Island 02901. I will be pleased to discuss with each of you your ideas; but in addition, jot them on paper so that I can pass them on to our planning team.

You might consider some of the following problems for our benefit:

1. Treatment of the site in regards to the national importance of Roger Williams and service to the out-of-town visitor.
2. Treatment of the site in regards to its local importance, appreciation, and use.
3. The zoning requirement that off-street parking be provided park employees and visitors. How can these needs be realistically met?
4. It appears that, during full operation, the Gray Watch Shop will not handle the crowds and provide the level of visitor services required. How can these be accomplished with a minimum of staffing?
5. What community needs do you see being met by the park?

Your candid ideas regarding any or all the above or any other ideas you may have will be sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Roy Weaver
Superintendent

2b. Letter sent to those who did not attend December 2, 1975, meeting.

Dear

We had an interesting and lively public meeting Tuesday evening, December 2, 1975, on the development and use of ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL on North Main Street in Providence. Many meaningful and varied ideas were contributed. I realize that you were unable to attend, but I would appreciate the benefit of your ideas regarding the memorial.

I am located in the Providence Preservation Society Office at 24 Meeting Street; phone No. 528-4881. My mailing address is ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL, P. O. Box 367, Annex Station, Providence, Rhode Island 02901. I would be happy to personally discuss your ideas with you, but I would appreciate having your ideas in writing so that I can pass them on to our planners.

You might consider some of the following problems and your reactions to them:

1. Treatment of the site in terms of its national importance, appreciation by, and service to the out-of-town visitor.
2. Treatment of the site in terms of its local importance, appreciation, and use.
3. The zoning code requires that off-street parking be provided for every park employee and park visitor. How can these needs be realistically met?
4. It appears the Gray Watch Shop is too small to handle the park visitor and provide the level of service indicated by the legislation. How can park information and interpretation be accomplished with a minimum of staffing?
5. What community uses do you see being met by the park?

Your candid ideas regarding any or all of the above plus any other ideas you may have will be sincerely appreciated.

Thank you very much. I am hoping to hear from you soon.

Sincerely yours,

Roy Weaver
Superintendent

3. Letter sent in May 1976 to further clarify National Park Service policy.

I do not have to tell you who Roger Williams was or what he means to this country, but I would like to tell you what ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL is and what it could mean to you.

Because he planted the principles of religious freedom and democracy in North America, Roger Williams is of interest to all Americans from California to Maine. The ideals of Roger Williams and his co-settlers are as relevant to all of us today as the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. For that reason, the National Park Service, an agency of the United States Department of the Interior, was directed by Congress to develop and manage a memorial to Roger Williams on the site of the Roger Williams spring. In that context, the memorial is to provide a greater awareness of Roger Williams, his contributions, and what they mean today to city, state, and national visitors.

In addition, the memorial will be a welcome open space for passive recreation and relaxation; a place to bring your sack lunch from work; a place for outdoor concerts, folk festivals, and art shows; and a beginning point for those visitors who want to see the historic and cultural gems of Providence.

Joe, Martha, and the kids, Californians visiting New York and New England, will notice that Roger Williams National Memorial is a convenient distance between New York and Boston or Cape Cod. They may stop in to visit the memorial having learned of it through one of the other 300 National Park Service areas across the country; or a family from Westerly, Woonsocket, or South Providence will want to learn more about their own state.

They will more than likely have a school days' recollection of Roger Williams and religious freedom and will want to learn more about the man, his ideas, and the every day life of his era. Answers to these questions will be presented at a Visitor Center through the use of movies/slide programs, displays, pamphlets, and dioramas. These presentations will heighten a national awareness of Roger Williams and the evolution of historic events that began in Rhode Island during the 1600s.

But the park should be more than an on-site museum. It is the physical and historical beginning of Providence. It becomes one place and one time in a progression of historic events that winds its way through the settlement period, the era of the sea trades, the rise of Providence as a colonial city, the Revolution, the China Trade, the industrialization, and on into the 20th Century. The park becomes a logical starting place to witness these historic and cultural places within Providence and throughout Rhode Island.

Besides all this, the memorial will provide a needed green space within an urban area; a place that will add beauty to the neighborhood and the city.

Roger Williams National Memorial will be a neighborhood park and more; it will be a city park and more; it will be a national park with the informal atmosphere of a neighborhood park and the cultural amenities of a city park. Interpretation will link the past with the present and set the other historic treasures of Rhode Island into the historic perspective of the entire nation.

Sincerely,

Appendix D: Bibliography

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Appendix E: Planning Team

Roy Weaver, Superintendent
Roger Williams National Memorial

James A. Rienhardt, Regional Park Planner
North Atlantic Regional Office

Stephen J. Maddock, Environmental Specialist
North Atlantic Regional Office

Robert Sabbatini, Landscape Architect
North Atlantic Regional Office

Shary Page Berg, Landscape Architect
North Atlantic Regional Office

Consultants

Charles P. Clapper, Jr., Chief
Planning and Design
North Atlantic Regional Office

David E. Clark, Chief
Environmental Compliance
North Atlantic Regional Office

Ricardo Torres-Reyes, Regional Historian
North Atlantic Regional Office

James Massey, Interpretive Planner
Denver Service Center

Mary Bradford, Interpretive Specialist
National Capital Parks

Todd Bennitt, Landscape Architect
North Atlantic Regional Office





United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL
P.O. BOX 367, ANNEX STATION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02901

IN REPLY REFER TO:

February 25, 1977

Dear Citizen:

The citizens of Providence have been instrumental since the early 1960's in establishing a National Memorial to Roger Williams, founder of Providence and a leader in democracy and religious freedom. Since 1974, the National Park Service, as directed by Congress, has acquired land and has prepared preliminary planning and design schemes for the 4.58-acre parcel located at the foot of College Hill near downtown Providence. Public participation is an integral factor in the preparation of development schemes for the Roger Williams National Memorial. The proposals are meant to represent the broad spectrum of ideas raised by concerned individuals and to satisfy the needs of the local and national visitor.

The attached Environmental Assessment presents alternative development proposals for the Memorial and assesses their particular positive and negative impacts. This document, therefore, is a means to guide you in voicing an opinion on the future of the Memorial. Your opinions, as in past efforts, are encouraged. We enclose for your convenience a short questionnaire to record your preferences and comments. The review period is scheduled to end on April 12, 1977. Please send your comments by that date to me at the address below.

We thank you for your help and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely yours,

Roy Weaver, Superintendent
Roger Williams National Memorial
P. O. Box 367, Annex Station
Providence, Rhode Island 02901

Enclosure



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

OPINION WORKSHEET: DEVELOPMENT CONCEPTS

ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND
February 1977

This worksheet is a means of soliciting your comments regarding development concepts for Roger Williams National Memorial. Please circle your preferences and indicate reasons for or against your selections. Use the back or a separate sheet of paper if you need additional space.

1. NATIONAL MEMORIAL SITE (excluding interpretive center)

Alternative: 1 2 3 4 5(no action)

2. INTERPRETIVE CENTER

Alternative: 1(no action) 2 3

Additional comments and opinions are welcomed. Please record them on the back or use a separate sheet of paper.

OPTIONAL:

NAME _____
last first middle initial

ADDRESS _____
street city state zip code

AGENCY OR GROUP AFFILIATION _____

Please return completed questionnaire to: Roy Weaver, Superintendent
Roger Williams National Memorial
P. O. Box 367, Annex Station
Providence, RI 02901



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NORTH ATLANTIC REGION
15 STATE STREET
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02109

IN REPLY REFER TO:

L-7617-NAR-(PE)

September 12, 1977

Memorandum

To: Superintendent, Roger Williams National Memorial

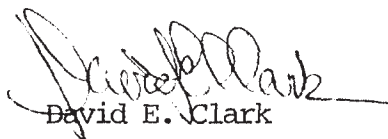
From: Chief, Environmental Compliance

Subject: Environmental Review/Negative Declaration,
Development Concepts, Roger Williams NM

The subject environmental review has been concurred in by the Regional Director and enclosed are two copies of the review for your files. The original will be retained here in our regional files.

It is our understanding that you intend to prepare a brief letter for public distribution indicating which development concept alternative the Park Service has selected, and that you will utilize as a graphic illustration the site development plan attached to the subject memorandum. We would be pleased to assist you in the preparation of this letter by commenting on your draft and providing volume copy for your distribution.

By copy of this memorandum, we are notifying the Denver Service Center of the completion of the environmental review. It is our understanding that the detailed planning for the selected site development concept is programmed for Fiscal Year 1979.


David E. Clark

Enclosures



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL
P.O. BOX 367, ANNEX STATION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02901

October 12, 1977

IN REPLY REFER TO:

Dear Citizen:

I am writing to inform you that the National Park Service has reviewed the Environmental Assessment of Development Concept Alternatives for Roger Williams National Memorial and has selected Site Development Alternative 1 (Rolling Topography), with some modifications, and Interpretive Facility Alternative 2 (Antram-Gray Shop Plus New Structure). The Park Service has also determined that an Environmental Impact Statement is not necessary since the proposed construction will not constitute a major federal action causing adverse impacts that could significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

The Environmental Assessment for Roger Williams National Memorial, which was issued in February 1977, was distributed to approximately 500 individuals and groups. Seventy-five individual responses were received by the Park Service during the review period. Fifty-two percent of these responses favored Site Development Alternative 1, while twenty-eight percent favored Site Development Alternative 4, and seventy-five percent favored Interpretive Facility Alternative 2.

The modifications to Site Development Alternative 1 are shown on the attached Concept Illustrative Plan. In place of a fountain, an attempt will be made to restore water to the existing well in the Hahn Memorial. A separate fountain might overshadow the significance of the Hahn Memorial, create maintenance problems and conflict with a pre-existing utility easement at the proposed fountain location. The parking area will be shortened considerably, yet widened somewhat, to permit angle instead of parallel parking for about 20 cars, thereby concentrating the parking at the north end of the site. This will enable the parking area to be screened more easily. An additional path will be constructed from the interior of the site to North Main Street opposite the Old State House, as shown on the attached plan. The idea of sculpture has been determined to be impracticable, since sculpture is really not needed to provide a better awareness and understanding of Roger Williams. Instead, this can be accomplished through interpretive programs. Also, protecting sculpture from vandals and repairing acts of vandalism can be very expensive.





United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

ROGER WILLIAMS NATIONAL MEMORIAL
P.O. BOX 367, ANNEX STATION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02901

IN REPLY REFER TO:
L-7617

September 2, 1977

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

From: Superintendent, Roger Williams National Memorial

Subject: Environmental Review/Negative Declaration, Development Concepts, Roger Williams National Memorial

This memorandum records the environmental conference review conducted on May 16, 1977 at the offices of the North Atlantic Region, Boston, Massachusetts. The environmental conference review considered the public responses to the Environmental Assessment, responses from public meetings, and National Park Service policies and legislative mandates in order to select the best development alternative.

The Foreword of the Environmental Assessment refers to the preparation of a General Management Plan. It should be understood that this Environmental Review bears directly upon the selection of a development concept alternative concerning the physical design of the park. In the preparation of the General Management Plan, this Environmental Assessment and Review will be further utilized.

FINDINGS

The Environmental Assessment of the Development Concepts for Roger Williams National Memorial discusses five site design alternatives and three facility design alternatives.

The Environmental Assessment was prepared following a formal public meeting held in Providence, Rhode Island, December 1975. Meetings were held with approximately 27 groups and countless individuals before and during the preparation of the Environmental Assessment.



Four hundred twenty-five copies of the Environmental Assessment were sent to interested groups and individuals including all state legislators, all Providence City Councillors, various city and state agencies, the State Clearinghouse, and the State Historic Preservation Officer. Over 50 additional copies were handed out upon request by individuals.

Availability of the Environmental Assessment was published in the Federal Register February 28, 1977 with a 45-day review period. Twenty local newspaper and television stations were notified. Two newspapers and one television station ran feature articles on the Environmental Assessment and the Memorial.

Seventy-five individual responses were received plus a statement from the State Clearinghouse and the State Historic Preservation Officer. The State Clearinghouse responded on behalf of the City of Providence, Rhode Island Department of Transportation, and the Rhode Island Department of Natural Resources. A condensation and tabulation of the responses is included in the appendix. A majority of the respondents supported site alternative #1 and facility alternative #2.

Provision for archeological testing and salvage will be made at areas of excavation.

Prior to construction, and as a part of the preparation of detailed project plans, the procedures for compliance to protect cultural resources as set forth in 36 CFR 800 will be accomplished. Also, the Providence Redevelopment Agency will be given opportunity to comment on the specific proposals.

DISCUSSION

The Environmental Assessment discussed each of the alternatives and presented each of their impacts. The public response revealed these concerns:

Site Design (excluding facilities)

Basically the respondents prefer a simple naturalistic design with some ambivalence regarding a fountain. The stronger link with the Historic District through the Old State House is a concern. The neighborhood groups prefer as little structural development as possible with emphasis on off-site parking. Alternative #1 would seem to bear the least amount of public concern and environmental impacts. A more detailed breakdown is shown in the appendix.

The Service proposed elimination of the fountain from the site design alternative and the investigation of the possibility of returning water to the present well in the Hahn Memorial section of the site. It is felt that a fountain will detract from the importance of the Hahn Memorial, create maintenance problems, conflict with the utility easement present at the proposed fountain location, and create additional costs in development and maintenance.

Angle parking for about 20 cars off Canal Street at the north end of the site is proposed as it is more compact, can be more easily screened, therefore less of an impact on the site and will adequately serve the visitors to the visitor center. It is felt that 20 parking spaces will be sufficient for routine visitation. Periods of greater visitation will occur during the weekends and throughout the summer; times when a surplus of nearby off-site parking exists. Special events which generate unusual parking demands will be handled through Special Use Permits controlled through the normal management of the Memorial. Guidelines concerning special events are published in the Management Policies of the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior (1975) and will be further elaborated in the Statement for Management, Roger Williams National Memorial.

An attractive convenient link with the Old State House can be achieved with a path from the interior of the site terminating on North Main Street opposite the Old State House parade.

It is felt that sculpture would provide more liabilities than benefits. The presence of sculpture invites vandalism and graffiti. The protection from vandalism and graffiti and reparation of sculpture can be very expensive. Sculpture is not needed to provide a better awareness and understanding of Roger Williams, the primary purpose of the Memorial. In fact, he is well memorialized sculpturally throughout the area. Instead, we propose to stimulate an awareness and understanding of Roger Williams through interpretive programs.

Facilities (structure only)

Most respondents felt that the Antram/Gray house alone would not serve the three functions of Administration, Maintenance and Visitor Services. However, most feel that the Antram/Gray house should be retained if possible. Therefore, facility alternative #2 appears to bear the least amount of public concern and environmental impacts.

There is some public concern that a new additional structure will visually conflict with the College Hill Historic District. Neighbors who favor a minimum of development on-site suggest leasing facilities off-site.

The Service will make every reasonable attempt to utilize the Antram/Gray house. If it is useable, administrative and some maintenance functions will be housed in the Antram/Gray house while visitor services and other maintenance functions will be provided in a new additional structure. Any alteration or removal of the Antram/Gray house must be reviewed by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Rhode Island State Historic Preservation Officer.

The new additional structure will be harmonious in size, shape, color, material, and scale with the Historic District but it cannot be an historic recreation. That would be a dishonest treatment of the historic significance of Roger Williams National Memorial. The Management Policies of the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior (1975): V-16, states: "Reconstruction to provide 'typical' or 'commemorative' or 'suggestive' examples of historic structures . . . are not permitted."

It is difficult to justify location of visitor services in a leased facility off-site when the space is available on-site and especially when the main reason for National Park Service purchase of and involvement in the 4-1/2 acres now encompassing the Memorial Site is to provide visitor services "memorializing" Roger Williams. It is doubtful if, in the long run, there would be a cost savings to the Service by leasing space in an existing facility. A visitor center complete with audio-visual capabilities is a very specialized structure requiring extensive modification of any existing structure. Furthermore, a very long-term lease would be required due to the special needs of the visitor center.

Impact on the Neighborhood

Throughout the various meetings leading up to the Environmental Assessment, Memorial neighbors have expressed a concern that their neighborhood and life style could be impacted by the development of and the activities associated with Roger Williams National Memorial.

The neighbors are concerned that during peak visitation periods visitors will block or use private driveways, park on the brick sidewalks, etc. They are further concerned that the Memorial will generate noisy and congested activities not in keeping with a quiet serene park.

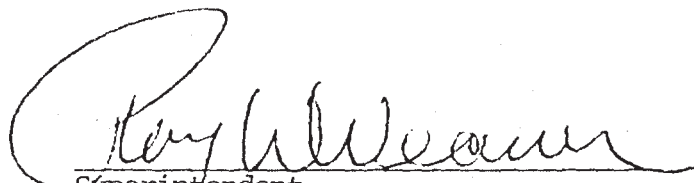
The parking problem is recognized and was addressed earlier in this memorandum. It will be handled, as indicated, through the management of the Memorial. The concerns of the Memorial neighbors will be worked

with through management of the Memorial to provide visitor services in keeping with the needs of the national, state, and local visitors while attempting to minimize the impact on the neighborhood. The Statement for Management, Roger Williams National Memorial, will confront problems such as parking and adverse use that the physical design does not seem to solve.

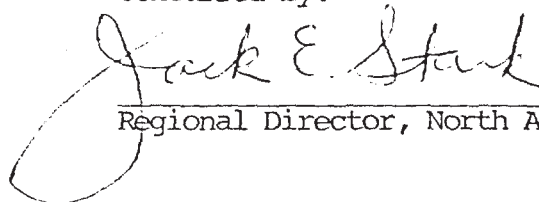
CONCLUSION

Site Development Concept Alternative #1 and Interpretive Facility Alternative #2, with the above-mentioned modifications, constitute the selected alternative package for detailed project design and eventual construction. See the appendix for the modified drawing of Alternative #1 and consult the Environmental Assessment of Development Concept Alternatives, Roger Williams National Memorial, for more detailed discussion of the selected alternatives.

This selected alternative package will not constitute a major federal action significant in the human environment, therefore, no Environmental Impact Statement will be prepared. Your concurrence with this memorandum will effect a negative declaration whereby an Environmental Impact Statement will not be prepared and the National Park Service can proceed with detailed project planning.


Superintendent

Concurred by:


Regional Director, North Atlantic Region

Appendix ICondensed Comments, Environmental Assessment, Public Response:

	<u>Form</u>	<u>Meetings</u>	<u>Total</u>
PARKING:			
no parking on site	2	0	2
concentrate parking, (angle)	3	1	4
additional parking off site	3	5	8
put parking at south end	1	0	1
SITE DESIGN:			
simple naturalistic	18	5	23
no fountain (specific comment)	8	4	12
simple fountain only	3	0	3
wants fountain (specific comment)	3	2	5
wants amphitheater (specific comment)	3	0	3
no group space in Bernon Grove	3	0	3
no rear (west) access to Hahn memorial	2	0	2
add sundial	1	1	2
no sculpture or statuary (specific comment)	2	0	2
wants sculpture (specific comment)	1	1	2
fence all around	1	1	2
raise walks as vehicle barrier	1	0	1
path connector with Old State House walk	3	6	9
outline limits of bay circa 1636	1	0	1
picnic area	1	0	1
identify old cross streets	1	1	2
Archeological research	2	0	2
design for handicapped (specific comment)	1	0	1
no Hyde Park corner or graffitti wall	1	2	3
STRUCTURE:			
additional facilities off site	6	2	8
remove gray house (specific comment)	2	0	2
modern addition	2	0	2
Gray Shop authentic facade (?)	1	1	2
put storage underground	1	0	1
Gray shop too close to street	1	0	1

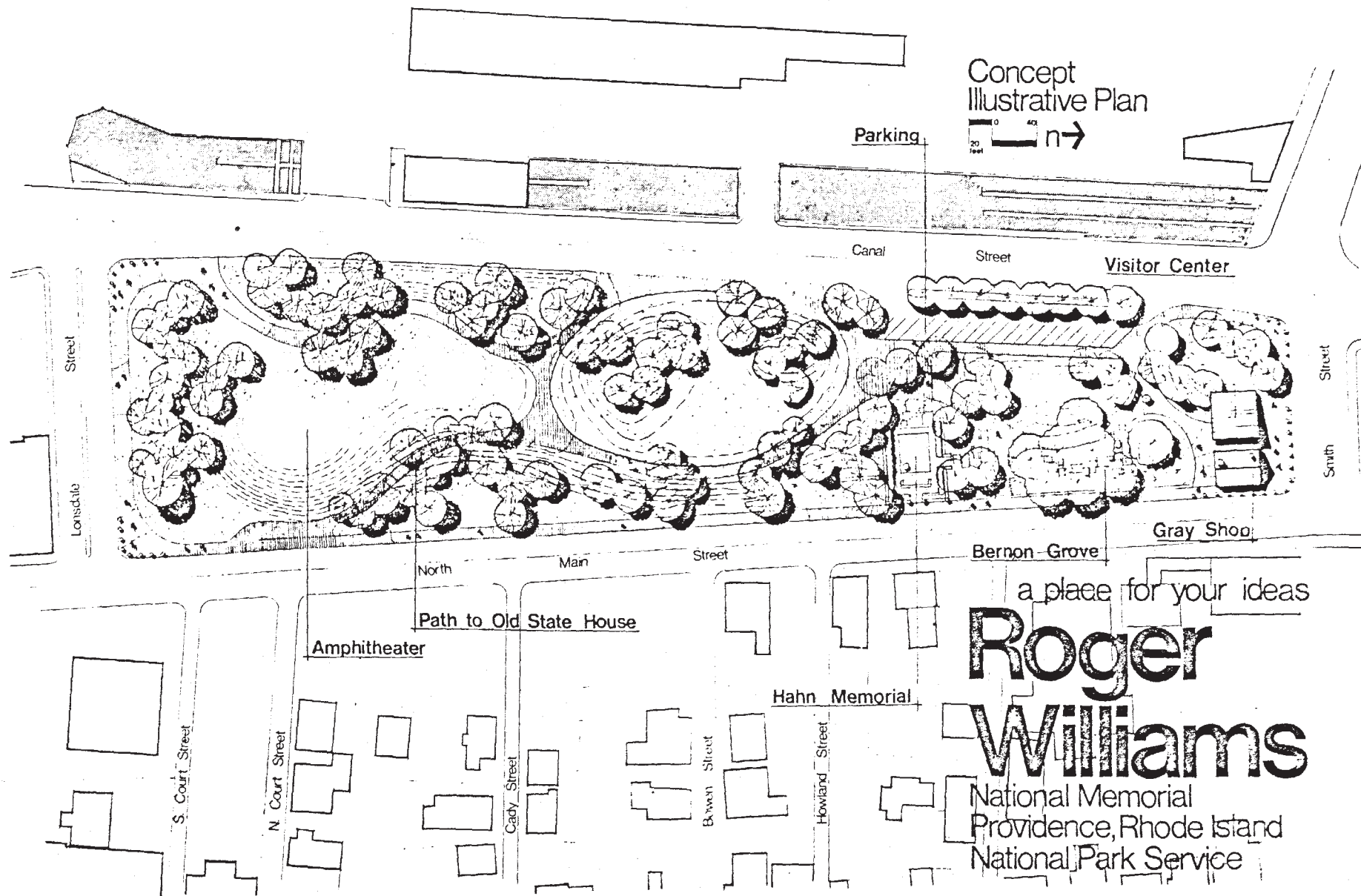
QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSESite Design:

1.	39.	.	.	52%
2.	2.	.	.	3%
3.	8.	.	.	10%
4.	21.	.	.	28%
5.	0.	.	.	0%
6.	5.	.	.	7% (other)

75 Total

Facility:

1.	6.	.	.	10%
2.	48.	.	.	75%
3.	6.	.	.	10%
4.	4.	.	..	5% (other)
64 Total				



Concept
Illustrative Plan

0 20 40
feet n →

Parking

Canal

Street

Visitor Center

Street

Lonsdale

Street

Smith

Gray Shop

Bernon Grove

North Main Street

Path to Old State House

Amphitheater

Hahn Memorial

a place for your ideas

**Roger
Williams**

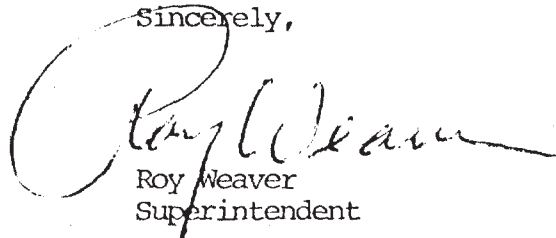
National Memorial
Providence, Rhode Island
National Park Service

The Interpretive Facility will include the Antram-Gray Shop and a new building. Administrative and some maintenance functions will be housed in the Antram-Gray Shop, while the new building will provide visitor services and other maintenance functions. The new building will be harmonious in size, shape, color, material, and scale with the Historic District, but it will not be a replica of an historic structure. Replica structures are not permitted by National Park Service policy because they are usually not accurate treatments of the authentic structures that once occupied the particular site. In addition, the site in question was never occupied by a structure relevant to the period of history portrayed. Hence, a replica structure constructed on the site may be misunderstood by the visitor, and in this case, mislead him in his attempt to understand the significance of Roger Williams.

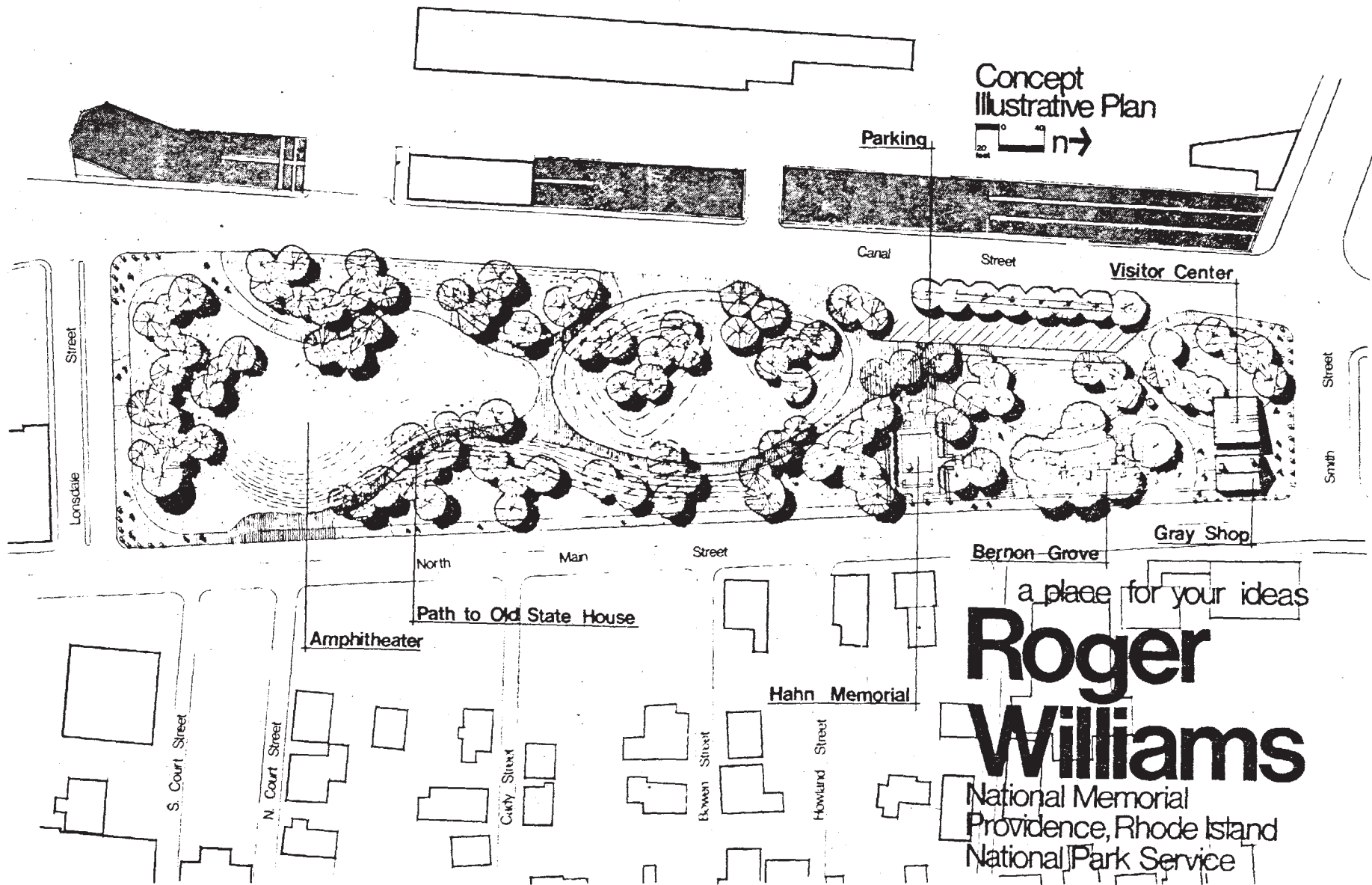
Now that a development concept has been selected, the National Park Service will proceed to prepare a detailed site plan for the National Memorial. If you wish, you may examine the report describing the Park Service's Review of the Environmental Assessment here at the Memorial office, 282 North Main Street, Providence.

Thank you for your continued interest and contribution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Roy Weaver". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Roy Weaver
Superintendent



a place for your ideas

Roger Williams

National Memorial
Providence, Rhode Island
National Park Service