
National Park Service
Cultural Landscape Inventory
2006



United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station
Historic District

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

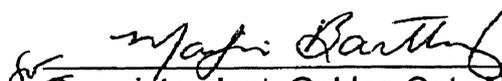
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Cultural Landscape Inventory
2006**

**Fort Point United States Coast Guard Station
Historic District
Golden Gate National Recreation Area**

Golden Gate National Recreation Area concurs with the general findings of this Cultural Landscape Inventory, including the Management Category and Condition Assessment as listed below:

MANAGEMENT CATEGORY: **A: Must be preserved and maintained**

CONDITION ASSESSMENT: **Good**



Superintendent, Golden Gate National Recreation Area

7/24/06
Date

Please return to:
Erica Owens
CLI Coordinator
National Park Service
Pacific West Regional Office
909 First Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104-1060

**UNITED STATES COAST GUARD FORT POINT STATION
GOLDEN GATE NATIONAL RECREATION AREA**

California SHPO Eligibility Determination

Section 110 Actions Requested:

- 1) SHPO concurrence with the determination of eligibility of the proposed historic district for listing on the National Register. (Note: This proposed district is located within, and already contributes to, the broader Presidio National Historic Landmark District.)
- 2) SHPO concurrence that the Setting as identified in the CLI, contributes to the significance of the site, and
- 3) SHPO concurrence with the structures to be entered on the List of Classified Structures (LCS). (See chart below.)

1) I concur X , I do not concur _____ with the proposed United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station Historic District's eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

2) I concur X , I do not concur _____ that the Setting as described in the CLI contributes to the historic district (see the following landscape characteristics: natural systems and features, spatial organization, and vegetation).

3) The following structures, located within the United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station, are **already listed on the National Register of Historic Places as contributing features** of the broader Presidio of San Francisco Historic District:

LCS Number	Structure Name	NRIS Number
56272	US Coast Guard Station Officer In Charge Quarters	66000232
56273	US Coast Guard Station 1890 Boathouse	66000232
56274	US Coast Guard Station Main Boathouse & Quarters	66000232
56275	US Coast Guard Station Buoy Shack w/Latrine	66000232
56276	US Coast Guard Station Tide Gauge House	66000232
56277	US Coast Guard Station Shop & Garage	66000232

Based on the information provided in the CLI, the following previously unevaluated structures have been identified as **contributing** to the United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station:

LCS number	Structure Name	Date Built	Concur	Do not Concur
56206	US Coast Guard Station Flagpole	1915 - 1938	X	
57656	US Coast Guard Station Concrete Seawall	1915 - 1938	X	
57657	US Coast Guard Station Wooden Pile Breakwater	1915 - 1938	X	
57659	US Coast Guard Station Main Pier	1915 - 1938	X	
329167	US Coast Guard Station Shed	1915 - 1938	X	

329171	US Coast Guard Station Flagpole	1915 - 1938	X	
329162	US Coast Guard Station Footpaths	1915 - 1938	X	
329151	US Coast Guard Station Driveways	1915 - 1938	X	
329165	US Coast Guard Station Parking Area/Curbing	1915 - 1938	X	

Based on the information provided in the CLI, the following previously unevaluated structures have been identified as **non-contributing** to the United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station:

LCS number	Structure Name	Concur	Do not Concur
n/a	Main Boathouse Footpath	X	
n/a	Accessible Ramps to Main Boathouse and Officer-in-Charge Quarters	X	
n/a	Vehicle Entrance	X	

Reasons/comments why 'Additional Information Is Needed To Concur' or 'Do Not Concur' findings were made:

The Cultural Landscape Inventory for the U.S. Fort Point Coast Guard Station makes an excellent case for the station's separate eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. However, the 1915-1964 period of significance extends beyond 50 years and makes the eligibility of the property subject to Criterion Consideration G. The 1964 termination date is well founded in regard to the use and operation of the station, but none of the previously unevaluated structures which are now considered contributing were constructed after 1938. Since none of the contributing structures are less than fifty years old, it is the suggestion of the SHPO that the period of significance be revised to eliminate the necessity of justifying the station's eligibility under Criterion G.

Steph A. Mukeseb DSHPO 9-26-2002
 California State Historic Preservation Officer Date

Please return forms to the attention of:
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Table of Contents

	Part 1
Executive Summary	1
Park Information.....	3
Property Level and CLI Number	3
Inventory Summary.....	3
Landscape Description	4
CLI Hierarchy Description	5
Location Map	5
Boundary Description.....	6
Regional Context	6
Site Plan.....	7
Chronology.....	10
Statement of Significance	19
History	Part 2
Introduction	26
Historical Background	26
U.S. Coast Guard Fort Point Station from 1886-1915	32
Rebuilding on a New Location (1915-1964).....	39
Service in Peace and War (1920-1964).....	45
Decline of the Fort Point Lifeboat Station (1964-present)	49
Analysis and Evaluation	Part 3
Summary.....	57
Natural Systems and Features.....	59
Spatial Organization.....	61
Vegetation	62
Circulation	66
Buildings and Structures	71
Small-Scale Features.....	79
Management Information	Part 4
Descriptive and Geographic Information.....	82
National Register Information.....	82
Cultural Landscape Type and Use.....	83
General Management Information	85
Management Category.....	85
Condition Assessment and Impacts.....	85
Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access	86
Treatment.....	87
Approved Treatment Cost	87
Stabilization Costs.....	87
Appendix	
Bibliography	89
Supplemental Information	90

Executive Summary

General Introduction to the CLI

The Cultural Landscapes Inventory (CLI) is a comprehensive inventory of all historically significant landscapes within the National Park System. This evaluated inventory identifies and documents each landscape's location, physical development, significance, National Register of Historic Places eligibility, condition, as well as other valuable information for park management. Inventoried landscapes are listed on, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, or otherwise treated as cultural resources. To automate the inventory, a web-based, national CLI database was created in 2005. The "Web CLI" provides an analytical tool for querying information associated with the CLI.

The CLI, like the List of Classified Structures (LCS), assists the National Park Service (NPS) in its efforts to fulfill the identification and management requirements associated with Section 110(a) of the National Historic Preservation Act, NPS Management Policies (2001), and Director's Order # 28: Cultural Resource Management (1998). Since launching the CLI nationwide, the NPS, in response to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), is required to report on an annual performance plan that is tied to 6-year strategic plan. The NPS strategic plan has two goals related to cultural landscapes: condition (1a7) and progress on the CLI (1b2b). Because the CLI is the baseline of cultural landscapes in the National Park System, it serves as the vehicle for tracking these goals.

For these reasons, the Park Cultural Landscapes Program considers the completion of the CLI to be a servicewide priority. The information in the CLI is useful at all levels of the park service. At the national and regional levels it is used to inform planning efforts and budget decisions. At the park level, the CLI assists managers to plan, program, and prioritize funds. It is a record of cultural landscape treatment and management decisions and the physical narrative may be used to enhance interpretation programs.

Implementation of the CLI is coordinated on the Region/Support Office level. Each Region/Support Office creates a priority list for CLI work based on park planning needs, proposed development projects, lack of landscape documentation (which adversely affects the preservation or management of the resource), baseline information needs and Region/Support office priorities. This list is updated annually to respond to changing needs and priorities. Completed CLI records are uploaded at the end of the fiscal year to the National Center for Cultural Resources, Park Cultural Landscapes Program in Washington, DC. Only data officially entered into the National Center's CLI database is considered "certified data" for GPRA reporting.

The CLI is completed in a multi-level process with each level corresponding to a specific degree of effort and detail. From Level 0: Park Reconnaissance Survey through Level II: Landscape Analysis and Evaluation, additional information is collected, prior information is refined, and decisions are made regarding if and how to proceed. The relationship between Level 0, I, and II is direct and the CLI for a landscape or component landscape inventory unit is not considered finished until Level II is complete.

A number of steps are involved in completing a Level II inventory record. The process begins when the CLI team meets with park management and staff to clarify the purpose of the CLI and is followed by historical research, documentation, and fieldwork. Information is derived from two efforts: secondary sources that are usually available in the park's or region's files, libraries, and archives and on-

site landscape investigation(s). This information is entered into CLI database as text or graphics. A park report is generated from the database and becomes the vehicle for consultation with the park and the SHPO/TPO.

Level III: Feature Inventory and Assessment is a distinct inventory level in the CLI and is optional. This level provides an opportunity to inventory and evaluate important landscape features identified at Level II as contributing to the significance of a landscape or component landscape, not listed on the LCS. This level allows for an individual landscape feature to be assessed and the costs associated with treatment recorded.

The ultimate goal of the Park Cultural Landscapes Program is a complete inventory of landscapes, component landscapes, and where appropriate, associated landscape features in the National Park System. The end result, when combined with the LCS, will be an inventory of all physical aspects of any given property.

Relationship between the CLI and a CLR

While there are some similarities, the CLI Level II is not the same as a Cultural Landscape Report (CLR). Using secondary sources, the CLI Level II provides information to establish historic significance by determining whether there are sufficient extant features to convey the property's historic appearance and function. The CLI includes the preliminary identification and analysis to define contributing features, but does not provide the more definitive detail contained within a CLR, which involves more in-depth research, using primary rather than secondary source material.

The CLR is a treatment document and presents recommendations on how to preserve, restore, or rehabilitate the significant landscape and its contributing features based on historical documentation, analysis of existing conditions, and the Secretary of the Interior's standards and guidelines as they apply to the treatment of historic landscapes. The CLI, on the other hand, records impacts to the landscape and condition (good, fair, poor) in consultation with park management. Stabilization costs associated with mitigating impacts may be recorded in the CLI and therefore the CLI may advise on simple and appropriate stabilization measures associated with these costs if that information is not provided elsewhere.

When the park decides to manage and treat an identified cultural landscape, a CLR may be necessary to work through the treatment options and set priorities. A historical landscape architect can assist the park in deciding the appropriate scope of work and an approach for accomplishing the CLR. When minor actions are necessary, a CLI Level II park report may provide sufficient documentation to support the Section 106 compliance process.

Park Information

Park Name: Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Administrative Unit: Golden Gate National Recreation Area
Park Organization Code: 8140
Park Alpha Code: GOGA

Property Level And CLI Number

Property Level: Component Landscape
Name: U.S. Coast Guard Fort Point Station Historic District
CLI Identification Number: 975275
Parent Landscape CLI ID Number: 725234

Inventory Summary

Date Data Collected: 11/18/2005
Data Collection: Timothy Babalis and Gretchen Stromberg
Date Entered: 2/14/2006
Data Entry Recorder: Gretchen Stromberg
Site Visit: Yes
Date of Concurrence: TBD

Landscape Description

The United States Coast Guard (U.S.C.G.) Fort Point Station is a five-acre historic district located in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area in California. It is sited within the boundaries of the Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark (NHL) along the protected waters of the San Francisco Bay. Several of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station structures were listed as contributing to the Presidio of San Francisco in the 1993 NHL documentation. This CLI establishes the significance of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station as an individual historic district with boundaries and periods of significance that are different than those established for the Presidio of San Francisco NHL. The 1993 NHL documentation for the Presidio identifies the period of significance from 1776 to 1945. For the purposes of the CLI, the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station period of significance extends from 1915 to 1964. This time frame includes the period of initial development at its existing site, until the time new lifesaving equipment was introduced that drastically altered the way in which the site was used.

The U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station contains structures associated with maritime transportation and early social and humanitarian efforts. The original Fort Point Lifeboat Station was built just east of the existing station in 1890 to come to the aid of ships stranded or wrecked at sea. The Station was moved in 1915 to make room for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. It has stood in its present location since 1915 with substantial additions and alterations being made throughout the period of significance. The major contributing features of the district include the 1890 boathouse, the Officer in Charge quarters, the 1915 boathouse, tide-gauge house, buoy shack, storage building, pier, breakwater, and concrete seawall. Additional features include a row of Canary Island date palms, lawns, footpaths, and driveways. Some features such as the juniper hedges and the Monterey cypress windbreak do not contribute but are compatible with the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station historic district. Other features such as the planters, accessible ramps, the entrance gate, and some of the foundation plantings do not contribute and are not compatible with the historic district.

Currently, the station is maintained in good working order by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the National Park Service. Most of the structures are used as office and educational space by NOAA and the buildings are maintained in fair condition. Overall, the district is in good condition and exhibits all seven aspects of integrity as defined by the National Register of Historic Places.

Those landscape characteristics that contribute to the significance of the proposed district include natural systems and features, spatial organization, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, and small scale features. The natural systems and features of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station provided an ideal location for lifeboat station. The gentle slope leading to the San Francisco Bay, the clear views of the entire north bay and the Golden gate, and the calm waters allowed for easier rescues. The remaining contributing buildings and structures display the evolution of the lifeboat station, including the original boathouse, the original Officer in Charge quarters, the newer boathouse, as well as the pier, breakwater, seawall, and outlying buildings. The footpaths and driveways from the original plan are still present although the vehicular access to the site was changed during the Crissy Field Redevelopment Project in the 1990s. Vegetation patterns such as rectilinear lawns, hedges, and Canary Island date palms are still present.

Cultural Landscape Inventory Hierarchy Description

As defined for the purposes of the CLI, the United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station Historic District is a component landscape of the Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark. The Presidio of San Francisco was determined to be an NHL in 1962. The NHL was updated in 1993 at which time the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station structures were listed as contributing. A cultural landscape inventory of the parent landscape (the Presidio of San Francisco) has not yet been conducted.

Location Map



Boundary Description

The U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station boundary is rectangular-shaped and includes all of the structures, circulation, and vegetation associated with the historic district (see site plan). Starting at the south corner at the intersection of Crissy Promenade and the easternmost driveway, the boundary travels northwest for 385 feet to the northwest side of the westernmost driveway. From here, the boundary veers right to the northeast. It travels for 648 feet into the San Francisco Bay. From this point, the boundary veers right and extends to the southeast for 245 feet. From here, the boundary veers right and extends to the southwest for 595 feet where it connects with the first point.

Regional Context

Physiographic Context

Located in the Presidio of San Francisco, U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station is a 4.66-acre district adjacent to and extending into the San Francisco Bay. The flat district abuts the Bay, providing easy access for the lifesaving crews to the water for rescue operations. Unlike the Point Bonita, Point Reyes, and Ocean Beach lifesaving stations, this station is located in the relatively sheltered bay waters as opposed to the rough Pacific Ocean.

Political Context

The U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station was operated under the Pacific Area U.S. Coast Guard until 1990 when it was transferred to the Presidio of San Francisco. In 1994, the Presidio was transferred from the U.S. Army to the National Park Service and became part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area. U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station is located in San Francisco County, California, Eighth Congressional District. The National Park Service maintains and manages the historic district in partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration which leases the buildings and pier for offices and research. The Gulf of Farallones National Marine Sanctuary (affiliate of NOAA) uses a portion of the boat house (structure no. PE 1903), the shop/garage (structure no. PE 1907) and the grounds as a visitor center and outdoor education for school groups.

Site Plan

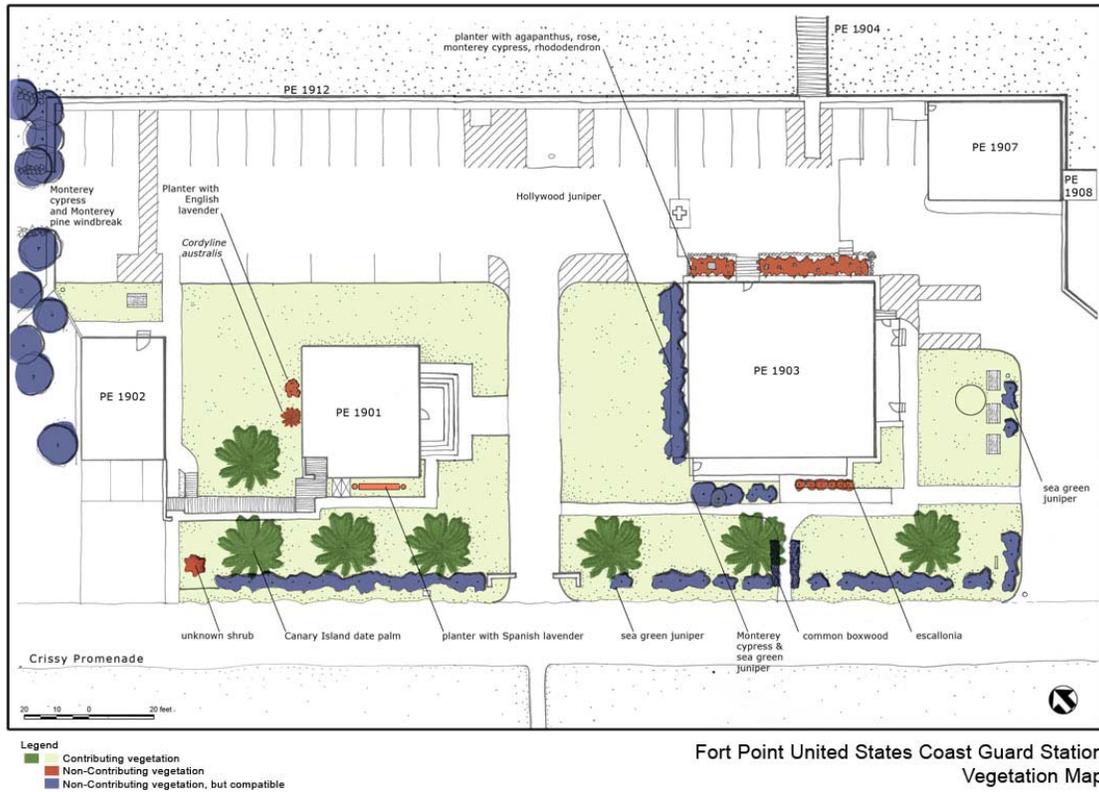


Site Plan No. 1: Boundary map.



Fort Point United States Coast Guard Station
Buildings, Structures, and Circulation Map

Site Plan No. 2: Buildings, Structures, and Circulation Map. Full-sized map is provided as supplemental information.



Site Plan No. 3: Vegetation Map. Full-sized map is provided as supplemental information.

CHRONOLOGY

Year	Event	Description
1886	Established	Fort Point Lifeboat Station is authorized by an act of Congress in June, 1886.
1888	Land Transfer	A permit for the construction of the station on the military lands of the Presidio of San Francisco is issued on January 21.
1889-90	Built	The contract for the construction of the Fort Point Station was awarded to a local San Francisco builder in February of 1889 and stipulated that the work be completed by September of that year. The builder, however, encountered unavoidable delays, so that the facility was not actually completed for another year.
1890	Developed	The Fort Point Lifeboat Station was completed on February 14. The original facility was comprised of the Keeper's Quarters (PE 1901), the original boathouse (PE 1902), and a 200-foot wooden launchway. The Keeper's Quarters included offices and living quarters for seven to eight seasonal employees in addition to providing permanent residence for the Keeper and his family.
1890	Built	A wooden fence is built around the facility in March to keep out grazing livestock. It was painted white.
1890	Built	A 20-foot wood-frame lookout tower was built a few months later on Fort Point. The Army provided a telephone line connecting this tower and the lifeboat station.
1890	Built	Two wreck poles appear in photographs dating from about 1900 and were probably erected shortly after the facility was completed. The larger of the two poles was at least 30-feet high and replicated a fully-rigged ship's mast, including three yards, a gaff boom, crosstree and stays. It was not in keeping with regulations. The other wreck pole was shorter and simpler, comprised of a single yard with stays and a small platform.
1895	Established	The lifeboat station received permission to lay a water main from near the end of Tonquin Street just outside the eastern boundary of the Presidio to supplement its water supply.
1895	Planted	Landscaping was introduced about this time. A photograph from about 1900 shows lush growth consisting of lawn around buildings and a tightly-pruned cypress hedge surrounding the entire facility on the landward side. A windbreak of conifers was planted along the seaward side of the station in front of the Keeper's Quarters and extended west to a point just short of the launchway.

Year	Event	Description
1890-1900	Built	Sometime between 1890 and 1900 several auxiliary structures were added to the station. These included a winch house (9.5 feet by 10 feet), which was attached to the landward side of the boathouse, a lamp room (16 feet by 16 feet), a storehouse (16 feet by 24 feet), and a wooden water tower. The lamp room and storehouse stood just east of the Keeper's Quarters. The water tower stood just west of the boathouse.
1907	Military Operation	The Life-Saving Service begins using motor lifeboats about this time. Fort Point is one of the first stations to receive one of the new boats.
1913	Neglected	A report dated this year noted that the boat launchway was buried under as much as 5 feet of sand and had not been used for many years. Because of this, boats were kept moored in the water and taken to Point Bonita Lifeboat Station when they needed to be serviced out of the water.
1914	Planned	Andre Fourchy, Superintendent of Construction for the Life-Saving Service, drew plans for a new facility at a proposed site 700-feet west of existing site. Plans included a new two-story boathouse and dormitory, 55 feet by 55 feet. Fourchy completed the drawings by November of that year.
1915	Established	The U.S. Coast Guard is created by an act of Congress on January 20, 1915. The new agency incorporates the Revenue Cutter Service and the Life-Saving Service.
1915	Altered	The Fort Point Lifeboat Station was renamed U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station No. 323. (The number would later change to 310). A few other changes in nomenclature occurred, most notably, the keeper becomes known as the Officer-in-Charge (and the Keeper's Quarters become the Officer-in-Charge Quarters, or simply the Officer-in-Charge Quarters).
1915	Moved	In early February the entire station was moved approximately 700-feet west to its present location in order to accommodate a new auto racetrack for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. The original Keeper's Quarters, boathouse, storehouse and water tower was preserved and moved. The Keeper's Quarters were reoriented so that they face east.
1915	Built	A wooden bulkhead was constructed along the seaward side of the new site about 150-feet below the mean high water line. It had wings extending about fifty feet on either side and was backfilled to create a level drill ground. This was completed by the middle of February.

Year	Event	Description
1915	Moved	The original small wreck pole was moved to the beach just west of the bulkhead.
1915	Planned	The existing circulation pattern of roads and footpaths was completed by the middle of February.
1915	Built	A flagpole (PE 1915) was erected in the middle of the entry path directly in front of the Officer-in-Charge Quarters entrance. It may have been the original large wreck pole.
1915	Built	Two-inch water mains from the city water supply were laid out by the middle of February.
1915	Built	A three-track, 400-foot marine railway on steel pier bents was constructed at the new site by engineers of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition. This was completed by the middle of February.
1915-1919	Built	The main pier (PE 1904) was built adjacent to the marine railway.
1915	Planted	Landscaping was introduced by the end of the year consisting of lawn and a low hedge (species unknown), but little else.
1915	Built	By the end of the year, a new two-story boathouse and dormitory, measuring 55 feet by 55 feet, was constructed at the new site (PE 1903). This corresponds to the structure proposed by Fourchy in 1914.
1915	Moved	The original boathouse (PE 1902) was moved to the east end of the new site and converted to a garage. It may also have been reoriented so that its main boat doors now opened onto Marina Drive to the south.
1915	Built	A small hen house was constructed just east of the relocated, old boathouse.
1917	Military Operation	Coast Guard was transferred from the authority of the Treasury Department to that of the War Department and assisted Navy in World War I operations. The U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station was responsible for coastal defense and harbor patrol.
1919	Military Operation	Coast Guard reverted back to the authority of the Treasury Department at the end of the World War.

Year	Event	Description
1919	Developed	Army began using the old Exposition drill grounds adjacent to the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station as an aviation field.
1920	Land Transfer	Army requested that the Coast Guard move its station to make room for a new aviation field. Permission is granted to move the Coast Guard Station approximately one mile east to a new site adjacent to the Presidio Wharf, however the move was not performed because neither the Army nor the Coast Guard was willing or able to pay for it.
1921	Developed	A new Army aviation field was completed and officially named Crissy Field. The close proximity of the Coast Guard buildings to the runway would always be a source of concern to the pilots. Navigation lights were later installed on the roofs of both buildings PE 1903 and PE 1901 in an attempt to mitigate the danger.
1922	Planted	Young palm trees (<i>Phoenix canariensis</i>) are apparent in a photograph from this year and must have been planted no more than a year or two previously. (They are not present in a photograph from 1916).
1926	Demolished	The hen house and the water tower were both removed sometime between 1922 and 1926.
1926	Moved	The flagpole was moved to the wooden seawall, just north of its original location, sometime between 1922 and 1926.
1931	Military Operation	The 38-foot Cabin Picket Boat was introduced. Over 500 were built for the Coast Guard between 1931 and 1943, but the vast majority was manufactured during World War II for war-related duties. They were retired shortly after the war ended.
1932	Planned	Technical drawings are made of the Officer-in-Charge Quarters showing modifications to the rear which had originally been proposed by Fourchy in 1914. These include substitution of old kitchen and enclosed rear porch with a simple shed addition extending most of the length of the building with a door and steps on south side. The rear center dormer was also extended to meet flush with the top of the first story shed addition.
1935	Built	The concrete seawall (PE 1912) was constructed by this date, possibly a year or two earlier. It replaced the wooden bulkhead from 1915.
1935	Altered	The porch on the southwest (rear) elevation of the main boathouse (PE 1903) was enclosed sometime around this date.

Year	Event	Description
1938	Altered	The main pier (PE 1904) was drastically altered: it was reduced in width and a row of pilings were removed.
1938	Built	The buoy house (PE 1905) and the tide gauge house (PE 1906) were both constructed by this time at the far end of the main pier (PE 1904), which was built adjacent to the marine railway. The wooden breakwater (PE 1911) and mooring piles (PE 1917) were also built by this time.
1938	Planned	A detailed site plan, dated August 24, was created.
1932-1938	Altered	The site plan shows that the modifications to the Officer-in-Charge Quarters planned in 1932 were carried out. They must have occurred sometime between 1932 and 1938.
1932-1938	Built	The site plan also shows that two additional garages were added just west of the old boathouse (PE 1902). They must have been constructed sometime between 1932 and 1938.
1938	Moved	The flagpole was again placed in front of the Officer-in-Charge Quarters. This is where it stood in 1915.
1940	Platted	During a routine inspection of revocable licenses on its Presidio reservation, the Army discovered that the 1915 move undertaken by the Fort Point station was never properly documented. Specifically, the "metes and bounds" survey of the new site was not made. This survey was conducted a few months later.
1942-1945	Military Operation	During World War II, the Coast Guard was again transferred from the Treasury Department back to the War Department—as it was during World War I. U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station was primarily responsible for harbor patrol in San Francisco Bay. The 38-foot Cabin Picket Boat was used for this duty.
1942	Reconstructed	The original 1915 maintenance shop (PE 1907) at the head of the marine railway was replaced by the current structure. The new structure may simply be a reconstruction of the older one. It was reoriented so that its roof axis ran east to west, parallel to the shore, whereas the original structure was oriented north to south.
1942	Moved	The flagpole was moved once again from the plaza in front of the Officer-in-Charge Quarters to the seawall, and the widening of the driveway indicated in the 1938 site plan was removed so that the curbing was straight again. The flagpole was apparently moved during the war years in order to allow passage of vehicles to the old drill ground, which was used for parking and storage.

Year	Event	Description
1942	Neglected	With the drill ground being used for storage, the wreck pole was obviously no longer used for practice. It may have been abandoned much earlier than this. A report from 1934 mentions that the Fort Point crew was not able to drill properly because of inadequate space at their facility and that they would go elsewhere to practice.
ca. 1942	Built	Several additions were made just beyond the east boundary of the station. These include additional parking, a tennis court surrounded by cyclone fence, and a Quonset hut. It is not known whether these structures were associated with the Coast Guard station. The exact date of construction is unknown, but since they were constructed to serve war-time operations, a date from early in the war seems appropriate.
1944	Built	New curbing. The date "December 7, 1944" was inscribed on the west curb end of the easternmost driveway.
1942-1946	Moved	The old boathouse (PE 1902) was moved several feet seaward (north), so that it aligned with the Officer-in-Charge Quarters (PE 1901). This occurred sometime after 1938 but before 1945. The realignment may be associated with the new curbing dated December 7, 1944.
1942-46	Built	A sign made of steel poles was erected over the main driveway at the Marina Drive entrance. It read "U.S. Coast Guard Fort Point Station." The exact date is conjectural, but this structure may have been associated with construction of new curbing.
1942-1946	Altered	The porch on the southeast (side) elevation of the main boathouse (PE 1903) was enclosed sometime after 1942 but before 1946. It too may be associated with work dated December 7, 1944.
1952	Land Transfer	The Coast Guard requested and received permission from the Army to extend their property 150-feet east. This additional space was needed for a proposed "equipment and shop building."
1953	Demolished	The Quartermaster's Wharf, which stood just east of the Coast Guard station was demolished.

Year	Event	Description
1957	Built	A site plan shows several new structures built on the additional land transferred to the Coast Guard station in 1952. These include a "paint locker" just east of the maintenance shop (PE 1907) and a large "storage building" situated in the middle of the World War II-era tennis courts. A photograph from about the same time confirms these additions.
1958	Altered and Moved	The old wreck pole was truncated by this time, and was used to support an outdoor gooseneck lamp. It was moved a few feet south to its current location next to the old boathouse (PE 1902).
1958	Removed and Built	The World War II-era steel pole entry sign was replaced with a wooden post-and-lintel version.
1962	Preserved	All 1,400 acres of the Presidio of San Francisco, of which the Coast Guard Station is part, was designated a National Historic Landmark (NHL). This designation was based primarily on the earliest historical values of the property, which pertained to "Spanish Exploration and Settlement" and "European Colonial Exploration and Settlement."
1964	Military Operation	The U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station began using a new 44-foot steel-hulled motor lifeboat in 1963 or 1964. (The first 44-foot motor lifeboat, CG-44300, entered service at Yaquina Bay, OR in October, 1962). This vessel quickly became the Coast Guard's standard lifeboat, replacing the old 36-foot model.
1964	Abandoned	The marine railway ceased to be used because it could not accommodate the new 44-foot motor lifeboat. The new boats were kept moored at the boat dock.
1970	Military Operation	The U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station was temporarily deactivated and its resources were consolidated with the San Francisco Station on Yerba Buena Island. Because this increased the response time by 45 minutes the mouth of the bay, the idea was quickly scrapped. The Fort Point Station was reactivated less than two weeks later.
1971	Military Operation	The Coast Guard initiated an experiment using Air Cushion Vehicles (ACVs). These vessels traveled a few feet above the surface of the water on a cushion of compressed air. They were capable of speeds up to 75 mph. Two ACVs were detailed to the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station.

Year	Event	Description
1971	Built	In order to accommodate the experimental ACVs, a large metal hangar with concrete launch apron was built just east of the boathouse. Additional floodlighting and a new electrical hookup were also installed.
1972	Built	A secure parking lot to provide sixteen additional spaces for Coast Guard personnel was constructed on vacant land just west of the station boundary. Construction included asphalt paving over about one foot of red rock fill and cyclone fencing to secure the perimeter. No retaining wall was built on the beach side of the lot, and apparently the fill simply sloped down to the natural level of the beach.
1972	Established	The Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA) was established by Congress. The Presidio of San Francisco was included within its formal boundaries, however it was recognized that the NPS jurisdiction would not be activated until military ownership and use of the reservation ended (Public Law 92-589).
1973	Military Operation	The ACV experiment was discontinued and the ACVs were scrapped. The hangar was then used as storage.
1979	Demolished	The Coast Guard removed the now-deteriorated marine railway and adjacent catwalk. This action was done with the endorsement of the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and the NPS.
1979	Altered	In conjunction with the removal of the marine railway, the main boathouse (PE 1903) was remodeled. The boat doors and beach apparatus doors were removed and the apertures walled in. New fenestration was introduced, and the interior of the old boat bay was partitioned to make several living quarters. These actions were also approved by the SHPO, ACHP, and the NPS.
1983	Altered	The electrical system of the Officer-in-Charge Quarters (PE 1901) was upgraded and a picket fence and new entry way on the south side of the station—at Marina Drive—were added.
1983	Altered	New footpath to the main boathouse was added from Marina Drive.
1983	Altered	ADA ramps were added to the Officer-in-Charge Quarters and the main boathouse.

Year	Event	Description
1990	Military Operation	The U.S. Coast Guard deactivated its Fort Point station and transferred all activities associated with it to a newly-constructed facility on the north side of the bay at Fort Baker.
1989-1993	Preserved	The NPS updated the 1962 Presidio of San Francisco NHL documentation to establish a more comprehensive inventory of contributing sites, buildings, structures and objects. As a result of this update, the historic structures associated with Fort Point U.S C.G. Station were determined to contribute to the landmark.
1992-Present	Maintained	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) leases the main boathouse (PE 1903), the Officer-in-Charge Quarters (PE 1901), the storage house (PE 1907), the pier (PE 1904), the buoy house (PE 1905), and the tide gauge house (PE 1906) from the NPS.
ca. 1995	Moved	Fountain originally placed east of the main boathouse (PE 1903) was moved to the western-most driveway entrance off of Marina Drive.
1995	Military Operation	The Army deactivated the Presidio of San Francisco and transferred ownership to the NPS.
1996	Planted	NPS removed overgrown cypress hedge and replaced it with <i>Juniperus x media</i> , var. 'Sea Green.'
1996	Preserved	NPS GGNRA and Denver Service Center personnel begin <i>U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station draft Cultural Landscape Report</i> but do not finish it do to unavailability of funding.
1998-2000	Altered	The Crissy Field Redevelopment project (designed by Hargreaves Associates) removed automobile traffic from Marina Drive on the south side of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station converting the road to a multi-use pedestrian path. Vehicular access to the station was redirected to the west by breaching the concrete seawall.
1998-2000	Demolished	The ACV hangar was demolished during this period.
2005-2006	Planned	NOAA, in consultation with NPS, begins master-planning efforts for spaces used at the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station. The NPS begins to reexamine the 1996 <i>U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station draft Cultural Landscape Report</i> to help provide design guidance for the master plan.

Statement of Significance

General Statement

In 1962 the Presidio of San Francisco became a National Historic Landmark (NHL). In 1993, the NHL documentation was updated to include a list of contributing buildings, structures, and objects. This update formally recognized the Fort Point Coast Guard Station as a component of the Presidio of San Francisco and identified its principal surviving structures as contributing features. This Cultural Landscape Inventory is intended to supplement the 1993 NHL nomination by inventorying the landscape features and characteristics that contribute directly to this component district of the Presidio of San Francisco or constitute to its setting. This CLI is also intended to elaborate upon the unique history of the Fort Point Coast Guard Station and clarify how it is distinct from the larger historical context of the Presidio in which the station is geographically situated. The period of significance for the Presidio of San Francisco was identified by the NHL nomination as 1776 to 1945. This is extended to 1964 for the Coast Guard Station. This inventory also introduces several new contextual themes which were not included in the NHL nomination. These additional themes are justified by the unique history and mission of the Coast Guard at its Fort Point Station, which was significantly different from that of the Army at the Presidio of San Francisco.

Parent Landscape: The Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark

The National Historic Landmark documentation from 1993 noted that the "Presidio of San Francisco is the oldest Army installation operating in the American West and one of the longest-garrisoned posts in the country." [8-1]. The size and duration of this installation has resulted in a complex landscape in which many layers of history overlap in a relatively small geographical area. The NHL documentation goes on to explain, "The Presidio district is like a great landscape palimpsest, characterized by a rich and often dense overlay of resources from individual periods." [Sec. 8, pg. 3]. The complexity and diversity of the landscape is itself an important characteristic contributing to its unique historic value. Few places offer the opportunity to witness, in such close proximity, the military histories of the Spanish colonial, Mexican, and American national periods. As one of the U.S. Army's largest and most important garrisons, the Presidio of San Francisco has played a key role in nearly all of the country's military campaigns since the Mexican-American war of 1846-1848, when the garrison was acquired by the United States through conquest. These campaigns include the Civil War, most of the Indian wars in the West, the Spanish-American War, the Philippine Insurrection, the Mexican-Punitive Expedition, World War I, World War II, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and the first Gulf War in Kuwait.

Another factor contributing to the Presidio's unique historic value is its close relationship to San Francisco, and, in turn, San Francisco's regional importance in the American Far West.

The Presidio has been a primary and focal element of San Francisco's long ascendancy in the Far West; as the importance of the City has increased, so has the importance of the Presidio that has protected it and the Bay area beyond...The Presidio and the City of San Francisco are intertwined, most fundamentally through their sharing of a peninsula and through the Post's long-running function of guarding the entrance to the Bay. The reservation, now engulfed within the City, holds the most strategic position on the San Francisco Peninsula, commanding access and egress through the Golden Gate strait into San Francisco Bay. [Sec. 8, pg. 5]

San Francisco's position as a vibrant economic and cultural center has contributed to and augmented the importance of the Presidio by reason of association. But at the same time, the Presidio has contributed to San Francisco's own importance by protecting its vital resources and making it possible for the city to grow and flourish. This protection has not been limited to military defense but includes a range of other

services rendered by the Army and its various lessees at the Presidio. These include Army assistance during natural disasters, like the earthquake and fire of 1906; forest-fire air patrols conducted by Army pilots flying out of Crissy Field; medical care provided by the United States Public Health Service based at the Marine Hospital; and protection of commercial shipping provided by the aids to navigation and life-saving services of the U.S. Coast Guard.

The 1993 NHL update recognized the national significance of the Presidio of San Francisco under combined National Historic Landmark Criteria 1, 4, 5, and 6, explaining that,

The property is composed of a wealth of historic, architectural and archeological resources that collectively comprise a distinctive entity of exceptional historical significance (Criteria 4, 5, and 6), and whose archeological study can amplify our understanding of those periods and peoples underrepresented in the existing historical record. As a vast district entity, the Presidio possesses exceptional value in illustrating the history of the United States through its association with important historical events and its outstanding representation of patterns of national development through multiple periods (Criterion 1). [Sec. 8, pg. 7]

It also recognized the Presidio's national significance under combined National Register Criteria A, C, and D, which closely parallel the National Historic Landmark Criteria. Criterion A recognizes the district's association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of American history. Criterion C recognizes the district's embodiment of distinctive characteristics of several historic periods and methods of construction. And Criterion D recognizes the district's potential to yield valuable information through its historic archeological resources. The period of significance was listed as 1776 to 1945 (and 1951).

The NHL update identified several contextual themes and sub-themes in which the Presidio of San Francisco expresses its significance. The language and organization of these themes were drawn from NHL guidelines that preceded the 1993 revision of the National Park Service's thematic framework. The nomination's list was comprised of the following items:

- II. European Colonial Exploration and Settlement
 - A. Spanish Exploration and Settlement
- V. Political and Military Affairs, 1783-1860
 - I. Mexican War, 1846-1848
 - K. The Army and the Navy
- VI. Civil War
 - C. War in the West
- VII. Political and Military Affairs, 1865-1939
 - D. The United States Becomes a World Power, 1865-1914
 - E. World War I
 - F. Military Affairs not related to World War I or World War II, 1914-1941
 - H. The Great Depression and the New Deal, 1929-1941
- VIII. World War II
 - B. War in the Pacific, 1941-1945
- X. Westward Expansion of the British Colonies and the United States, 1763-1898
 - C. Military-Aboriginal American Contact and Conflict
- XVIII. Technology (Engineering and Invention)
 - E. Military (Fortifications, Weapons, and War Vehicles)

These themes all relate principally to Army military operations associated with the Presidio. The NHL acknowledged that several other themes might also be cited to describe activities and facilities associated with the Presidio that were not directly related to military operations. However, it declined to elaborate on these themes, writing that, "with regard to several other National Historic Landmark themes/sub-themes, there is not sufficient contextual information at this time to establish significance at the national level." [Sec 8, pg. 9]. Among these excluded themes are those which describe the life-saving activities of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station. In the language of the pre-1993 revision, these themes are comprised of the following:

- XIV. Transportation
 - B. Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures

In the language of the post-1993 revision, they are:

- II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements
 - B. Social and Humanitarian Movements: Emergency Aid and Health Care
- V. Developing the American Economy
 - T. Shipping and Transportation by Water: Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures

This Cultural Landscape Inventory proposes that the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station Historic District is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under these different themes and sub-themes than those previously offered by the NHL. Additional contextual information is provided to sufficiently determine the significance of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station in light of these themes and sub-themes.

Period of Significance (1915-1964)

This CLI also proposes using a separate period of significance for the Fort Point U.S.C.G.S. Historic District in order to more accurately reflect the historic reality of the Station as distinct from the Presidio. This proposed period of significance is 1915 to 1964. This period reflects a relatively continuous state of operations during which the physical character of the Fort Point Coast Guard Station and its landscape changed very little. Moreover, the existing structures and landscape retain sufficient integrity to convey the significance of this period. The argument might be made for pushing back the period of significance all the way to 1890, when the Fort Point station first opened under the Coast Guard's predecessor organization, the U.S. Life-Saving Service. Two of the buildings at the existing site date back to that time and have experienced only minor structural alterations since. But in 1915 the entire facility was moved approximately 700 feet, and in the process its constituent structures lost their original relationship to one another and to their immediate setting. This action seriously compromised the integrity of the early station, and existing conditions no longer convey the significance of that period. Also in 1915, the U.S. Life Saving Service experienced a profound change of identity when it was absorbed in the newly-created U.S. Coast Guard. The consequences of this reorganization were not immediately apparent but would eventually result in revision of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station's mission and the duties associated with it. The Coast Guard's close association with the Navy would require its small craft stations, like Fort Point, to devote increasingly more time and resources to harbor patrol and coastal defense work. Taken together, these factors argue persuasively for 1915 as the beginning of a distinct historical period for the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station.

The proposed terminal date for the Fort Point Coast Guard Station's period of significance is 1964. At that time the Coast Guard's new 44-foot motor lifeboat was introduced at Fort Point, causing operational

changes which would result in significant modifications to the facility and eventually require its abandonment altogether. The new lifeboat was too large to fit on the marine railway and had to remain moored in the water. As a result the railway ceased to be used from this date and was allowed to deteriorate. With the abandonment of the marine railway, the boathouse also ceased to be used according to its original design. These changes constitute a significant turning point for the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station and represent a break in its historic continuity which had extended since 1915. The terminal date for the Presidio's period of significance, as proposed by the 1993 NHL update, is 1945. This makes sense for Army operations and facilities at the Presidio, which experienced significant changes associated with the end of World War II. But the Fort Point Coast Guard Station experienced only minor changes in operation and virtually no change in physical structure at that time. Its period of significance should therefore extend beyond that of the Army Presidio and terminate only when events justify a break in its history—1964.

Criterion A

The Fort Point Coast Guard Station is historically significant at the state level under Criterion A for its association with events that have contributed to the broad patterns of American history. In this respect it may be understood within contextual theme *II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements*, sub-theme *B. Social and Humanitarian Movements: Emergency Aid and Health Care*. It may also be understood within contextual theme *V. Developing the American Economy*, sub-theme *T. Shipping and Transportation by Water: Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures*. These contextual themes are closely related in this instance, because the Coast Guard's life-saving mission helped (and continues to help) develop and maintain the American economy by ensuring relative safety and security in maritime transportation. The Fort Point Station's importance in this regard is directly related to the economic and commercial importance of San Francisco. This commerce was significantly threatened by the dangers of the difficult maritime approach to this port city, a situation which the Fort Point Station, in conjunction with other Coast Guard facilities, was designed to mitigate. Like the Presidio, then, much of the Fort Point Coast Guard Station's unique historic value derives from its close relationship to San Francisco.

Life saving stations were a response to maritime conditions unique to nineteenth century America. An increase in shipping during the first half of this century brought rising numbers of shipwrecks, especially in Massachusetts and along the coasts of New Jersey and Long Island, where two of the nation's most important maritime centers were located, Boston and New York. The relative lack of navigational aids—like accurate charts, signal buoys and lighthouses—compelled early mariners to sail close to shore so that they could use physical landmarks to orient themselves. Along much of the Atlantic seaboard, the land sloped at a very gradual angle into the water, so that sandy shoals were often present a long ways from the shore itself. Ships sailing close to the coast frequently grounded on these shoals, and their crews had to be rescued. For much of the nineteenth century this responsibility was left up to local volunteers, but as the problem only worsened with time, many legislators came to recognize the need for a more comprehensive and better-organized solution. In 1871 they finally succeeded in getting the federal government involved, and the Treasury Department created a life-saving branch within its Revenue Cutter Service. By 1878 the enormous value of this new institution was recognized, and it became its own bureau within the Treasury Department, the U.S. Life-Saving Service. The Life-Saving Service established permanently-manned stations at regular intervals along the coasts where shipping was present. Eventually, nearly 300 of these stations were built throughout the country. There were different types of stations, but nearly all were equipped with boats for reaching victims in the water and a "beach apparatus" for reaching victims from the shore. Crews were trained in a variety of life-saving techniques and first aid procedures and were required to stay in a high state of readiness at all times.

The topography of the Pacific Coast differed from the Atlantic in that much of it was composed of hard rocky shelves and fell steeply away into deep water. Ships were more likely to run aground only on points which extended far out into the ocean shipping lanes—like Point Arena or Point Reyes—or when they neared the shore as they approached or departed from a port. The Life-Saving Service responded to these differences by concentrating its stations on points and near harbor entrances. It also built more lifeboat, rather than life-saving, stations. A lifeboat station was designed specifically to accommodate the larger, heavier lifeboat, which the service used for providing assistance in deep water and in heavier seas. These stations had to be located in relatively protected, deep-water bays, and were frequently situated within a harbor itself.

In 1890 the Fort Point Lifeboat Station was built just inside the mouth of San Francisco Bay in order to provide assistance to vessels traveling through the treacherous waters of this narrow inlet. It cooperated closely with the Point Bonita Lifeboat Station, which was built in 1899 on the north side of the bay entrance, and also with the Golden Gate Park Life-Saving Station, which had been built in 1877 to patrol the southerly approach to San Francisco from outside the bay's entrance. The crew of the Fort Point Lifeboat Station distinguished itself almost immediately by their heroism and earned the gratitude and respect of the citizens of San Francisco. Only a year after the Station opened, the San Francisco *Examiner* wrote the following praise for its tragic attempt to save the crew and passengers of the sailing ship *Elizabeth*:

It is gratifying to note that the Life-Saving Station on this side of the channel showed no lack of promptness or courage on this occasion. The life-saving crew at Bakers Beach [Fort Point] put off for the scene of the wreck, but it was too distant to be reached by a lifeboat in the heavy sea that was running. The death of the captain of the station is much to be regretted, but it has done much to raise the Service in the esteem of the people.

The Fort Point Lifeboat Station would continue to distinguish itself over the years in numerous actions, both large and small, around the San Francisco Bay. It continued to perform the same duties for which it had originally been intended following its transfer to the Coast Guard in 1915 (after which the facility became officially known as the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station). During times of war, the station assumed the additional responsibility of providing harbor patrol for coastal defense. With the consolidation of Coast Guard life-saving resources in the area—the Point Bonita station closed in 1946 and Golden Gate Park closed in 1951—the Fort Point Coast Guard Station assumed even greater importance as the sole lifeboat facility guarding the entrance to San Francisco Bay. Changing technology eventually rendered the station obsolete, and the Fort Point Coast Guard Station was deactivated in 1990. However, the services it always rendered were still needed. They are now provided by larger, faster lifeboats operating out of a new Coast Guard facility at East Fort Baker and by helicopters operating from Coast Guard airfields.

Criterion C:

The Fort Point Coast Guard Station is also significant at the state level under Criterion C for embodying the distinctive characteristics of a landscape and architectural type associated with a particular period in American maritime history. A characteristic architectural and landscape style grew up around the stations of the U.S. Life-Saving Service and was carried on by the U.S. Coast Guard after 1915. That style was derived from a conscious emulation of existing domestic architectural styles, usually those popular on the East Coast, but was made distinctive by its adaptation to the specific utilitarian purposes of these life-saving institutions. Because the unique value of this architectural and landscape adaptation lies in its connection to the Coast Guard as an expression of that institution and its life-saving mission, this subject should be understood within contextual theme *V. Developing the American Economy*, sub-theme *T*.

Shipping and Transportation by Water: Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures. An argument might also be made for treating this subject as architectural and landscape sub-themes of contextual theme III. *Expressing Cultural Values*, but this further classification is not necessary and misses the more essential point of the *purpose* for which these landscapes were intended.

The earliest life-saving stations—for example, those built by the Massachusetts Humane Society—were utilitarian, wood-frame structures with no architectural styling or adornment. With the creation of the U.S. Life-Saving Service in 1871, the buildings became more substantial and elaborate. This was partially in response to the need to accommodate a larger, more permanent staff, but professional pride also played a role in determining the character of these structures. Nearly all of the facilities built after the 1870s borrowed their architectural motifs from contemporary domestic models. Many of the early stations were built according to the Stick or Eastlake style, which was popular during the first two decades of the Life-Saving Service. Colonial Revival, including the Dutch Colonial or Gambrel, became popular slightly later. The basic residential model was modified according to the specific needs of a life-saving or lifeboat station. Boat houses, for example, all needed a large bay on the ground floor to store and service the station's small craft. These bays had to be accessed through barn-like doors, which pierced most of the ground-floor wall on one or more sides. Usually there was a ramp of some sort attached on which the boats were conveyed to the water. With the later lifeboat houses, this launchway ramp was one of the most visually arresting features of the whole structure. Most boathouses had a living room or lounge adjacent to the boatroom on the ground floor and sleeping quarters on the upper floor. Another peculiarity of boathouses was the need for an observation deck or a watchtower. Many had either an open widow's walk or a cupola built into the roof peak. The Keeper's Quarters were closer to the typical residential house in design, but they too often had some distinctive features which betrayed their unique use. Many, for example, had cupolas like the boathouses.

These architectural elements were laid out in a simple but carefully designed and meaningful landscape. The boathouse was always, by necessity, oriented toward the water with which it communicated by means of a launchway. Launchways could range in complexity from a simple wooden ramp placed over the sand to the elaborate marine railways of the later lifeboat houses. All stations included a large open area for use as a practice area and drill ground. In many places this was the section of beach lying directly in front of the station, but some stations utilized an adjacent field for this purpose. A wreck pole always stood at one end of the drill ground. There was always a sharp contrast between the utilitarian purpose of a life-saving or lifeboat station and its domestic appearance. This was suggested in the architecture, as already described, but was emphasized even more strongly in a station's landscaping. Nearly every station took exceptional pride in laying out a residential-style garden and maintaining it meticulously. The quality of the garden and the care taken to maintain it were usually noted by the Office of Inspector, implying that this was an official, if largely unregulated, standard throughout the service. Proximity to saltwater and heavy winds usually restricted how elaborate a station's garden might be and limited its choice of plants to the more hardy variety of shrub, like cypress and juniper. A crew might also adorn its garden with non-vegetative features. The Fort Point Station, for example, included a variety of elaborate sculptures and fountains.

When the Coast Guard inherited the facilities of the U.S. Life-Saving Service, it generally preserved the architectural and landscape traditions of its predecessor. The new boathouse (bldg. PE 1903) designed by Andre Fourchy at the Fort Point Coast Guard Station in 1914, for instance, differed from the other buildings in specific style rather than general intent. Like the earlier structures, this building was designed to emulate currently-popular architectural styles, particularly those from the East Coast. The Fourchy addition did not retain the specifically Dutch Colonial elements of the original buildings, but it nonetheless remained decidedly Colonial Revival. The reconfiguration of the Fort Point Station

following its move in 1915 introduced an emphatically designed character to the landscaping surrounding it. With the Officer-in-Charge Quarters (bldg. figure 1902) now reoriented to face the boathouse, an open plaza was created between the buildings. The centrality of this plaza was emphasized by the flagpole which temporarily stood in the middle of it. Secondary plazas mirrored each other on either side of the grounds, at least in the original Fourchy plan. This symmetry was largely effaced when the old boathouse (PE 1902) was placed in the middle of the westerly driveway, blocking the projected plaza on that side, but a hint of the neoclassical pattern of Fourchy's original plan always remained and is still evident. The rectilinear layout of paths and driveways, for instance, is rigidly neoclassical in concept. Plantings would always be sparse at the Fort Point Station, largely because of environmental constraints, but the addition of palm trees (*Phoenix canariensis*) in the early 1920s was a creative response to this limitation and gave the station one of its most distinctive landscape characteristics.

Integrity

The present-day Fort Point Coast Guard Station possesses integrity of location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association and conveys its significance from the period 1915 to 1964. The essential design and configuration of the station was established when the facility was moved to its present location in 1915. All of the major buildings associated with this date remain intact and relatively unchanged. The main boathouse (PE 1903) suffered a major renovation in 1979, when its boat doors and beach apparatus door were removed in order to convert the ground floor boat bay to residential quarters and offices. These renovations, however, were done thoughtfully, and the original feeling of the building was retained. The new ground floor walls were clad in shingles that matched the rest of the building's wall cladding, and the new fenestration was in keeping with that from the original structure. Moreover, these changes may be reversible, as the Coast Guard was instructed by the National Park Service in 1978 to preserve and store the original boat doors. Whether it did so or not, however, is presently unknown. The basic configuration of the vegetation as it was proposed in 1914 is similar to the original plan, though many individual plants have been replaced. The plan, however, is still preserved in existing drives and pathways.

Two changes have occurred since the end of the period of significance which compromised the integrity of the Fort Point Coast Guard Station. The first of these was the removal of the marine railway in 1979. The second was the breaching of the seawall in 2000 and the reconfiguration of vehicular circulation patterns associated with this action. Despite these changes, the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station retains overall integrity.

Physical History

Introduction

The original Fort Point Lifeboat Station originated in 1890 as a lifeboat station of the U.S. Life-Saving Service, prior to the creation of the U.S. Coast Guard. It was one of several similar stations built along the approach to San Francisco Bay during the late nineteenth century for the purpose of assisting mariners in these treacherous waters. The Life-Saving Service built nearly 300 stations throughout the country. Lifeboat stations were distinguished from the much more common life-saving stations by the fact that they specialized in the heavy lifeboat. Most were situated in relatively protected waters near the entrance to major harbors. Life-saving stations tended to be situated on remote coastlines and usually employed a lighter surfboat. This distinction became blurred after the widespread introduction of motor lifeboats during the first two decades of the twentieth century. Fort Point was always a lifeboat station and possessed the classic characteristics of that sort of facility. In 1915 the newly-created U.S. Coast Guard absorbed the Life-Saving Service. Most of the old lifeboat and life-saving stations continued operations under the administration of the new agency with little change for the first generation of the Coast Guard. Throughout much of the twentieth century these stations continued to provide assistance to mariners in distress. With time, however, new technologies and changing mission priorities greatly altered the nature of these stations and the type of equipment they used, until modern conditions eventually made most of them obsolete. The Coast Guard continues to provide life-saving services in and around San Francisco Bay, but it now uses helicopters and powerful motor lifeboats to fulfill its duties. It closed the Fort Point station in 1990 and transferred all motor lifeboat operations to a new facility on the north side of the bay at East Fort Baker. Ownership of the Fort Point facility passed to the National Park Service in 1995 when the Army deactivated its Presidio reservation on which the Coast Guard station was located. The Park Service currently leases most of the old Coast Guard buildings out for office and classroom space.

Historical Background

Origins of the Life-Saving Service (1807-1877)

Life-saving stations were a response to maritime conditions unique to nineteenth century America. An increase in shipping during the first half of that century brought rising numbers of shipwrecks, especially in Massachusetts and along the coasts of New Jersey and Long Island, where two of the nation's most important maritime centers, Boston and New York, were located. The relative lack of navigational aids—like accurate charts, signal buoys and lighthouses—compelled early mariners to sail close to the shore so that they could use physical landmarks to orient themselves. Along much of the Atlantic seaboard, the land slopes at a very gradual angle into the water, so that sandy shoals are often present a long ways from the shore itself. Ships sailing along the coast frequently grounded on these shoals and their crews had to be rescued. Ironically, the tendency to sail close to the shore was often greater during bad weather, because navigators could not use the stars to establish their position and had to rely almost exclusively on terrestrial landmarks. Prior to the advent of steam power at the end of the nineteenth century, ships were also more vulnerable to the vicissitudes of wind and current and could more easily be swept off course and into land. If a wooden ship grounded on an exposed shoal or beach during a storm, it could be battered to pieces in a matter of hours, and the crew would have little chance of getting ashore alive without help.

Volunteer Life Savers

The response to this problem was incremental, growing only slowly in proportion to the gradual increase in the number and severity of wrecks. A few individual tragedies brought attention to the need for some system of assistance. Not surprisingly, the earliest measures were taken on the Massachusetts coast near

Boston, since Boston was one of the nation's earliest major ports. The Massachusetts Humane Society, established in 1785, began building simple huts on the more remote stretches of coastline in the 1790s. These unmanned shelters were supplied with caches of food, warm clothes, and firewood for use by survivors of shipwrecks. But so few people ever managed to get to shore once their ship had wrecked in these northern waters that the need for a more active form of assistance eventually became obvious. The first true life-saving station was established in 1807 by the Massachusetts Humane Society near the town of Cohasset on the Atlantic coast south of Boston. The Cohasset facility was supplied with a surfboat and equipment for rescuing mariners in distress. The station was not manned by a resident staff but by volunteers from the nearby town. By 1845 the Society had established eighteen more of these volunteer stations along the Massachusetts coast. As welcome as these stations were, they fell far short of providing the level of assistance most critics felt was needed. Many people, including several legislators, believed that only the federal government had the necessary resources to provide adequate measures and should therefore intervene. By the 1830s Washington grudgingly began to respond to this pressure.

The federal government had actually been involved in maritime assistance since as early as 1789, when the U.S. Lighthouse Service was created. In addition to providing a vital aid to navigation, lighthouse keepers frequently helped mariners who were shipwrecked in the vicinity of their stations. The federal government eventually made supplies and equipment available to lighthouse keepers to support this work, but it was never acknowledged to be one of the official responsibilities of the lighthouse service. In 1837 the government became more actively involved in life-saving when Congress authorized federal revenue cutters to patrol the coastlines during the winter storm season. [1] The Revenue Marine Bureau had been established in 1790 within the Treasury Department. [2] In 1848, in response to the appeals of New Jersey congressman William A. Newell, Congress appropriated a sum of money—about \$10,000—to provide surf boats and associated apparatus for equipping coastal life-saving stations. These stations were built and supplied by the Revenue Marine but subsequently turned over to a local community to be manned and maintained by untrained volunteers. [3] The system was no different from that which the Massachusetts Humane Society had established. Nobody was officially responsible for ensuring the upkeep of the stations or for training their volunteer staff, and the quality and effectiveness of each life-saving station varied dramatically. Most were less than satisfactory.

The inadequacy of these measures became apparent in 1854, when a severe storm swept the East Coast. In response to the loss of life and property which resulted, Congress appropriated money for more stations and equipment. More importantly, it allocated funds to employ full-time keepers at each station and two superintendents to oversee the entire system (which was still limited to the coastlines of New Jersey and Long Island). This was a decided improvement over the *status quo ante*, but the crews who manned the boats were still volunteers, and the station keepers had to raise these men from nearby communities whenever a disaster occurred. Usually it was too late by the time a crew was assembled.

The U.S. Life-Saving Service (1878-1915)

For awhile it seemed like the prospects for a better life-saving system were improving with federal involvement, but the Civil War distracted the government, and the life-saving program fell into neglect from the late fifties through the end of the sixties. But in 1870 a devastating winter storm season drew attention to the problem once more. In 1871 Congress officially established a life-saving branch within the Revenue Cutter Service and voted that “...the Secretary of the Treasury may establish [life-saving stations] on the coasts of Long Island and New Jersey for affording aid to shipwrecked vessels thereon, and furnish such apparatus and supplies as may in his judgment be best adapted to the preservation of life and property from such shipwrecked vessels.” [4] This legislation merely formalized activities which had been going on in an *ad hoc* manner for nearly thirty years, and little might have changed except for the efforts of the newly-appointed chief of the Revenue Cutter Service, Sumner I. Kimball. Kimball made

the life-saving activities of the Revenue Cutter Service his principal task and personal obsession. He immediately organized a survey of existing facilities and prepared a highly-critical report on the less-than-satisfactory findings. At Kimball's instigation, steps were taken to replace the volunteer crews of the coastal life-saving stations with professional, full-time staffs. He established rigorous standards of professional conduct for these men to follow, introduced a manual of training and drill, and set up a centralized administration to provide oversight and accountability for the new organization. By 1878 Kimball had persuaded Congress to reorganize the entire life-saving branch of the Revenue Cutter Service as a separate entity within the Treasury Department. It was known from then on as the U.S. Life-Saving Service. Kimball became its first—and only—general superintendent, holding that position for the duration of the Service's active existence. A Board on Life-Saving Appliances was also established in 1882 to assist with the development and procurement of appropriate technology for the new Service.

The U.S. Life-Saving Service expanded rapidly during its relatively short existence. By its peak in 1915, a total of 280 stations existed on coastlines throughout the continental United States. These stations were divided into three categories: life-saving stations, lifeboat stations, and houses of refuge. The first of these categories, the life-saving station, was the original model established on the northeastern coast. These facilities were usually located on remote stretches of beach and staffed by a resident keeper and crew of between six and eight men. The crew manned small, lightweight boats that were launched directly into the surf. Life-saving stations were originally manned only during the storm season for about four months every year. The duration of this "active season" might vary from place to place. Over time, it was gradually increased, and some life-saving stations eventually began keeping their staff on hand all year long. On the West Coast, where heavy fogs made summer nearly as dangerous as winter, the Life-Saving Service was allocated enough funds to maintain a year-round staff in 1883. Keepers had always resided full-time at the life-saving stations, and most facilities provided a house specifically for the keeper and his family.

The second category, the lifeboat station, was an adaptation to conditions more common on the West Coast and the Great Lakes. In these places the shoreline tended to be more rugged with fewer beaches than the eastern seaboard, making the lightweight surfboat unnecessary or inappropriate. Instead, the much heavier lifeboat was used. These vessels were more stable in heavy seas and could operate further from shore, but they had to be launched by mechanical means directly into deep, sheltered water. Many lifeboat stations were actually built directly over the water on pilings. They were equipped with davits or a marine railway for launching the boat. Unlike the generally remote life-saving stations, lifeboat stations tended to be placed near major ports, often within the harbor itself or in a protected cove adjacent to the harbor entrance. Most lifeboat stations also possessed at least one surfboat.

The final category, the house of refuge, was only built in Florida and on the Gulf Coast, where milder conditions made the need for active rescues less common. In concept the house of refuge was much like the original shelters established by the Massachusetts Humane Society, but these were occupied year round by a keeper and his family and were generally more substantial. They provided food and shelter for survivors of shipwrecks.

Life-saving Technique and Equipment

The mission of the Life-Saving Service was not only to rescue mariners but to help prevent shipwrecks in the first place. Stations maintained a twenty-four hour watch over their designated service area. One man always stood watch at the station itself, positioned in a tower or in a cupola on top of the boathouse. During stormy or foggy weather, a patrolman would also walk along the coastline for a distance of one and a half to five miles in either direction. These men carried a type of flare, called a Coston signal, which they would use to warn ships in danger of approaching too near the coast. In effect, the patrolman

was like a moving lighthouse. The Coston signal was also used to alert the station lookout in case of emergency. A signalman of the U.S. Army Storm Signal Service was assigned to the life-saving stations to provide weather information to passing ships. Signals were transmitted by means of flags.

In the event of a shipwreck, surfmen had basically two means of providing assistance. They could either bring the victims ashore using equipment collectively known as the beach apparatus. Or they could try to reach the victims by boat and carry them back to shore. The first of these methods was employed only when the wreck was near the shore. It was done by firing a weighted shotline over to the wreck from a small cannon called a Lyle gun (named after its inventor, Lt. David A. Lyle of the U.S. Army). The shotline was carefully aimed so that it would fall across the mast or superstructure of the stricken vessel, where the vessel's crew could retrieve it. This shotline was used to haul out a much heavier rope, or hawser, which was tied securely to the mast of the ship. The life-saving crew secured the other end to a beach anchor, which was buried in the sand. The hawser was elevated as high as possible on a wooden crotch to get it off the sea, and a device for carrying people was sent out on a pulley. The most common carrying device was the breeches buoy, a simple harness that held one individual at a time, but occasionally a lifecar was used. The lifecar resembled a small boat with a domed, sheet-metal roof. It was entered through a water-tight hatch in the top and could hold as many as eleven people.

As the name implies, the beach apparatus could only be used when a ship was grounded relatively near the shore on a beach or sandy shoal where a rescue by breeches buoy or lifecar could be executed. The apparatus could not be used if the ship were wrecked more than six hundred feet out—the maximum range of the Lyle gun—or if it was wrecked off a shoreline that was too rugged or steep for the lifesavers to access with their heavy apparatus. In these instances, the life-saving crews had to rely on boats to execute a rescue. The Life-Saving Service used two categories of small boats. The first, the surfboat, was a relatively lightweight craft that could be hauled down the beach by its crew and launched directly into the surf. The design of this vessel had evolved from a variety of similar types used commercially on the northeastern seaboard, including the beach skiffs of fishermen on the New Jersey coast and the whale boats developed at Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. The typical surfboat used by the LSS was open and shallow-drafted, ranged from twenty-three to twenty-seven feet in length and weighed just under half a ton. Surfboats were often equipped with airtight compartments, making them insubmersible, but were usually not designed to be self-righting or self-bailing. The surfboat was kept in a boat house which stood directly on the beach above the highwater line. Garage-like doors swung out toward the ocean, and the crew would haul the boat down to the surf on a wheeled carriage. In a few places horses were used to pull the carriage.

The other type of boat commonly used by the Life-Saving Service was the lifeboat. This craft was as much as eight times heavier than the surfboat, but was considerably more seaworthy and could operate much further from the shore. The lifeboats used by the Life-Saving Service were taken from an English design, first invented in 1785 by a London carriage-maker and developed to its mature form by about 1852. [5] The English lifeboat was a relatively large, double-ended, deep-drafted craft. It was pulled by oars but could also be sailed. Most importantly, it was insubmersible and possessed the capacity to self-right and to self-bail. Self-righting was achieved through the addition of a heavily-weighted false keel and air-tight compartments. The compartments kept the vessel buoyant at all times, while the false keel concentrated the bulk of the vessel's weight beneath the hull, so that it would always return to an upright position. Self-bailing was achieved through a system of one-way valves placed within scuppers in the bottom of the hull. Another characteristic of these boats was their extraordinary strength, which was needed in order to survive the strain of heavy seas. In 1873 the United State Life-Saving Service—still part of the Revenue Cutter Service at this date—acquired its first lifeboat from an English manufacturer. By 1876 a slightly modified version of the English boat was being built for U.S. service in New York.

This basic design remained standard for the duration of the Life-Saving Service with only a few modifications. In 1891 the overall length was increased to thirty-four feet, and in 1907 a motorized version was introduced using a gasoline-powered engine. The motorized lifeboat was increased to 36 feet to accommodate the new equipment. Slightly later versions added a small compartment amidships for the helm.

Unlike the surfboat, a lifeboat could not be hauled to the water by hand. Those in use by the 1890s weighed about four tons. Instead, they had to be launched by mechanical means. In some instances, lifeboat houses were built directly over the water on piers, and the boats were lowered through a trap door. Much more common, however, was the marine railway, which was in widespread use by the end of the 1880s. [6] This system appears to have evolved naturally from the method of launching surfboats down a beach. The first modification was the addition of an inclined wooden launchway from the boathouse to the water. This facilitated the passage of the much heavier lifeboat carriage as it traversed the sand. Eventually steel rails were added to help accommodate the increased weight even better. Boats were moved up and down these launchways with a cable attached to their carriage and driven by a hand-powered cargo winch. Sometime around 1904 the hand-powered winch began to be replaced with a gasoline-driven version.

The inherent difficulty of conducting a maritime rescue as well as the complexity of the equipment involved, meant that the life-saving crews had to practice regularly in order to be able to perform their duties quickly and automatically under the most trying circumstances. The two most important drills, which were conducted regularly at every life-saving station, were the beach apparatus drill and the boat drill. Every Monday and Thursday the life-saving crews turned out their beach apparatus and practiced going through the entire procedure, from firing a shotline with the Lyle gun to bringing a crewmember back in on a breeches buoy. The drill was usually conducted along the beach in front of the station, where a "wreck pole" was permanently emplaced. The wreck pole was a simulated mast which was used as the target for the practice rescue. Crews were timed and had to be able to finish the entire drill in five minutes or less. On Tuesdays the life-saving crews practiced handling their boats. This included launching the surfboats and lifeboats and pulling at the oars for at least half an hour. Crews also practiced capsizing and righting their boats. These drills were held in all weather and could be as dangerous as an actual emergency. In 1890, for example, the Point Reyes Life-Saving-Station lost two surfmen during a Tuesday drill when their boat was capsized in heavy seas. On Wednesdays the life-saving crews practiced signals. They had to be proficient in wig-wag and in flag-hoists. Wig-wag was a type of code done with two hand-held flags, similar to morse code. Flag-hoists were a way of communicating using differently-marked pennants raised on a flagstaff or a spar. Each flag represented a different number or letter of the alphabet, and specific combinations of pennants had universally-accepted meanings. On Fridays the crew practiced first-aid; on Saturdays they cleaned and conducted routine maintenance around the station; and Sundays they had off. This routine was repeated every week without fail during the active season, unless it was interrupted by an actual incident.

Architecture

The earliest life-saving stations—for example, those built by the Massachusetts Humane Society—were utilitarian, wood-frame structures with no architectural styling or adornment. With the creation of the U.S. Life-Saving Service in 1871, the buildings became more substantial and elaborate. This was partially in response to the need to accommodate a larger, more permanent staff, but professional pride also played a role in determining the character of these structures. [7] Nearly all of the facilities built after the 1870s borrowed their architectural motifs from contemporary domestic models. Many of the early stations were built according to the Stick or Eastlake style, which was popular during the first two decades of the Life-Saving Service. Colonial Revival, including the Dutch Colonial or Gambrel, became

popular slightly later. The basic residential model was modified according to the specific needs of a life-saving or lifeboat station. Boathouses, for example, all needed a large bay on the ground floor to store and service the station's small craft. These bays had to be accessed through barn-like doors, which pierced most of the ground-floor wall on one or more sides. Usually there was an attached ramp used to transport the boats to the water. Most boathouses had a living room or lounge adjacent to the boatroom on the ground floor and sleeping quarters on the upper floor. Another peculiarity of boathouses was the need for an observation deck or a watchtower. Many had either an open widow's walk or a cupola built into the roof peak. The Keeper's Quarters were closer to the typical residential house in design, but they too often had some distinctive features which conveyed their unique use. Many, for example, had cupolas like the boathouses.

The U.S. Coast Guard (1915 to present)

In 1911 President William Taft's economic adviser, Frederick Cleveland, convened a commission designed to investigate and recommend ways to increase cost efficiency in government. One of the key conclusions of the Cleveland Commission was that agencies with a single, well-defined responsibility or function were far more efficient than those with multiple, diverse responsibilities. The Commission therefore recommended consolidating related responsibilities and functions within single agencies as much as possible. Among the opportunities it saw for such consolidation were the so-called "protection" responsibilities distributed among the Life-Saving Service, the Lighthouse Service, and the Revenue Cutter Service within the Treasury Department. The first two services were exclusively responsible for life-saving. The latter had a variety of duties, of which life-saving and protection were only one. The Commission proposed that the exclusively life-saving and protection responsibilities of the Revenue Cutter Service be combined with the Life-Saving Service and the Lighthouse Service in a single, uni-functional agency, while the remainder of the Revenue Cutter Service's responsibilities be assumed by other, existing agencies, for example, by the Navy Department.

These recommendations aroused jealousies in the Treasury Department, which did not want to lose its Revenue Cutter fleet, as well as resistance in the Navy, which did not want to assume responsibility for the Revenue Service's civilian personnel. A compromise was reached in which the Revenue Cutter Service and the Life-Saving Service were combined in a new military service which would operate under the authority of the Treasury Department except during times of war, when it would revert to the authority of the War Department (now the Department of Defense) and work with the Navy. The new agency was created by an act of Congress on January 20, 1915 and was called the U.S. Coast Guard. Captain Ellsworth Price Bertholf of the old Revenue Cutter Service was its first Commandant. The Lighthouse Service was later added in 1939.

The creation of the Coast Guard had one very immediate effect on the life-saving stations. Their crews now formally became military personnel. As far as the men of these stations were concerned, the most important consequence of this change was their eligibility for military benefits, including retirement. This was something the old Life-Saving Service had fought for in vain since its creation. Other consequences included the introduction of a formal military hierarchy and the relative duties and authority associated with each grade. Surfmen now received enlisted ranking. The number one (senior) surfman became a petty officer. Keepers became warrant officers. District superintendents and above became commissioned officers. A few minor changes in nomenclature also occurred. Most notably, the keeper became known as the Officer-in-Charge (and the Keeper's Quarters became the Officer-in-Charge Quarters, or simply the Officer-in-Charge Quarters).

The implications of these changes did not become apparent for the life-saving stations for another few years. Personnel remained essentially the same. Duties remained primarily coastal life-saving. But in

1917 the United States entered World War I, and the Coast Guard, consistent with the terms of its enabling legislation, was transferred to the Navy. As the service's revenue cutters crossed the Atlantic to assume escort duties in the Mediterranean and around the British Isles, the life-saving stations assumed the new duty of coastal-watchers, patrolling for potential enemy infiltrators and saboteurs. World War I began a process of militarization that continued even after the Coast Guard returned to civilian status in 1919. The role of coastal-watcher had to be maintained by the life-saving stations throughout the following decade when the Volstead Act introduced Prohibition and made it necessary to patrol for rum-runners and clandestine drop points up and down the coast. By the time Prohibition was repealed in 1933, the seemingly imminent approach of new political hostilities ensured that patrol work would remain a permanent part of the life-saving stations' duties.

By this time, the original purpose of the old Life-Saving Service was becoming increasingly anachronistic in other ways. Commercial disasters close to shore were now less frequent as a result of improved navigational aids. More importantly, the substitution of steam for sails at the end of the nineteenth century had made ships less susceptible to the vagaries of ocean currents and the wind. Shipwrecks still occurred, but they were less likely to happen in the near-shore zone that the original Life-Saving Service had been designed to protect. By the middle of the twentieth century, the majority of incidents to which Coast Guard life savers responded involved small pleasure craft rather than commercial ships. This, combined with coastal defense, occupied most of the life-saving stations' time by the end of the 1930s. Since these activities tended to be concentrated in or around major ports, rather than off remote stretches of beach, the Coast Guard began to consolidate its resources over the next few decades in those stations that already existed within or near harbors. The introduction of faster motor lifeboats and especially aircraft, which allowed life savers to respond effectively over greater and greater distances, was an additional impetus toward such consolidation.

World War II only reinforced tendencies which had been taking place since 1917. In 1942 the Coast Guard was again transferred to the authority of the Navy and resumed much the same duties it had undertaken during the First World War. The Coast Guard's cutters performed convoy escort while its life-saving stations performed coastal defense and harbor patrol. This need to balance multiple duties associated with the Coast Guard's combined military, law enforcement, and civilian life-saving responsibilities has remained characteristic of the service up to the present day. Only those stations which were able to combine and integrate all these aspects of the modern Coast Guard's diverse mission have survived into the twenty-first century. The majority have been consolidated in new, multi-functional facilities.

Origins of the Fort Point Lifeboat Station (1886-1915)

In June of 1886, the First Session of the 49th Congress authorized the Fort Point Life-Saving Station, and a permit for its construction on military lands of the Presidio of San Francisco was issued in January of 1888. A station was sorely needed as close as possible to the treacherous mouth of San Francisco Bay. The only other life-saving station in the area at that time was the Golden Gate Park Station, built in 1877 and located on Ocean Beach at the foot of Golden Gate Park. But this station was too far away to be of much help for any ship that came to grief on the shoals or rocky shoreline that bordered the narrow channel entering San Francisco Bay. Fort Point Station was the first to be built in useful proximity to this busy shipping lane. Later a second lifeboat station would be built on the north side of the Golden Gate just inside Point Bonita. [8] The contract for the construction of Fort Point Station was awarded to a local San Francisco builder in February of 1889 and stipulated that the work be completed by September of that year. The builder, however, encountered various problems ranging from bad weather, delays in

the supply of specified materials, and broken contracts with subcontractors, so that the facility was not actually completed until February 14, 1890. The contract for a wooden fence to surround the property was bid out separately and completed in March of that year. It was extended into the surf with barbed wire seventy feet on either side. The fence had proven necessary in order to keep wandering livestock out of the facility. [9] A few months after the completion of the station, the Life-Saving Service requested permission from the Army to erect a lookout tower on Fort Point. This was necessary in order to provide comprehensive visual coverage of the mouth of San Francisco Bay, the outer part of which was obscured from the station by Fort Point itself. The Golden Gate Park Life-Saving Station on Ocean Beach already maintained a lookout on the bluffs above Point Lobos, as did the Mercantile Exchange. These facilities provided good visual coverage of the Gulf of the Farallones, but were not able to observe vessels inside the Golden Gate itself. The Army granted permission to the Life-Saving Service, even agreeing to provide a telephone line between the lookout and the Fort Point Lifeboat Station.



History figure 1. This photograph was taken shortly after the station was completed in 1890. The photographer is looking northwest toward the Golden Gate. [10]

The original Station, as it appeared in 1890, contained only two buildings, a boathouse and the keeper's quarters. Its boundary was an irregularly shaped polygon 501-feet wide by 156-feet deep on the west end and 241-feet deep on the east. It was protected from the surf by a sheet piling bulkhead with a short wing at each end. This bulkhead elevated the station grounds from three- to five-and-a-half- feet above the

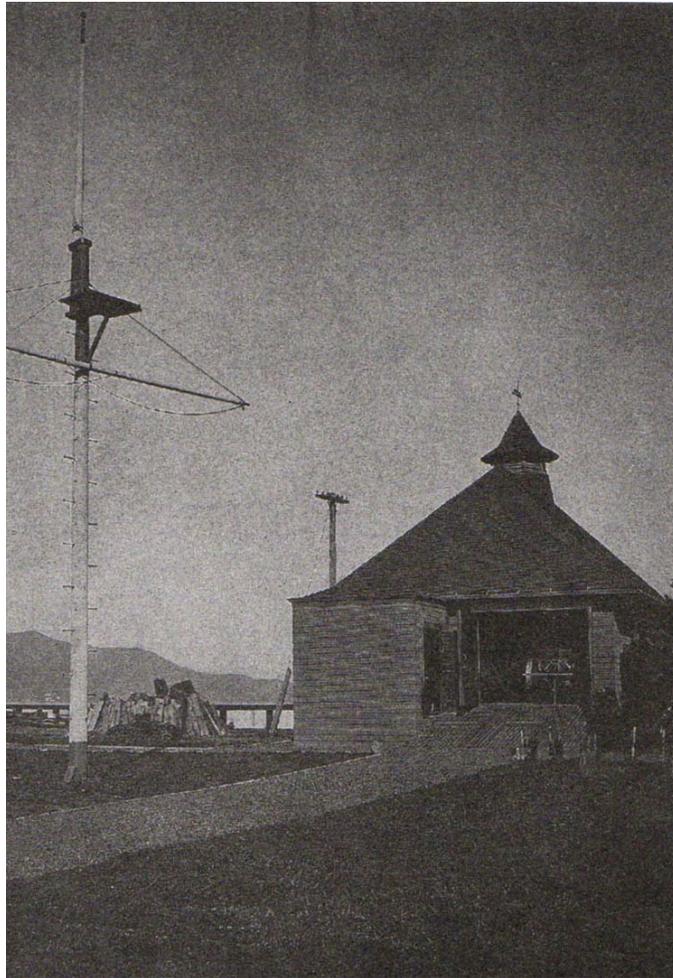
beach. Both of the original buildings are still extant, though they have been modified. Their architectural style is Dutch Colonial, which was then popular especially on the East Coast. The keeper's quarters originally had four rooms downstairs and three upstairs. But several additions were made over subsequent years, so that, by 1914, it had "... 7 rooms besides 2 pantries, porches and a bathroom on the first floor. The size of the original building, exclusive of porches was 41 ft. by 28'8". [11] The building had a gambrel roof with three gabled dormers on either side. A pair of corniced brick chimneys flanked a false widow's walk with a balustrade on the peak of the roof. In the front, an open porch with simple round columns faced the bay to the north. This porch had a balustrade across the top and could be used as a balcony. It was accessed through a door in the center dormer. An enclosed porch, also with a balustrade, was built to the rear, and beside it a large kitchen extended perpendicular from the main building about twice the depth of the porch. This extension was flat-roofed, with a balustrade across the top, and may have been accessible from a door in the southwest dormer so that it, too, could be used as a second-floor balcony. The original keeper's quarters functioned as the main dormitory and headquarters for the entire lifeboat station. During the active season it had to house a complement of at least seven surfmen in addition to the keeper himself. This explains the need for a separate addition to accommodate the kitchen, which would have had to be large enough to provide for the culinary requirements of the entire crew. The rest of the building was needed for living space. The extended kitchen would no longer be required when the building ceased being used as a dormitory after 1915, following the completion of a new boathouse and dormitory. The extension was eventually removed and the building transformed into a single-family residence for the keeper alone.



History figure 2. Photograph of the Keeper's Quarters (bldg. PE 1902) from about 1900. Note the established vegetation and garden ornaments. A hose bib is also visible, indicating the existence of an underground water main. [12]

The original boathouse stood west of the keeper's quarters approximately 200-feet. It measured 24 by 40 feet. Like the keeper's quarters, it was clad in rough shingle and painted a neutral red. Its steep, hipped roof with decorative cupola remains largely unchanged, but the original building had large, barn-like

doors opening both south and north. The south door was designed to provide access for the beach apparatus wagon. It extended only half the width of the building and was approached by a short, wooden ramp. A small winch room, measuring 9 feet 6 inches by 10 feet was later built beside it. A wooden sign with the painted inscription "U.S. Life Boat Station" hung over the top of this door. The north doors of the boathouse opened onto an inclined launchway which led down into the bay. The launchway was 200-foot long and built of wood planking suspended between pilings of "creosoted yellow fir." [13] The contractor originally made the launchway 30-feet too short due to an error in reading his plans. He later returned and added the missing length. This launchway was eventually fitted with a single three-rail track with switch and turn-out. The turn-out was a two-rail track designed to accommodate the surfboat. Both tracks were constructed of light-weight (60 lb.) flat galvanized iron rail. A hand-driven cargo winch was used to move the boats up and down the rails. [14] A technical drawing of a boat carriage dated 1895 proves that the railway system was being used at Fort Point by this date, if not earlier. [15] By 1914 the launchway had become unusable due to siltation which had buried the majority of its length under as much as five feet of sand. The 36-foot motor lifeboat, which was introduced in 1907, was being kept anchored in front of the station at that time. In its present state, the old boathouse has a pair of large, side-hinged doors opening south while the seaward side is walled off. This configuration dates from about 1915, when the building was moved to its present location and began to be used as a garage for the officer-in-charge. It is possible that the present southward-facing doors are the original boat doors and that the entire building was turned around in 1915 to face away from the bay. The original beach apparatus door would have been removed and the space filled in. Nothing remains of the original launchway, which was demolished in late 1914 or early 1915.



History figure 3. Photograph of the boathouse (bldg. PE 1902) from about 1900, looking north. Note the beach apparatus wagon just inside the open door. The winch room is just to the left of it. [16]

Two wreck poles were also installed at the original facility, though they do not appear until after 1890. The larger of the two stood on the beach just seaward of the keeper's quarters. It was at least 30-feet high and replicated a fully-rigged ship's mast, including three yards, a gaff boom, crosstree and stays. The complexity of this pole exceeded LSS regulations. It was probably used as a flagpole and signal staff as well (no other flagpole appears during this period). The other wreck pole was much simpler. It stood no more than 20 feet in height and included a single yard with stays and a small platform. It was located just south of the boathouse at one end of the grassy field separating the two buildings. The Fort Point facility also included a storeroom, 16 by 24 feet in dimension, and a lamp room, 16 by 16 feet in dimension. Both of these outbuildings stood east of the main building (keeper's quarters). On the west side of the boathouse was a wooden water tank which was elevated on a short tower.

By the end of the 1890s, the Fort Point Lifeboat Station was extensively landscaped with lawn and a border of cypress which was kept vigorously pruned in order to function as a border. This vegetation set the facility off in dramatic contrast to the surrounding dunes with their sparse native vegetation. The irrigation demands of these plants may explain why the lifeboat station needed to augment its water supply in 1895. In that year it requested permission from the Army to lay a water main across Presidio grounds from near the end of Tonquin Street. A photograph from about 1900 shows that the station

landscaping was already lush (see *history figure 2*). It also reveals at least one fountain and several hose bibs, which demonstrate that permanent, subterranean plumbing had been installed by this date.

Shipwrecks and Assistance I

The Fort Point Lifeboat Station had scarcely been in service for a year when its crew was called out on an especially trying incident. On February 21, 1891 the three-masted sailing ship *Elizabeth* was inbound from New York with a cargo of general merchandise, when she tried to enter San Francisco Bay in high seas with a strong southeasterly wind. Captain Colcord declined the assistance of a steam tug in order to save himself the cost. But his miserliness ended up costing him his ship and the lives of more than half his crew. For the *Elizabeth* encountered a powerful ebb tide as it entered the Golden Gate which, combined with the southeasterly wind, drove the ship northward past Point Bonita and onto the nearby shoals at Four Fathom Bank. Two steam tugs were nearly swamped trying to reach the *Elizabeth* in that exposed location. When the crews of both Fort Point and Golden Gate life-saving stations also tried to reach the *Elizabeth* in their heavy lifeboats, they too were overwhelmed. The Fort Point boat was nearly swamped and its keeper, Charles Stuart, was washed overboard and drowned. The two boats barely made it back to shore. Despite their exhaustion, however, and the loss of Keeper Stuart, both life-saving crews remained intent on somehow reaching the survivors of the *Elizabeth*, if there were any. By this time the *Elizabeth* had drifted north up the Marin coast, so the life-saving crews arranged to have themselves and their beach apparatus ferried across the bay to Sausalito by steam tug in order to reach the *Elizabeth* from the shore. After an arduous journey lasting nearly all night as the life savers pulled their apparatus over the steep hills of the Marin Headlands, they finally arrived on the coast only to discover that the *Elizabeth* was dashed completely to pieces. Eighteen of her twenty-six man crew, including the miserly captain, were dead. Although the entire incident seemed like a tragic failure for the Fort Point life crew, their heroism and determination made a deep impression on the public and did much to establish the reputation of the Life-Saving Service in the local area. On February 23, 1891, the San Francisco *Examiner* wrote:

"It is gratifying to note that the Life-Saving Station on this side of the channel showed no lack of promptness or courage on this occasion. The life-saving crew at Bakers Beach [Fort Point] put off for the scene of the wreck, but it was too distant to be reached by a lifeboat in the heavy sea that was running. The death of the captain of the station is much to be regretted, but it has done much to raise the Service in the esteem of the people." [17]

Not every incident was as frustrating and tragic for the life-saving crews as this. Two years after the *Elizabeth* came to grief, the iron-hulled propeller steamship *City of New York* struck the rocks just below Point Bonita lighthouse. The *City of New York* had been built in 1875 in Chester, Pennsylvania for the Pacific Mail Steamship Company. At the time, she was one of the most advanced ships in America's passenger fleet and among the first to replace the wooden-hulled sidewheel steamers that were still in use after the Civil War. On October 26, 1893, when she met her end at San Francisco, she was just embarking on a trans-Pacific cruise to Australia, China and Panama with a mixed cargo of general freight and 300 passengers. The tides that day were the highest of the month and the fog was worse than anyone could remember. The foghorn at Point Bonita was rendered practically useless, since its sound was deflected seaward and gave a false impression as to its source. The light was completely obscured by the heavy fog. The crew of the *City of New York* had no idea they were off course until the ship wedged itself firmly on the rocks at the north side of the bay. A contemporary account described the situation:

"City of New York met with disaster by a hair. So close was she from the cliff on which the light house stands it was possible to look down on the steamer's decks ... lights of the vessel were reflected in [the] stretch of water between the vessel and point of land. It did not look to be more than 500 feet out to the place where she was lying

and it could hardly be more than that distance from the rocks, as those which fringe the North Heads do not reach out more than 300 yards and beyond that is deep water. Indeed the light-house keeper said that if the steamer had passed 50 feet farther out from shore she would have cleared the rocks entirely."

The *City of New York* was mortally damaged by the impact, but the seas were relatively calm and the ship was in no immediate danger of sinking or breaking up. The Fort Point Station was able to evacuate all of her passengers and crew on their lifeboat without mishap. But the ship itself could not be pulled from the rocks and had to be abandoned. It was gradually picked to pieces by opportunistic salvors.

Two years later, during the worst storm of the season, one such group was still working on the *City of New York*. Captain Hamson had anchored his barge *Samson* alongside the sunken hulk and had been recovering bits of salvageable iron from it all year. The *Samson* had been built in 1890 specifically for the wrecking trade and possessed no motive power. It had to be towed into position by tugs and anchored in place. When the storm came up, the *Samson* dragged her anchors and began drifting toward the same rocks that had claimed the *City of New York*. The crew hoisted distress flags and blew the whistle on their deck engine but could attract no attention until the following morning. By the time the *Samson* was finally spotted by the Fort Point Station many hours later, her situation was dire. The station's crew arranged to have their lifeboat towed by the steam tug *Reliance* out to the site of the incident. By the time they arrived, all but four of the *Samson's* crew had abandoned the barge in small boats. One of these boats, containing two men, was lost. The other, containing eight men, was picked up by the Fort Point crew and transferred to safety. Three of the remaining four men managed to make it to shore and were rescued by the crew of the Point Bonita lighthouse. The fourth man drowned in the surf. The *Samson* was blown ashore in Bonita Cove and consumed almost entirely by a fire that probably resulted from her steam-powered deck engine being upended. One fact which the *Samson's* tragedy makes clear about early life-saving efforts was the limitation of hand-pulled boats. Although the Life-Saving Service's lifeboats were famously seaworthy, they depended on steam-powered tugs to get them where they were needed, especially in heavy seas. This situation would change dramatically with the introduction of gasoline power after the turn-of-the-century. [18]

Changing Technology

Sometime around 1907 the crew of the Fort Point Lifeboat Station received its first motor lifeboat. This was one of the first motor lifeboats in the service. The introduction of gasoline power had a profound effect on the Life-Saving Service. Not only was its range of operation increased, but its ability to respond in all types of weather was also markedly improved. The result was a dramatic increase in the number of persons saved. The Annual Report for 1911 noted that one year prior to widespread introduction of motor lifeboats, the average number of persons rescued was 2,158. [19] Over the subsequent four years, that number averaged 2,852. The first motor lifeboats were standard 34-foot self-bailing, self-righting lifeboats which had been refitted with a gasoline engine and single screw. This is probably the sort of vessel which the Fort Point crew received in 1907. Within a few years the original "E" series 36-foot motor lifeboat was introduced. This vessel was designed specifically for power. Though it went through various modifications, it remained standard for the next fifty years. The 1911 Annual Report goes on to note that only sixteen of the 36-foot motor lifeboats had been introduced as of that year, ten of these in 1911 alone. Forty-three of the refitted 34-foot lifeboats were also in service. The remaining motorized craft in service that year, numbering sixty-three, were all surfboats which had been refitted with small, eight-horsepower gasoline engines.

Shipwrecks and Assistance II

A few years later, in 1912, a minor incident of the sort which would become increasingly common for the Life-Saving Service illustrates some of the changes brought about by the introduction of gasoline power. On June 16 of that year,

While the crew of the Fort Point (Cal.) station were lying off Black Point, San Francisco Bay, in their power lifeboat on the afternoon of this date, keeping watch over numerous small craft that were taking part in a carnival, their attention was attracted to signals being made aboard a launch half a mile offshore and in mid-channel of the harbor entrance. The lifeboat crew immediately responded, passed a line to the launch, and towed it into Black Point Cove. [20]

With gasoline power, the lifeboats were able to act like tugs and actually tow stricken vessels into safety. This applied not only to small craft like the launch mentioned in this report, but also to much larger vessels. Another consequence of the introduction of gasoline power is suggested by the presence of the launch itself. Motorized pleasure craft like this one were becoming increasingly popular and common. Within a few decades they would account for the majority of incidents to which the life savers responded.

In 1914 the Fort Point crew participated in a response to what would prove to be the worst maritime disaster in the San Francisco Bay Area since the wreck of the *City of Rio de Janeiro* in 1901. [21] On November 22 the steamer *Hanalei*, bound from Eureka to San Francisco with a cargo of railroad ties and passengers, struck Duxbury Reef off Bolinas Point in a heavy fog. Since the *Titanic* disaster of 1912, all ships were required to carry ship-to-shore radios, and the *Hanalei* was no exception. The stricken vessel immediately radioed for help with its apparatus, and the life-saving stations at Fort Point and Point Bonita both responded. [22] The Revenue Cutter *McCulloch* also responded. The fact that Duxbury Reef was over thirty miles north of the Golden Gate, where both lifeboat stations were situated, testifies to the advantage provided by the new gasoline-powered motor lifeboats. Prior to their introduction it would have been impossible for any lifeboat station to respond to a call so far from its base of operations. As it happens, the motor lifeboats from Fort Point and Point Bonita were not able to render assistance to the imperiled survivors on board the *Hanalei* before the ship disintegrated the following night, because of the severity of the surf breaking over the reef. Fort Point's boat was capsized and its engines disabled, while Point Bonita's boat was forced to retire at nightfall after numerous failed attempts to reach the *Hanalei*. But another form of gasoline power did provide valuable assistance to the victims of the wreck at this point. The Golden Gate life-saving station, which did not possess a motor lifeboat, was able to respond to the incident when a motor truck was volunteered for its disposal and used to transport crew and beach apparatus to Bolinas mesa, from where 29 persons were brought safely to shore on lines shot from the station's Lyle cannon. Another 13 persons were rescued from the oily waters the following morning by the crew of Point Bonita's lifeboat. One person made it to shore alive, and was recovered by the crew of the Marconi wireless station, making a total of 43 survivors from a complement of 66. Twenty-three lives were lost in the disaster, and nothing remained of the *Hanalei* itself.

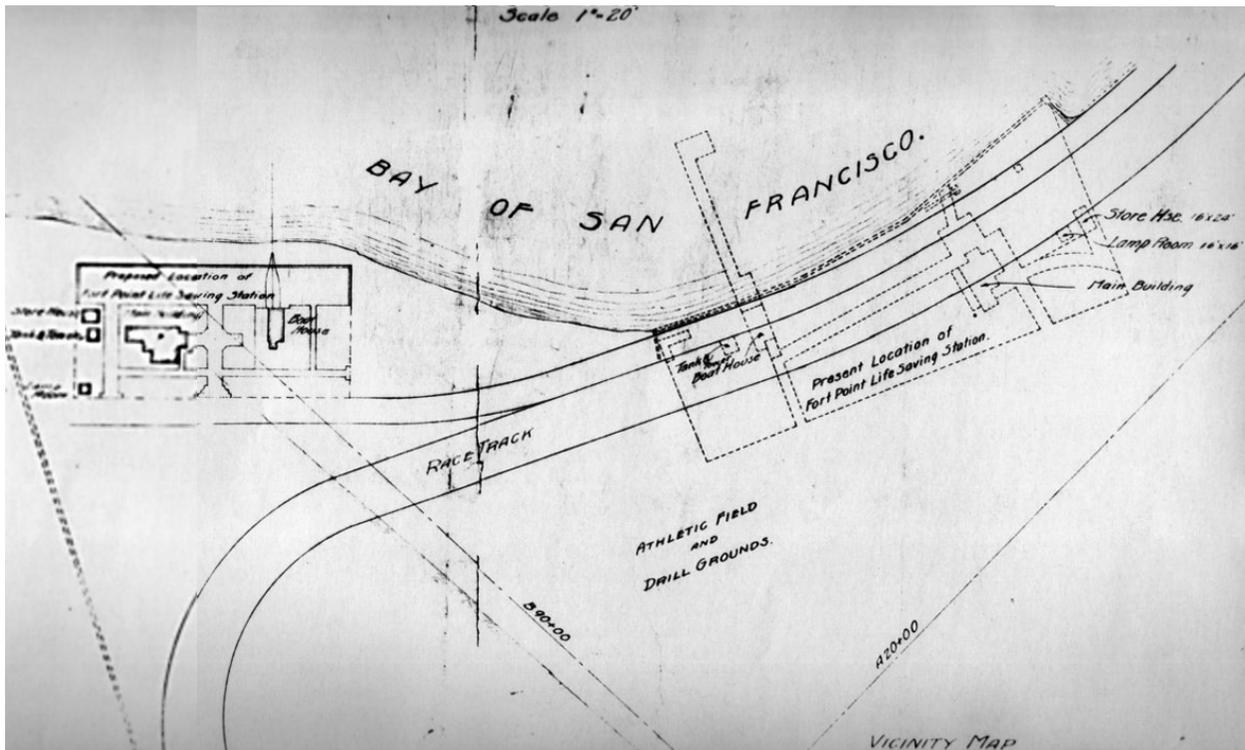
Rebuilding on a New Location (1915-1919)

The Panama-Pacific International Exposition

The year 1915 brought profound changes to the Fort Point Lifeboat Station. As already mentioned, the U.S. Life-Saving Service was absorbed by the Coast Guard in January of that year. During the same month this happened, the Fort Point Station was moved from its original location and shifted about 700-foot further west in order to make room for an auto racetrack. The racetrack was one of the features of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (PPIE), which would open in February. The exposition was conceived as a celebration of the Panama Canal, which was scheduled to open in 1915, and was intended to be an enthusiastic tribute to technological progress and the promise of the dawning twentieth century.

It would showcase new technologies, especially in transportation, as well as emerging trends in the arts and culture from around the world. It proved to be an ironic gesture, given the war that would concurrently devastate most of Europe, though this was hardly appreciated in the euphoria of the moment.

For San Franciscans, the privilege of hosting the Panama-Pacific Exposition had an immediate, local value, for it signified their city's recovery from the earthquake and fire of 1906. They consequently plunged into the task with enthusiasm expressed on a large scale. Six-hundred thirty-five acres of beach and wetlands along the city's northern shore were chosen as the site of the event. More than a third of this land lay within the eastern boundaries of the Army's Presidio reservation, including the windy beachfront on which the Fort Point Lifeboat Station sat. The Army agreed to make a temporary lease of this land, as well as eighteen acres at Fort Mason, in return for the right to retain any improvements which the Exposition Company might make. Since much of the land lay under water at the time and had to be reclaimed to be of any use, the Army rightly assumed that it would benefit from this arrangement, which would inevitably result in an increase in the usable acreage of its property. Beginning in 1912, contractors for the Exposition began the task of pumping more than 360,000 cubic yards of sand from the bay floor into the coastal wetlands and lagoons. By the time they had finished, some 184 acres had been filled and leveled. The Fort Point Lifeboat Station, which once sat on a narrow strip of beach called Strawberry Island, separated from the mainland by a lagoon and adjacent wetlands, was now on the edge of a broad plateau where a fantastic city of fanciful temples, art galleries and exhibition halls was quickly rising.



History figure 4. Map from 1914 showing proposed relocation of Fort Point Lifeboat Station 700 feet west of original site to make room for Exposition racetrack. [23]

The relocated station became officially known as U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station No. 323. (The number would change to 310 sometime after 1920). The new location was the site of the current facility, and the present configuration of structures and landscaping was more or less established at that time. The chain of events which culminated in the station's move began in 1912, when contractors for the PPIE first began draining the lagoon behind Strawberry Island in order to make room for the exposition ground. In connection with this operation, it became necessary to install a sewer to drain the water displaced from the infilling back into the bay, and the most practical location for this drain passed through the lifeboat station. A series of correspondence documents the exposition committee's application to the Life-Saving Service for permission to construct this sewer. In addition, permission was sought to install a pump and associated piping to draw saltwater back up from the bay to sprinkle on the exposition grounds to keep down the dust. This apparatus would also be situated within the boundaries of the lifeboat station. The Life-Saving Service seemed amenable to these requests, which were relatively trivial, but by the end of that year, it appears that the exposition committee's desires had evolved into a much more serious demand. A letter from the assistant superintendent of the U.S. Revenue Cutter Service, dated January 8, 1913, summarized a request made to him by the Director of Buildings and Grounds of the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, a Mr. H.D. Connick, in which the latter expressed his desire to have the lifeboat station moved "...to a site several hundred feet westward of its present location." The Assistant Superintendent explained Mr. Connick's concerns that,

...the present grounds interfere seriously with the race track, drill grounds and esplanade, as they butt directly against the eastern fence. [Mr. Connick] objects also to the appearance of the present station as being unsightly and not at all in harmony with the plans of the Exposition. By placing the station around the bend [of the race track] several hundred feet to the westward, it will clear the race track and esplanade, the latter running then directly in rear of the new station grounds. [24]

Despite the implied insult over the "unsightly" condition of its facility, the Life-Saving Service seemed willing to cooperate with the Exposition committee. The service realized that it might benefit from the move. This was due to the fact that the Fort Point Lifeboat Station really was in poor condition by that date and was sorely in need of upgrading. As noted already, the launchway had silted up and become unusable some years prior. Digging it out would provide only a temporary solution. A much longer structure was needed. The service also suspected that the present location of its facility contributed to the problem and that a more westerly location would be less inclined to silt up. But changing practices and the introduction of new technologies contributed more than anything else to the original lifeboat station's obsolescence. The larger motor lifeboats which had been introduced several years earlier required a more robust launchway in order to support their increased weight. They also took up considerably more space and required a larger boathouse for storage and maintenance. The Life-Saving Service had also increased the complement of its lifeboat stations and now required year-round staffing. The original Keeper's Quarters had been designed to accommodate only seven part-time staff in addition to the keeper and his family. It was no longer large enough. The Exposition committee's request to move the Fort Point station provided a convenient excuse to initiate the necessary upgrading. More importantly, it offered the opportunity to have at least part of the upgrading paid for.

By July of 1914, Sumner Kimball, General Superintendent of the Life-Saving Service, had expressed his assent to the proposed move, provided the government would incur none of the expense and that the new facility met LSS standards. In order to ensure the latter, the district superintendent of construction, Andre Fourchy, was asked to draw up plans and specifications for the proposed new facility. These were prepared in stages during the latter half of 1914. Preliminary specifications were ready by the middle of May, while complete engineering plans and elevations were not finished until November (Supplemental Information: Fourchy Plan). These documents, and associated correspondence, provide a detailed

baseline description of the Fort Point Lifeboat Station as it was initially constructed at the beginning of the period of significance. [25]

Fourchy's completed drawings show how he intended the new facility to appear. His plans included a new, two-story boathouse, measuring 55 by 55 feet. This would include dormitory-style accommodations for 12 crew members plus a private room for the No. 1 Surfman (or Chief Petty Officer, as he became known under the Coast Guard system). The Keeper (or Officer-in-Charge, as he became known) would have the entire Officer-in-Charge Quarters for himself and his family. This change in use was reflected in Fourchy's plans by the elimination of the large kitchen extension, which would not be needed in a single-family residence. This extension and the enclosed rear porch were both replaced by a simple shed addition which would extend about three-quarters the length of the building and end with a door and steps on its south side. The older wooden launchway was replaced by a more robust structure with marine railway supported on steel piers, or bents. It was nearly twice the length of the original launchway. A survey made in 1975 (just prior to its demolition) described it as follows: "Marine railway and westerly catwalk: rails on fifty-one 13" wide cast iron pile bents spaced 7-1/2' O.C. [on center] = 382' long, 3' wide wood catwalk on wood piling spaced 12' o.c..." [26]

Fourchy also proposed building two maintenance sheds just east of the top of the marine railway. One of these would accommodate a spur line for moving boats in need of repair off the main launchway track. The remaining auxiliary buildings were clustered on the west side of the facility, just beyond the O-in-C Quarters. They included a fuel house, garage, the water tower, and a hen house. These smaller structures were arranged to either side of a broad lane leading in from Marina Drive, and formed a small plaza between them in front of the hen house. A drill ground would be created on the seaward side of the O-in-C Quarters by building a wooden bulkhead, or seawall, about 150 feet beyond the mean high water line, then backfilling the protected space with sand topped with a 6-inch layer of macadam. This wooden bulkhead was understood to be a temporary measure, and the Life-Saving Service intended to replace it later with a more permanent concrete structure. (This was not done until sometime around 1935). The drill ground would extend lengthwise from the marine railway on the east to just beyond the cluster of auxiliary buildings on the west, a distance of about 250 feet. The wreck pole would be installed on the western end. The old boathouse does not appear at all in this plan, and presumably Fourchy was going to have it demolished.

Fourchy's plans were followed closely—but not exactly, and parts of his design had to be realized in stages. The most significant deviation from plan was caused by the Exposition's refusal to commit itself to building any new structures except the marine railway. Thus, Fourchy's most important proposed structure, the new boathouse/crew's dormitory, was not completed until the end of 1915, after construction was undertaken by the Coast Guard itself. The Exposition agreed to assume responsibility for the following actions only:

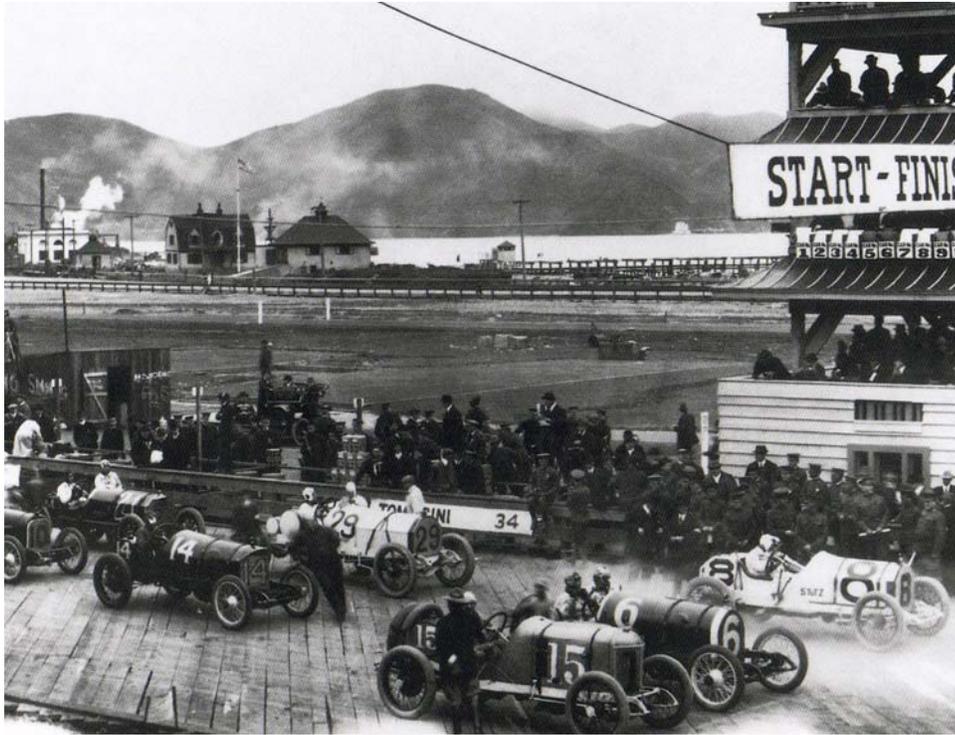
1. Erection of a wooden bulkhead around the seaward side of the new facility.
2. Laying of 2-inch water mains from city water supply.
3. Backfilling and grading of surface behind bulkhead.
4. Transportation of original buildings to new site.
5. Construction of new steel launchway with marine railway.
6. Grading of walks.
7. Landscaping.

This list also suggests the order in which each action was taken. Instead of building a new boathouse, the Exposition engineers laid out the footprint of the proposed structure but placed the original boathouse in its place, with the new launchway attached. The rest of the old buildings were also preserved and laid out more or less in keeping with Fourchy's 1914 plan. The O-in-C Quarters stood about 90 feet west of the

boathouse and were oriented so that the front porch now faced east toward the boathouse, rather than north toward the bay. A small plaza was created between the buildings and the flagstaff was placed in the middle of it. Interior remodeling of the O-in-C Quarters was not undertaken as Fourchy proposed, since the building still had to serve as dormitory and headquarters for the entire crew. Auxiliary buildings were placed west of the O-in-C Quarters along with the water tower. The proposed maintenance sheds were not built until after the new boathouse was completed (and then only one, not two, was constructed). Landscape plantings were probably introduced at this time but no evidence exists to establish this for certain. The present configuration of driveways and footpaths was established more or less as it exists today.

The Exposition planners may have had something to do with the orientation of the buildings in Fourchy's design, since the facility was to host open-house demonstrations and exhibits throughout the year. As a result, the Exposition planners wanted the boathouse to be readily accessible to the public while preserving privacy for the residential quarters. This may explain why the orientation of the two buildings was reversed. By February of 1915 all of these actions were complete, and the new facility was operational.

A photograph (*history figure 5*) of the opening of the 1915 Grand Prix auto race, the event for which the Exposition's wooden racetrack was built, shows the Fort Point Coast Guard Station in the background. [26] The race was held on February 27, one week after the Exposition opened, so work on the relocated Coast Guard Station must have only just been completed. The old boathouse can clearly be seen occupying the space intended for Fourchy's larger boathouse. The Exposition's large garbage incinerator is visible in the background to the west of the station. Like most of the Exposition structures, this building would have been demolished or removed shortly after the event closed, probably sometime in 1916. Its presence helps confirm the date of another photograph taken sometime later in which the new boathouse appears. This demonstrates that the new boathouse was completed within a year of the station's relocation. This same photograph shows that a few other deviations from Fourchy's 1914 plan also occurred. Rather than build a new structure for a proposed garage at the west side of the facility, the original boathouse was moved to the center of the western driveway and reoriented so that its main boat doors opened to the south onto Marina Drive. It now became the garage for the O-in-C Quarters. This configuration eliminated the small plaza which had been proposed in Fourchy's plan. The water tower was placed directly behind the old boathouse, and just beyond it was a fuel shed. This was probably the old 16 by 24-foot storage shed which had been moved from the original site by the Exposition. The hen house proposed in Fourchy's plan can be seen just west of the water tower. The smaller lamp room was either never relocated or had been demolished by this date. Despite the completion of the new boathouse and dormitory, the O-in-C Quarters were not immediately remodeled. The large kitchen extension appears in photographs as late as 1926 and probably remained until about 1932. Photographs from the early 1920s show other minor deviations from the Fourchy plan. Just east of the marine railway, for instance, a single, large maintenance shed was built instead of the two smaller ones proposed. This building was a simple gable-roofed structure oriented with its major axis perpendicular to the shoreline. [28] The proposed spur from the launchway to this shed was never built. Another minor deviation was the location of the wreck pole. The smaller of the two original poles was retained in 1915 as Fourchy intended, but it was installed on the beach *outside* the western boundary of the seawall rather than within it. This may have been done to increase the amount of space available for drilling with the beach apparatus. Inadequate practice space would always be a problem for the Fort Point crew after they were confined to their new location.



History figure 5. Photograph of start of Grand Prix on February 27, 1915. Fort Point Coast Guard Station in its new location is visible in background. The new boathouse has not yet been built. The exposition incinerator is just visible in the upper left corner. [29]



History figure 6. Photograph of Fort Point Coast Guard Station from late 1915. The new boathouse (bldg. PE 1903) is visible in background. This is the earliest known image of the new boathouse. Old boathouse (bldg. PE 1902) has been moved to present location and converted to a garage. Exposition garbage incinerator visible in left foreground. [30]

Service in Peace and War (1920-1964)

Crissy Field

The Fort Point life-saving crew had barely settled into their new facility when, amazingly, they had to start preparing for another move. Late in 1919 the War Department notified the Secretary of the Treasury, under whose authority the Coast Guard lay, that it needed the area currently occupied by the Fort Point Station. A series of correspondence passed back and forth between the two departments over the ensuing year, in which the Secretary of War reminded the Secretary of the Treasury that the lease which it had been granted for the lifeboat station was revocable. A copy of the original letter from January 21, 1888 granting a reservation of use was forwarded to the Treasury Department, with attention directed to the condition "that the land be vacated whenever needed by the War Department." Such need had now arisen. In June of 1919, executive staff at the Army's Presidio of San Francisco had selected the level area created by the Panama-Pacific International Exposition to be the site of its new Coast Defense Air Station. Most of the Exposition buildings had been demolished or moved by 1917, the year that America entered the First World War, and the extensive fair grounds lying within the Presidio's boundaries had been filled with temporary barracks to house the troops mobilizing for combat. With the

war's end, the Army now wanted to demolish these structures and create an airfield in their place. The Army included the Coast Guard Station in its demolition plans. It was feared that, were the buildings to remain in their existing location, aviators would be placed at risk trying to maneuver around them during take-off and landing.

The Secretary of the Treasury agreed to the War Department's request. In return, it asked for permission to occupy a new site about a mile further east near Presidio Wharf. The Army agreed to the request and offered to lease lands at Presidio Wharf under essentially the same terms as before. But the move never occurred. The Coast Guard was unable to pay for the move's expense, and the War Department was unwilling to do so. On June 24, 1921, the completed Air Coast Defense Station was opened. The airstrip was named Crissy Field, in honor of an Army aviator who had been killed in a test flight. And the Fort Point Coast Guard Station remained where it was—beside the dirt runway.

Between the Wars

A routine-inspection report of the Fort Point Coast Guard Station in 1934 offers a detailed view into life at the facility. The inspector's report revealed that many of the routines established during the old Life-Saving Service remained the same under the Coast Guard. [31] The surfmen were drilled in boat handling, use of the beach apparatus, signals, and first aid. In addition, however, the surfmen were also drilled in fire fighting and infantry practice, including the use of firearms, which were now regularly kept at the station. The latter was a decided departure from the old Life-Saving Service but was consistent with the Coast Guard's role as a reserve military force. The Coast Guard's charter stipulated that it would "operate as a part of the Navy, subject to the orders of the Secretary of the Navy, in time of war or when the President shall so direct." [32] This provision had already been invoked once during the First World War. Even though the Coast Guard reverted to its pre-existing status under the Treasury Department at the end of hostilities, its close collaboration with the Navy during those two years had transformed the character of the Coast Guard and permanently introduced a variety of military practices and duties. Lifeboat facilities like the Fort Point Station which were situated in or around major harbors were responsible for patrolling these harbors in the event of hostile activity. Fort Point Coast Guard Station in effect became part of San Francisco's coastal defense. The station's crew now had to balance the dual responsibilities of life saver and coastal picketman. This compounding of duties is illustrated by the types of boat which were kept at the station. In addition to a motor lifeboat and self-bailing surfboat, the inspector's report from 1934 also mentions a cabin picket boat. As the name implies, this type of vessel was used for patrol work and would not have been part of the usual complement of a Coast Guard station prior to World War I. [33]



History figure 7. Aerial photograph from about 1938. This view corresponds closely with the site plan drawn up that year. Note that old boathouse (PE 1902) has not yet been aligned with buildings PE 1901 and PE 1903. Maintenance shop (PE 1907) at head of marine railway shows original north-south orientation of roof. [34]

The interbellum was a relatively stable period for the Fort Point Coast Guard Station. Following its reconstruction in 1915 at the present location, only minor changes were made to the facility until after World War II. Sometime between 1924 and 1926 the hen house and water tower were removed. By 1926 a basic landscaping scheme was also introduced, the rudiments of which still survive. This included a grass lawn surrounding the Boathouse and the O-in-C Quarters, a cypress hedge along Marina Drive, and a row of palm trees just inside this hedge (the palm trees can be seen in photographs from as early as 1922). The most significant structural changes occurred sometime between 1932 and 1935, when the front porch of the Boathouse was enclosed. The O-in-C Quarters were probably modified at this time as well. A detailed site plan made in 1938 indicates that the old kitchen has finally been removed and the building remodeled according to the plan proposed by Andre Fourchy in 1914. [35] The center rear dormer was also extended so that it is flush with the outer wall of the shed below it. The 1938 plan shows a number of other modifications which occurred sometime between 1926 and 1938. During this period the wooden seawall was replaced with the present concrete wall. The flagpole was moved to the middle of the driveway in front of the O-in-C Quarters again (this is where it stood in 1915). And two small garages were added just west of the old boathouse.

World War II Operations

In 1942, when the United States entered World War II, the Coast Guard was transferred to the Navy Department as it had been during the First World War. Fort Point Coast Guard Station assumed responsibility for harbor security in San Francisco Bay, in addition to its usual life-saving duties. At least three 38 foot cabin picket boats were kept at the station to patrol the local waters. One such picket boat had been part of the station's complement since at least 1934.

A number of modifications were made to the Coast Guard Station during the war. These can be seen in photographs from the period. The flagpole was moved once more from the plaza in front of the O-in-C Quarters to the seawall, and the widening of the driveway indicated in the 1938 plan has been removed so that the curbing is now straight again. A sign made of steel poles was erected over the entrance to this driveway. The flagpole was apparently moved in order to allow autos to pass along the driveway from Marina Drive to the interior of the facility, where as many as fifty vehicles were now stored on the old drill field just seaward of the O-in-C Quarters. Obviously the wreck pole which still stood on the west side of the drill field was not being used at this time. Perhaps a change in duty responsibilities made practice with the beach apparatus no longer necessary or possible. Additional parking was also available in a small lot on the east side of the boathouse just beyond the seawall. A Quonset hut was erected on the east side of this lot, and just beyond that were tennis courts surrounded by tall cyclone fencing. Towards the end of the war—perhaps in 1945 or 1946—the porch on the east side of the boathouse was enclosed.

Post-War Consolidations

In 1952 the Coast Guard requested permission from the Army to extend its Fort Point facility by 150 feet on its eastern side. [36] It wanted this additional space for a proposed "equipment and shop building." In a letter from January of that year the Coast Guard's 12th district commander explained that the recent closures of Point Bonita and Golden Gate Park Lifeboat Stations placed a greater burden on the remaining Fort Point Station and therefore required an expansion of its facilities. (The Point Bonita Station had closed in 1946; the Golden Gate Park Station in 1951). This request (which was granted) demonstrates how dramatically the Coast Guard was consolidating its resources in the years immediately following the war. The Fort Point station was by this time the only life-saving station in the San Francisco Bay Area south of Point Reyes. [37]

A photograph from a few years later shows that a small, gable-roofed shed had been built just east of the older maintenance shop. The remainder of the area was being used for parking. Another, larger shed had been built on the World War II-era tennis courts, and the cyclone fence around these courts had been removed. These modifications are further illustrated in a Site Plan prepared in 1957. [38] On this plan the smaller shed is labeled "Paint Locker" and the larger structure "Storage Building." The old drill field on the seaward side of the O-in-C Quarters was apparently still being used for parking. The wreck pole has been truncated and moved southeast several feet closer to the garage. It was now being used to support a gooseneck outdoor lamp. The steel pole sign that stood over the entry drive during the 1940s has been replaced with a wooden post and lintel version.



History figure 8. Aerial view from north ca. 1958. [39]

Decline of the Fort Point Lifeboat Station (1964-present)

New Technologies and a Changing Mission

In 1963 the Coast Guard introduced a new 44-foot, steel-hulled motor lifeboat. Its first operational model, number CG-44300, entered service in October of that year at the Yaquina Bay Station in Oregon. The new vessel was more than just ten feet longer. It represented a dramatic modernization of lifeboat design and technology. It also represented profound consequences for the Fort Point station. [40] To begin with, the new boat would not fit on the marine railway and so had to be kept in the water more or less permanently. It was secured on mooring lines between the end of the boat dock and pilings—called "dolphins"—which stood just east of the dock. The marine railway ceased to be used from this date forward and was left to deteriorate. It was gradually disassembled over the ensuing years, the last of it being removed sometime shortly after 1978.

Another consequence of the new boat was longer in coming but would eventually result in the Coast Guard abandoning its Fort Point station altogether. Since the boats had to be left in the water, they were vulnerable to the weather and to the strong tidal surge which ran through the bay near Fort Point. Boarding the boats was also complicated and frequently dangerous. Crew members had to climb down to the deck on the mooring line, supporting themselves precariously on ropes. Mishaps were common, and a great deal of equipment had to be recovered from the floor of the bay (providing the life savers with plenty of diving experience). [41] How the boats were raised from the water when they needed to be serviced is not clear now that the marine railway was out of service. The boats may have been taken to a different facility. The smaller surfboat was now lowered from davits attached to the edge of the boat dock just west of the buoy shack.

As the inconvenience of this situation became increasingly apparent, the Coast Guard began to search for a new location for its lifeboat facility. In August of 1970 the Fort Point Station was briefly deactivated and its operations transferred to the San Francisco Coast Guard Station on Yerba Buena Island in the middle of San Francisco Bay. The new location was better protected and more convenient for the life-saving crews, but added forty-five minutes to any response near the entrance of the bay, which is where most incidents occurred. The Fort Point crews left Yerba Buena Island less than two weeks later and reactivated the old station. But the final demise of the Fort Point Station was only a matter of time.

Early the following year the Coast Guard began experimenting with a new type of boat technology. In January of 1971 two Air Cushion Vehicles (ACVs) were introduced to the Fort Point Station for a trial service. A metal hangar with a concrete launch apron was built just east of the boathouse. The ACVs traveled slightly above the surface of the water on a cushion of compressed air generated by downward-facing rotors. They were very fast—capable of 75 miles per hour—but they were also very expensive. When the pilot program's financing expired in June of 1973, it was not renewed. The Coast Guard preferred to invest its money in helicopters, which cost about the same as an ACV but had fewer operational limitations.

At this time the Fort Point Station had a full complement of nearly thirty personnel. An Installation Report from 1972 lists twenty-seven enlisted personnel, one officer-in-charge, one civilian temporary hire and three dependents (at least one of whom must have been the officer-in-charge's wife). This was twice the number of personnel who staffed the facility in 1934. Much of this increase probably occurred shortly after the war, when the Fort Point Station assumed responsibilities that had once been shared between four other stations. [42] The old facility was simply not able to house the increased number of personnel. By the seventies, it was noted that most of the staff had homes elsewhere and commuted to the station. This relieved the burden on the living accommodations but created a greater need for parking. In 1972 a new parking lot was constructed on vacant land just west of the station boundary to provide sixteen additional spaces for Coast Guard personnel. Construction included asphalt paving over about one foot of red rock fill with a cyclone perimeter fence surrounding the entire lot. No retaining wall was built on the beach side of the project, and apparently the fill simply sloped down to the natural contour of the beach. This parking lot was immediately protested by the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission. The commission was concerned about a number of issues in addition to the fact that it had not been consulted. These included the environmental effects of construction on the beach shoreline, the aesthetic and environmental effects of debris left in the parking lot, and restriction of public access to the beach. Apparently, these 250 yards of polluted shoreline represented one of the only public access beaches on San Francisco Bay in 1972 and had become popular among local residents. The Coast Guard commanding officer mollified public sentiment by having his personnel clean up the garbage from the area and by continuing to allow public access to the beach. The parking lot, however, remained. [43]

In 1974 the Coast Guard began making plans to remove the remainder of the now badly-deteriorated marine railway. It notified the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) of its intent. The SHPO responded with a letter approving of the Coast Guard's proposed action, offering its opinion that the action would have no adverse effect on the site, but it instructed the Coast Guard to prepare a formal "determination of no adverse effect" and forward this to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) in Washington, D.C. This was promptly done, and the ACHP concurred with the Coast Guard's determination in September of that year. While this decision may seem surprising in light of how integral the marine railway was to the historic function and character of the Fort Point Coast Guard Station, it is important to note how deteriorated the railway was by 1974. Its condition was noted in a survey made the following year:

The marine railway has not been used for over 15 years. It is in an advanced state of deterioration. All that is left of the railway itself are the pile bents. Only the easterly catwalk, which is in fair condition, is still required as access to the search and rescue boat dock. [44]



History figure 9. Photograph of deteriorated marine railway in 1978 shortly before its complete demolition. Photograph taken by Gordon Chappell—PWR Historian. [45]

By 1978, the Coast Guard had still done nothing with the marine railway. In an apparent excess of caution, it once more requested advice from the State Historic Preservation Officer. This second request may have seemed necessary, because the Coast Guard was now proposing further modifications in addition to just the removal of the railway. These would include:

1. Removal of remaining marine railway structure and adjacent catwalk.
2. Remodeling of boathouse in order to provide living space for as many as thirty personnel. The most significant feature of this proposed remodel was the conversion of the first-floor boat room into eight double-occupancy bedrooms. This required removing all three boat doors on the north side as well as the supply door on the west and filling in these spaces with solid walls. New partitions were to be built on the interior.
3. Removal of ACV hangar and construction of additional parking in its place.
4. Removal of World War II-era shop.
5. Rehabilitation of buoy shack at end of boat pier.

This time, the Coast Guard also consulted the National Park Service, and an historian from that agency visited the site that year. [46] The Park Service endorsed all of the Coast Guard's proposed treatments but recommended that the boathouse modifications be done in such a way as to be reversible. This would require preserving and storing the large boat doors once they were removed and building new walls

between existing load-bearing piers. Whether these recommendations were followed is not known. All proposed actions except number 4—removal of the World War II-era shop—were eventually carried out. [47]



History figure 10. Photograph of main boat doors with detail, taken in 1978 shortly before their removal. Photograph taken by Gordon Chappell—PWR Historian. [48]



History figure 11. Photograph of beach apparatus door with detail, taken in 1978 shortly before its removal. Photograph taken by Gordon Chappell—PWR Historian. [49]

Shipwrecks and Assistance III

In 1980 the wreck of the two ocean-going barges *Kona* and *Agattu* illustrates some of the dramatic changes which had been introduced into Coast Guard practice by this date. *Kona* and *Agattu* were massive, welded-steel barges that were designed to be towed by tugboat between San Francisco and Hawaii. Just minutes before midnight on New Year's Eve, 1979, as the ocean-going tug *Sentinel* was pulling *Kona* and *Agattu* out of the Golden Gate enroute for the Hawaiian islands, the towline on the *Kona* parted, and the hapless barge drifted out of control toward the rocks just north of Point Bonita, where it finally wrecked. Since the *Kona* was carrying primarily lumber and paper products, there was little danger—either to humans or the environment—from the detritus of its misfortune. Less than an hour after the *Kona's* demise, however, the *Agattu's* towline snagged in *Sentinel's* screw and was severed. Like the *Kona*, the *Agattu* now drifted to shore and wrecked on Cronkhite Beach. But unlike the *Kona*, the *Agattu* was carrying potentially dangerous cargo. It had thirty-five cylinders of chlorine gas, which, if ruptured, could produce a lethal cloud large enough to envelop much of the Bay Area. The Coast Guard

responded to the threat with helicopters, which successfully transported all of the chlorine gas cylinders to shore. The success of this operation demonstrates the profound changes wrought on Coast Guard operations with the introduction of aircraft, especially helicopters. Lifeboats continued to be used, but their operations would now be coordinated with those of helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft.

Although the number of commercial shipping disasters declined precipitously during the twentieth century as improved ship-board technology and aids to navigation made it much easier to avoid potential hazards, the possibility of disaster remains. This was dramatically illustrated in 1984 when the 34,000 ton supertanker *Puerto Rican* exploded just outside the Golden Gate. The cause of the explosion remains unknown. The tanker was loaded to capacity when the disaster occurred, and it burned for twenty-four hours before Coast Guard crews could finally subdue the flames. By this time the ship had split in two. The rear section sank, leaking its cargo of oil into the Gulf of the Farallones for years afterward. The forward section was stabilized and brought back to port, where its vitreous cargo could be removed. The magnitude of this wreck, as well as concern over the environmental consequences of its spilled cargo, indicate some of the changing priorities faced by the Coast Guard in more recent times. When the *Hanalei* wrecked on Duxbury Reef in 1914, the Life-Saving Service attributed its success in recovering at least some of the victims to the oil slick which calmed the roiling waters. It even suggested applying oil at future wrecks to facilitate rescue efforts. When the *Puerto Rican* went down, the chief concern was for containing the oil leaked by the vessel and mitigating its environmental consequences.

The Denouement

In 1983 the Coast Guard undertook renovations of the O-in-C Quarters and grounds. Although an Army memo from August 2, 1984 notes that the "Coast Guard has made rather substantial expenditures to renovate the Station and the Officer's-In-Charge Quarters," the full extent of this work seems to have been relatively minor. It included upgrading of the electrical system in the quarters and the addition of a picket fence and new entry way on the south side at Marina Drive. These renovations were documented in a site plan made just prior to their introduction. [50] The following year the Coast Guard proposed building a new breakwater and boat pier, which were expected to be completed about 1987. These projects were never undertaken. Instead, the Coast Guard deactivated its Fort Point Station in 1990 and moved all operations to a new facility located on Horseshoe Cove at East Fort Baker on the north side of the bay. This facility remains active at the present date (2006).

In 1962 the Presidio of San Francisco was established as a National Historic Landmark and in 1993, in anticipation of the Presidio's military deactivation, the NPS conducted a large-scale effort to update the NHL. This update provided detailed lists of contributing and non-contributing features. Most of the historic structures within the Fort Point Coast Guard Station were determined to contribute to this landmark, but the station's unique history and landscape characteristics were not fully documented or made clear at that time.

In 1995, the Fort Point station reverted to the National Park Service after the Army transferred the Presidio. Currently most of the grounds and structures are used for offices and classrooms by the NOAA under an Interagency Agreement and Use Permit, renewable at five-year intervals. As of this writing—2006—NOAA is undergoing master planning efforts for the facility.

Physical History Endnotes

1 In fact, Congress authorized "any suitable number of public vessels, adapted to the purpose," to patrol during the winter storm season. But since only the Revenue Marine's cutters were "adapted to the purpose" only they

- conducted these patrols. See Robert Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea: The United States Coast Guard, 1915 to the Present*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987), 4.
- 2 In 1863 the Revenue Marine became the Revenue Cutter Service.
- 3 To call the volunteers "untrained" might be unduly harsh, since most of these men were fishermen by trade and usually very competent with a small boat in local waters. The two greatest problems with the volunteer system were ensuring regular maintenance of the facilities and gathering a volunteer crew quickly enough during an emergency.
- 4 Quoted in William Wallace Johnson, "The United States Life-Saving Service," *The New England Magazine* 8.2 (Apr., 1890): 135.
- 5 Martha J. Lamb. "The American Life-Saving Service." *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 64.381 (February, 1882): 361; and Dennis Noble. *That Others Might Live: The U.S. Life-Saving Service, 1878-1915*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1994), 81-90.
- 6 Gebhard, David Gebhard and David Bricker. *The Former U.S. Coast Guard Lifeboat Rescue Station and Lookout Tower, Point Arguello, California (1936-1941)*. (Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service, Interagency Archeological Services, 1980), 8.
- 7 A comprehensive study of this subject was made by Eugene York in 1983. See his "The Architecture of the United States Life-Saving Stations." Master of Arts thesis, Boston University 1983.
- 8 The Point Bonita Life-Saving Station, built in 1899 and deactivated in 1946.
- 9 The low-lying region adjacent to the eastern border of the Presidio is still known as Cow Hollow. It derived its name from the number of small dairy ranches that operated in the vicinity.
- 10 GOGA park files, National Park Service, Pacific West Regional Office, Oakland, California.
- 11 From a description given by Sumner Kimball in official correspondence to Andre Fourchy, Superintendent of Construction, 13th Life-Saving District, San Francisco, CA, dated May 7, 1914. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC), GOGA-3088, F1/2.
- 12 Reproduced from Erwin N. Thompson, *Defender of the Gate: The Presidio of San Francisco, A History from 1846 to 1995* (San Francisco, CA: National Park Service, 1997), 820. Original owned by San Francisco Public Library. Print available at Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC). Permission of SFPL required if published.
- 13 The yellow fir mentioned by the contractor was probably Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*).
- 14 This winch was part of the original equipment requisitions made in 1890. Its presence, however, does not prove the existence of a marine railway at that date, since it could have been used to move boats on the earlier-style wheeled carriages, which did not utilize rails.
- 15 National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC), GOGA-2265, Folder 2 (OS).
- 16 Reproduced from Thompson, *Defender of the Gate*, 821. Original owned by San Francisco Public Library. Print available at Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC). Permission of SFPL required if published.
- 17 Quoted in *Report of the United States Life-Saving Service, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1891*. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1892), 76.
- 18 This account is not a complete record of incidents to which the Fort Point crews responded. Only a few of the station's more illustrative and noteworthy activities are here described.
- 19 *Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1911*. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1912), 21.
- 20 *Annual Report of the United States Life-Saving Service, for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1912*. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1913), 88.
- 21 The City of Rio de Janeiro, a passenger steamer of the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. (like the City of New York), struck rocks off Point Lobos in a heavy fog early on the morning of February 22, 1901. Since the vessel sank in less than ten minutes, there was no chance of a rescue attempt, and so the incident is not mentioned in relation to the Fort Point Lifeboat Station. The first who learned of the accident were the fishermen who were just then sailing out of the bay at the start of their day's labor. These boats were responsible for picking up the only survivors of the stricken passenger liner. 128 of a total 210 passengers and crew were lost on the City of Rio de Janeiro. Most of them never made it to the deck before the ship went down.
- 22 It is unfortunate for the Hanalei that the Bolinas Bay Lifeboat Station was no longer in service. It had been deactivated in 1885 after the facility burned down. (Keeper George Gibson was suspected of arson). Had the

Bolinas station still been active, a more rapid response might have resulted in the rescue of all the passengers and crew on board the Hanalei.

23 National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC), GOGA-3088, folder 1/2.

24 Official Correspondence, Assistant Inspector, U.S. Revenue Cutter Service to General Superintendent, U.S. Life-Saving Service, January 8, 1913. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC), GOGA-3088, folder 1/2.

25 Full-scale plans available at Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center, GOGA-2265, folder 2.

26 Proceedings of a Board of Survey, June 24, 1975; Survey No. 12-277-75; USCG Records, Real Property Branch, 12th CG District, Alameda, CA.

27 Since the Life-Saving Service had now become the U.S. Coast Guard, the station will be referred to by its new name from here on.

28 The structure presently on this site is oriented with its major axis parallel to the shore.

29 Reproduced from Stephen A. Haller, *The Last Word in Airfields: San Francisco's Crissy Field* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Parks Association, 2001), 12. Original available at Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC), GOGA-1766 (OS).

30 National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC), GOGA-2042.

31 Official Correspondence. Chief Boatswain Alfred Rimer to Inspector, Western Area, August 21, 1934. National Park Service, GOGA Park Files, Pacific West Regional Office, Oakland, California.

32 "An Act to Create the Coast Guard," quoted in Robert Erwin Johnson, *Guardians of the Sea: History of the United States Coast Guard, 1915 to the Present*. (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1987), 44.

33 The boats mentioned were type "T" 36-foot motor lifeboat No. 3676, 36-foot cabin picket boat CG-2357, and 26-foot self-bailing surfboat No. 4515. Another self-bailing surfboat (No. 1345) was in poor condition and used only for practice. The station also possessed a pulling dory (No. 4401) and a 9-foot pulling dinghy (No. 2733). The inspector may have been in error in recording the length of the cabin picket boat as 36 feet. The standard picket boat used by the Coast Guard during the thirties and forties was a 38-foot model which had been introduced in 1931. It is also possible that the boat described by the inspector was an earlier version.

34 National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC).

35 Ground Layout of the Fort Point Coast Guard Station. August 24, 1938. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC). Detailed plans of the entire facility were drawn up in 1932. These include floorplans of the O-in-C Quarters showing the described renovations. These plans may have been done in association with the actual work. See PARC, GOGA-3088, Folder 2 (OS).

36 Official Correspondence, Commander, 12th CG District, to Commanding General, Sixth Army, Presidio of San Francisco, Calif., January 2, 1952. USCG Records, Real Property Branch, 12th CG District, Alameda, CA.

37 The Point Reyes Coast Guard Station, located in Drakes Bay, would close in 1968.

38 Site Plan & Vicinity Map, May 16, 1957. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC).

39 National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC).

40 The exact date of introduction at the Fort Point Station is not known. Photographs from February of 1964 show the old 36-foot series TRS lifeboats still in service. The first of the 44s probably arrived later that year but were certainly in service at Fort Point no later than 1965.

41 Dale Champion, "Army, Park Service Squabble Over Fort Point." *San Francisco Chronicle*, June 2, 1986.

42 Southside, which reverted back to the War Department in 1945; Point Bonita, which closed in 1946; Golden Gate Park, which closed in 1951; and Point Reyes, which closed in 1968.

43 For summary of dispute from a public point-of-view, see Alan Cline, "Auto Rules on Scenic Beach," in *The San Francisco Sunday Examiner and Chronicle*, January 21, 1973.

44 Proceedings of a Board of Survey, June 24, 1975; Survey No. 12-277-75; USCG Records, Real Property Branch, 12th CG District, Alameda, CA.

45 Photograph by Gordon Chappell, 1978. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA Park Files, Pacific West Regional Office, Oakland, California.

46 The historian was Gordon Chappell. See "Memorandum to Regional Director, Western Region" on "Meeting with U.S. Coast Guard representatives at Fort Point Station and Point Bonita Lighthouse...", April 19, 1978. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA Park Files, Pacific West Regional Office, Oakland, California.

47 Memorandum to Regional Director, Western Region, from Acting Chief, Division of Cultural Resource Management, Western Region, April 19, 1978. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA Park Files, Pacific West

Regional Office, Oakland, California. The ACV hangar was not removed until after 1998 by the National Park Service.

48 Photographs by Gordon Chappell, 1978. National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA Park Files, Pacific West Regional Office, Oakland, California.

49 Ibid.

50 Rehabilitation of O-in-C Qtrs., Fort Point Station, May 6, 1983. U.S. Coast Guard, 12th District, Alameda, CA, Civil Engineering. Full-scale copies of engineer's drawings of all renovations are available at Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC).

Analysis and Evaluation

Summary

The landscape characteristics contributing to the district as they relate to the 1915-1964 period of significance include: natural systems and features, spatial organization, vegetation, circulation, buildings and structures, and small scale features. The natural systems and features of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station provided an ideal location for the lifeboat station. The gentle slope leading to the San Francisco Bay, the clear views of the entire north bay and the Golden gate, and the calm waters allowed for easier rescues. Vegetation patterns such as rectilinear lawns, hedges, and Canary Island date palms are still present. The footpaths and driveways from the original plan are still present although the vehicular access to the site was changed during the Crissy Field Redevelopment Project in the 1990s. The remaining contributing buildings and structures display the evolution of the lifeboat station, including the original boathouse, the original Officer in Charge quarters, the newer boathouse, as well as the pier, breakwater, seawall, and outlying buildings. Finally, extant small scale features such as flagpoles, wreck poles, fountains, and utility features are character defining features.

Integrity

Location – The Fort Point Station was moved to its present site from its original location 700 feet to the east. The purpose of the move was to make room for the 1916 International Exposition. The Station’s period of significance begins with its move to this site and it retains integrity with respect to its location.

Setting – The physical environment within and around the historic district saw many changes between 1914 and 1964. Fort Point Station outlasted most of the activity and associated structures that surrounded it. The International Exposition came and went during the early part of U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station’s existence in the new site. An army hovercraft pavilion, located immediately west of Fort Point Station was built and later razed during the period of significance.

After the period of significance, the Crissy Airfield that was built in 1920 and active through the early 1970s, was redeveloped into a public promenade and park. World War II barracks associated with the occupation of the Presidio of San Francisco by the United States Army were built on the airfield site and later removed during the 1990s to make way for the recent Crissy Field Redevelopment. Beach dunes to the east and west of the site, largely denuded of vegetation during army occupation, have been restored as part of the Crissy Field Redevelopment Effort. If anything, with the completion of Crissy Field redevelopment, the setting for Fort Point Station is nearer in landscape character now to what it was in the 1920s than at any period in between. Since the period of significance dates between 1914 and 1964, the rehabilitated setting contributes to the integrity of the historic district.

The bay remains the same, although in recent years, substantial accumulations of sand have pushed the edge of the water further away from the life-saving station, altering the station’s physical proximity to the San Francisco Bay. The Coast Guard occupied Fort Point Station until 1993, when facilities were relocated to a new facility constructed across the bay at East Fort Baker.

Design – Fort Point Station is a collection of buildings laid out with rectilinear access roads and walks, lawns, and spaces. The site plan dated August 24, 1938 documents the design of this facility. The existing cultural landscape retains a high degree of integrity with respect to the initial overall design and layout of the complex. All of the original structures with the exception of the marine railway are still intact. The circulation and much of the vegetation such as lawns and hedges is also still representative of the period of significance.

Although the original hedges were removed in 1995, those that were on the south side of the lawn areas were replaced with juniper specimens. The replacement hedges are compatible with the original design. Handicap accessible ramps have been added to the buildings and driveway gates have been added at the south end of the central driveway. In spite of these changes the initial form, plan, spatial structure and style of the site remain largely intact to this day.

Materials – The materials that comprise the historic district have suffered some loss, but overall they district retains the bulk of its contributing materials. The lawns and Canary Island date palms are still present in their same configuration as the during the period of significance. The original concrete curbing surrounding the lawn areas also remains. East of the boathouse the curbing has been replaced by taller curbing which has been painted red. The initial areas paved with gravel macadam have been re-paved with asphalt and concrete, but this occurred during the period of significance. Original piping for irrigation purposes is present but not functional. One of the two original fountains remains, but is no longer *in situ*—an easily mitigated problem. The wood-clad structures all retain most of their original siding, fenestration, and detailing. Although the pier has recently been re-decked in pressure-treated wood, it retains the character of the historic pier.

Workmanship – The initial workmanship that remains worthy of mention is limited to the buildings.

Building No. 1901, the Officer in Charge Quarters, erected in 1889-1890, “is a fine example of a nineteenth –century architectural type utilized by the early United States Life-Saving Service, predecessor of the United States Coast Guard. This is the only building on Post that exhibits a gambrel roof and decorative “widow’s walk” element.”¹ Building No. 1902, the Boathouse, erected in 1889-1890 together with the residence, “stands as valuable evidence of the original lifesaving station at the Presidio.” The boathouse “is a fine example of a nineteenth–century architectural type utilized by the early United States Lifesaving Service, predecessor of the United States Coast Guard.”²

Feeling – The Fort Point Coast Guard Station expresses a connection to the late 19th and early 20th century U.S. Live-Saving Service stations on the West Coast. The architecture, building layout, and site design maintain a cohesiveness that preserves this place in time. One can sense that this facility has not changed all that much since 1919.

Association – The facility is significant because of its historic association with the Life-Saving Service and U.S. Coast Guard. It is significant because of its role in providing aid to vessels in distress and it is the only location of the Pacific Coast that retains architectural and landscape features from both the period of the U.S. Life-Saving Service and the U.S. Coast Guard. Combined, the facility’s location, remaining structures, layout, design, views, and vegetation patterns convey its association with all aspects of life-saving activities during the period of significance.

¹ *Presidio, National Register of Historic Places, Registration Forms* (National Landmark Update); National Park Service, 1993, pp. 7-74 and 7-75.

² *Ibid.*, p 7-75.

Natural Systems And Features

The natural systems of the region influenced the siting of the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station. When Congress authorized the construction of the original Fort Point Lifeboat Station in 1886, a station was needed as close as possible to the treacherous mouth of the San Francisco Bay. The only other life-saving station in the area at that time was the Golden Gate Park Station located on Ocean Beach. This station was too far away to be of use for any ship that needed help within the narrow channel entering the San Francisco Bay (NS and F figure 1). The Fort Point Station was the first to be built in useful proximity to this busy shipping lane. Its location at the shores of the Bay, near the mouth of the Golden Gate provided clear views of ships entering the Golden Gate as well as most of the north bay.

Despite the fact that the station was moved 700-feet to the west to its present site in 1915, the same natural systems and features that influenced the original siting are relevant. Whereas the Golden Gate Park Station and Point Bonita Station were built on the rough waters of the Pacific Ocean, the Fort Point Station was built on the relatively protected waters of the San Francisco Bay. The wooden breakwater was constructed to calm the water even more as it approached the station and the concrete seawall was added to protect the station from the occasional storm that would bring crashing waves to shore. The relative flatness of the slope to the Bay also influenced the siting of the station, allowing for easy and gentle access for the boats to enter the water (NS and F figure 2).

The site's proximity to the Bay has changed since the end of the period of significance. Over the past two decades, a significant accumulation of sand has widened the beach in front of the station. The sand now extends to the breakwater and mooring piles that once were surrounded by water. Despite this change, the siting of the station and the addition of features such as the breakwater and concrete seawall, still reflect the adaptation and use of the landscape by the U.S. U.S. Life Saving Service. In this regard, natural systems such as land form, proximity to the Bay and Pacific Ocean, calmness of waters, and far-reaching views contribute to the setting of the historic district.



Natural Systems and Features figure 1. View of the Golden Gate from the U.S.C.G. pier. Note calmness of the San Francisco Bay (helped by the addition of the breakwater) and easy access to water from the shore (PWR Staff—2005).



Natural Systems and Features figure 2. View of the shore and U.S.C.G. Station from the pier. Note gentle slope of beach(PWR Staff—2005).

Spatial Organization

Spatial organization at the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station was historically shaped by two primary factors: the needs of the U.S. U.S. Life Saving Service and the geomorphology of the Presidio of San Francisco and the San Francisco Bay.

The original station and present station were similarly organized. The rectilinear site was located at the edge of the water, and the structures and circulation system were in alignment with the water and one another. When the station was moved to its present location, it retained the same relationship with the water. In the first few years after the move, the original boathouse and the O-in-C quarters were sited adjacent to one another. By 1919, the old boathouse was moved to the west of the O-in-C quarters and the new boathouse was built in its place. Before 1945, the shop/garage (PE 1907) was built and the old boathouse (PE 1902) was moved a few feet to better align with the O-in-C quarters. By 1945, all four of these buildings were in their present location. Also by this time, the pier (PE 1904), buoy shack (PE 1905) and tide gauge house (PE 1906) were built.

When the station was moved to the current site, the O-in-C quarters were reoriented so the main entrance faced the boathouse to the east rather than facing the Bay as it did at the original site. By reorienting the entrance, a small plaza was created between the boathouse and the O-in-C quarters. This plaza was further defined by the macadam surfaced driveway (currently asphalt) that entered from Marina Drive and led to the gravel surfaced drill ground located between the structures and the shore (currently an asphalt-surfaced parking lot). The rectangular shaped lawns bordering the main boathouse and O-in-C quarters, as well as the alignment of cypress hedges and date palms, worked together to create a formal and symmetrical design. In addition to the architectural style of the structures, the formal layout and landscape design was representative of U.S. Life Saving Service properties across the nation. This design aesthetic conveyed order and a civic presence along the relatively undeveloped shores of the Presidio.

Over the past several decades the area surrounding the site has changed: Crissy Field has been redeveloped as useable open space for the public; Marina Drive was closed to automobile traffic and is now a promenade; and structures from the Panama Pacific International Exposition have come and gone. Despite these changes, the station remains a distinct, tight, rectangular island of development within the broader Presidio of San Francisco. The buildings, circulation, and vegetation are still sited and positioned the way they were during the period of significance and continue to convey their formal alignment and historic relationship to the San Francisco Bay.

Vegetation

Vegetation at the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station contributes to the setting of the historic district because it continues to convey the formal design intent that was common among life saving and lifeboat stations across the nation. The historic plant palette is simple and is comprised mainly of rectangular-shaped lawns, a line of Canary Island date palms, and cypress hedges that border the lawns. These three elements serve to define the edges of the property and distinguish this site from the rest of Crissy Field and the Presidio of San Francisco. Existing vegetation patterns are close to the historic configuration, despite a few alterations throughout the decades.

CONTRIBUTING

Palms

Phoenix canariensis (Canary Island date palms) were planted early during the period of significance, probably during the 1920s. These palms were planted in a row at the south west edge of the site creating a boundary to the site (Vegetation figure 1 and Vegetation figure 2). Two palms were offset from the row—one was planted west of the O-in-C quarters, and one was planted west of the main boathouse. Seven of the eight palms that were planted during the historic period still remain—the palm that was located at the west corner of the main boathouse is no longer extant. The remaining palms are approximately 85 years old..

Lawn

Although the original site plan from 1914 only describes “loam” surrounding the buildings, photographs from this era appear to show lawn surrounding the buildings. Lawns first appear in site plans in 1938. They were designed in two distinct rectangles: one surrounding the O-in-C Quarters, the other surrounding three sides of the main boathouse (Vegetation figure 4). They are cleanly bordered by curbing, footpaths, and/or driveways, and although footpaths and wheelchair-accessible ramps have been added or altered, the lawns have remained true to their historic configuration. The lawns are currently being overrun by kikuyu and Bermuda grass and are impacted by gophers.

NON-CONTRIBUTING BUT COMPATIBLE

Hedges

From the time when the site was first developed in 1915, cypress hedges have defined portions of the buildings’ and site’s perimeters. Most photographs dating to the period of significance show the hedges as well-clipped with a height ranging from 2-5-feet (Vegetation figure 2). In 1996, the existing perimeter hedges, located southwest of the date palms, had grown to a 15-foot height and were replaced with new *Juniperus chinensis* ‘Sea Green’. The NPS determined that this new species would more naturally maintain the smaller, more manicured character of the hedges from the period of significance. Several of the individual plants have died, leaving large gaps within the hedge. Despite having been planted ten years ago, the junipers that have survived are only 1-2-feet in height.

A narrow concrete pathway was constructed connecting the Crissy Promenade to the northwest entrance to the main boathouse sometime after 1983. At this time, a common boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) clipped hedge was planted to line both sides of the pathway. Currently, the hedge is approximately 18-inches tall.

Windbreak

A windbreak comprised of a combination of twelve Monterey pine (*Pinus radiata*) and Monterey cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*) was likely planted sometime after 1964 at the northwest (leeward) side of the site. It continues to provide protection from the wind (Vegetation figure 3).

Foundation Plantings

Foundation plantings were absent during the early period of significance up to 1938. They are not documented in the 1938 period site plan, whereas the cypress hedges and lawn areas are specifically referenced. They were subsequently planted and first appear in the mid-1940's photographs. Plantings seen in some of the 1945-1946 photographs show *Impatiens sodenii* (poor man's rhododendron) among other unidentifiable species. Existing foundation plantings that do not contribute but are compatible with the historic district are located on the northwest and southwest side of building PE 1903 (the main boathouse). These include the five Hollywood juniper (*Juniperus chinensis* 'Torulosa') that were planted along the northwest foundation of the main boathouse at an unknown date. A manicured hedge appears in this location in photographs dating to the mid-1940s. It is unlikely, due to their current form (widely spaced and distinct shrubs rather than a unified hedge) that the existing plants date to the historic period. More research is needed to identify when they were first added to the district. These juniper are currently 6-7-feet tall, and are not pruned. Even if they date to the period of significance, their unkempt form no longer reflects the trimmed and ordered character of the hedge that was located here in the mid-1940s.

Additional Monterey cypress and sea green juniper shrubs are growing along the southwest foundation of the main boathouse. Because they were likely planted after the end of the period of significance, they are non-contributing. However their species and form are compatible with the vegetation patterns and palette already established for the historic district.

NON-CONTRIBUTING AND INCOMPATIBLE

Several planters and/or planting beds located at building foundations are non-contributing and incompatible with the historic district. A recent planting bed was constructed where the boat ramp was originally located northeast of the main boathouse. It contains a mixture of perennial ornamentals such as: *Agapanthus orientalis*; *Rhododendron sp.*, and *Rosa sp.* A small planter northwest of the O-in-C quarters and a planter southwest of the same building contain *Lavandula angustifolia* (English lavender) and *Lavandula stoechas* (Spanish lavender).

Additional non-contributing plants include a *Cordyline australis* northwest of the O-in-C quarters; *Escallonia sp.* along the southwest foundation of the main boathouse, and an unidentified shrub near the old boathouse (PE 1902) entrance.



Vegetation figure 1. Canary Island date palms and juniper hedge lining the southwest edge of the site. View to the east (PWR Staff—2005).



Vegetation figure 2. Canary Island date palms and cypress hedge in 1945 (view to the northeast). (GGNRA Archives: P85-087.16)



Vegetation figure 3. 1964 aerial view of the station. Note that there appears to be no Monterey pine or cypress growing to the right of the old boathouse where the existing windbreak is located. (GGNRA: P85-089.17)



Vegetation figure 4. Manicured lawns surround Officer in Charge Quarters and main boathouse. Note Monterey cypress/Monterey pine windbreak in background. (PWR Staff—2005).

Circulation

For purposes of the CLI, circulation is defined as spaces, features and applied material finishes which constitute systems of movement in a landscape. The circulation system at the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station Historic District is composed of concrete footpaths, driveways, and a parking area. This rectilinear system of driveways and walks links buildings on the site and links the site to Presidio.

Contributing Features

Footpaths

LCS ID: 329162

Concrete footpaths are located at the northeast and southeast sides of the old boathouse connecting to Crissy Promenade (Circulation figure 5). A footpath parallel with Crissy Promenade travels from the east end of the site to the west end. This path is shown on the 1938 site plan. It is slightly altered as it exists today. It was narrowed from 8-feet to 3-feet in width south of the O-in-C quarters and south of the main boathouse (Circulation figure 4). Additionally a small section was removed between the O-in-C quarters and the asphalt driveway to the southeast.

Pedestrians can access the site by using the existing driveways and sidewalks. Since there is no formalized access to the beach from Crissy Field near Fort Point Station, pedestrians routinely cut through the site to get to the beach.

Driveways

LCS ID: 329151

Three driveways historically existed on site and still remain. All three of these driveways begin at Crissy Promenade and head northeast into the site. The northernmost driveway is the shortest and leads from Crissy Promenade to the old boathouse. It is mostly surfaced in asphalt, although the portion adjacent to the boathouse is surfaced in concrete.

East of this driveway, between the O-in-C quarters and the main boathouse, is a second driveway. This driveway is approximately 16-feet in width and is also surfaced in asphalt. This driveway was historically the main entrance to the site, and served as a formal courtyard between the O-in-C quarters and the main boathouse (Circulation figure 1 and Circulation figure 2). When first designed, the flagpole was located in the center of the driveway, on access with the entrance to the O-in-C quarters and the main boathouse western ramp (no longer extant). The driveway was wider at this intersection around the flagpole, and 2-inch high concrete curbing further emphasized the boundary between the courtyard/driveway and the lawns surrounding the buildings. Based upon review of historic site plans and photographs, the courtyard has been altered since it was first built. The 1940s entrance gate was removed and new gates were added in 1983. The original flagpole was relocated from the center of the courtyard to the rear of the site. And the western ramp to the boathouse was removed in the 1970s. The concrete curbing, some original and some more recent, continues to line both sides of the driveway.

The third and easternmost driveway leads to the storage building (PE 1907) at the western corner of the district. All three of these driveways are described as having graveled surfacing in the 1938 plan. Currently the drives are surfaced with asphalt and all three appear to be in good condition.

Parking Area

LCS ID: 329165

The parking area is located on the northeast side of the district adjacent to the shore. The 1938 plan describes it as a “graveled yard.” It is likely that boats may have been repaired here or that drills were practiced in this area. The yard layout is essentially the same as shown in site plans prepared early during the period of significance. Concrete curbing still lines the southern edge, providing definition between the parking area and the lawn. The pavement appears to be in good condition. The parking area accommodates 28 cars and includes two accessible parking spaces (Circulation figure 3).

Non Contributing Features

Main boathouse footpath:

A concrete footpath approximately 3-feet in width was built from Crissy Promenade to the southwest entrance of the main boathouse in 1983.

Accessible ramps to main boathouse and O-in-C quarters:

Also built in 1983, these wooden planked ramps provide wheelchair access to side or backdoors of these structures.

Vehicle entrance:

Currently vehicular access to the site is from the new entrance at the northwest side of the site that was built in the 1990s as part of the Crissy Field Redevelopment Project. This new entrance drive leaves Marina Drive, travels southeast through a restored dune area, then arrives at the rear parking area through a breach in the concrete seawall.

Summary

The circulation system in the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station Historic District continues to reflect the pattern of movement during the period of significance. The driveways and footpaths used by the personnel at the lifeboat station continue to provide the same access within the district. The width of the footpaths has been modified in some areas, and the macadam surfacing of the driveways and parking area has been replaced with asphalt. Despite these changes, the majority of circulation features remain and circulation is a landscape characteristic that contributes to the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station Historic District.



Circulation figure 1. Central courtyard looking towards the north (PWR Staff—2005).



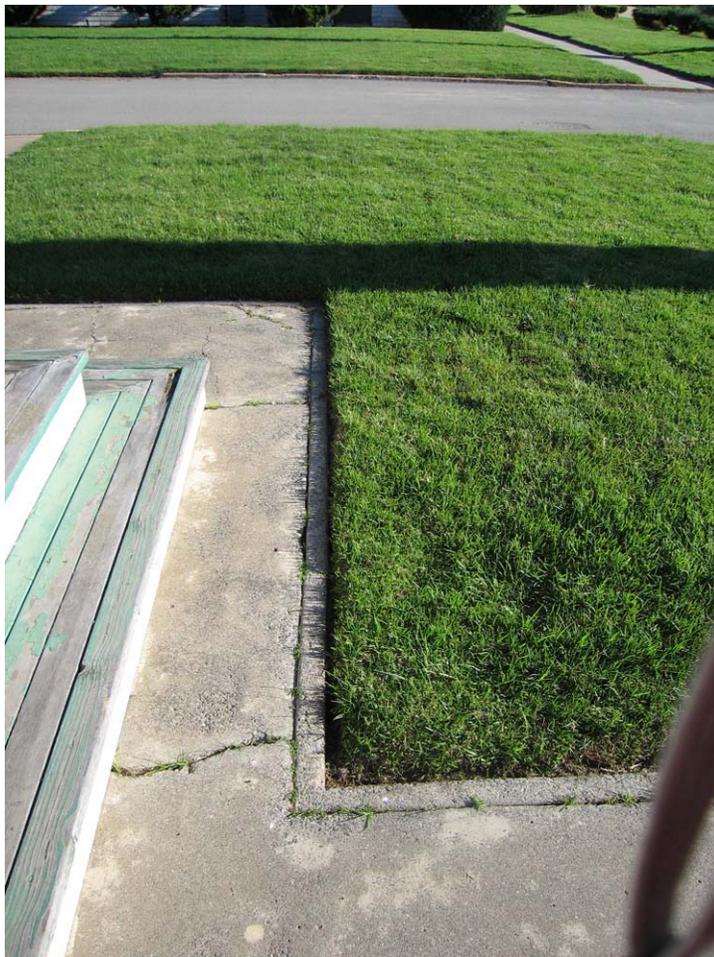
Circulation figure 2. Central courtyard looking towards main boathouse. Western boat ramp was removed from this exterior wall in the 1970s. Note contributing curbing along driveway and footpath. (PWR Staff—2005).



Circulation figure 3. Contributing parking area facing the northwest. (PWR Staff—2005).



Circulation figure 4. Contributing footpath southwest of O-in-C quarters. (PWR Staff—2005).



Circulation figure 5. Contributing flush curbing along footpath at entrance to the O-in-C quarters. (PWR Staff—2005).

Buildings And Structures

CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURES

The following buildings and structures were built during or prior to the beginning of the period of significance and contribute to the historic district. These structures were also found to contribute to the Presidio of San Francisco NHL in 1993.

U.S. Coast Guard Station Officer in Charge Quarters

LCS ID: 056272

Structure No: PE 1901

The Officer in Charge or Keeper's Residence is one of two remaining structures from the original 19th century lifeboat station (B and S figure 1). Erected in 1889-1890, this one-and-a-half to two-story house, was moved early in 1915, 700-feet west of its original site to make way for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition auto racetrack. Prior to the move, the house was oriented north—toward the Bay. The structure was reoriented when moved to its new site, to face east—creating a central court between it and the boathouse. The building is of wood-frame construction clad in wood shingles and has a cross-axial rectangular plan with a prominent cross-axial gambrel roof, also clad in wood shingles. The shingled walls of the house are distinguished by a slight bell cast at the base and between the first and second floors on the gable ends; the gambrel roof also displays a slight bell cast above the eaves. The poured-concrete foundation may constitute a fairly recent improvement. A one-story shed addition (not original; perhaps dating to the 1915 relocation, or later) extends across the entire northwest (rear) elevation, making the overall footprint of the house roughly square in shape.

At the second story, the front and rear elevations have three dormers each, set into the gambrel roof. Dormers are identical in design, having steeply inclined gable roofs, abbreviated raked cornice moldings with returns, and wood-shingle cladding; the two exceptions to this are the middle front dormer, which is decoratively distinguished by a prominent fanlight, and the middle rear dormer, which was at some point enlarged to extend over the shed addition below it. Two internal chimneys of brick are centrally and symmetrically located and have tall, prominent corbelled caps. Between the two chimneys, a low platform rises from the roof and is surmounted by a wood railing or balustrade; this decorative treatment recalls the roof look-out element of "widow's walk" of historic coastal domestic architectural prototypes (the existing railing is a fairly recent reconstruction of the original railing). The front portico, with a full balcony above, is of wood construction and rises from a prominent stepped platform. This portico is comprised of two pairs of slender columns with capitals and bases of broad pulvinated moldings, two additional engaged columns of the same design, a much abbreviated entablature, and a balcony railing, or balustrade, with closely spaced squared balusters, punctuated by six turned balusters over the four free-standing and two engaged columns. The front doorway has vertically aligned sidelights divided into eight panes; the door itself is paneled and glazed and does not appear original. Principal windows have eight-over-eight and six-over-six double-hung sash; originally all windows had wooden louvered shutters, standard for the period. Recent changes include the addition of a wheelchair accessible ramp leading to the southwest (back) elevation of the residence). Even as relocated (not far from the original site) and reoriented, this building stands, along with a contemporary boathouse, as valuable evidence of the original nineteenth century lifeboat station at the Presidio. This is the only building at the station that exhibits a gambrel roof and decorative "widow's walk" element.

U.S. Coast Guard Station Boathouse, 1890

LCS ID: 056273

Structure No: PE 1902

Erected in 1889-1890, this boathouse, along with the station-keeper's residence, was moved early in 1915, 700-feet west of its original site to make way for the Panama-Pacific International Exposition (B and S figure 2). When it was moved, the building's original relationship to the shoreline, with the boat doors on the elevation opposite the Bay, was maintained. These doors were oriented away from the beach to facilitate opening them in the high winds common to the area. This one-story utilitarian building surmounted by a tall hip roof is of wood-frame construction clad in wood shingles and has a rectangular plan (25 feet by 40 feet). The shingled walls are distinguished by a slight bell cast at the base; the prominent hip roof also displays a slight bell cast above the eaves. This roof, also clad in wood shingles, now painted red, has decoratively swan exposed rafter ends and is surmounted by a central vented monitor or lantern, which appears octagonal in plan, with battered side walls (vents) and a skirted conical roof. A pair of large wood double doors comprised of narrow vertical tongue-and-groove boards and set with large, long strap iron hinges, fills the southwest elevation; they are not the original doors, but may have been added as early as 1915, or, later, in the 1930s. There are two types of small, rather square wood windows: the larger type has three-over-three double hung sash; the smaller type, six-light pivotal sash. Even as relocated and reoriented, this building stands, along with a contemporary station-keeper's residence, as valuable evidence of the original nineteenth-century lifeboat station at the Presidio. It is an intact example of a nineteenth-century architectural type used by the early United States Life-Saving Service.

US Coast Guard Station Main Boathouse and Quarters

LCS ID: 056274

Structure No: PE 1903

Planned as early as 1914, the building repeats many architectural elements of the relocated 1889-90 station buildings, and with them, forms a distinct unit that represents two technical and architectural eras of the nation's coastal rescue service (B and S figure 3).

This large two-and-a-half-story boathouse, planned apparently as early as 1914, was completed by the Coast Guard sometime between 1915 and 1919, at a location east of the station's two existing 1889-1890 buildings—the station-keeper's residence (PE 1901) and the original boathouse (PE 1902). The 1919 boathouse is roughly square in plan, having a simple block-like format with hip roof and two small one-story hipped extensions (enclosed porches), across the southeast (side) elevation and the southwest (rear) elevation. The porch on the southwest (rear) elevation was enclosed ca. 1935 and the porch on the southeast (side) elevation was enclosed sometime between 1942 and 1946. The prominent hip roof, clad in wood shingles, now painted red, displays broadly overhanging eaves above a simple frieze-like element. All four sides of the roof are dominated by a broad low-rising shed dormer with exposed rafter ends; a large central lookout lantern or monitor, with a broadly overhanging hip roof and expansive glazing in the form of tripartite wood windows, rises above the building, forming a small fourth story. Like the earlier station buildings, the boathouse is of wood-frame construction clad in wood shingles, and the walls display a slight bell cast at the base; a slight bell cast also marks the division between the first and second story. Principal windows, often paired, have one-over-one double-hung sash.

Originally, on its Bay-side (front) or northeast elevation, the boathouse had three large boat stalls and a corresponding three-track marine railway for switching and launching the boat carriers; in the 1970s, the railway was dismantled, and the large stall openings in the building were infilled and the interior boat

decks remodeled into additional dormitory space. Also at this time, the wooden ramp on the northwest elevation, facing the Officer in Charge Quarters (PE 1901), was removed and the boatroom doors were infilled. Other post-period of significance changes include the addition of a large open-frame exterior staircase constructed in steel on the northeast (front) elevation that generally follows the location and form of an earlier exterior open-frame staircase constructed in wood; and a recently-added wheelchair access ramp on the southwest (rear) elevation. Despite these alterations, the large 1919 boathouse existing configuration repeats many of the architectural elements of the relocated 1889-1890 station buildings and, with them, forms a distinct and unified functional and architectural group that represents two eras of the architecture and technology of the nation's coastal rescue organization—one, under the early United States Life-Saving Service (Fort Point Lifeboat Station; later U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station).

US Coast Guard Shop and Garage

LCS ID: 056277

Structure No. PE 1907

The original structure was built by 1919 and was rebuilt (for unknown reasons) between 1942 and 1945. This one- to one-and-a-half-story building has an axial rectangular plan configuration and is built of wood-frame construction clad entirely in wood shingles (B and S figure 4). It has a tall axial gable roof. Principal windows are small and square in shape with four-light wood sash. The long elevation on the southwest side (oriented away from the Bay) of the building is entirely filled with large hinged doors composed of narrow tongue-and-groove vertical boards and displaying prominent strap hinges of iron. The building exhibits a simple design incorporating the conventional forms of wood construction. Its all-shingle cladding, complete with a slight bell cast at the base of the walls, follows the design of the earlier station buildings, dating from 1889-1890 and 1919.

US Coast Guard Buoy Shack with Latrine

LCS ID: 056275

Structure No: PE 1905

This small building, along with the adjacent and smaller tide gauge house (PE 1906), was built in the late 1930s and is located at the end of the main pier (PE 1904) of the United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station (B and S figure 5). The one-story buoy house has a rectangular plan configuration and is built of wood-frame construction clad in wide horizontal wood siding. Its gable roof is covered with red composition or asphalt roofing. Principal windows are small and square in shape, with four-light wood sash. The building displays a simple utilitarian design incorporating the conventional forms of wood construction, and stands as part of a program of highly compatible improvements undertaken for the historic U.S. Coast Guard Station in the 1930s.

US Coast Guard Tide Gauge House

LCS ID: 056276

Structure No: PE 1906

This building, along with the adjacent buoy house (PE 1905), was built in the late 1930s and is located at the end of the main pier (PE 1904) of the lifeboat station, now known as the United States Coast Guard Fort Point Station (B and S figure 6). The tide gauge house has a very small one-story block-like configuration and is built of wood-frame construction clad in wide horizontal wood siding. Its hip roof is covered with red composition or asphalt roofing. The building displays a simply utilitarian design incorporating the conventional forms of wood construction, and stands as part of a program of compatible improvements undertaken at the historic station in the 1930s.

Pier

LCS ID: 057659

Structure No: PE 1904

This wood pedestrian pier measures 300-feet long by 8-feet wide (B and S figure 5). The end of the pier expands to the southeast creating an “ell” shape on which the Buoy Shack and Tide Gauge House are sited. The pier angles in a northeast/southwest direction. The superstructure has been stabilized/rebuilt in recent years with red pressure-treated decking and white-painted pressure-treated railings. Most of the pilings appear to be original.

Wooden Pile Breakwater

LCS ID: 057657

Structure No: PE 1911

This 200-foot-long wooden pile breakwater is just north of the U.S.C.G. Station and the pier (PE 1904). The structure angles in an east/west direction (B and S figure 7). Earliest photographs showing the breakwater date to 1945. In recent years, a significant amount of sand has accumulated along the shore in front of the station. Whereas in 1945 the breakwater was completely surrounded by water—at least 75-feet from shore, it is now meets the shore at its westernmost edge.

Concrete Sea Wall

LCS ID: 057656

Structure No: PE 1912

This U-shaped concrete seawall measures two-feet wide and two to five-feet high (B and S figure 8). It is approximately 300-feet long, with 50-foot returns inland at each end. It is sited along the edge of the beach on the northeast side of the station and was built to replace the original wooden bulkhead in 1935. The western return was recently breached during the Crissy Field Redevelopment Project to create a new automobile entrance to the station.

Shed

LCS ID: 329167

Structure No: PE 1908

A small shed abutting the southeast elevation of the shop (PE 1907), does not have any internal connection and may best be considered a separate building, constructed perhaps as late as the 1950s. This structure does not contribute to the Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark, but because it was built within the period of significance for the Fort Point U.S.C.G.S. Historic District, it does contribute to this historic district.



Buildings and Structures figure 1. Officer in Charge Quarters (PE 1901) facing northwest. (PWR Staff—2005).



Buildings and Structures figure 2. Old boathouse (PE 1902) facing northeast. (PWR Staff—2005).



Buildings and Structures figure 3. Main boathouse (PE 1903) facing east. (PWR Staff—2005).



Buildings and Structures figure 4. Shop and Garage (PE 1907) facing south. (PWR Staff—2005).



Buildings and Structures figure 5. Pier in foreground (PE 1904), Buoy Shack (PE 1905) and Tide Gauge House (PE 1906 to the right, breakwater (PE 1911) in the center of the frame—facing northeast. (PWR Staff—2005).



Buildings and Structures figure 6. Tide Gauge House (PE 1906) facing south. (PWR Staff—2005).



Buildings and Structures figure 7. Breakwater (PE 1911) facing northwest. (PWR Staff—2005).



Buildings and Structures figure 8. Concrete Seawall in foreground (PE 1912), Officer in Charge Quarters and old boathouse in background—facing west. (PWR Staff—2005).

Small Scale Features

Small scale features are scattered throughout the site. Features range from historic hose bibs to decorative fountains. As a group, they reflect the utilitarian character of the landscape. Several small scale features have been moved or added since the end of the period of significance and are non-contributing to the historic district.

CONTRIBUTING FEATURES

Flagpole

LCS ID: 056206

Structure No: PE 1915

This fifty-foot high flag pole, painted white with a golden ornamental fixture at the top, is adjacent to the seawall and beach. It is sited in the former drill ground (current parking lot) and is on axis with the main entry into the U.S.C.G. complex (SSF figure 1).

Wreck Pole

LCS ID: 329171

The wreck pole has been relocated several times during the period of significance. After World War II, the wreck pole ceased being used as a practice device. Towards the end of the period of significance, in 1958, the pole was truncated and used to support an outdoor gooseneck lamp. At this time it was also moved a few feet south to its current location next to the old boathouse (SSF figure 1). Currently, the wreck pole is painted white and the ladder rungs and disabled wiring for the lamp are still present (although it is not currently being used as a wreck pole or a lamp).

Fountain

LCS ID: Not applicable

Two fountains are shown in site plans as early as 1937. One was located northwest of the main boathouse and one was located southeast of the main boathouse. Only one fountain still exists, and is currently located at the southeast driveway off of Crissy Promenade (SSF figure 2). The original foundation for this fountain is still apparent on the lawn southeast of the main boathouse. The fountain was damaged during the Crissy Field Redevelopment project.

1945 Benchmark

LCS ID: Not applicable

One benchmark from 1945 was embedded in the northern-most corner of the seawall—approximately ten years after the seawall was built.

Water System

LCS ID: Not applicable

Soon after the lifeboat station was moved to its current site in 1915, a water system—consisting of two-inch water mains connected to city water—was installed. Remnant hose bibs and fire hydrants are scattered throughout the site and contribute to the historic district (SSF figure 3).

Dolphins

LCS ID: Not applicable

Two of four dolphins or mooring piles remain adjacent to the pier in the Bay. They were likely built in the 1930s around the same time as the tide gauge house and the buoy shack.

NON CONTRIBUTING FEATURES

Two small scale features were constructed in 1983 by the Denver Service Center and do not contribute to the historic district: the entry gate at the central axis of the site off of Crissy Promenade, and a wall adjacent to the driveway to the old boathouse. Both of these features are constructed of white shingles with metal flashing at the top.

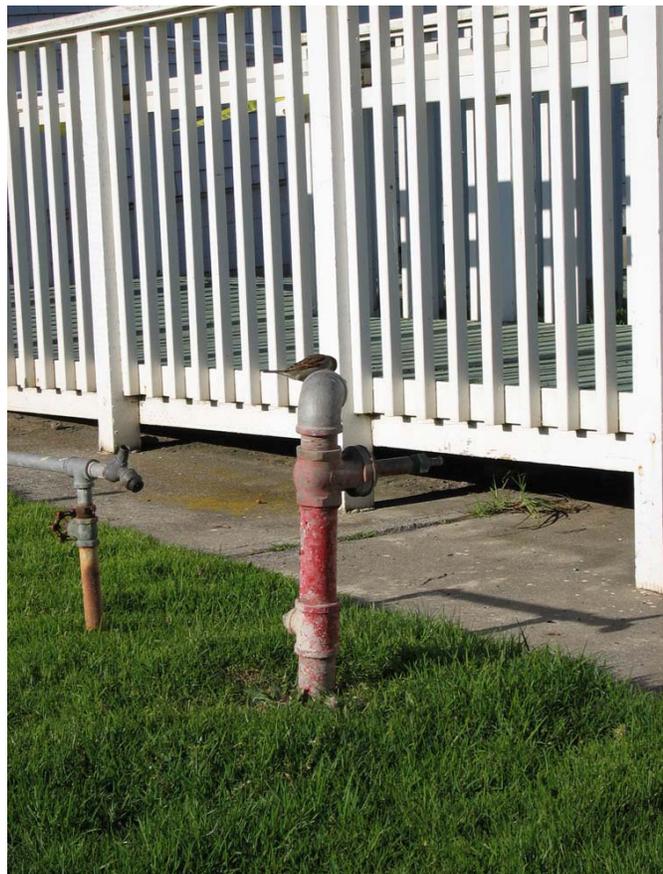
Other small scale features recently added to the site include ornamental planting beds on the northeast side of the main boathouse, planters on the northwest and southwest side of the O-in-C quarters, and picnic tables located northeast of the old boathouse and southeast of the main boathouse. None of these features contribute to the historic district.



Small-Scale Features figure 1. Image of flag pole and wreck pole—both are located on the northeast side of the district (PWR Staff—2005).



Small-Scale Features figure 2. The remaining fountain currently located at the eastern entrance to the station. Probably moved to this location during the Crissy Field Redevelopment project (NPS Staff—1999).



Small-Scale Features figure 3. Historic fire hydrant and hose bib located on the lawn at the southwest side of the site (PWR Staff—2005).

Management Information

Descriptive and Geographic Information

Historic Name: Fort Point Life-Saving Station
Current Name: Fort Point Life-Saving Station
Management Unit:
Tract Numbers:
State and County: San Francisco, California
Size (acres): 4.66 acres

Boundary UTM

Source	Type	Datum	Zone	Easting	Northing
USGS Map	Area	NAD 83	11	546835	4184387
1:24,000	Area	NAD 83	11	546988	4184514
	Area	NAD 83	11	547042	4184451
	Area	NAD 83	11	546925	4184315

National Register Information

National Register Documentation: Inadequately Documented

Explanatory Narrative:

The Presidio of San Francisco was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1962. The NHL was updated and placed on the National Register in 1993. At that time, several of the structures within the U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station were listed as contributing to the NHL. Until now, the U.S.C.G. Station has not been evaluated for inclusion on the National Register as an individual historic property.

National Register Eligibility:

Explanatory Narrative:

The CLI will be submitted to SHPO in 2006 seeking concurrence regarding its eligibility for listing on the NRHP as a historic district.

Date of Eligibility Determination: TBD

National Register Classification: District

Significance Level: State

Contributing/Individual: Individual

Significance Criteria: A,C

Period of Significance

Time Period: 1915-1964

Historic Context Theme: Creating Social Institutions and Movements

Historic Context Subtheme: Social and Humanitarian Movements
Historic Context Facet: Emergency Aid and Health Care

Time Period: 1915-1964
Historic Context Theme: Developing the American Economy
Historic Context Subtheme: Shipping and Transportation by Water
Historic Context Facet: Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures

Area of Significance

Category: Maritime History
Priority: 1

Category: Military
Priority: 2

National Historic Landmark Information

National Historic Landmark Status: Yes, Presidio of San Francisco
Date Determined Landmark: 1962
Landmark Theme: II, V, VI, VIII, X, XVIII

World Heritage Site Information

World Heritage Site Status: No

Cultural Landscape Type and Use

Cultural Landscape Type: Historic District

Current and Historic Use/Function:

Use/Function Category: Transportation
Use/Function: Water-Related
Detailed Use/Function: Water-Related Other
Type of Use/Function: Historic

Use/Function Category: Transportation
Use/Function: Water-Related
Detailed Use/Function: Boat Launching Area
Type of Use/Function: Historic

Use/Function Category: Domestic (Residential)
Use/Function: Single Family Dwelling
Detailed Use/Function: Single Family House
Type of Use/Function: Historic

Use/Function Category: Government
Use/Function: Government Office
Detailed Use/Function: Administrative Office
Type of Use/Function: Both Current and Historic

Use/Function Category: Recreation/Culture

Use/Function: Museum
Detailed Use/Function: Exhibit
Type of Use/Function: Current

Use/Function Category: Landscape
Use/Function: Leisure-Passive (Park)
Detailed Use/Function: Leisure-Passive (Park)
Type of Use/Function: Current

Ethnographic Information

Ethnographic Survey Conducted: No

Adjacent Lands Information

Do Adjacent Lands Contribute: No

General Management Information

Management Category: Must be Preserved and Maintained
Management Category Date: November 22, 2005
Explanatory Narrative:

The U.S.C.G. Fort Point Station is located within the boundaries of the Presidio of San Francisco National Historic Landmark, and several of its historic structures are contributing features of this Landmark. Because it is part of the Nationally significant Presidio NHL, it falls within Management Category A: Must be Preserved and Maintained.

Condition Assessment and Impacts

The criteria for determining the condition of landscapes is consistent with the Resource Management Plan Guideline definitions (1994) and is decided with the concurrence of park management. Cultural landscape conditions are defined as follows:

Good: indicates the landscape shows no clear evidence of major negative disturbance and deterioration by natural and/or human forces. The landscape's cultural and natural values are as well preserved as can be expected under the given environmental conditions. No immediate corrective action is required to maintain its current condition.

Fair: indicates the landscape shows clear evidence of minor disturbances and deterioration by natural and/or human forces, and some degree of corrective action is needed within 3-5 years to prevent further harm to its cultural and/or natural values. If left to continue without the appropriate corrective action, the cumulative effect of the deterioration of many of the character-defining elements will cause the landscape to degrade to a poor condition.

Poor: indicates the landscape shows clear evidence of major disturbance and rapid deterioration by natural and/or human forces. Immediate corrective action is required to protect and preserve the remaining historical and natural values.

Undetermined: not enough information available to make an evaluation.

Condition Assessment: Good
Assessment Date: November 22, 2005
Date Recorded: February 14, 2006
Park Management Concurrence: June, 2006
Level of Impact Severity: Low

Stabilization Measures:

Overall the site is in good condition. Historic and compatible vegetation is in need of the most stabilization. The lawn is being overrun with Kikuyu grass. Continuing efforts to control the spread of this weed is recommended. The juniper hedge along the southeast of the site is in poor condition. The hedge should be protected from visitors and pets until it is established enough to no longer be adversely affected. Non-contributing vegetation and planters should be removed. The structures, vegetation, and circulation have all suffered from neglect. Structures need painting, vegetation needs pruning and pest/invasive management.

Impact:

Type of Impact: Vegetation/Invasive Plants

Internal/External: Internal

Description: Kikuyu grass is spreading throughout the lawn and on the dune areas.

Type of Impact: Visitation

Internal/External: Internal

Description: Pet dogs trample and urinate on the juniper hedge lining the southern boundary adjacent to Marina Drive, inhibiting its growth.

Agreements, Legal Interest, and Access

Management Agreement: Interagency Agreement with Special Use Permit, renewable at five-year intervals.

Explanatory Narrative: Since 1993, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has held a special use permit to use the grounds and facilities at the station. This permit also allows NOAA to sub-lease office space to two non-profit groups.

NPS Legal Interest: Fee Simple

Public Access: Other restrictions

Explanatory Narrative: The public may access most of the grounds. The pier is closed to public access due to NOAA liability issues.

Treatment

Approved Treatment:	Preservation
Approved Treatment Document:	General Management Plan
Document Date:	1994
Explanatory Narrative:	The Presidio General Management Plan preferred alternative states “the lifesaving station would also be rehabilitated to provide space for educational programs related to the maritime environment” (NPS 1994:24).
Approved Treatment Completed:	No

Approved Treatment Cost

LCS Structure Approved Treatment Cost:	None
Landscape Approved Treatment Cost:	None
Cost Date:	
Level of Estimate:	
Cost Estimate:	
Explanatory Description:	

Stabilization Costs

LCS Structure Stabilization Cost:	None
Landscape Stabilization Costs:	To be determined in the 2006 Cultural Landscape Report.
Cost Date:	November 18, 2005
Level of Estimate:	Class C Estimate
Cost Estimator:	Support Office
Explanatory Description:	A Cultural Landscape Report is being prepared in conjunction with NOAA’s Master Planning Efforts. The CLR will provide specific treatment recommendations and associated costs.

Appendix

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Records of the United States Coast Guard, 12th Coast Guard District, Real Property Branch, Bldg. 56, Coast Guard Island, Alameda, CA.

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Golden Gate NRA, Park Archives and Records Center (PARC).

U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Pacific West Regional Office. Park Files: Golden Gate NRA.

Supplemental Information

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Title: Existing Conditions—Vegetation Map
Description:

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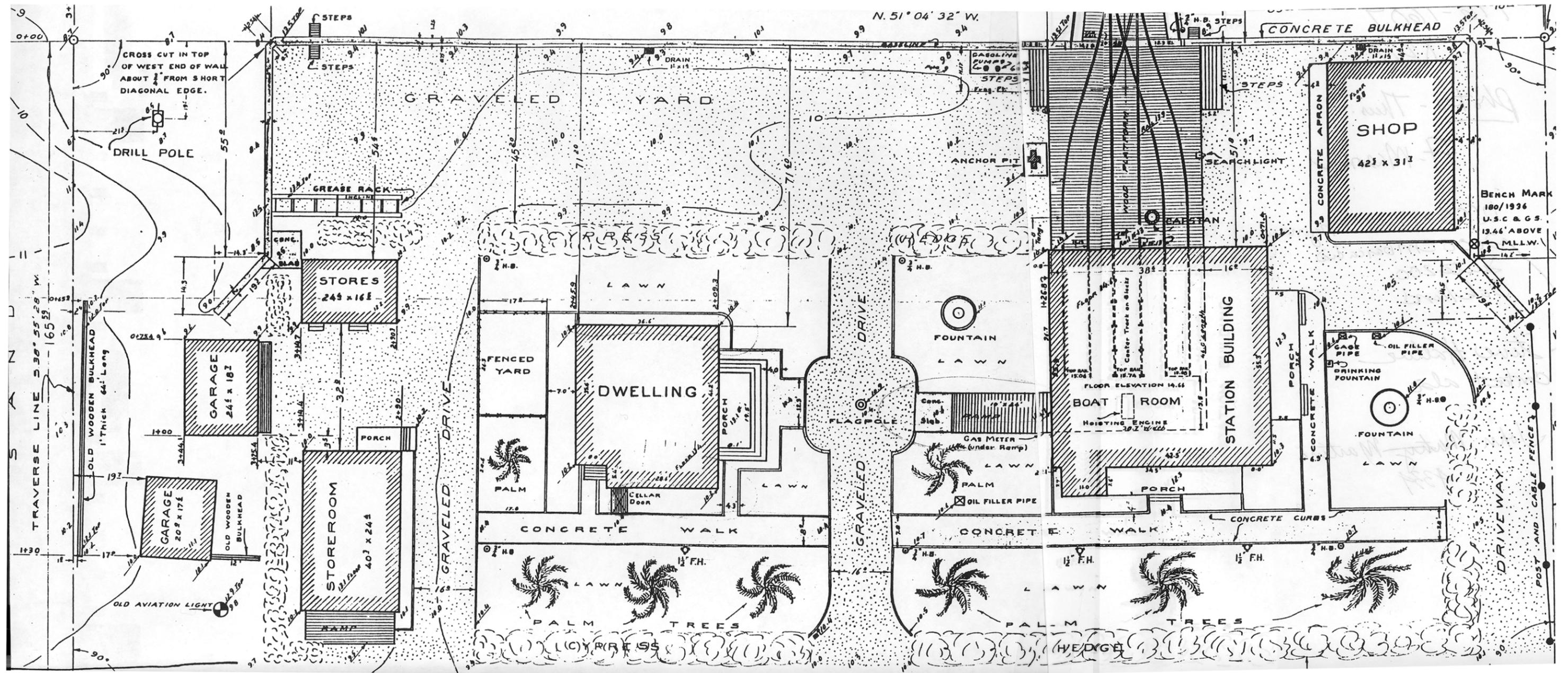
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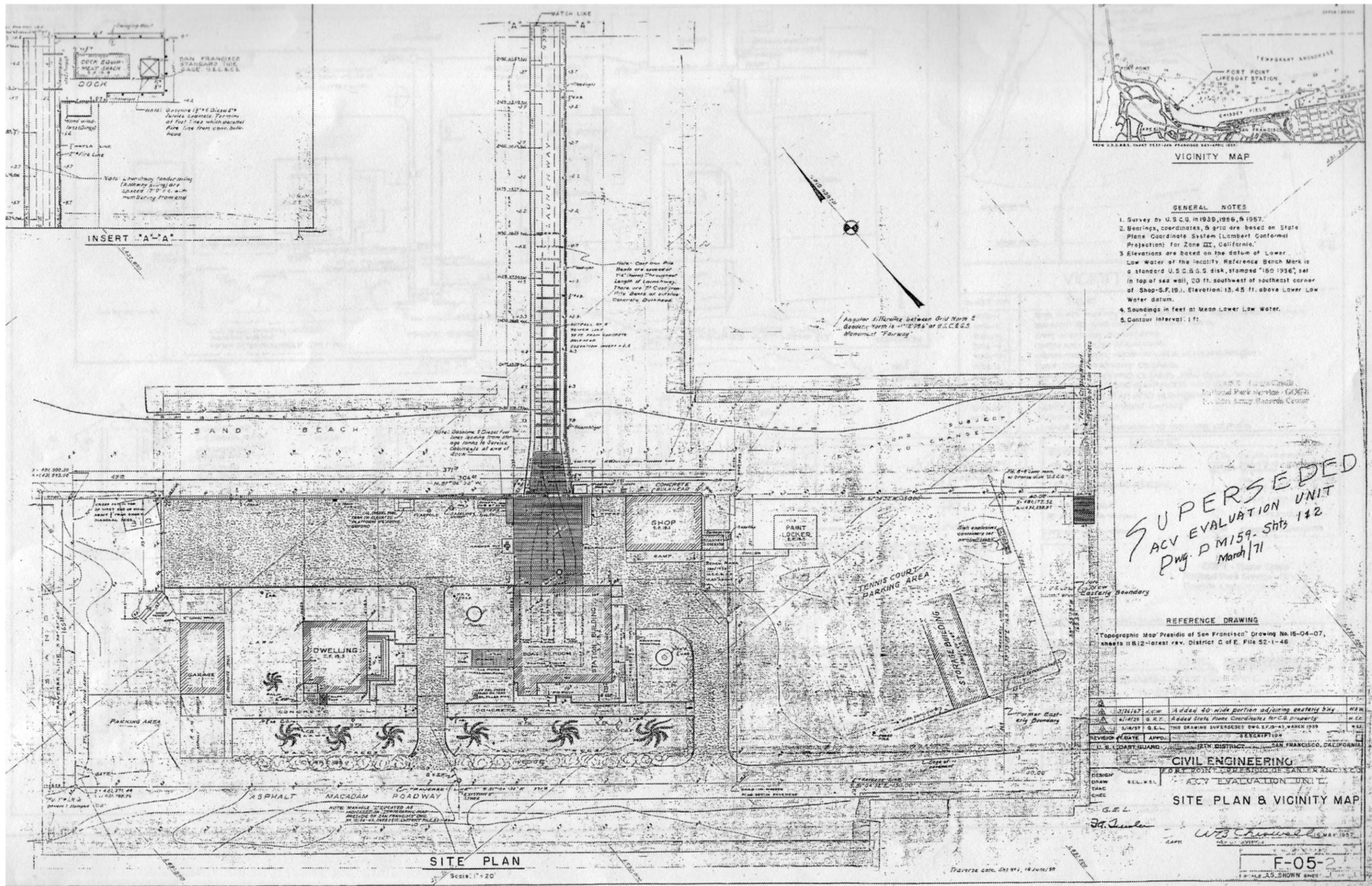


- Legend
- Contributing structure or circulation
 - Non-Contributing structure or circulation
 - Contributing curb

Fort Point United States Coast Guard Station
Buildings, Structures, and Circulation Map



Fort Point United States Coast Guard Station
1939 Site Plan



Fort Point United States Coast Guard Station
1958 Site Plan