

**LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK  
CENTER FOR LOWELL HISTORY  
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**“FROM CREATION TO OPERATION: TWENTY-FIVE  
YEARS AT LOWELL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK”**

INFORMANT: RICHARD CORREIA

INTERVIEWER: MEHMED ALI

DATE: 8/26/2004

R=RICHARD

A=ALI

**Tape I, side A**

A: And this is interview with Richard Correia, August 26, 2004, and first, Dick, a little bit of background information. Where and when were you born?

R: I was born 1933 in Boston. I've been brought up in Hudson, Massachusetts until I was ten years old.

A: Okay, and (--) Go ahead.

R: Then we moved to Oxford, Mass., which is probably thirty miles away, (A: Okay) but always in the Central Massachusetts area.

A: Okay. And what did your folks do for work?

R: Just first generation mill workers and things like that. You know, shoe workers in those days, (A: Yup) but that's, you know, work hard and long days.

A: And your parents came from Portugal?

R: Yup.

A: Okay, and where did you go to school at?

R: I went to high school (--) Actually, let's start from the beginning, because I started in parochial school and went through, two parochial schools until the ninth grade, through the ninth grade, then went to Public Oxford High School, graduated from there and then worked for a few years. (A: Yah) Went into the service for a few years. (A: Okay) Then started college in 1956. Graduated with my Bachelors Degree in 1960. So I'm a

nontraditional student. (A: Yah) And a BSCE from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst, Mass.

A: Okay. And what did you get the particular degree in?

R: Civil Engineering.

A: Civil Engineering, I see. Okay. And what did you do for employment when you first left college?

R: I worked for a structural engineering consulting firm in Worcester for five years, and then an opportunity came up to be interested in a state service position. And it looked interesting enough, and that's when I started with DEM in 1965.

A: Okay, and what was that first position that you took?

R: First position was a senior engineering position, but soon developed into something else. In a matter of a few years I was director of acquisition and construction, (A: Okay) and that's when I started getting involved in overall concept of projects, rather than you know, a little piece of a big project.

A: Okay. And what were your responsibilities with that job that you took around 19 what, '68 or so you said?

R: Yah, in the 1968, 19 you know, in that particular range of years I would lead up all the acquisition and the construction projects for DEL. In those days DEM was very, very fortunate. We were allocated, or we were authorized considerable funding, relatively speaking considerable funding from the legislature for park expansion. So that created the need for additional land and for recreational purposes. We also bought land for conservation purposes obviously. (A: Okay) But the Park Development Program expanded tremendously in the, you know, late 60s and early 70s.

A: What were some of the more outstanding parks or projects that you worked on during that period?

R: The, well what comes to my mind off hand would be Wompatuck State Park in Hingham, a camping area in Taunton, which was, I just forget the name of it right off hand. The Boston Harbor Islands, we purchased a number of them for DEM. (A: Okay) I think there were about 13 of them as a matter of fact. (A: Really) And of course since that time it's developed into a different concept of ownership you might say, or in management. The Holyoke Range, which is a unique mountain range in Massachusetts. It runs east and west instead of north and south, and South Cape Beach in Mashpee. (A: Okay) We reacquired that. The Commonwealth reacquired that, and I was instrumental on that.

A: And you say reacquired? Why?

R: Well it once was owned by the Commonwealth, a good piece of it, and for whatever reason the legislature turned it back to the former owners. So it was a number of years later that the interest was renewed. It was, in fact it was after the, the suit that was settled by the Wampanoag Tribe against the United States of America. The Wampanoags lost that particular case, and so the land was put back on the market. It wasn't put back on the market. The Commonwealth at that point had renewed its interest and took some by imminent domain.

A: I see.

R: Not from the Indian Tribe, but rather from the owner, [New Seabury] Corporations.

A: Did you use imminent domain more that outright purchase back in those days?

R: No, we, you know we actually negotiated most of our settlements and land acquisition. That was the policy, it was the tendency, it made the relationships between the owners of property and the state agency much more palatable to them. It, you know, it was just our way of doing business, not quite like the federal government, which often times takes property by imminent domain and then tries to settle out afterwards perhaps.

A: Yah.

R: But that's the way it went, you know. It was our, it was a policy and it was carried out that way. Imminent domain was the last resort.

A: Okay. Okay. Do you remember your first bubble of information about creating a Park in Lowell?

R: A little bit. A couple of interesting things, because one of the first times I was here, at least the stronger memory, I was walking down the main street of Lowell, which was Merrimack Street. There's a picture of this I'm sure at the Lowell Sun. I was actually walking down the street with Governor Dukakis, and the Congressman, the United States Congressman from I think it was the Philippines, and he was here as a committee member, Congressional Committee member reviewing I suppose, evaluating the project for the Congressional Commission. This would have been on the House side. And I was walking down the street and trying to, trying to envision this in the very visionary way that Pat Mogan saw it, and I just failed to obtain it in that particular day.

A: Many, many people have tried and failed.

R: And I was saying, "Where's the Park?" That's kind of unkind, but I mean it was just the first impression. But if in fact you know, not having the dates exactly straightened out here, if in fact that was my first day walking at the site you might say, other things must have happened in the department before that, or certainly concurrent, because the Congressman wouldn't have been here unless there was you know, some strong interest

being expressed. And so I have to suspect that some of our [Decamps] Planning Department had been out here. And it may well have been that the plan had been developed at that point. I forget exactly the name of that plan, but it's the one I mentioned to you before (A: Yah) that Lieutenant Governor O'Neil was the Chairman of that. And I think you know, he was a very strong leader that brought a lot of force to that, you know, to the study.

A: Yah, now the Heritage State Park was actually designated in 1974. So obviously (R: In that time, yah) before even Michael Dukakis took office.

R: It (--) There's some, yah, I recall some of the planning being started under the Francis Sargent Administration, but I'm not sure how much ground work had been done at that particular time. When I say ground work, the actual execution of any plans. (A: Yah) My, my recollection of this, and it has to be after '74 I think, it would have to be in the Michael Dukakis administration. I'm using these people as you know, as points in time. Because some of the first things that I did in Lowell was to accept on behalf of the department, when I say accept, I'm using the term as in being instrumental in making sure the documents were prepared and transferred ownership of property to, from the city to DEM, or to the Commonwealth. (A: Yah) An example was the Dutton Street Parking Lot, which was owned by the city. (A: Okay) And I think even in those early days there was no question that that was going to be the entrance point for people coming in to see the National Park, okay. (A: Yah) So there was a lot of interest in getting the house in order you might say, in getting those city lands, which would be important to, to the entire Park concept, okay, into [DECAMS], I'm sorry, DEM's possession, okay and centralized so that it could be in a stable condition, okay. It wouldn't be lost. It wouldn't go out for other reasons (A: Yah, correct), because it takes a 2/3 vote of the legislature to divest interest in the DEM's property. (A: Okay) So it was a good way of putting the plan in the bank. And then these other things had to happen, you know, for final resolution. I used that as an example.

Meanwhile, another piece of property (--) Well let me put it this way, there are interest groups in the city, and one of them was focused on the Pawtucket Boulevard, which has become the Sampas Pavilion. I think people know that as the Sampas Pavilion.

A: Yup, and the Vandenberg Esplanade.

R: The Vandenburg Esplanade, right. And the second was downtown, and what I call the Wentworth Bock area. (A: Yup) And so our focus, DEM's focus was to try to start our efforts in those two locations. And so we, we made a lot of progress in the city in keeping all interests just going along with us, okay. We worked closely with two groups in the city, and Armand Lemay was chairman of both groups. One was the steering committee, (A: Okay) the Lowell Heritage State Park Steering Committee. And the other was the Lowell Heritage State Park Interpretive Committee. And so I was, you know, I was a frequent visitor to Lowell, let me tell you. I mean a lot of evening meetings. But this is how we, we came to focus on these two areas, or refocus really, because certainly they were part of the overall plan. Now we're at a stage of implementing that plan. And so we had to make things work. Most of the esplanade

okay, was city owned. (A: Okay) Right next to the, you know, right next to the Merrimack River. So a lot of that was transferred. A lot of that property was transferred from the city to the, to DEM. So that made it relatively easy as far as acquisition. Construction was another issue. We worked very hard to quickly, we didn't have a lot of time. There was you know, there really was a genuine interest to have DEM have a strong presence in Lowell. And so we did a lot of in-house design and we execute the construction also. The, the Wentworth Block area was a little bit more difficult. We had to acquire the YMCA, which, which was a little ticklish.

A: Yah, tell us about that story.

R: Well you know, it had been a structure there for you know, long standing, but you know, genuine use of the community. It had sort of moved on to different things, and the Y had relocated away from that area. (A: Okay) So while it had a lot of attachment to many people, I think that people recognized that the use had changed dramatically, and that we could obtain it, and raise it. Now why was it interesting, because it opened up a completely new vista of the community, of that area down there. Middle Street, Market Street became integrated again with areas closer to city hall for example. You could actually see them. You could walk to them. You just, it created a different atmosphere within the community. There also was, it enabled the site to be somewhat restored to more historic time in Lowell's history, the old transportation building site there. I think it was Alexander Graham Bell exhibited the telephone there, or something. There was certainly some great history to it; a great covered arch over the canal.

A: Umhm, which was there, but buried by the Y building essentially?

R: That's correct. It was in some structure of the Y. And as it became exposed it was, the brick veneer was very soft. And sometime in the future, I'm not sure I was there when this happened, it was covered over with an additional veneer of brick to help preserve the original brickwork.

A: Okay.

R: The other piece of property that was of interest in acquisition was the LoMedco Buildings, which included the Mack Building, which was quite significant to us. We, it was, had been planned to have been retained. DEM would have its headquarters there, and its exhibit there, and the adjacent corrugated metal two-story building, which was quite ugly as a matter of fact, okay, we purchased and we took that down too. LoMedco happily had relocated at the time to, to an abandoned shopping center. And so there were some good uses all the way around there. I mean good purposes. At that time the shopping center was vacant of a store, and you know a major anchor store. And so LoMedco was able to walk right in there and keep up the economy in that particular part of town, (A: I see) at that time.

A: Yah. (R: At that time) Did they get any incentives for removing over there to that other building?

R: Yah, I think so. I think this is why you know, first of all, these were the days when we offered you know, very fair market value prices for the property. I mean it was a negotiated purchase. If in fact there was any imminent domain, it was a friendly imminent domain, and not an unfriendly one. Relocation was, you know, we had been, was coming into, into forces, a part of acquisition policy in the United States, and in Massachusetts. So there were some benefits there, and also probably some economic incentives. I'm not, wasn't part of it in terms of financing and stuff like that, but you know, I hear that, I'm not sure what happened, okay. But that's the kind of thing that other departments in the commonwealth would be a part of.

A: Yah, yah.

R: I was just a win/win situation for a lot of people. That allowed us to do things at that particular block, okay, which goes from you know, Shattuck to Market, to Merrimack; and then the back is (A: Dutton?) Dutton Street. (A: Dutton Street). Yah, that really, a lot of, an awful lot of things that happened once those two buildings were, were demolished. And you know I think another thing of interest there is the Commonwealth, DEM, purchased a preservation easement facade of the Wentworth Block. (A: Okay) Okay, that may even been forgotten for the most part these days.

A: Was that the first time that that had ever happened? (R: Um) Was that a new concept?

R: It was you know, it was sort of a new concept for DEM to implement. I'm not sure (-) I'm sure it must have been thought about in the past. It was the first one that I had come up in my tenure there. (A: Yah) We found it very interesting. We thought it had a lot of you know, potential to help preserve facades of buildings without going into extreme costs. I mean you don't have to buy a building in order to make it, you know, to make the building serve your purpose. Adaptive reuse was a big, big term in those days. You know, architecturally the buildings could be used for a lot of things from the inside of the building, just you know, help save the architectural significance of the buildings from the exterior. That's part of that process at the time. We felt it very beneficial, and I hope that's been you know, complied with over the years.

A: Oh I think so. I mean I think the National Park continued that whole thrust, and offered grants and loans to maintain, and that's why we have such a snazzy looking downtown in a way, right?

R: Right. I just hope, I meant specifically to that site, because I'm putting on my DEM hat for a minute and saying, I hope our investment was sound and was still, and the people are still living by the terms.

A: Was that, was that an apartment block back then, or?

R: Yah, it was a junk block. (A: Really) It was, in those days I mean it was being renovated okay, for that purpose, okay. (A: Yah) And so everybody was looking at opportunities, okay. Opportunities are too directional. Okay, we were looking for our opportunities, and the developer was looking for opportunities. So we were able to sit down and negotiate you know, something that helped us both.

A: Who was the developer at that time?

R: I forget the names. I see their name once in a while, and I, I forget what it was. (A: Now you?) Big, big developer, he became a big developer.

A: Yah, you talked earlier about a time sensitivity, a time factor that you guys felt pressed to move forward. What was that overall time, time sensitivity originating from, or why, why time sensitivity?

R: Well you know, I think that part of it was to make sure that there's no delay, no delay set into a particular process, okay. And the process I imagine had to, you had to be sensitive to the interest being expressed by people who would like to see a National Park here. (A: Okay) Okay. I mean it sort of, it sort of represented, okay, it was symbolic of an interest of them being parlayed by the state of Massachusetts, okay, being implemented by the state of Massachusetts, okay. So here it is folks, and we're, there's some valid reason here for you to take a look at us to see what we're doing, and we've, we think that we're moving on with our projects. So, you know, I mean close to it seems, I imagine you could probably describe it differently, but I mean as far as, for my purposes okay, it was one of my four priorities, but by the time I got in through a different term, you know.

A: Yah, right. So along those lines did you guys always have conscious knowledge that what you were doing to set up the State Heritage Park, one of the major reasons was to prove to the Feds that they could have a National Park here?

R: Um, I'm not sure I could describe it that way.

A: Okay.

R: I think you know, there was (--) Because you're talking at my particular level. (A: Yah) Okay, now other people may say, oh absolutely right, you know. I don't know that, okay. I know that there was always this buzz, there was always this interest. There was you know, conversation. You know, I was well aware of time frames. I mean that's my, my, the way I've worked anyway, okay? (A: Yup) The, and probably it was a very, maybe it was successful. Maybe what we did happened to succeed in helping the establishment of the National Park here, okay, but I have to think it wasn't the only reason why you're here.

A: Okay. What would you say would be other reasons then?

R: I think collectively there's you know, and I go back to Pat Mogan who probably had the best vision in my opinion, okay, the best vision of the educational importance of the happenings in Lowell over you know, since the late 1800, 1700s, I'm sorry. He saw it in a way that was important educationally, and from, in order to do this, in order to succeed in conveying that particular problem, you needed to develop the city in a meaningful way, in a presentable way for that educational model to take place. You had to believe in that. That really was you know, the prime mover okay, of establishing something here. I think we, we had an awful lot of developments in the city that don't result in National Parks. And assumably on some kind of time frames that you have to hustle a little bit, you know. So this one did. This one made sense. And when I told you about walking down the street saying, "Where's the Park?" okay, it was because I had not been exposed yet, okay, to the kind of vision that Pat Mogan had. (A: Yah) Okay. And then when I came to know him, I came to know the city better, and I walked the towpaths, and I went through the mill buildings with different people, and with people like Ted Larter, (A: Yah) okay. And then I better understood the history, and said you know, there's something here. It's maybe not the only place that had a similar story, but there's still enough here to put it together, okay. And I'm not a vote in Congress okay, but said, but I thought, well you know, this is making sense now, okay. And so there's you know, an awful lot of reward that come out of it, can come out of this. So that's what came out of it. I think it's great. Good for Pat Mogan.

A: Absolutely, absolutely.

R: I still admire him very much. Haven't seen him for a long time, but I admire him.

A: He still has got a thousand new ideas. (R: I bet) So watch out when you cross his path.

R: I bet he has. I bet he has. He challenged everybody.

A: You said the state picked up some of the city owned land like the Dutton Street lot and the Vandenburg Esplanade up on the boulevard. Was there money for that purchase, or was that um (--)

R: No, that was, the city land was just transferred to the DEM, okay. It doesn't mean we didn't spend the money on the land acquisition. We certainly did. And primarily we spent it at, the acquisition property, acquisition we spent primarily at the Wentworth Block. And there was another piece of property I was very, very proud to have purchased, because, and this was, unfortunately not much has been done with it, if anything, and it's over by Wannalancit Mill, and we purchased it from a fellow by the name of Barrett. And most of that particular acquisition is a parking lot for the Wannalancit Mills, but to me what was important was the building that is (--) I haven't driven by it lately. I have to suppose it's never been touched. There was a fence around it.

A: Yup, the ruined mill building?



R: Yah. And what was important to me there was that right, or wrong, true or false, whatever it is, is that, that my understanding is that the turbine that James Francis did his experiments on, okay, was located in that particular building.

A: Oh.

R: Okay. James Francis, everybody here knows who James Francis is. James Francis is known worldwide, okay. And so the textbooks on hydrology okay, you know, focus Francis and his work on the turbines. And all of these water turbines that had developed since 1940 something or other, (A: Yah) are known as Francis Turbines, okay. And being the civil engineer, and having gone through a course, I hope successfully, in hydrology, in hydraulics, Francis meant a great deal. And it's not that I had to pay anymore for it, but there are two good reasons, okay, for that acquisition. One was that history behind it, and secondly, was that, that because of the land that was there, and it's location, DEM could play a leadership role in the planning of that particular area.

A: Okay.

R: Okay. And what happened in the disposition of the property happened after I was, after I had transferred to [DECAM] okay. (A: Yah) I'm not saying, by the way, I'm not saying it's right or wrong, I'm just saying that was the important part of it, okay, because it was a considerable piece of land there, okay. And on one side of the property had the Courier Citizen, which was having its difficulties in that day, (A: Okay) and then on the side of course you had Wannalancit Mills. Let's be honest, I mean it wasn't anything that was thriving at the time, okay. I would think everything to me anyway, seemed to be struggling. Okay. So rather than chance having something undesirable take place on that property, I think it was a lot better okay, to capture that land and to make it, to make D, you know, DEM become an active player in the planning process, okay. And that's exactly what happened.

A: I see. I see.

R: That's exactly what happened. So it was well worth the investment. I still would like to see something happen to the building, but nobody is taking that on. So.

A: So that property was owned by, you said, who?

R: Well I'm not quite sure, a fellow by the name of Barrett.

A: Oh, maybe Frank Barrett?

R: Frank Barrett, yah, Frank Barrett.

A: Wanzkuk Corporation?

R: I forget what the corporate name was, or Frank Barrett was the representative, and he and I came to a quick conclusion through a negotiation. And he was reasonable. I mean he was reasonable by both parties, okay, and we were able to buy that. That was, that was a good move on our part I thought. And I had a long chat with my boss in Boston about it, and that's primarily why we purchased it. The opportunity was there, and we thought it was important.

A: Yah. And was Frank Barrett also involved in the YMCA Building?

R: You know I don't remember the [unclear]. I don't remember that he was. I just (--)  
He could have been, but I don't remember that, okay.

A: Yah. Now how, how did you guys select the sites? Was it part of a plan that had been brought forward to you?

R: Yah. This was part of the planning process that, that had been expressed and documented.

A: And the document done by Tom O'Neil and those folks?

R: Sure. Absolutely. Yup. And so you know, you have a plan, and then you have an implementation of a plan, okay. (A: Yah) And it is my role, my role was stronger in the implementation stages than it was in the planning stages.

A: In the planning part of it, right.

R: We, quite frankly we, we were often running those days and trying to get something going in all of the Heritage State Parks. Okay. So this was an entirely new role for DEM. I was very much involved in the [unclear] of contracts and whatnots. That kept me plenty busy, and you know, to prepare for the stages that we got into. So the planning was going on in a lot of areas. I was working with people who, a lot of those people work side by side with me. We had planners in each of these communities, a lot of new people. You know I was sort of like an older person who could be more than a resource, and was really you know, trying to get them going with this, but going in the right direction, because it was something new. We had to have some legislation to do some of the things that we did, but that's how we got involved in it, you know. So we knew what we wanted to do, how do we get there? And sometimes that took change in legislation.

A: Yah. Any interesting issues in the acquisition end of your work?

R: You mean at this Park?

A: In Lowell, yah.

R: Well all acquisition is interesting. All my construction was interesting. The (--)  
What makes it, what makes it very, very interesting is the outcome of what you do, okay, the

final product. I mean that's, that's what we're all here for, is to, is we buy things, we buy land and then reconstruct land, okay, to serve a purpose. And so the interesting part about the boulevard for example, is that we took an area, which was a parker's lane, nothing wrong with that, but I mean it was used also for you know, people who changed their motor oil. (A: Yup) You know, it was not a very pleasant place. So the interesting part about acquiring property like that, even when it's only a transfer of ownership from the city to the state, is you really get a big kick out of it when you see people jogging, people walking, people sitting on the lawn. The lighting concept there you know, which we took a lot of pains in by the way, to make it safe, to you know, create a neighborhood that was peaceful, that was safe, that was entertaining. The stage was, was something else. That was a real time frame breaker, believe me.

A: Really? Yah.

R: Probably something that if you had had all the time in the world you might have even come up with something different, don't get me wrong. We had to do the best we could with the time. But that's it. We got it going. We had the sound system there. I've, you know, we, in the fall of that year we had you know, the Boston Pops was out there.

A: So you put that thing together almost in one year?

R: Yah.

A: Wow.

R: Yah. And you know, we did things so that to make things move. We pre-purchased things. We got into different methodologies to make things work, okay. We would buy some materials to make sure you know, [unclear] items, we would buy them. The agency would buy them, purchase them, okay, and have them on hand for the contractor to install. (A: Oh) And the sound system was that way, okay. We did a lot of things legally but different. It created challenges for us and we had to you know, what resulted was innovation and good things that spread across the entire system.

A: So previous to the (--)

R: We do the same thing today by the way.

A: Previous to that you would hire a contractor who would then go purchase a sound system to put in, whereas you guys shopped around for the sound system and then provided that for the contractor to put in.

R: Yah, we were, that's right, and we were able to start off early in certain phases of things, okay, and we do that today. The interesting concept was that that's how we, we do things in some places, and some times today. (A: Yah) It wasn't like the inside of this building, that didn't happen, okay. This was sort of you know, the old design bid/construct procedure okay, by DECAM, okay. And I was at DECAM. I was director

there for you know, almost eight years. So I know that process, and believe me okay, and I know other processes okay, methodology is generally legitimate, okay. And one of them is using state authorized vendors for [unclear] items. We had one here. Why get hung up in the process. Yah, the state agency takes a little bit more responsibility for it, you know, does the work. (A: Right) But you know, sometimes that pays off. Most of the time it does pay off.

A: Let me ask you about some other sites. Oh I should ask, you talked about interest groups, obviously up on the boulevard, the Regatta people were very instrumental (R: Sure) and they were encouraging the state to get involved in that area of the city. (R: Right) What other interest groups were involved in the State Park, like say for the downtown?

R: Well I'm not sure exactly who, as a single person would, I could pick out, but the thing is that there was a genuine interest okay, at a that time, of saving the city okay, and I think it's admirable. Okay, you just can't let the cities keep on going the way they were going. Okay. So I'm you know, a taxpayer like everybody else, okay. I think it's tax dollars put to good use when, when you revitalize communities, and help make the living situation better for people who are city dwellers you might say, okay, or they want to be in the city, we want them to be in the city. There's a lot of pluses for that to have, you know, to have happen. When you looked around at the time and you saw (--) I mean I'm amazed today okay, and I compare today with the day I walked down Merrimack Street, okay. And things improved for a while. I'm talking about in terms of years now. Don't forget I'm going back almost thirty years. Okay, things improved for a while. It seemed to be, I haven't tracked them, okay, but it seemed to improve, and then it took a dip you know, like a [unclear]. Like it took a dip and then, and then it started going back up again. Now I, I can walk down Merrimack Street today, and it just resembles a community that's moving, you know, the storefronts are filled up. The condos are being built. Is that good for everybody? I don't know, but you know, it's better than seeing those you know, buildings empty as they were. I mean.

A: And you think the way the cities were headed in the late 60s, early 70s would have meant kind of the end of them? You talk about, you're talking about saving the cities.

R: You know I'm sort of familiar with the site at North Adams, and that was down trodden. Holyoke, which was a mill city also, and we focused on a certain area there. We built a visitors center. Oh yah, I forget Fall River. Fall River has a State Heritage Park also. I'm trying to think, you know, Lawrence I was a little familiar with, probably less familiar with Lawrence than I was with some of them. Springfield, which was centered about city hall and that whole quadrangle and doing things to, to attract tourism there too, you know, but making the lifestyle, making the lively conditions for people, you know. And I'm trying to think. I'm not sure if there's another one. I don't consider Lawrence in the same way that I look at Lowell. And nor do I look at Fall River the same way. Okay, but we had very important roles there, okay, and those roles were catalytic and you know, in a turnaround way. I mean you just had to do something for these communities. Now whether they, whether another way of saving those

communities would have come along, I don't know, okay, but we were there. The legislature was extremely good about this, wanted results, okay, and rightfully so. (A: Yah) It was a legislative funded you know, program. You know, you don't get money for nothing. You guys know that. And so they want results. Okay. And I bet you two to one, if anybody went back and since we're talking about Lowell, if anybody went back today and said to the legislature, you know, "Look what's happened to Lowell? How could they be disappointed?" I mean one thing has happened after another, okay, and I you know, I sort of wish the Heritage State Park was playing a different role today, but that's not, that's not in my say so.

A: Did you, did you see the article in the paper recently?

R: I didn't, no. No. I'd like to see that really.

A: Yah, it was in Sunday's paper, and it was highly critical of the State Park for kind of the lack of response that they've given Lowell in the last few years. So.

R: Yah, see I, it's been too long that I've been out of it you know, for me to respond to that. I know that you know, part of, part of the way things were going, okay, we were going to be a lot of partnership roles, you know, and I think the federal government and state government played that role in the Mack Building if I'm not mistaken, right. You guys are in there. And I know at one time it used to be a water exhibit in there, and I don't know if it still is or not.

A: No, that's gone.

R: No, okay. I don't know how successful or otherwise it was, but I guess not. But (--)

A: Well it might be viewed as a success if you see that that was a showpiece again, to illustrate to the federal government that the city and the state had made a large investment in the history of the city, and the reason why it should be recognized as a National Park.

R: What year was the Park, the National Park established?

A: '78. So it came four years after, after the state.

R: I remember the day, okay. I remember the day when you know, Senator Tsongas was up at the, in front of the city hall in the annex building. A wonderful crowd there. (A: Really) And he brought the signed legislation to Lowell, and it was a real wonderful festivity.

A: Yah. Were you there on site that day?

R: I was right there. (A: Yah) I was right there, yah. And what I'm trying to think, and this is part of my problem here, is where we were you know, in the development of the,

let's say the Wentworth Block? So you know I'm not sure that it was up and running at that point, in '78

A: By that time, yah.

R: It was well on the way. (A: Yah) You know, I'm not (--) A person who is very, very great in this, and had the same kind of interest, okay, was, at the time was when she was the Executive Secretary of Environmental Affairs, was Evelyn Murphy.

A: Oh, okay.

R: Okay, and I have to think this was during the first Michael Dukakis Administration that she was in that position.

A: Yah. What was her background? Do you know?

R: She was an environmental consultant in planning and things like that. (A: Uh huh) Okay, and give her a lot of credit. Okay, she was one of a team, okay, a very (--)

**Tape I, side A ends**  
**Tape I, side B begins.**

R: Yah, yah. This was a team effort, okay, and you know, one of the four priorities that I was given okay, by Evelyn Murphy, and she, she's not my immediate boss, she was my boss' boss, okay, but this was so genuine to her, so she was concerned enough to call me up to say, and this is four things I want you to accomplish, which meant, if you got time to work on other things, that's up to you, but this is what I want, okay. And Lowell Heritage State Park was one of them.

A: Okay.

R: So, and I was glad to get that kind of direction. I mean sometimes you can't read everything. You know, if somebody taps you in the shoulder and says this is what you're going to do, it's helpful.

A: Right.

R: So I was able to focus on it, okay. And since it was important enough to her, okay, at a time when we were taken down the YMCA I wanted her to see what we were doing in the city of Lowell. Okay. And we, we came up with a program where she came up to the city okay, for almost an entire day, okay, and only part of her day really was to look at what was going on at Wentworth Block. That's how busy things were at that time. Okay. Things were going on at the, at the Pawtucket Boulevard. We had, she had economic development dinner out there, (A: Oh really) at the Speare House. (A: Okay)

Packed the place. (A: Really) Okay. And Joe Day was out there, you know, the TV celebrity. It was a day and a half. We were successful in getting Locks and Canals to open up the north, the Northern Canal. (A: Okay) Okay, and we had taken down a piece of the fence, and stuff like that, and rebuilt it, you know, temporary barges in there and stuff like that.

A: Really.

R: We had the barges going back and forth, the boats and all. I think DEM brought in the environmental police with their, their gloves. And you know, when you're looking at a chain link fence, looking at the water, it's an entirely different view than when you're on the water looking up at things, okay. (A: Yah) And you know, and you sort of, the picture was less cloudy and more-clearer when you did things like this. Okay, and I think you're more closely approaching Pat Mogan's vision. Okay. He had it before the ride in the canal, okay. So it took things like that, okay, for us to gain that kind of insight, okay. And you, you know, when you go down and you look up at the Wannalancit Mills, how can you not be impressed? Okay. When you go inside the mill on the tour okay, in those days, I mean how can you not be impressed okay, with how people work, and how production took place. (A: Yah, yah) It wasn't linear, it was vertical, you know, [unclear] moved up you know, from the process demanded that you lift things up you know. And it wasn't, and of course that's one of the reasons why a lot of things are alive in Lowell, okay, because that industry went to where there was plenty of land, and things could be done on a production line all in one floor, okay, at that time making cars for example. You know, that kind of production.

A: Right. Right.

R: But so you know, but you can't lose sight of what people went through. You can't lose sight of the fact that the mill workers [were women one day]. (A: Right) So things started tying together [unclear]. We lit up the day with a dinner over at the Pollard Restaurant, which was on Middle Street at the time, next to the Derby Building. And low and behold by the way, on another role of my career, the Derby Building came along with Middlesex Community College.

A: Oh, okay. Yah, yah.

R: So you know, things started tying together. I think my vision of Middle Street will never be attained, okay, but I can have a vision too. And, but so it was interesting when I came back, I'm sorry, not when I came back, but when I came to Middlesex Community College, and the Health Science Technology Center was being discussed, and there were different proposals. And you know I could, one of them of course was the "K" Building, the Talbot/"K" Building, and the Derby Building on Middle Street. So that was desjavous. You know, I'm back here again. I can look down the street and practically see the Mack Building. I could see things that I had done before, you know from I think it was 70 something, and here it is you know, after '89, or in that neighborhood, '89 or '90, or whatever it was. I say, you know, wasn't it wonderful that what we did, I'm

saying to my self, you know, at DEM, which opened up this Middle Street. (A: Umhm) Okay, and you guys did an awful lot to Market Street. (A: Right) Things were popping along for Merrimack Street, and this was all now starting to fit together. Okay. So we were you know, interested in those buildings, and purchased them for the HSTC. The whole place is exploding.

A: Yah, yah, its burgeoning at the seams, right.

R: Yah, and my vision of course was to, was to, which won't happened, was to perceive more of an old country approach there, where you could take the vehicular traffic off of there, except for emergency vehicles, and for early morning deliveries and stuff like that.

A: Well the artists might, might produce that vision.

R: You know, you really (--) If you know, you've been to Europe, you've seen some of the old cities, and they're created for an entirely different reason. You know, they were all walled in over there. They were protective (A: Right), and they were protecting each other, okay. But all of these old cities have become wonderful places of interest, and for tourism, (A: Yup) and they've kept the vehicles out of them. Whether you go to Switzerland, and in places in Germany, or whatever it is, okay, and I visited a few, only a few of the countries over there, and I mean it impressed me that you could have people you know, make a go of it. You could have stores. You could have restaurants. You could have a wonderful academic climate. You could have a wonderful cultural climate, artistic climate. You know, to me art and the colleges go together. (A: Yah) You have a good match. You've got residents. You're not going to have much empty space pretty soon. (A: No) But you got too many cars. That's just me, okay. And if you could do that, I'm not sure that the will is there, but wouldn't it be a wonderful place to go?

A: Well supposedly one of the big sticklers is Rogers Pool, who has trucks coming and going all day on upper Middle Street, but I've heard a lot of the new residents talk about it. So you wait, you wait. Let's move on a little bit.

R: You could get a wonderful urban campus type atmosphere in there. A wonderful urban community feeling right in there, in that road, Middle Street, you know. And then you can continue on down where the Mack Building was, and you can see city hall. I mean it's just a great, great view from there, if the trees haven't grown up too tall.

A: You talked a little bit about the canals. Let me ask you about what DEM's role with the Locks and Canals, and the purchase of that property was?

R: That came after I left, okay. When, I wasn't part of that [unclear], I just didn't, I don't think I was, you know. That was before I left. (A: Okay) Okay, it happened after I left. I'm sorry, okay. So I don't know how it came about. So, I'm not judging it by the way, okay. I, when I came back to Middlesex, excuse me, when I came back to Middlesex I heard about it. And I said, oh well, you know, okay. I know I looked out the city campus building, you know, the old Wang [Property] across the street, and I looked



down at the locks, you know, the lower locks, and I could see the big blow-out there, and I was oh wow! You know, that's interesting, you know. And the DEM actually paid for the renovation for that. That's my understanding. I don't know. And DEM had done a lot of other things, okay, but that was part of the implementation of things, you know, I would guess. And so however it came up, and however it was judged. I know that after I left Chris Scott I think, have you got his name down? (A: No) I think Chris Scott, and I think it's his name, okay, the planner who worked for me, not for me, but with me okay, in the years I was at DEM on the Lowell Project, was Jane Bernstein.

A: Jane Bernstein?

R: Umhm.

A: Is she still around?

R: I have no idea. I have no idea.

A: Where did she come from, do you know?

R: You mean where did she live?

A: Yah.

R: Cambridge.

A: Cambridge.

R: I don't know what happened to her. She [unclear], you know, but I think Chris was very involved with things here. I don't know where Chris is right now. I saw his name come up in Martha's Vineyard I think once.

A: Oh really?

R: Yah. (A: Okay) But, well it was either Martha's Vineyard, or Nantucket, one of those, [unclear] Martha's Vineyard.

A: Now the Locks and Canals if of interest to the National Parks because of, it's one of the reasons why the federal government came and decided that Lowell was nationally significant because of this canal system, and the hydro power, the mills, etc. So there was that reason for probably the State Heritage Park coming in, and the National Park coming in as well. But there was also some business relations there that the Locks and Canals had fallen on hard times, and the state needed to come in and help them out. Have you heard stories about that?

R: No, but I'm trying to think of why I, I'm trying to think of why I encountered people from Locks and Canals, okay. And if you really want to know the truth, I don't think it

was on that issue. I don't think, I'm trying to think back when I was, while I was here, of what we may have purchased from Locks and Canals, okay. I do know that the same law firm represented Mrs. Drury and Field I think it was, okay, and represented an owner of other property that the DEM purchased and in another community. (A: Okay) Okay. So I crossed path with these attorneys, but I don't think it was on the Locks and Canals property.

A: Okay. Would that be the Great Brook Farm property?

R: Yah, it is, yah.

A: So did you work on that project? (R: Yah) Tell us about that.

R: Yah. Great Brook Farm is a piece of property that we certainly took a great deal of interest in, and made a wonderful, wonderful purchase. You know, we're as much into open spaces. Some people are into development. Each has its role. Okay, and in the Park, in that particular purchase we were wearing the hat, you know, conservation/recreation kinds of things, okay, and it's not often that you get nine hundred acres [unclear] so close to the Boston area. (A: Right) We had the policy. This would, this would have been during, I'm pretty sure during the Sargent Administration. Okay, at that time it was, does it make sense I mean for conservation/recreation purposes? Yes it does. So that we, we pursued it and acquired that. We had a governor and commissioner at the time who, who (--) And I didn't make those decisions by the way, okay. (A: Yah, yah) But certainly I was part of, I did the cleanup work. I made sure all of the deeds were in order on that item. We did the appraisals, we did the title exams and all of that kind of stuff you know, and I became a member of that team [did you want to buy] that's fine, but I think there's a certain, to the same extent that I took on a lot of my projects, you know, it was easy to see why we were doing things. Okay. And I'm sure you feel the same way in the Park Service, you know. I see why we're doing this. It's important because of this reason, you know. It wasn't universally accepted, (A: No?) the Great Brook Farm. No, they got, they got tossed around. I think people thought we bought too much of the town of Carlisle. (A: Oh really) Okay, and when you're talking about I don't know, nine/ten percent of the land mass there. (A: Really. Yah, yah) But again you're talking about, you're right outside the reaches of the great population area, and where do these people go to recreate, and where do they go, okay? So if everything gets gobbled up with houses, then I guess you're not going to recreate except in your back yard. Okay. And you know, not everybody has two acres of you know, of land [unclear]. (A: Right, right) Okay. So while I've had a lot of people from the Cape come up over the years and say, that was a wonderful acquisition, a lot of people, no one has ever come up to me and said, that was a bad acquisition. I won't say there's nobody out there. I don't know, okay, but everybody said what a great, great place that is. And you know, I, I've enjoyed it a number of times, and I've gone cross-country skiing there, I've did some hiking, whatnot. And there's not a lot left of this.

A: No, no. (R: Okay) It's an amazing piece of land.

R: [Unclear].

A: Now so you've dealt with Eldred Field on that parcel?

R: Yah, he represented the owner.

A: How was he to work with?

R: Okay.

A: He's kind of an interesting character in his own right.

R: Well whenever you approach an attorney representing the interest of an owner, they become interesting and they become characters too.

A: Any stories about that parcel, and the negotiations for it?

R: No, no. As I say, it wasn't necessarily the most popular thing. You know, there's, there was a big piece, big price. It was an appraised price, a little over an appraised price. I mean I know that people would say, "Oh, why did you pay that when the appraisal was this?" You know. Well you have to negotiate things like that. You know it wasn't like the arm, we were the arm of the law. We were an instrument okay, of a governmental agency that the first thing we attempted to do was to, well not to get shafted obviously, but certainly to approach this reasonably. Okay, what's reasonable, okay? And a lot of discussions going on about this, because there was, you know, a fair amount of money involved in it. I'm trying to think it's about three million bucks, or whatever it was, you know?

A: Okay.

R: Well you know, you need to justify that kind of expenditure, you know, and then say, oh look, is this really? First of all, today's price, because it represents today's price, and what is this going to bring us in the future, you know, to the people? Okay, that creates a different value. You don't capture that right away by using, where else? What else do we go, okay, to provide that kind of service to the people?

A: And certainly today you couldn't buy nine hundred acres.

R: You couldn't find it.

A: You couldn't find them, and if you found them, how much would it cost today, right?

R: The same thing is true here in Lowell. (A: Yes) The same thing is true in any of the urban areas that we went into, okay. You paid pocket dollars for any acquisition. I mean it wasn't all transferred from the city to the state. We had to work at it. Okay, and then you have development cost. I mean these are expensive, okay. So you look at those

prices to make sure everything is right and proper, but you're in a position where you have to look at how you serve the public. And the role of the Department of Environmental Management was to provide conservation, recreation, and at instances, preservation property. Okay. So it was sort of like South Cape Beach okay. Beautiful beach, beautiful, beautiful, beautiful. You don't, you can't create a piece of property like that. Okay. You talk about every Heritage State Park, okay, that has turned around. Okay, sometimes you know, immediate boundaries, okay, because they had to establish economic development. I'm sorry, not economic development, but distressed areas, economic distressed areas. These were declared by the legislature, okay. So you had to really get those back economically, okay. And then that spread out. Okay. So instead of having bad things spread out, you had good things spread out.

A: Yah.

R: Okay. So those are all bonuses. Okay. So you had, we have bonuses, everything that we do. Okay, and I look at Lowell the very, very same way. Today we were in a bonus stage (A: Right) I think.

A: Now the acquisition of properties back then, did some of that funding come from the Feds?

R: Yah, from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

A: Okay. So tell us about how that worked?

R: Well it was in the Department of Environment Management, and then at some point in time it went up to the Executive Secretary Level, okay. We, you know, of course the Land and the Water Conservation Fund was part and parcel of [unclear]. Okay. And so we were participants, and applicants, okay, to that fund through, through either the agency that was within the, in the Environmental Management, or it was elevated to Environmental Affairs level.

A: Okay.

R: So we had to do all of the same kinds of things that municipalities had to do.

A: Oh, okay.

R: Okay. You know, at a time, you know, there was a time when there were sizeable amounts of money available okay, and the fund managers, Joe Lerner, was the director at the time and I don't know who it is today, okay. We had a lot of decisions to make, and I'm sure he had people watching over his shoulder in terms of determining what projects were going to be funded, you know. But we, we stood in line like a lot of other people. Okay, and like Great Brook, I'm not sure off hand whether that was funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. There were a lot of projects that were, but I just (--)

A: Yah, but that was one of the, probably one of the more expensive pieces of property picked up, right?

R: Oh yah, yah. On a single parcel basis, no question about it. But I don't know whether it was you know, an application, or if it was partially funded through you know, the feds. That was primarily a source of funding, okay. We also got involved with the small watershed projects with division of boom, boom, boom, boom.

A: The alphabet [soup of its day].

R: Well you know, small watershed I guess. But of course you know, they work with the corps of engineers and stuff like that. And so it may well be that the state participated in the acquisition and construction of water, bodies of water, or dams and bodies of water.

A: Reservoirs.

R: Reservoirs, you know, which became recreation areas, which where we would come in and develop a recreation project, okay. Some of our camping areas are done that way, some of our day use areas are done that way. So you know, it's, it was a lot of inter-agency agreements, and you know, for management purposes and whatnot. And it was, it was a great opportunity for increasing the recreation and conservation base at the time, because the people wanted it, the funding was available, and there was a will on the part of a political basis to do something at the time. Probably because of the other two reasons, you know, that money was available and stuff like that. You know we weren't in such economic bad times for all the time, you know what I mean? And but there was a lot of direction, a lot of looking at providing opportunities for recreation/conservation.

A: Now the commissioner during that time under Frank Sargent, was it Arthur Brown?

R: Arthur Brownell.

A: Arthur Brownell, yah. Is he still around?

R: I can't tell you whether (--) What you need (--)

A: Was he much older than you?

R: Oh no! No, he's not much older than I am.

A: No, no.

R: No, he's a young guy.

A: Really.

R: Arthur was a forester. (A: Okay) And he became the executive in one of the paper industry companies.

A: Okay. Where? Up in Maine?

R: No, no. No, no. I'd say his base was in Washington, D.C.

A: Okay.

R: Arthur was you know, six foot four, or six foot five; very impressive, very imposing type of individual; very smart.

A: Yah, how did he get tapped into being the commissioner, do you know?

R: No, I can't tell you that, but a popular guy I guess, you know.

A: Yah, yah. Did you ever have a chance to meet Farnham Smith?

R: Oh sure.

A: Yah, what kind of a guy was he?

R: Sociable, businesslike, pleasant, to me, I'm talking about our relationship. Loved his place there, and loved it, absolutely loved Carlisle and loved what he did. I guess it was a good life for him. He had a wonderful home. Of course the home was reserved out of the acquisition, okay.

A: Right, and the little office building there, which is now (--)

R: The office building was on a life estate.

A: Oh okay.

R: Yah, if I recall correctly it was a life estate. And (--)

A: And that was something that Eldred Field negotiated?

R: You know I, you know um (--). You know different people express different things, you know, and I can't remember all of the negotiations.

A: It's an interesting story, because you know, Farnham, Farnham got himself into a little hot water. So you know, the whole situation was created, but then it provided an opportunity for the state to get such a big, beautiful piece of land.

R: Yah, you know, you sort of hear those things you know, I'm not quite sure why he got himself in hot water. Was it taxes probably, or [unclear]?

A: [Unclear].

R: You know, I heard about it, and I said, well how the hell did he ever get himself into trouble like that? Maybe it's easier than I think, you know. But in terms of the individual and his family, I met his wife, I'm pretty sure his (--) I don't know. I'm pretty sure he was married.

A: Yah.

R: And it was a pleasant situation. This was not an acrimonious acquisition, okay. Very unique acquisition, and Commissioner Brownell was instrumental in it. I was with him a lot of these times you know, and giving advice, and you know, yah, we let our heads pounded in a little bit about it, and but you know, you have to know what you're doing. You have to be in a defensive position, you know, position that you're defending to the public, okay, which you guys know what this is all about, because this is their right thing to do, okay. And here's why we did it, okay.

A: And of course people in those days said, I don't care about twenty years down the road. Wait a minute, we know what's right now, is right for right now, it's really going to be more right okay, in the future. And that's how these things work.

R: Yah, yah. And I suspect if we had not acquired that property nobody else was going to acquire it for that price unless there's a development behind it, okay. There's nothing wrong with development.

A: Right, right.

R: I'm not saying it's bad, okay. People have got to live somewhere. I bought into a development, okay, and all of the houses are the same, you know. The thing is forty years later I'm still in the same house, okay, and you go in the neighborhood, you see trees. You don't see anybody else's house. You know, everybody had added on, and the houses look a little bit different, and nothing wrong with that, okay.

A: But it certainly would be a different change landscape in Carlisle.

R: Absolutely. Absolutely. Like I say, nobody, nobody has ever come up to me and said, "Man, you made the wrong (--)" I've read about it. (A: Yah) I mean I read about it, "You've made a bad choice."

A: But I don't think anybody has written anything like that in ten, fifteen, twenty years.

R: Oh yah. No, I don't remember anything like that.

A: Maybe at the time.

R: At the time, yah, and I can sort of understand that, you know. It was a big piece of change, and it was a dramatic thing, and you don't, you don't do that everyday, so therefore it is looked at a little bit differently.

A: Yah.

R: Okay. And there was nothing improper about it (A: Right, right) Okay.

A: There was a guy here that had his hand into a lot of community activities, Homer Bourgeois. Did you ever get to know him?

R: No, I didn't get (--) I heard about him, but you know I didn't, I don't think I did.

A: Any stories associated with him?

R: No. No. What was he? Help me out a little bit.

A: He was president of the Union National Bank, and he seemed to be involved in a lot of activities around the city, politics and all sorts of economical, economic stuff.

R: Yah, you know, there could be a lot of things that he thought of, which would come my way indirectly. Okay, I mean my, the way we kept this going is the only way we could have at the time, okay, was to deal with our steering committee and interpretive committee. (A: Yah, yah) Here is the plan, okay. You people would love to have us do something out there, okay. You people would love to have something down here in the city. Well we can do something both places, okay. If we do what you want to do out there, there's going to be nothing left over here. Okay, and we need to, we need to approach this sensibly. Okay. Here's what we can do at the Wentworth Block, okay. That was, that was wonderful. That was, you know, that was part of our mission that came out of that plan. Here's what we can do up at the boulevard. And thank goodness the city had land that was transferred. That was a cost that we didn't have to oblige ourselves to. So we could put it into, into the development, (A: Development, yah) you know. That was crap. You know what I mean? It was bad. It was dirty. It was you know, it was undesirable, okay. It was a nighttime scene out there, you know, that you didn't want. And, "Okay folks, what would you like to see up here?" And maybe what we did, even what we did probably didn't keep everybody happy, but we did something that was worthwhile, that fit in with you know, what people thought should be there. Okay. And we had to do it rather rapidly.

A: Who are some other strong personalities besides Armand Lemay on these steering committees if you recall?

R: Well you know, Bob was on both committees too I think, okay.

A: Bob Malavich?



R: Bob Malavich, okay.

A: Was Bobby Kennedy involved at that time? Do you remember him?

R: Yah, Representative Kennedy, he became a State Rep?

A: Yup!

R: Yah, you know, but I'm not sure that he was involved with those committees, okay.  
(A: Okay) It was more street folks than you know? (A: Yah) They had the director of the museum, and I'm trying to distinguish myself between the two committees. It's hard now at this point in time, okay. Peter, was it Peter? Yah, first it was Peter Goldman I think. Was that Peter, or?

A: Might be. Might be. I know Lou Karabatsos.

R: Lou Karabatsos, okay, was there, and I'm not sure which committee he was on, but you know, I'd have to go through my things, but you know, was there anybody as strong as Armand? No. (A: Okay) Armand, you said you know, he was very confident in life. He, you know, he handled things wonderfully. He certainly had opinions, nothing wrong with that. He was, you know, he was on the city council. He, we had a great relationship. He was instrumental in getting me to be an honorary citizen of Lowell.

A: Really?

R: I brought this with me. See here? (A: Oh yah) 1982, after I had left the DEM, and Brendan Fleming was the (--)

A: Is that the correct spelling of your name?

R: Yah, it's Correia, E - I - A.

A: Okay, because I misspelled it on there.

R: You want to put an R in there, another R in there. (A: Yah) And then on the steering committee, a very, very helpful person, I think she was wonderful. It was Mary something, from University of Mass Lowell.

A: Mary Blewett?

R: Yup! Yup, yup, yup!

A: Historian.

R: Yup. And when you mentioned Martha Mayo's name I mean that rang a bell, but I'm not sure how.

A: Well she was involved early on as kind of the keeper of the archives I think.

R: Okay. There was Ann Welcome at the time.

A: Sure. Sure. Great lady.

R: Yah, super lady. She came to work for the state I think for (--)

A: Yup. I'm involved in a group that's interested in, it's called "The Friends of the Forest."

R: Yah, you've mentioned that to me, yah.

A: Yah, so we're doing stuff out there.

R: Is she still working for the state?

A: Well she passed away.

R: Oh when?

A: Just last year.

R: Oh gee. I'll tell you she was terrific.

A: Yah, she was a great lady. I learned a lot from her. Speaking of the forest, did you have any ah, I think the forest at that time kind of got lumped in to the Heritage State Park.

R: Yah. Yah.

A: Do you remember any stories, or how that came to be, or anything?

R: No, not really. You know I think it was sort of a management issue, you know, how we manage things here, you know.

A: Any knowledge, or any history of the forest that you have?

R: No, no, I don't.

A: As kind of a sudden issue for my own (--)

R: I haven't been there for a long time.

A: Yah.

R: A good place for people to go out and shoot.

A: Don't say that!

R: Junk their cars. Okay. That's was here say by the way.

A: Yah. Um, let's see. Paul Tsongas? Did you have many relations with him during this period?

R: No. No I didn't.

A: No? Any of his staff members you worked with?

R: Well you know, of course it was Fred Faust I knew pretty well. There was, let me go back. There was Bob, Bob somebody in the city. He was assistant to Taupier. Okay? Bob, Bob, Bob, Bob, Bob, in fact I saw him here the day of the dedication. (A: Oh) I said, "Hey Bob!" Every once in awhile I think of his last name. He's thin, thin guy.

A: Not Bob Healy?

R: No. I think his last name begins with P for whatever reason.

A: Okay.

R: And I think he was like an assistant to the city manager. (A: Okay) He came from Holyoke.

A: Yah.

R: Yah, in the Taupier era. I'm pretty sure it was with him. He was, he was, he was around, always helpful. A great, a great guy. You know, if you've got a problem whatsoever, he'll see what he can do about it. I'm trying to remember what Peter Aucella was doing in those days. [Unclear].

A: I don't think he was quite on the scene yet actually. I don't think he came even to town until maybe '86 or something like that.

R: Okay, so I guess I must have met him in my second life here at, or in a different life anyway. Actually, actually between, you know, between '82 and '89, okay, my involvement with the city was you know, took a big dive, because you know (--)

A: Yah, because you went on to do other things?

R: Yah, and then in '89 when I came to work for Middlesex, okay, my prime time consuming effort was the development of the Bedford Campus. (A: Okay) Everybody

remembers that as being the biggest modular project in non, non institutional, non correctional project in Massachusetts, you know. That took a lot of my time, even though I still had responsibilities up here, okay. When we purchased the building across the street, okay, from Wang, I was up here, I was up here for a couple of reasons practically all of that summer. One of them was to get that cleaned up, and we started in March or April doing that, okay. It was a wonderful building, don't get me wrong, but it was you know it needed some house keeping.

A: Really?

R: Which you know, Wang just wasn't going to put money into the thing. So we didn't have a [unclear]. So we had quite a bit of house cleaning to do. And then the other thing we did that very same summer, we moved the library. We moved out of (--) I'm sorry. We moved the library out of Wannalancit to the Derby Building.

A: Okay.

R: Where the Derby Bar was?

A: Yup.

R: Okay. So I think three things happened that summer. We opened up the Bedford Campus; I think we opened up this Wang Building, okay, (A: Really) the same year, and then we moved the library over. And then we continued on for the rest of the summer. We moved out of Wannalancit Mills

A: Is that where Middlesex was originally housed?

R: Yes sir, that's where the Lowell Campus started was at the Wannalancit.

A: Okay, I see.

R: And you know, the lease was given up. I don't know what the story was, you know.

A: Yah, yah.

R: But we had to move out.

A: And how did they end up acquiring the Wang Tower Building, this Wang Building here?

R: How did we happen to do that? It was the best of all deals that was offered to us in terms of space. When you put all of the things together, okay, (A: Yah) it was a natural fit, okay, because it was essentially an educational facility. Okay, it was the Wang Corporate Education Center. (A: Yah) So it had classrooms. It had, it was just a great fit, okay. When, you know, a state institution was to purchase something, okay, it has to

go through [DECAM], okay, and [DECAM] has this real property, you know, part of it. And it gets involved with receiving proposals you know, and stuff like that. And I'm trying to remember how, and when that happened, because I had more of involvement with HSTC, okay.

A: What's that?

R: The Health Science Technology Center, which is located on Middle Street.

A: Okay.

R: Okay. This came about, I'm trying to remember how. I don't remember how, but it was a great fit. But when HSTC came along, okay, there were a lot of places that were offered to the state for that purpose, you know, for the establishment of that center. (A: Yah) And you know, right next door, across the street, a couple of buildings across the street, (A: Yah) you know, and other places. So there was, you know, there was some competition I would say for that. It worked out well though. I think Middle Street is wonderful.

A: So in that instance what made Middle Street the attraction verses the other locations?

R: Um, you could do more with it in terms of developing it for educational purposes. And there was, you know, the price was, and the things were affordable. (A: Umhm) The, I forget who the owners were, but they did a great job in presentation. They did a lot of layout work, you know, they said, okay, here's what you want to do. Here's how it fits in here, and stuff like that. You know, things were affordable where some other things weren't affordable, I think that's the case, or would no have been if we had to imminently take them, you know. (A: All right. Let's um) It's not always what you see. It's not always the cover you know.

A: Right, right. All right, we're almost done now. Any other interesting stories about the Heritage State Park that you can think of? Any ribbons cuttings? Any (--)

R: Well I'm trying to think.

A: Any complications in building construction, or acquisitions, or?

R: Well I think, I think in terms, let me take, let me take the boulevard first, okay, because the boulevard came together and pretty, pretty good, I mean considering the time frames that we had to work in. And we were very imaginative about how we could do thing out there, you know, because we didn't have in place a management team. You know, we didn't have in place people who were going to be there all the time. (A: Yah) First of all there weren't going to be a lot of people anyway, because the whole Heritage State Park System is just developing, okay. So you know, like the light and sound system. We've put the workings of that into a trailer, (A: Really) a mobile trailer. And so when we had a concert, we had to count on umbilical cords, okay. And then when the

concert wasn't being performed there, we had to put the, this trailer would get off and put it in the bathhouse. The kinds of things we had to do, we, we probably couldn't (--)  
Because the site was remote to some degree, we wouldn't have fulltime supervision, okay. The stage we put up was not the kind of a stage that I would have liked, where it was more spaced framed, and stuff like that. Because, like remember specifically, you know we're going to have a jungle gym out here. I mean who's going to take care of this? You know, who is going to control everybody. You're going to have people climbing up this thing, they're going to fall down. Can't do that, but you know, and so we, it didn't work out the way we perhaps would like to have had something that looked a lot different.

A: Yah.

R: And also at the time nobody, nobody would come to a decision, a permanent decision, whether we were going roof that over someday.

A: Okay.

R: Therefore [unclear]. So we, we designed, we had to designed this things for loads that you would have had to if you had made a decision never to put a roof on. Okay, maybe you could had a little bit more [spacial] rather than more industrial looking.

A: Yah, yah.

R: So that was the regret I had for that place, okay. I wish we could have made it softer, and plus we were going like a bat out of hell. I mean we used the sod. We used things that sometimes you wouldn't use because we were, you know, had some time frames. But we got it up. We had the Boston Pops out there. When I say we, I guess it was the, the Regatta Committee who sprung for the dough. I mean I don't, I don't know, maybe DEM put in a chunk of it too, I don't know. An interesting part about that, it was in the fall, and it is mobbed out there. I mean it was mobbed. You weren't around at the time.

A: I was a young kid, but we didn't go.

R: Okay. So here's the Park. So they showed up, and it's cool out. Well guess what? When it's cool the instruments don't play well. We had to put a tent over the whole stage, a tent, okay, with the plastic on the front so people could look in and look out, and heat.

A: Really.

R: Yah, so that the instruments would not be affected by the chillness of the air, okay. It went off, but it was funny as hell. It's funny. It was comical in a way, because you could see through the plastic, and every once in awhile you could see Arthur Fidler looking out like this, see.

A: Looking outside?

R: Looking out to see what was going on outside, yah, yah. And it was, other than that though, I mean it was a great occasion. And you know, I, you sort of have, when you're involved with something like that you sort of hope that that's going to be a forever thing. But when I go down there I don't see signs of a lot of activity down there. I may be wrong. I just don't see signs.

A: There's a lot of people that are walking.

R: A lot of people that walk.

A: The stage, you know, is beginning to be used by ethnic groups, the Cambodian, the Africans, and some others. (R: That's great) So it's, I think it's doing okay.

R: That's great.

A: And it was named for a great guy.

R: Yah. Yah. And I think all of those things are great, and that's what makes it worthwhile. And we had a wonderful sound system. And we had a state of the art sound and light system at the time, you know. And I remember you know, we went like a bat out of hell out there, you know. And put the light pole, you know, the ones up in front there, you know, and mine falls over. [Laughs] I said, "What the hell!" And that thing, of course it hit, it went like this.

A: It bent.

R: Yah, it bent. You can't put that back up. That's not going to work, you know. And they had to go like a bat out of hell to get that thing replaced on time. And it happened okay. That is kind of a comical piece, but you know, when you look back it's comical, but it wasn't at the time. It was a great, great evening there. It all, it makes it worthwhile, you know, [unclear].

A: With the (--)

R: Downtown, well see now downtown, over here I think what I liked about this particular [unclear], I think what happened at the Wentworth Block was wonderful. I think the Mack Building was a nice little history, where they made stoves and stuff like that. You know, it really brought you back to something that you don't think about today, you know, interesting little parts, you know, the trap doors, the pulleys and that. The un, you know, the undressed size of timbers. Every one of those timbers in there was a different size, and we had to replace a lot of them. And we replaced with the same dimensions of the stock that was in there. The contractor went nuts. We told you that, you know. Ah, that stuff [unclear]. I don't care what it [unclear], this is what we want, you know. We put the elevator in there very nicely. Great, great firm, CBT, and

designed it out of Boston. You know, we got our work with transportation in there nicely.

**Tape I, side B ends.**

**Tape II, side A begins.**

R: ...community compared to what was there, as it were. I'm just trying to remember, was there a big, big dedication. I don't know. Maybe there was. Maybe I wasn't there.

A: Maybe it came after you.

R: I certainly remember the day that Secretary Murphy was over there, because I had planned that. And we had, we had jackhammers going, we had everything going. Couldn't hear okay, what she was saying. Really. Talking like us we couldn't hear. There was so much activity going on. So I asked them, hey, could you shut off things for awhile. Get those [unclear] so we can hear ourselves talk, you know. They did it. (A: Really) They did it. And they took a half an hour or so. So we were able to brief her. It was a great, great day. She was a strong supporter, and she had the chance to (--) You know, of course she was, you know, she was Lieutenant Governor at the end of, the last of Michael Dukakis' three terms. (A: Okay) She was a big, big supporter of him. She was, I want you to work on Lowell. She said, okay!

A: You had your Martian orders.

R: Yah, and I saw her in Lowell. I saw her in Bedford in the later day when she was you know, candidate for the governor's position.

A: Was there any political involvement in the decision making on your work with the Heritage State Park?

R: In implementation?

A: Yah.

R: No. I mean things were sort of carved out a little bit, you know. Even my understanding of the roles of the National Park verses the State Park, you know. I don't want to say, verses, but in relationship to you know, you guys in to the textile industry, and we would be involved in the transportation part, and the water part of it, and stuff like that. And so we had compatible you know, the roles were compatible and sort of a little bit different mission. I (--) It wasn't an issue, okay, I think the way the whole process worked where you had a plan that was, that went through the process that it went through. (A: Umhm) You know, not every nut and bolt was in place. It didn't have to be, because you know, it was untested you might say, you know, but it made a lot of sense. And people worked hard to make some common sense out of a plan, okay. So we



could take that and as long as there was enough, there was enough understanding of the plan, and latitude of the plan, okay, where you could make things work. And but you had to make, you know, you had to just say hey, not every little thing is going to work that way. Okay, so you know, I, I didn't see that, didn't see that. Now whether other people were, you know, whether Armand was under any pressure, I don't know. I mean Armand you know, Armand was a very powerful force. He was a city councilor. He, I'm sure he listened to the people. I'm sure he didn't come up to say it's got to be that way because this guy said it. That wasn't it. Things, things just worked out great, okay. And quite frankly, you want to know the truth, most of the Heritage State Parks work that way. Plans were developed openly, you know, all of our meetings were opened. We had meetings. I mean I was up here all the time, you know, and opened to the public, you know, and stuff like that. It was a 100% agreement, I suppose not, but you know, it worked.

A: You said you were there on the day the National Park Legislation was brought back to Lowell. Tell us about that day, what you remember, where you were before, or who asked you, or who told you that this was going to happen.

R: No, it was, well I think it was a pretty anticipated thing, because, because you know, the stage set-up. This is you know, in the, in the quad there, right around the center of the quad.

A: In front of JFK Civic Center?

R: Yah, right. And you know, it was a talked about situation, okay. I don't know whether the ink was dry, or not, but you know, but I mean people were delighted. People were, this is what a lot of people hoped for, and certainly something that Senator Tsongas worked hard for, and a lot of people in the city. So it was a fruition of a dream, a fruition of hard work. I think everybody was quite happy about it. I mean there was an applaud, and here's the legislation [unclear]. I mean it was a glorious kind of event, okay. I mean I wasn't going to miss it. Whether I had other things here that day, because I was up here quite a bit, okay. I'm sure other things (--) I didn't go to any you know, cheese and wine party because of it, but you know, I, I think I wasn't at that level. Okay, first of all, it wasn't when I was at that level. (A: Right) It was just a great day. I mean a lot of (--) It was packed up there. It was packed and hopefully for Paul it was what he, what he expected as a, you know, as a reaction from the community. He certainly worked hard for it.

A: Yup, he sure did.

R: And I, I remember him, because he was, you know, waving. I mean I didn't know what was in this package he was waving, but I'm assuming that it was you know, a copy of the legislation, you know, as he said. I said, "Great." It was a day of fulfillment, a day of joy, and you know, I was still busy do things, you know. What year was it in?

A: '78.

R: '78. It was interesting. Um, '78. Again, sometimes I go back to my governor's list here. So, but Dukakis was still (--). (A: Yah) Yah. I went to DECAM. In fact I applied for a position there and I didn't know whether I would get it or not, because of the change of administration.

A: Yah, over to Ed King?

R: Yah. Yah. And the big thing at that particular time was the Ward Commission Legislation, which was Construction Reform Act it was so called, okay. And I'm sure that a lot of people were involved with the Bureau of Building and Construction as it was called before DECAM.

A: Yah.

R: You know a lot of people being kind of careful what they were going to be doing, because it was going to be looked at, you know, there was a substantial change in how construction was going to be done in Massachusetts for public agencies. But I, you know, I went through an open process. I didn't know anybody. I knew some of the people at the Bureau of Building and Construction, but it wasn't politically something that I had, I had to get involved with. So, so the trans (--). So I was able to make that move and [with no other problem], but of course when I made that move my involvement in Lowell changed substantially.

A: Yah. Well any final thoughts about your time working in Lowell during that 1970s period?

R: Um, I guess you look back on that time, okay, by looking at today, and by looking at the day I walked down the street, okay. And that's a picture, I have that picture somewhere, and I'm sure that the SUN has it. (A: Yah) There were three people, me, Michael Dukakis, and this Congressman who was here from one of the Interior, I guess the Interior Committee, (A: Subcommittee) Subcommittee, yah. And you know it was my first real introduction to urban kinds of things, okay. And DEM, let's face it, DEM was not involved in tremendous urban areas, okay.

A: And was there a reaction within the department on this new strain of thought?

R: Yah. Well you know, the thing is that urban parks became very competitive for the resources, okay, that that competition didn't exist before. Okay, we were in rural areas or suburban areas. Okay, and you know, people in Boston, people in Boston [words unclear]. So there was, you know, this was a different approach. Okay, this is now, bring the parks to the people. Probably something that you guys are more involved in than we were at the time, and so a different way of looking at things. Different way of creating [unclear] okay, because you're not building you know, a, on the edge of a pond, or you're not building a trail in the forest, okay. You're talking, now you're talking about urban forestry. You're talking about urban recreation. You're talking about things

that maybe we should have been talking about a long time ago. And maybe [NDC] was a part of that you know. But those two agencies were separate, and now they're together interestingly, okay.

A: Right.

R: Okay. So it was, to me it was okay, this is going to be challenging on my part. For the maintenance people okay, for the operation people okay, the Park Supervisors, the Regional Supervisors, the people involved with the budgets, I think this created something new okay, and something very demanding, okay. You know, now compensations are to interpretive staff. Not the numbers that you guys have. Come on, you know, you're going to overwhelm us, you know. The day you came in you probably had more people than we had forever (A: Yah) [unclear], okay. But there was a mission, okay, and you know, there was a definition that had to be established for new kinds of approaches, new kinds of thinking. Certainly financial resources required certainly different kinds of equipment, you know. All of these kinds of things that we didn't have, because we didn't need them, okay, but now you need them, and how do you, you know, how do you best manage things? I think that's part of why Lowell/Dracut was looked at in terms of being supportive of the Heritage Park and visa versa. Okay, so now you've got a Park Supervisor. You need one for the Heritage State Park and one for the Lowell Dracut State Forest, I don't think so, you know, but let's look at it in terms of a [unclear].

A: Yah.

R: Okay. And so there's a whole new thinking process for DEM there.

A: And internally did you sense that anybody was opposed to this movement to the city for creation of Urban Parks?

R: I don't know.

A: Did you experience that, or?

R: You know, conversation leads to a lot of talk, you know. I mean, not conversation, but the discussion of philosophy leads to a lot of talk. And sometimes, I wouldn't want to call these parks negative. Just because you bring up points of view that, that state, you know you need this, we don't have it. I don't look at that as necessarily a negative thing. I look at it as a demanding kind of a situation, because of the circumstance. Okay. Yah, we do need to do that. And we do need to support [unclear]. Yah, but whether that comes along is another issue. Okay, you've got to recognize it, and you've got to ask for it. You've got to sell it, okay, and I have no idea why today you've got to have, have a person maybe assigned to the Heritage Park. I don't know. Now I do know that it makes sense sometimes to enter in to service agreements, interagency agreements, and stuff like that, for management, for best management purposes, but I don't know where those things went, and how they went, because I was out of the loop.

A: Yah, okay. Well thanks very much for all your time today Richard.

R: Okay. You're welcome.

**End of interview**