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## Garcia, Sarah ~ Oral History Interview

Kenneth Walker

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## **Interview with Sarah Garcia by Kenneth Walker**

*Summary Sheet and Transcript*

### **Interviewee**

Garcia, Sarah

### **Interviewer**

Walker, Kenneth

### **Date**

December 30, 2014

### **Place**

Gloucester, MA

### **ID Number**

VWWF\_SG\_005

### **Use Restrictions**

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### **Biographical Note**

Sarah Garcia is Community Development Director and Harbor Planning Director for the City of Gloucester, Massachusetts.

### **Scope and Content Note**

Sarah Garcia was interviewed to document the experience of Gloucester, Massachusetts in completing an economic assessment to better understand the economic contribution of waterfront activities. Ms. Garcia discusses the history of Gloucester, the long standing polarization around waterfront issues, and the harbor planning effort which included the economic assessment. For Gloucester, the economic assessment was key to understanding the value and continued economic importance of the community's waterfront.

### **Indexed Names**

Hayes Hammond

Michael Jones

Caroline Kirk

### **Transcript—SG\_005**

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Garcia=Answer  
[Inaudible] = Inaudible  
[Word] = Attempt at Word  
[Gesture/Action] = Gesture/Action

WWF/NOAA  
Garcia

January 20, 2015

1 [Begin Garcia Interview]

2

3 00:00:02

4 **Interviewer:** This is Kenneth Walker and I'm with--with the NOAA Voices for the Working  
5 Waterfront Oral History Project. And I'm here with Sara Garcia who was formerly the  
6 Community Development Director and the Harbor Planning Director for the City of Gloucester,  
7 Massachusetts. We are--we are at the--at the NOAA Headquarters in Silver Spring today and it's  
8 December 30, 2014 at about 9:30.

9 00:00:36

10 And Sara would you introduce yourself and--and tell me about your role in Gloucester?

11

12 00:00:43

13 **Sara Garcia:** Sure; I'm Sara Garcia. I came--my role in Gloucester was the Community  
14 Development Director. I was hired by Mayor Caroline Kirk in January of 2008. And while the  
15 Community Development Department covered a wide-range of areas, a priority for the Kirk  
16 Administration was the harbor and the harbor-front specifically the downtown inner harbor, the  
17 designated port area. There had been for several years a stalled harbor plan that had been  
18 developed and finished two years previously and the business community had protested to the  
19 Mayor and did not want to send it up to the State. They said it did not allow enough flexibility  
20 for economic development on the harbor.

21 00:01:36

22 There was a real polarization between people who felt like allowing greater development  
23 would be a sell-off to tourism like many waterfronts had become not--no longer working

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24 waterfronts versus many in the community who felt it was critical that we preserve the working  
25 waterfront and that we just hadn't looked hard enough to find new uses that were legitimate  
26 working waterfront uses consistent with the history of Gloucester which is somewhat blue collar,  
27 independent, you know the fishing heritage made for self-sufficiency and it was a world of high-  
28 skill that was developed in the field and not in the classroom.

29 **00:02:24**

30 So, how to capitalize on those--those assets of--and transform because obviously the  
31 fishery across the Northeast has been challenged with resource availability?

32

33 **00:02:44**

34 **Interviewer:** So Sara would you describe the character of--of the area to someone who has  
35 never been there?

36

37 **00:02:50**

38 **Sara Garcia:** Sure; Gloucester is a community that in 2000 had approximately 30,000 people  
39 and in 1900 also had about 30,000 people. It is an island community divided by the Annisquam  
40 River from the mainland though parts of Gloucester, West Gloucester, Magnolia are on the  
41 mainland. The community, the center of the community is about 4,000 acres called Dog Town, a  
42 preserved area. And the reason that's relevant is Gloucester is very coastal; it has 62 miles of  
43 coastline and the settlement is concentrated around the edges of the island so that almost  
44 everybody in Gloucester lives within a mile, maybe two at most from the water, from the shore.

45 **00:03:41**

46           It makes it a very you know marine-centric community. The harbor itself for many years  
47 had been declining because of fishery, the money in the fishery was way down and I guess I  
48 should know those numbers of what it once was and what it now is. We were down to--we are  
49 still landing \$50 million of fresh catch in 2010 approximately, \$50--\$54 million in fresh catch,  
50 primarily ground fish, which was unfortunate 'cause ground fish is a low-dollar per pound fish as  
51 opposed to our neighbors to the south of Boston, New Bedford who we often collaborated with  
52 on fisheries issues had the scallops which are of course very high-dollar per pound, as well as  
53 scallops became managed successfully, so that there was abundant resources. So the fishery  
54 stayed very strong in New Bedford and got constricted in Gloucester.

55

56 **00:04:44**

57 **Interviewer:** Okay.

58

59 **00:04:46**

60 **Sara Garcia:** Just a little bit about the community more is that since it's--it's a series of  
61 settlements, it has a central core, the Downtown Harbor area which has about maybe 3,500  
62 people and that has a series of small villages with these historic little small villages, Annisquam,  
63 Lanesville, Bayview, West Gloucester, Magnolia, so in that way it reminded me a little bit of  
64 Hyannis on Cape Cod that has very distinct little villages connected to a central core. And that  
65 central core was around the harbor.

66 **00:05:19**

67           But for many years as the fisheries declined an industrial park was built out near the  
68 highway quite successfully. It attracted a semi-conductor, you know industry and Varian Semi-

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69 Conductor business and some--and manufacturing. But the harbor represented to the City is kind  
70 of the image of the City. Gloucester is a fishing city and the idea of the working waterfront is--is  
71 kind of core to the identity of the community even while jobs on the working waterfront were no  
72 longer very available.

73

74 **00:05:59**

75 **Interviewer:** Okay; and can you--can you tell me how the idea of implementing the Economic  
76 Analysis Tool developed?

77

78 **00:06:11**

79 **Sara Garcia:** Yeah; I'll give you a broad outline because this was six years of work from 2008  
80 to 2014 when the plan was just adopted by the State actually last--last month or earlier this  
81 month. I forget the exact date; it was just adopted. And we--we started with this polarized  
82 community like I said. If you were for loosening the regulations on the waterfront you were anti-  
83 working--labeled anti-working waterfront, you know selling off. You wanted to preserve the  
84 working waterfront you were labeled unrealistic and also you know putting people's properties  
85 on hold. And it was abundantly clear that piers and wharves were deteriorating and buildings  
86 were vacant.

87 **00:07:00**

88 And the work--those in favor of the working waterfront would argue oh no; it's very  
89 active. And those against it would say take a walk around [**Laughs**], and there was just no--it  
90 was really a loggerhead. So our first step was to identify the--the values of the community that  
91 would drive development on the waterfront. And it was a city-wide visioning effort. And the idea

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92 was to take it out of the kind of entrenched always showing up, always speaking arguments and  
93 get what are our values. And then we would develop consistent with the values and--that we  
94 would be inclusive, not exclusive; that we would go in every avenue this community wanted  
95 from its harbor. And we had 600 people show up at a series of five meetings. We went to every  
96 neighborhood and we established the community values that would drive direction for the  
97 waterfront. We used a listening post of neutral people from the community and it included a  
98 minister who also lobsters, there was a lobsterman as well. It included a whale watch boat  
99 captain. It included several citizens without any business affiliations but had long ties to the  
100 community and generational community--Gloucester is a very generational community, very  
101 low-turnover.

102 **00:08:21**

103 So that gave legitimacy to the values and we published the values, draft values and we  
104 took input and we had final values. So I just say that because after that we had a series of  
105 vehicles. First we had this stalled harbor plan that had already been mostly written called a  
106 Harbor Plan and Designated Port Area Master Plan in Massachusetts. They're conflated into one.  
107 So the first thing was to get that approved 'cause there were certain things we could get for the  
108 community if we had that approved. One of it was a slight loosening of the amount of  
109 commercial use that could be on the waterfront. Instead of 25-percent of a property it could be  
110 50-percent. We knew this probably would only help one property but if it helped one landlocked  
111 property become a brew pub which it did we were happy to see a six-year abandoned former  
112 Union Hall, Seafarer's Union Hall become this brew pub which in fact 'cause they actually brew  
113 their own beer there it is slightly industrial and gritty and kind of fits the character.

114 **00:09:29**

115           So we did that and we also pursued a--an economic development plan which by the time  
116 it was done had established a third leg of our economy. We used tourism as one which we called  
117 the visitor-based economy. The fishery is another and then we created this maritime industry as  
118 our third leg of the stool. Everyone said what's maritime industry? And we had people arguing  
119 that we should be doing wind power, we should be doing boat building. And you look around  
120 Gloucester Harbor and it's only 79 industrial properties. This is a harbor that's been in existence  
121 since the late 1600s. It's not big properties; you aren't going to lay down wind turbine blades on  
122 a property in Gloucester Harbor. There just isn't a piece of property to do it on, except maybe the  
123 State Fish Pier which is preserved for fishing, so forget it. **[Laughs]**

124 **00:10:21**

125           But and the same thing in my opinion on boat-building but there's still a diversity of  
126 opinion around that but I, again didn't see--I look at all the shipyards being repurposed and  
127 there's a capacity for boat-building along the Eastern Seaboard that I didn't see. There was a  
128 niche we needed to fill--personally. But we didn't have to go into that; what we really wanted to  
129 do from that first economic development plan is further explore it. How do we really know what  
130 that maritime economy is? So I will say during these six years we did various other things. We  
131 did a harbor walk 'cause the idea was to attract people in and around the city, so that we could  
132 attract relationships. We knew we needed to relation-build. We had been a very isolated  
133 community unfortunately because of the fisheries regulation. There was hostility between the  
134 Fishery and NOAA which is one of the biggest sources of expertise and research and all that. But  
135 so that wasn't going to work. So we needed relationships, so Ocean Alliance showed up at our  
136 doorstep accidentally but it was a wonderful thing that they did. And we went all out to support  
137 them. We put together brownfields loans for them. We walked them through the Waterways



138 Board process to try to get them the docks that they wanted for their research vessel. We--we  
139 featured them at meetings and--so we did a lot to promote our relationships with research. We  
140 also reached out to MITC Grant. We reached down to Boston University.

141 **00:12:02**

142 What we had to do is--and you want to know economic tools; we had to find out what we  
143 didn't know, we didn't know. **[Laughs]** And that's hard. One of the ways we did it, EDA sent a  
144 technical assistance team out to our community 'cause of the fisheries disaster. And out of that  
145 came the idea of having a Maritime Summit where we just had a two-day summit on what does  
146 the ocean look like in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. And we held that two day summit; it--we had never held a  
147 summit before so--but luckily we had a room to rent that was big enough and we had 100 people  
148 come. But what that did is out of the woodwork we found people recommending panelists for  
149 panels during the day. And we met people we never even knew. I mean the one I always  
150 remember 'cause I was just so astounded was a man lived in Lanesville which is one of our tiny  
151 villages, David Burke and it turns out he's a retired Navy, retired Draper Lab and in charge of  
152 the MIT Singapore project for how Singapore should use its ocean resources.

153 **00:13:07**

154 Well we're like will you come speak at our summit? He's like sure; happy to. You know  
155 I mean these were things we did not know were happening out there, so it was really interesting  
156 to see.

157 **00:13:17**

158 So we spent several years, just developing relationships and understandings and where it  
159 all came into the tool that really is what we're about today was when we had to renew our  
160 Harbor Plan and Designated Port Area Plan, we have the ability to scope that however we want.

161 It does have to in the end have a slight regulatory piece that shows the State that we do meet the  
162 specific Massachusetts DPA standards but what we scoped most of it for primarily was to be an  
163 economic development strategic plan. We wanted to know okay; these markets all exist out  
164 there. What are the steps we're supposed to do as staff to get to them 'cause we were kind of  
165 haphazardly doing some of them but we wanted to formalize that into a strategy.

166 **00:14:08**

167 And so we were lucky enough to--so we wrote the scope for it as an economic--we said  
168 we want the economic data. We want the data for who we are, how our labor force--what the  
169 skillsets of our labor force, how they align with potential compatible industries. We want to  
170 understand what are the range of industries out there, where are they, how are they funded, and  
171 how do we get--? And then finally we'll know how we get to them, which ones are compatible  
172 with us. And--and do we have any obstacles to--to doing that which of course we do? **[Laughs]**

173 **00:14:48**

174 And in that--that was absolutely eye-opening for us and we had done some of the  
175 groundwork but in the plan itself, once we had hired our consultant and integral partners, with  
176 the lead which was economic development lead and then the supporting partners in that  
177 consultant group was an urban planner, Utile, a very high-quality urban planner, but wasn't  
178 actually used very much because what we really needed was the economic analysis and then  
179 Duran and Anastas which were the regulatory experts and they were complete experts on our  
180 State regulatory system. And that was very helpful as we--because as we identified compatible  
181 industries we actually had the--the rules were written at a day when no one--these industries  
182 didn't exist.

183 **00:15:34**

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184           So we really did need that linkage.

185   **00:15:39**

186           So when we started to look at the data, what was astonishing to us is when EDA first  
187 came to Gloucester for example they looked at the census data--not the census data--the NACE  
188 Codes and they said do we really only have 140 people working in the fishery? And are we really  
189 here for 140 people? And we're like no; that's not true but I didn't know what to tell them. I  
190 hadn't--like I don't know; I mean it seems like a lot more. But we did some of our own data  
191 gathering. One, we counted vessels. We went through State, both the Massachusetts--Mass  
192 Division of Fisheries and NOAA databases and then culled those by actual reported landings so  
193 we had actual active vessels. And then found those either landing or home porting in Gloucester.  
194 And at that point we had over--about 240 vessels and this was two years later when the fishery  
195 was even in you know its height of crisis.

196   **00:16:38**

197           And so then estimating about 2.5 persons per vessel we could use that number from  
198 several studies that had been done in Rhode Island that were consistent with the kind of vessel  
199 sizes we had. We had about 680 people working directly in the fishery. But beyond that we  
200 found our industry like in many places had become bifurcated because when they no longer had  
201 a source, a reliable source of fish the processors either had to shut down or find another source of  
202 fish. Well most--the successful ones found another source of fish which meant it was coming  
203 from the Pacific Northwest or it was coming from Canada. And it was coming in by truck, so we  
204 had come from--it used to be a community where the ships came in, unloaded, and it was trucked  
205 out; it became trucked in, processed, trucked out.

206   **00:17:27**

207           So what it did is it deadened the waterfront because those processors if they're on the  
208 waterfront they're not actually using it anymore. So but we had to include that skill set in our  
209 labor force 'cause we had an extraordinary concentration of food sciences, food production,  
210 food--I had one man who was--had a new company. They were creating a way to produce eggs  
211 for aquaculture, Cryoocyte was the new company's name, and they said we're here in Cambridge  
212 in the high-tech center but we can't find a food biologist. I'm like well, we're really close to  
213 Cambridge and we--I can't tell; we've got them coming out of our ears. You want fisheries and  
214 food biologists, they're everywhere around here. You can't go to a party without meeting one.

215 **00:18:15**

216           So in the end we--and I brought you some information--we found 2,900 of our 10,000  
217 jobs in the city were in the maritime economy--2,900. That's for going from a 140 fishermen to  
218 oh, guess what? You know we're hugely maritime-oriented. And then so that in and of itself is--  
219 it's really important to know the data that's underlying what you're trying to work with. And if  
220 you don't know that you can--it kind of gave--it gave weight--the people said the fisheries is not  
221 dead, while also explaining that a lot of the maritime jobs weren't actually actively using the  
222 water. So how do we start linking that up? And then we--and we actually identified how much of  
223 the wage-base and then--then we asked our consultant and he said what are the sectors in the  
224 maritime economy? And--and the man we hired had done a lot of work in Rhode Island for the  
225 State of Rhode Island which is equally interested in its waterfront. And so I think he learned a lot  
226 there. But he had five areas and so he had tech, research, resources and renewables, seafood and  
227 coastal tourism. So seafood and tourism we kind of knew those two so the new ones for us was  
228 applied technology meaning that we learned a lot about acoustic sensing and there are a lot of  
229 offshore observing platforms now. All those are tethered; they tend to have little robotics running

230 up and down those tethers taking, sensing temperatures and currents and--and taking pictures, so  
231 where is that all happening? Well it turns out a lot of is happening north of Boston. The  
232 Raytheon labs, the Draper labs, the--so at one point one of my favorite stories was we were  
233 trying to decide how to develop a cluster and I was out in San Diego speaking to a head of their  
234 Maritime Alliance there, Michael Jones. And I said, you know we don't--you know we're trying  
235 to develop a cluster around the--the north of Boston and not just south of Boston. He said are  
236 you--he said didn't you say you're less than an hour from Boston? And I said yes. He said you  
237 don't have to develop a cluster; you're in one of the biggest clusters of the--of the nation.  
238 **[Laughs]** You know the west coast, the--so that again; you know we're such an isolated  
239 community we hadn't made those linkages and as soon as we started--. So--so knowing those; so  
240 we--so our economic strategy was to look at those five areas, applied tech, research, and  
241 renewables and then the two we knew and to sift through it towards the ones that we already  
242 could see seeds of it happening in our community 'cause we already saw ocean observing. There  
243 was already a program going around ROVs in the high school.

244 **00:21:24**

245 The new people who had just come into town, Ocean Alliance, commissioned drones to  
246 collect whale spume and other things where--so then they can tell about the genetics of--of the  
247 whale. And--and they had a relationships with Olin College of Engineering which is an applied  
248 college for engineering so they created the drones there. And that led to for example, we became  
249 the center for the sailbot races which had been held in British Columbia the year before and they  
250 were looking for an East Coast location and they were thinking maybe Salem, maybe another,  
251 and Gloucester is just so perfect. It's like it was the right place and we were able to attract  
252 Endicott College right down the road to open a little satellite campus which was huge. We had

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253 been dying to do that. And they put the sailbot teams all up in their dorms. It was in late Jun after  
254 the college kids had gone home, only nine miles of coastal, rural coastal drive up to Gloucester.

255 **00:22:28**

256 So we started to have partners that made these--these things possible 'cause without  
257 Ocean Alliance we wouldn't have been able to attract Olan College who was the host because  
258 they had been offered to host it from the University of Vancouver or University of British  
259 Columbia. But it was very exciting for us; I mean the Naval Academy was there from Annapolis.  
260 I mean that's a big deal you know. **[Laughs]** So it was wonderful to see these and what they do  
261 is they create automated--what do they call them--they create sailboats that aren't remote-  
262 controlled. They're actually pre-programmed to a course so they launch their boats but they pre-  
263 program the boat to go around the triangle course. And that was amazing to me.

264 **00:23:16**

265 And also that they can print out the boats; the boats are one to two--one to three meters  
266 and they actually have printers that can print the boat. I didn't know that and we didn't know that  
267 and in fact now our high school can do that. And I talked to the high school teacher at dinner. We  
268 had an awards dinner at the Hammond Castle, where many years ago what's his first name--  
269 something Hayes Hammond--had hundreds of patents to his name, all radio-controlled. He had  
270 come out of the Navy and the War and so it was really this nice circle of connection where these  
271 new remote-controlled boats or new pre-programmed boats was right in the place where the man  
272 who would have been inventing them you know--if it were 100 years ago he would have been  
273 one working on that.

274 **00:24:07**

275           And I talked to the high school teacher and he--and I said so this was a great experience  
276 for you it looks like 'cause they were all smiling? He said, this moved our program forward  
277 probably five years; this advanced our program just hosting this event in terms of what we  
278 learned and what we're able to offer. And one of the three members of his team went to MIT. So  
279 you know that's from our public high school in Gloucester, Massachusetts. So that's the kind of  
280 connections we're trying to make and then bring home our kids trained with also the knowledge  
281 that they all grew up in of--I try to tell people; many places kids don't know about tides. They  
282 don't know what a literal zone is. You ask any kid in Gloucester what's a lympid and they'll say  
283 oh yeah. You know or what's a mussel? You know or how come the mussels aren't up in North  
284 Gloucester? You know I mean people just you know it's just part of your everyday life. And it's  
285 useful to use.

286 **00:25:02**

287           So the--so the sector analysis that was very helpful. And then he included estimated  
288 market sizes and in fact, we have these reports on the Gloucester website if you go under Harbor  
289 Planning and Development 'cause I think it's relevant to any other community that's looking at  
290 this. They might as well build upon what we did. For example, he traced the marine research  
291 field. He took a national--Kevin who is our consultant--took National Science Foundation Grants  
292 to Massachusetts and sifted through it by university. So you could look; Woods Hole for  
293 example has the majority of the grants but then as he sifted down through you could see the--like  
294 MIT and Harvard and various ones all have smaller sectors, Northeastern and--so then we could  
295 reach out to the ones with the smaller sectors who don't already have a station. For example,  
296 MIT Sea Grant is a logical one for us 'cause they really want kind of a--you know they want to  
297 be able to put a container somewhere where they can keep their stuff but when they want to go

298 launch something they want to just be able to come up and you know work there with a crane for  
299 a while and you know one of their projects that was so cool is they were going to test a way to  
300 store energy. So they were going to put a hollow concrete piece of three meters-round ball of--of  
301 concrete and drop it at 4,000 feet because as it drops and the pressure intensifies--I'm trying to  
302 remember; it's been a couple years now. But it--the pressure pumps out the water and then when  
303 you bring it in it pumps it back. It's--it's a logical way to use depth to create storage capacity and  
304 I'm forgetting the details because I'm a political science person. **[Laughs]** I understood it at the  
305 time but it was just really cool. And when they came to us a few years ago we weren't ready for  
306 that, but eventually we will be because one of the things we found is you do have to have--we  
307 started to look around and like where would we put these people if they came? We don't have  
308 clean labs. And everything you do on the water is more expensive so we have nothing  
309 inexpensive because if you're working on the water you know both--it's just everything is more  
310 expensive.

311 **00:27:23**

312 So it got to be kind of--it is a little bit of a fine line of--do people have to have the water  
313 or you know could they be somewhere else? Well a lot of things could be somewhere else that  
314 are very important to your marine environment for crossover and idea generation and innovation  
315 and growth of the marine economy. So a research lab doesn't necessarily have to always be on  
316 the water but if it's on the water then periodically they're going to be bringing in specimens off  
317 of the water and they're going to create those linkages that really you know--what they call when  
318 they say blue ocean economy right; it's a cross-pollination right? All the--right; they say all the  
319 wildlife is at the edge of the forest for example, so the edges are really vibrant places. And you



320 have to keep them diverse to keep them vibrant. The reason they're vibrant, they have a lot of  
321 different creatures in it, right.

322 **00:28:27**

323         So--so we were successful with our plan. We still--we really--at the end of the day he  
324 said a couple of things. We came up with the marine Tech and Research that it would be  
325 opportunistic. It would be all relationship-based if we could make that work. We pursued a  
326 concept plan for an Ocean Innovation Center that I left right when we finished the concept plan. I  
327 thought it had a lot of promise on paper. And in reality if there was going to be political will; I  
328 don't think the political will is there for it. It's funny; Gloucester is such a self-sufficient place, I  
329 feel there is a resistance to public funding and the fact is in economic development there is a role  
330 for when public funding gets things going. There are reasons for advanced manufacturing centers  
331 or for institutes to give people a toe-hold.

332 **00:29:36**

333         And I like the Ocean Innovation Center. I had a mix of giving a home--we have a lot of  
334 fisheries groups in town, the--the Fishermen's Wives Association, the--the Sector Managers and  
335 the new Sector Plan, the Seafood Coalition, Northeast Seafood Coalition which is regional but  
336 nonetheless a huge player in the fisheries. And there were several other smaller ones. Oh, several  
337 other smaller ones, Cape Ann Fresh Catch but they were scattered around. So to give them a  
338 location it seemed a shame for a City like Gloucester to come in and not be able to see something  
339 about what the harbor is about and what people are doing there. So to have that window; so we  
340 had included that in a piece, we included the ocean tech sector, we had several focus groups with  
341 real companies who said if you had this kind of space and this kind--we would come, you know  
342 we would at least sign a member and understanding to work further with you, which is huge.

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343 **00:30:38**

344 But it takes a persistence of will and it's still a political football. It's too easy for people  
345 to use the fishery as--or the waterfront as kind of a--a sure-hand rallying cry. So then it takes  
346 good projects and lets them be you know stereotyped.

347 **00:31:03**

348 We had success with a group started in marine genomics. They call it the Gloucester  
349 Marine Genomics Institute and it's just a little office in part of Cruise Port Gloucester which  
350 actually brings in quite a few cruise ships and has been a good development. And we have good-  
351 -we have high hopes for them. They bought a vacant what was New England Marine Resources  
352 building that--one of the few parcels that's big enough. One of our challenges ongoing is the  
353 parcels are really small for at least according to our consultant. He said that's going to be very  
354 hard to redevelop. The second challenge we have is with--with the new FEMA flood maps.  
355 We're going to have to start building to a first-floor elevation of 14 instead of 10 or 11 that it  
356 used to be.

357 **00:32:00**

358 It's kind of okay with us because Roger Street actually is on elevation 14 which is our  
359 waterfront street and then the properties go down so we could build up and not have a huge  
360 problem. But it is going to be a factor. What we recommended out of the plan is to change our  
361 zoning so that the first floor elevation will recognize that the first floor elevation will be at 14  
362 and that we have to take--allow two stories from there, as right now you're only allowed 35 or  
363 40--I'm sorry 40-feet from grade. So you have to start recognizing if grade is really 14 high you  
364 got to allow the height to go with that so we'll have to have some studies--further studies on site  
365 lines and getting that passed 'cause you can't develop on the waterfront if you can't give a big

366 enough footprint to what you're trying to attract. So we haven't solved that problem yet. So  
367 we're getting toe-holds, you know the Marine Genomic Institute, the idea for the Innovation  
368 Center.

369

370 **00:32:53**

371 **Interviewer:** Okay; so what would you tell other communities across the country who are  
372 looking to--to Gloucester as a model for protecting and preserving their waterfront?

373

374 **00:33:04**

375 **Sara Garcia:** I think the community values that drive waterfront development are really  
376 important to establish first. I think there has to be very explicit--well it may depend on their  
377 community but at least in our community there's a lot of polarization around the idea that  
378 working--. It is very difficult to develop a working waterfront. They're not obvious uses. And but  
379 my--my bottom line was do we really want all our ocean observing sensors and data being sent  
380 to a basement in Cambridge or is there a role for the--the physical interface of that and people  
381 who understand it and I think there is obviously.

382 **00:33:46**

383 So the community values; second, I would really try to understand where your skill sets  
384 are in the community. I would look at the NAICS codes of industries and I would try to look at  
385 value chains of industries. If you used to land fish and you know maybe communities have  
386 already done that but I think it's really important to make the case for how many people are  
387 involved in the maritime, in your maritime world. It's a--just a very basic legitimacy to a  
388 maritime community. And then and relationship-building; I think summit--actually I'm a big fan

389 of a summit. It seemed intimidating to me at first but I was so thrilled. Actually it was so  
390 interesting to hear what people had to say and to set up these panels around and there's a lot of  
391 interest around what are 21<sup>st</sup> century working waterfront uses.

392 **00:34:49**

393 And you have to look to your region because a lot of people in Gloucester only--not a lot  
394 but several people said we're not like our region. We're--since we're so ocean-centric we don't  
395 relate to the back-end of the region. But it's not really true 'cause that--that's a resource and  
396 there are a lot of regional agencies who can help. So those sorts of--those would be lessons  
397 learned; reach out to your regional agencies, make the case for the people you have in the  
398 maritime economy, and--and look at the seeds that are growing in the community and--and  
399 where they can be developed.

400

401 **00:35:29**

402 **Interviewer:** Great; so what else needs to be done to preserve and protect Gloucester's  
403 waterfront?

404

405 **00:35:37**

406 **Sara Garcia:** Well recently many of us--actually everybody who pays attention to Gloucester  
407 has seen the *Wall Street Journal* article about hotels being built on the Gloucester waterfront.  
408 And it's certainly part of our six years of work; from day one we were in favor of the hotel. I--  
409 people--some--the anti-tourism group said it's for tourists. I claimed it was an economic  
410 development tool. I talked to many businesses in town including Gorton's of Gloucester and

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411 Varian and others and they had no small business hotel to stay in. They're putting their people up  
412 in Danvers which is about 10 miles away inland.

413 **00:36:16**

414 Gloucester has a beautiful downtown. It has coffee shops. It has cool restaurants. It has  
415 live music all the time. The indigenous culture of Gloucester is really fun. And to have a way for  
416 other people who are interested in maritime issues to come in seem to me essential. It was  
417 combined with the Harbor Walk--I said was for the same way. We were very careful to make it  
418 wind in and out of the working waterfront and not in any way overshadow what was there or the  
419 feel of it--what was there. But you have to get people down to your waterfront to love it and  
420 protect it.

421 **00:36:53**

422 And so this 90--this hotel is only 90 rooms. But without going into my defense of the  
423 hotel what I'll say is it speaks to the challenge of holding--holding that unity of purpose that's  
424 really--it's really necessary to move forward. If you get too polarized you cannot move. And  
425 things change and if you're not moving forward they will deteriorate. So managing change well  
426 and how you--you know I would say just keep--keep the relationships going and keep reaching  
427 out to all sides and trying to keep that coalition together 'cause you know I've always believed  
428 this community voice, the whole community voice is the strongest voice. And that's why I do  
429 community development. I feel like the--the totality of all the voices is stronger than any of us  
430 individually.

431

432 **00:37:54**

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433 **Interviewer:** Okay; great. And the article that Sara referred to was in the *Wall Street Journal* on  
434 December 9, 2014. So Sara is there anything you'd like to add for our oral history interview?

435

436 **00:38:11**

437 **Sara Garcia:** No; thank you. It is a pleasure to be able to speak about Gloucester. It's a real  
438 honor actually to speak about my community so thank you.

439

440 **00:38:18**

441 **Interviewer:** Well on behalf of our Voices from the Working Waterfront team I'd like to thank  
442 you for participating today. I think you really did a great job kind of painting a picture of the  
443 Gloucester waterfront and community and some of the tools that have been successful there. So  
444 we appreciate your time.

445

446 **00:38:41**

447 **Sara Garcia:** Thank you; my pleasure.

448

449 **00:38:45**

450 **[End Garcia Interview]**