



MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

COMMUNITY BRANDING & WAYFINDING PROJECT

FINAL REPORT 2024

Prepared by Favermann Design

Funded by MA Downtown Initiative Program of:



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of
Economic Development



The Harbor

BACKGROUND

With many stunning views, debatably one of the most beautiful towns in Massachusetts and New England, Manchester-By-The-Sea is an affluent oceanside suburban community on the Eastern Massachusetts North Shore. The town was originally just called Manchester at its incorporation in 1645 until its name was changed officially in the 1980s to lessen confusion with the City of Manchester, New Hampshire located about 70 miles away. Manchester-by-the-Sea started as a fishing community, a tradition that still exists even today. The town's beautiful and vibrant harbor includes fishing boats as well as personal pleasure craft. The compact downtown is at once elegant, appealing, and humanly scaled. Its Singing Beach is a picturesque fine sand summer magnet. The beach's sand crystals underfoot actually "sing" as individuals walk. Part of Essex County's scenic Cape Ann, Manchester-By-The-Sea is a location with a true sense of place.



The Town was included in a grant of land to the Massachusetts Bay Colony made in 1629 by King Charles I. By June 1629, the first ship dropped off settlers in Manchester Harbor to live and work and thrive there. These hearty souls were attracted to the place by "the promise of a safe harbor, streams of water, the sheltering hills and an abundant opportunity for building fishweirs, which offered an almost ideal spot for the planting of a new settlement." Prior to these settlers' arrival, the Agawams, a tribe of the Algonquins, inhabited most of eastern Massachusetts. The chief Sagamores was Masconomo, who ruled the region was a friendly, peace-loving man whose tribe was decimated by disease beginning soon after the arrival of the newcomers

The history of the English town starts when Manchester became "Manchester" in 1645-- the people of "Jeoffereyes Creeke" requested and were granted the village name based on where many of the settlers came from. Prior to that, the area was part of the Town of Salem. The settlers acquired land by purchase or by "peaceful possession" from the Algonquin Indians until 1700, when a final payment was made to the grandson of Masconomo, and the Native Americans relinquished all rights in the land comprising the township. Much of the land in Essex County was purchased from the Sagamores.

Initially, the Town of Manchester was first known as Jeffrey's Creek. It has always been a small population town. Located between the cities of Beverly and Gloucester on the coast, it is four and a half miles long and two and a quarter miles wide. Founded by settlers who had moved from Salem to the area. By 1640 the entire town consisted of about 63 people, who petitioned to become the town of Jeffrey's Creek. The name was changed upon incorporation in 1645 to Manchester.



Singing Beach

The male residents were mostly fishermen, with a few farmers attempting to earn a living in the rocky fields. With a smaller harbor than nearby Gloucester, the Manchester boats tended to be smaller. The dangers of the sea caused numerous losses. Mostly family businesses, many of the fishing boat crews contained several relatives. This type of fishing was a young man's job. Records show the deaths of some as young as 14 and the oldest deaths at sea tend to be men in their 30's or early 40's.

Other mariners were also involved in coastal trading. By the time of the Revolutionary War, ships belonging to Manchester men were venturing overseas, as far as Europe, and later to the Orient. Often these ships were home ported at the larger Gloucester or Salem harbors, where goods could be offloaded and sold

or traded more easily. Later generations saw a small but thriving cabinet making industry. By 1865 there were 160 cabinetmakers. Many of the shops consisted of the owner and one to three workers or apprentices. Small shoemaking establishments were also common in Manchester in the 19th Century.



Downtown

Around the period of the Civil War, Manchester had become a popular resort location for wealthy people from New York and Boston. A number of these part-time residents kept summer homes there. One

of the earliest was the poet Richard Henry Dana, who purchased 30 acres in 1845. Masconomo House was built originally as a residence for one of John Wilkes Booth's brothers and was enlarged until it became a luxury hotel, with an amphitheater where plays and musicals were performed. It remained until the early 20th century but was eventually partially torn down and turned again into a private residence. Manchester-By-The-Sea is now primarily a bedroom community, with commuter rail links to Boston. Today, no large hotels or motels exist in the town.

Manchester men have served with distinction in the military since the 17th Century. A few were among those who died at Bloody Brook, near Deerfield in 1675 during King Philip's War. Others served at the siege of Louisburg during the French and Indian War. Manchester contributed 75 men to the Revolutionary War. Interestingly, privateers from among the Manchester fishermen and coastal traders were also commissioned and sent out with Letters of Marque, both during the Revolution and during the War of 1812. 85 Manchester men served in the War of 1812, and 160 during the Civil War with 18 lost in action and another 5 in Confederate prisons. In the 20th Century, 190 residents served in World War I with 5 deaths. In World War II, about 330 Manchester citizens served including 11 deaths.



Ship weathervane



Manchester-By-The Sea is governed by an elected Select Board and Town Meeting. The town Manchester-By-The Sea is managed by an appointed Town Administrator. There are also a vigorous number of town citizen committees and commissions. This Branding and Wayfinding project involved this strong community participation ethos. Today, Manchester-By-The Sea is a vibrant community that still has living pieces of its history including a relatively small population (under 6000), commercial fishing (a 2016 Oscar winning movie was made about these fishermen’s families), stunning natural settings, an exquisite public beach (Singing Beach), a quaint, very appealing downtown, along with a great number of magnificent homes set in spectacular scenery.

Earlier, it was said that the town has always had a sense of place. A vital downtown also needs to be a clear destination rather than just a map location. There

needs to be a sense of arrival. A visitor needs to understand where they are and where they are going. This Branding and Wayfinding project was focused on solving the distinctive orientation needs of the Town of Manchester-By-The Sea. It was funded by a grant from the Massachusetts Downtown Initiative program, part of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Economic Development.

OUR PROCESS

Starting in December of 2023, the MDI consultants Favermann Design began a series of discussions with Manchester-By-The-Sea’s Town Administrator

Gregory Federspiel to develop a scope of services for the Branding and Wayfinding MDI grant awarded to the town. The scope was efficiently worked out with the Town Administrator because Manchester-By-The-Sea (MBTS) was in-between town planners, and the town and the consultant wanted to expedite the project. The Scope of Services was agreed to by late December.

THE SCOPE:

Scope of Services for MDI Community Branding and Wayfinding

To be provided by Consultants Favermann Design for the Town of Manchester-By-The-Sea, MA

Dates: January 1, 2024 through June 30, 2024

Actions

1. A preliminary meeting/conversation with Project Coordinator and designated individuals to develop strategy and goals.
2. Site visit and Analysis.
3. Three to five Advisory Committee meetings as well as two meetings with the full Downtown Improvement Committee with Town of MBTS to discuss historical context and visual influences as well as individual wayfinding elements and placements.
4. Design of a brand theme, logo, and optional slogan or tagline including color, font, placement, etc. to be approved by the Town of Manchester-By-The-Sea Advisory Committee.

5. Creation of as many as three (3) brand option designs for application to all wayfinding elements.
6. Incorporation of existing designs and concepts by Advisory Committee into the design process.
7. An Intermediate and final design review and discussion by the Advisory Committee.
8. Creation of a “hierarchical family” of individual signs and other elements to illustrate design elements.
9. Refinement of a final logo/logotype and potential optional slogan as a community brand.
10. Recommendations for placement and use of town brand on wayfinding elements and other social media and town communications applications (website, facebook, etc.).
11. Using town maps, creation of sign element site placement by working with and led by Advisory Committee members.
12. Development of a final wayfinding sign and element hierarchy to be approved by the Select Board at a public meeting.
13. Once approved by the Town’s Select Board, Favermann Design will create a full set of specifications that can be used for pricing and fabrication by appropriate vendors.
14. QR codes will be developed and integrated into appropriate signs and markers.
15. A Final Report will be submitted to the Town and to the EOED Massachusetts Downtown.

Note: Site visits will take place as necessary by consultant.

Schedule

There will be monthly Advisory Committee meetings. These will be scheduled every three to four weeks. Whether in-person or virtual starting in the middle of January 2024. Dates will be developed with the Project Coordinator.

The Board of Selectmen approval presentation will take place in late May or early June 2024.

Note: Images and refinements will also be circulated to the Advisory Committee digitally outside meetings for review and comments.

Deliverables

1. Meetings:
 - A. Three (3) Project or Advisory Committee Meetings
 - B. Two (2) meetings with the Downtown Improvements Program Committee combined with the Project Advisory Committee
 - C. A Family of elements mapping session
 - D. A public forum and Select Board approval presentation.
 - E. Note: Meetings can be combined.
2. Branding materials and final report
3. Brand/logo design in digital format
4. Optional tagline or slogan
5. A hierarchical family of sign and wayfinding elements





The Harbor

6. QR codes will be integrated into signs as necessary.
7. A map of individual wayfinding element placement at the downtown area and strategically throughout the Town of Manchester-By-The-Sea.
8. General cost estimates for wayfinding and sign elements.
9. A full set of specifications for vendor cost estimations, fabrication and installation of wayfinding and sign elements.
10. Final Report for Executive Office of Economic Development (EOED).

The first task was to have a MBTS Branding and Wayfinding Advisory Committee appointed by the Town Administrator and approval of the Select Board. *The following individuals were appointed:*

Marlene Dolan, Downtown Improvement Committee, Coordinator/Chair
Beth Panangos, MBTS Business Owner of Bravo by the Sea
Lauren Bunker, MBTS Business Owner of Stock Exchange
Rosemary Costello, MBTS Historic District/Historic Commission
Mark Resnick, Town Planner
Becky Jaques, Select Board Member
Ruth Fitzgerald, Department of Public Works
Tiffany Marletta, Town Communications Director
Jim Brown, Downtown Improvement Committee
Gar Morse, Downtown Improvement Committee
Sue Thompson, Manchester Museum Board Member
Colleen Murdock, Cape Ann Chamber of Commerce
Mark Favermann, Favermann Design, MDI Consultant Ex Officio

All of the meetings were held either hybrid or on Zoom. The first meeting took place on February 19, 2024. The focus of the meeting was to discuss what community branding was could be and how it can reinforce a sense of community and a sense of place. An extensive slideshow by the consultant was presented. The second meeting of the MBTS Advisory Board took place on March 26th.

At that meeting, the Consultant presented several illustrative Case Studies of previous MDI Branding and Wayfinding projects along with a few projects outside of the state. Special emphasis was made on cases that dealt with communities that were similar to Manchester-By-The-Sea as they were smaller seaside towns.

The next Advisory Committee meeting was an Ideation Exercise Workshop. At the Ideation Exercise workshop, there was a short presentation focused on shared as well as specific images of Manchester-By-The-Sea. That slide presentation was followed by a series of questions to obtain through “word pictures” the true essence, character, and personality of MBTS. Exercises ranged between one-word descriptions, two-word descriptions and full phrase descriptions. Other questions were asked regarding to colors, symbols, landmarks, street furniture and public art. To give flavor to overall discussion, a question was asked about what the Advisory Committee understood to be the best possible future for MBTS. Community aspirations were discussed in detail. All the answers were documented.

The Ideation Exercise included:

How would you describe Manchester-By-The-Sea using one word?

- | | | |
|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Quaint | Boats | Beautiful |
| Driftwood | Stunning | Desirable |
| Pleasant | Small | Home |
| Comfortable | Storybook | Peaceful |
| Beaches | Seaside | Quaint |
| Clean | Lovely | Suburban |
| Welcoming | Harborside | Vibrant |
| Foghorn | Coastal | Welcoming |
| Gorgeous | Vibrant | Authentic |
| Green | Estates | Comfortable |
| Elegant | Affluent | Lovely |
| Charming | Bubble | Old |
| Historical | Walkable | Small |
| | | Rural |

How would you describe Manchester-By-The-Sea using two words?

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| Happy place | Salt water |
| Seaside village | Boating delight |
| Coastal dream | Working harbor |
| Beach town | Walking community |
| Rocky coast | Singing beach |
| Cape ann | Nautical scenic |
| Cold water | |



Stately home



Aerial view of the Town

How would you describe Manchester-By-The-Sea with three words or a phrase?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| By The Sea | A Delightful Harborfront Downtown |
| A Charming Harbor | Vibrant Seaside Village |
| A Hallmark Town | Beautiful Retail Center |
| A Harbor For All Seasons | Quaint, Community-Focused, Historical |
| Coves, Harbors & Waves | Beautiful, Land Conservation-Minded |
| A Sunset Haven | Family Community Farms |
| Spin The Beach | |

What color or colors do you associate with Manchester-By-The-Sea?

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| Blues | Granite Grey |
| Greens | Rotunda Red |
| Sunset (Cotton Candy) | |

What symbol or symbols or landmark(s) do you associate Manchester-By-The-Sea?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Rotunda | Seaside Estates |
| Singing Beach | Eagle Head Rock |
| Town Common | Black and White Beach |
| Hornets | Scenic Views |
| Harbor | Coolidge Point |
| Chowder House | Stone Walls |
| Harbor Boathouse | |
| Commuter Train Stop Building | |
| Beautiful Center of Town | |
| Charming Retail | |
| Stanley's Garage | |



The Library

Public Art?

- No for the most part
- Perhaps a mural for a passageway
- More plantings
- Flowered archways
- More flowers around retail areas

Symbols

- Rotunda
- Singing Beach
- Town Common
- Hornets
- Harbor
- Chowder House
- Harbor Boathouse
- Commuter Train Stop Building
- Beautiful Center of Town
- Charming Retail
- Stanley's Garage
- Seaside Estates
- Eagle Head Rock
- Black and White Beach
- Scenic Views
- Coolidge Point
- Stone Walls

Branded Street Furniture?

- Too many benches exist already.
- Strategic Kiosks are desirable—at Public Boat Docks/Retail areas.
- Beautify Pathways and Connect Parks



Aerial view

Future Aspirations

- Preserve the Town's Character
- Celebrate History More
- More trees and flowers
- Workers' Space/Gallery
- Longer tourist seasons.
- Thoughtful Outside Dining
- More successful restaurants
- A Beer Garden
- More Picnic Areas
- More Public Restrooms/Showers
- Use social media better
- Group Advertising/Marketing
- Simplify retail permitting.
- Improve visitor experience.
- More Offseason Events
- More activity at night
- More activity at night
- More visitors in Winter months

A thoughtful and very lively discussion by the Advisory Committee members took place during the Ideation Exercises. From this information, the consultants were able to harvest design themes, concepts, and graphic images. These concepts became design options that were over time revised and presented both digitally and at formal meetings.

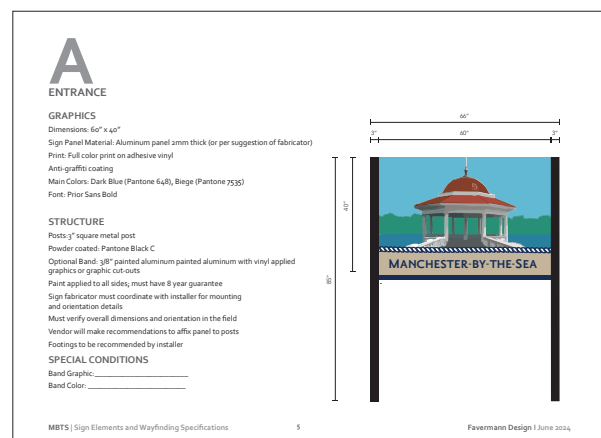
As the Select Board are the official sidewalks and street commissioners of the town, here was a goal to create and develop two design options for the Select Board to choose from. The Select Board’s “ownership” of the final design was key for its townwide implementation. A very strong theme developed through the process—there was a desire to celebrate The Rotunda, a charming Victorian pavilion (built in 1896) at Tuck’s Point Harbor designed by Boston architect E.A.P. Newcomb, a prolific country house designer at the turn of the 20th Century. Interestingly in 2025, it will be raised to 19 feet to mitigate against rising sea levels. After passionate discussions, the MBTS Advisory Committee voiced a collective affirmation of it as Option One for the MBTS brand. A second option put forth by the consultant was an image of the sailing ship (The Talbot) pictured in the town seal and used as a weathervane on top of the Manchester-By-The-Sea Free Public Library. Following that meeting, the consultant developed an extensive and interactive Ideation Exercise Workshop to be shared at the 3rd meeting on April 8th .

Both design options were further refined and presented over the 4th and 5th meetings of the MBTS Branding and Wayfinding Advisory Committee. At the 5th Meeting, it was recommended that the weathervane be dropped, and two distinct versions of The Rotunda be presented for approval by the Select Board.

The Favermann Design staff created (1) a painterly version and a (2) silhouetted line drawing version of The Rotunda. For the Select Board, a special presentation was created by Marlene Dolan to underscore the process, design development thoughts, and potential placement of sign element entering the town and in Downtown.

After complementing the process, hard work, and designs of the Advisory Committee, its Chair and the consultant, the Select Board approved the painterly Rotunda design 5-0. They wanted to implement the wayfinding program in two phases—one starting the process; the second phase to fill in gaps. A Specifications Package of the hierarchy of sign elements was prepared by Favermann Design for cost estimation, fabrication, and installation by appropriate vendors.

The cover and a page from the MBTS Specification Package





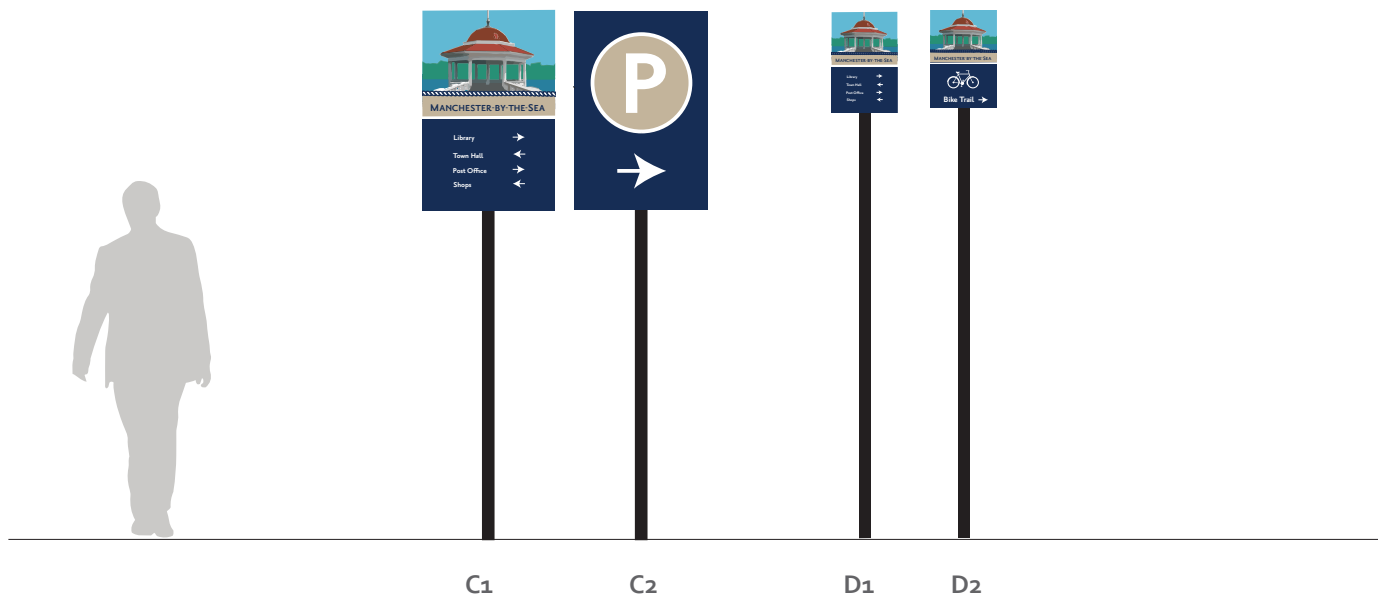
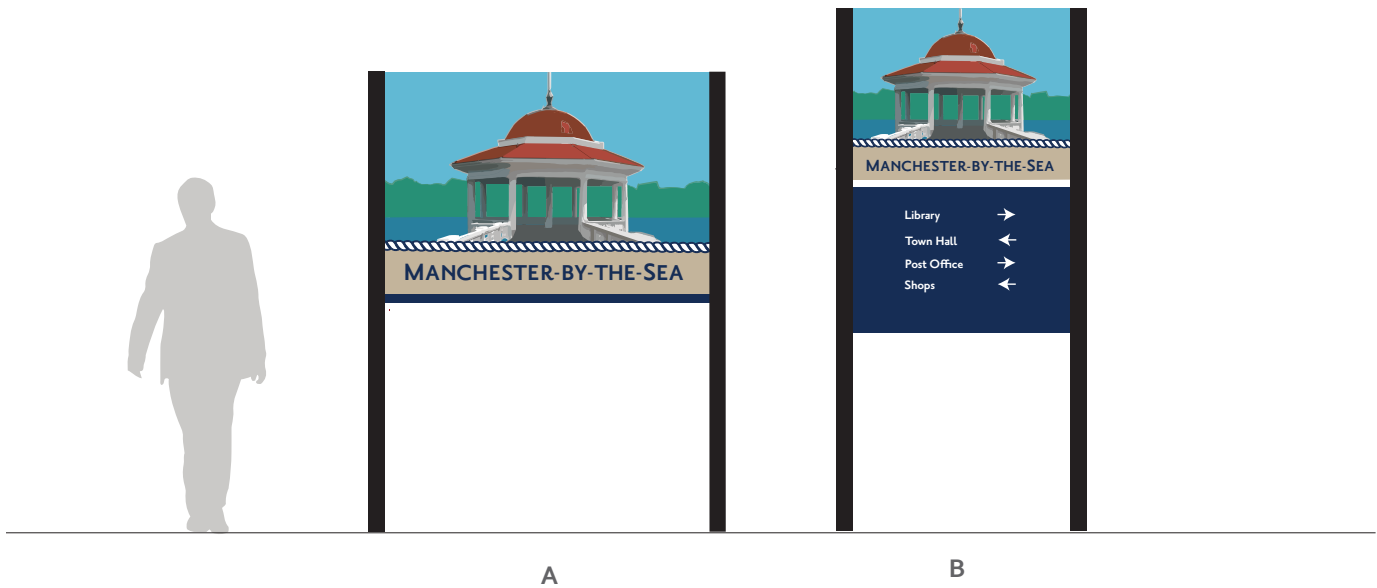
The outline silhouette Rotunda Design Option



The painterly and chosen Rotunda Design Option

MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA

FAMILY OF ELEMENTS





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