

Skip Motes, March 6, 2021

CRITIQUE OF JAY HYLAND'S CPC PROPOSAL TO CREATE A WATERFRONT "NEWBURYPORT SHIPBUILDING MEMORIAL."

THE PROPOSAL DOES NOT COVER TWO-CENTURIES OF NEWBURYPORT'S (AND ITS PREDECESSOR'S, THE WATERSIDE COMMUNITY) SHIPBUILDING HERITAGE.

- It features only the first Revenue Cutter and Donald McKay's four years in Newburyport.

THE PROPOSAL CLAIMS NEWBURYPORT IS THE COAST GUARD BIRTHPLACE

- A 1965 House Joint Resolution did pass commemorating the founding of the U.S. Coast Guard in Newburyport based on the first commissioned revenue cutter *Massachusetts* built in Newburyport in 1791.
- Historians, however, place the founding of the USCG on August 4, 1790 when the First Congress authorized construction of ten vessels (of which, the *Massachusetts* was first) to enforce tariff and trade laws.

THE PROPOSAL CLAIMS NEWBURPORT IS THE BIRTHPLACE OF AMERICA'S FAMOUS CLIPPER SHIPS SINCE "DONALD MCKAY INVENTED THE CLIPPER SHIP AND BUILT THE FIRST ONE IN NEWBURYPORT."

- Donald McKay did not invent the clipper ship; the design evolved overtime and place since 1812 when swift privateers built in Baltimore were known as "Baltimore Clippers."
- The first attempt to incorporate this design into larger vessels was in Baltimore in 1835.
- McKay came to Newburyport after earlier shipbuilding experience by 1840.
- Here he built seven vessels in Newburyport, first for John Currier, Jr. then in partnership with W.C. Currier, and later with W.B. Pickett.
- These were fine, fast vessels, but not clipper ships.
- Based on the success of his last vessel, the *Joshua Bates*, built for Enoch Train who then convinced McKay to move to East Boston in 1845. McKay excelled there, becoming the most famous clipper shipyard in America during the clipper ship period ending in 1858.
- Hyland's memorial celebrates McKay's East Boston success, not Newburyport's.

MCKAY IS THE REASON WHY NEWBURYPORT IS CALLED "CLIPPER CITY."

- This is not correct. McKay was not associated with clipper ships until East Boston.
- The name evolves from Newburyport sports teams. The 1873 Belleville baseball team was called the "Clippers," as was the Newburyport football team in the 1950s.
- The Clipper name in Belleville was reasonable; it was the center of ship building, including over a dozen clipper ships in the 1850s, the most famous was the *Dreadnought* built in 1853.