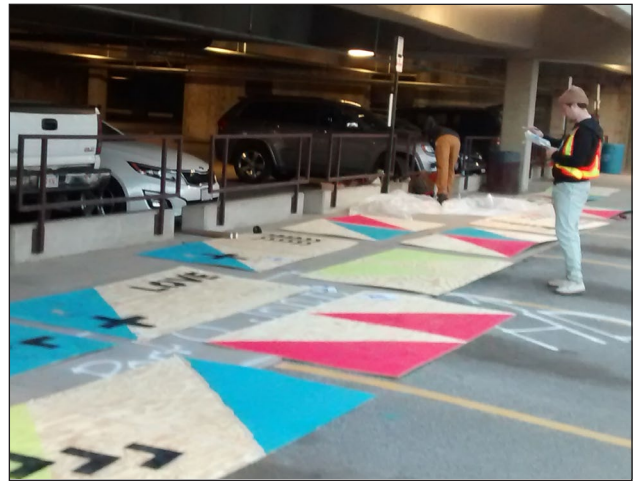




Boardwalk Mural Project
Greg Moutafis, Artist
Haverhill Massachusetts



BOARDWALK MURAL PROJECT - Overview by Artist Greg Moutafis

As winter turned to spring in 2017, downtown Haverhill became a focal point for new public art and event planning. A key area of development was the long-awaited Brian S. Dempsey Boardwalk project, running along the Merrimack River and the back of many small businesses on Merrimack Street.

Two progressive, grant-funded cultural events were scheduled for May 6 2017 (Better Block and O+ Festival) and calls went out for live mural art and music acts to invigorate and reimagine downtown spaces, including the Goecke Parking Deck and the new Harbor Place complex. The visiting team from Better Block were engaging residents and businesses to create street art experiences and pop up markets.





In March 2017, while walking and exploring for inspiration, I discovered the new stretch of boardwalk behind the Landmark Building's office/retail space. The raised walkway now connected and brought attention to their largely neglected, boarded-over second story window area. This would now be a prominent walkway for new residents and also seen from across the river on the Bradford Rail Trail.

While developing some pitch ideas for more conventional wall murals for downtown events in May, I became focused on a unique multi-window art idea for the Landmark.





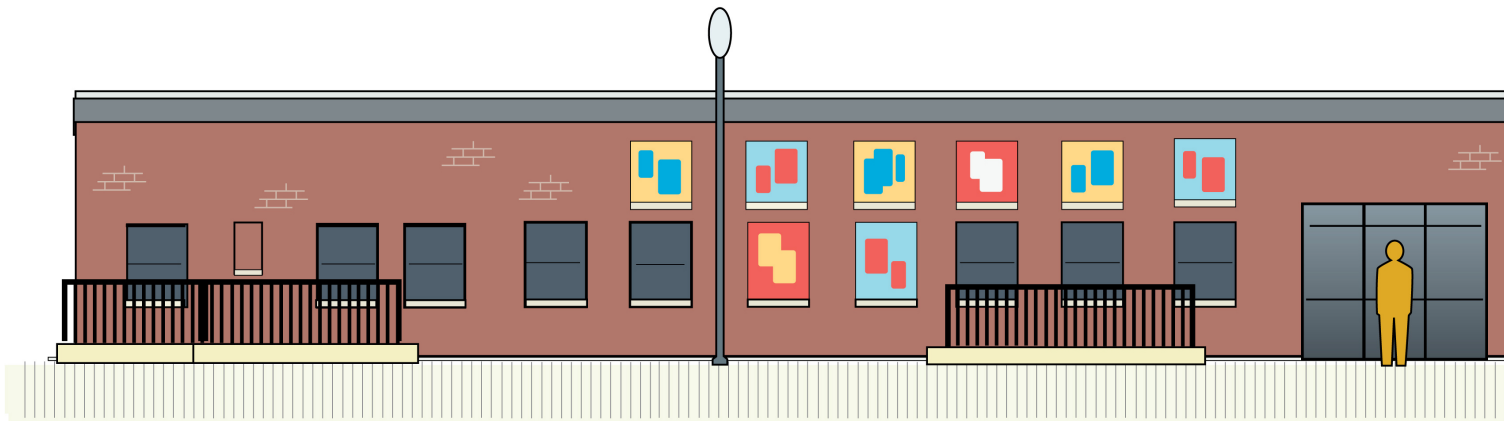
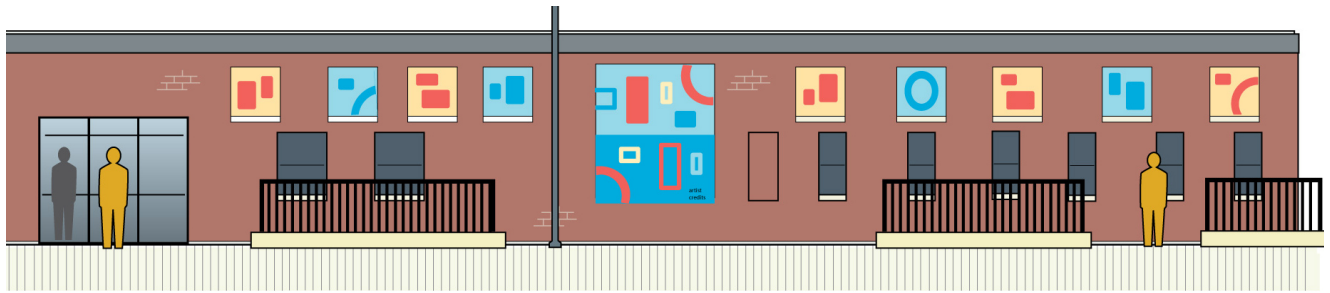
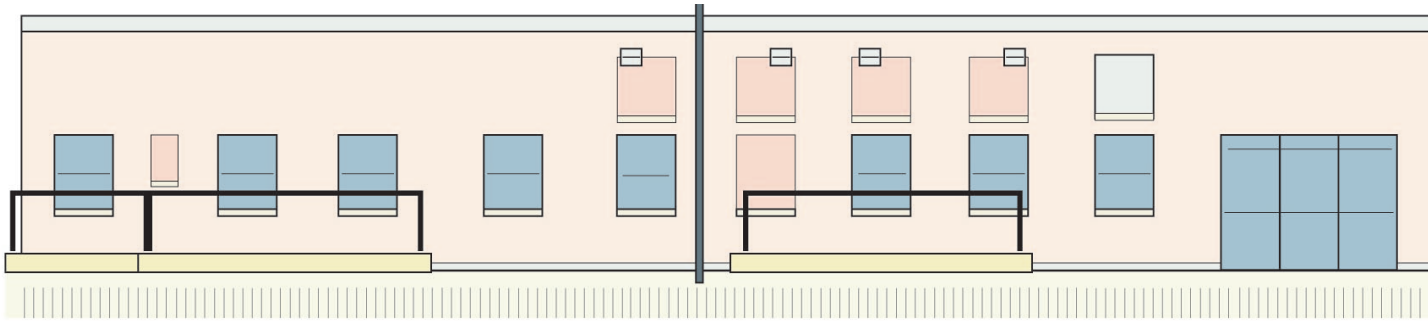
I took photos of the full site and created simple Photoshop mockups of a potential art installation, replacing old windows with artboards full of simple, alternating blocks of color.

After approaching the building management at 76 Merrimack Street, they were eager to support the mural concept with a modest budget for design and labor, and a collaboration with their carpentry team to handle key aspects of materials and installation.

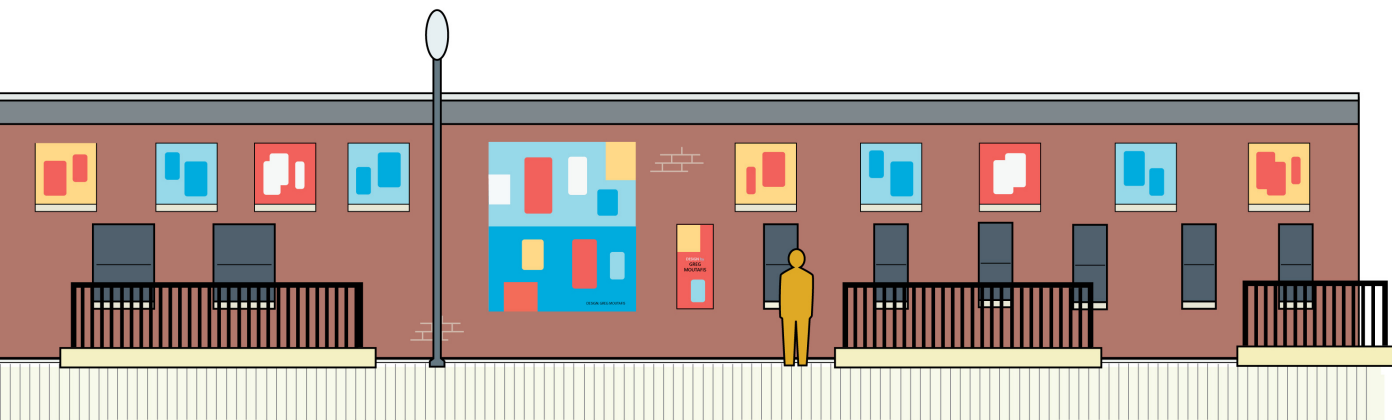
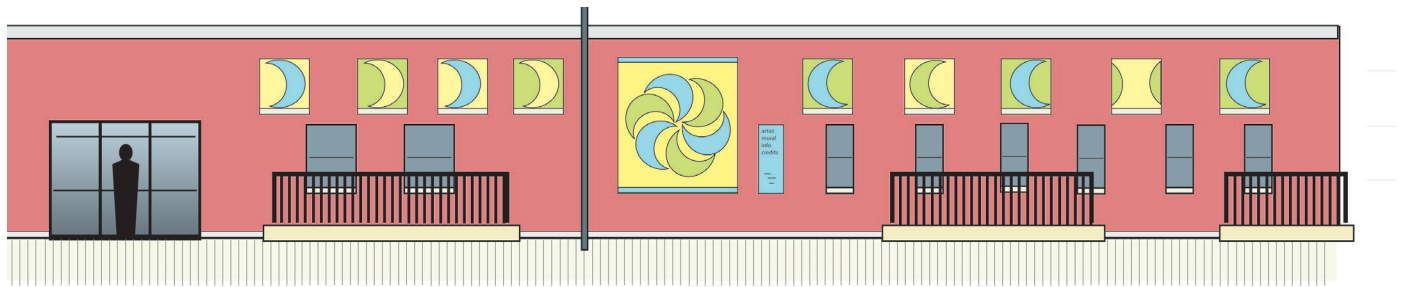
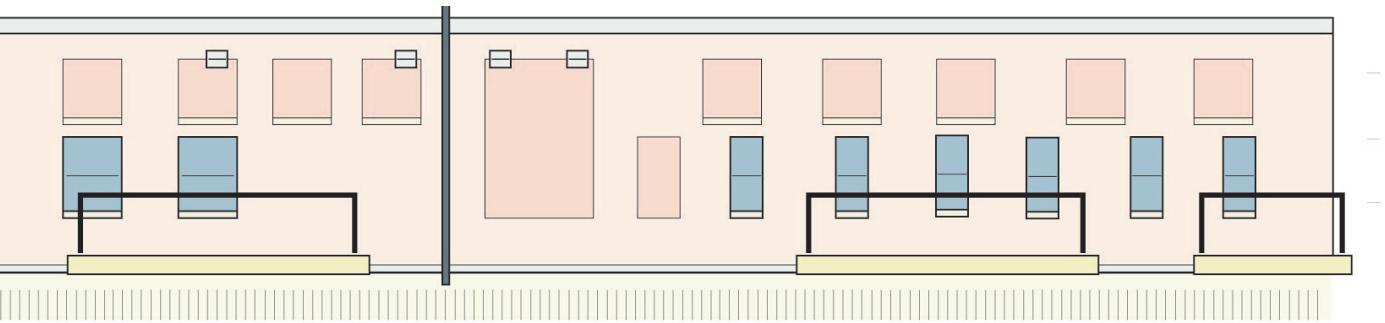
Over the next several weeks I mapped out the project in better detail, also spending time working, learning and gaining general inspiration as part of the street team for the Better Block event.

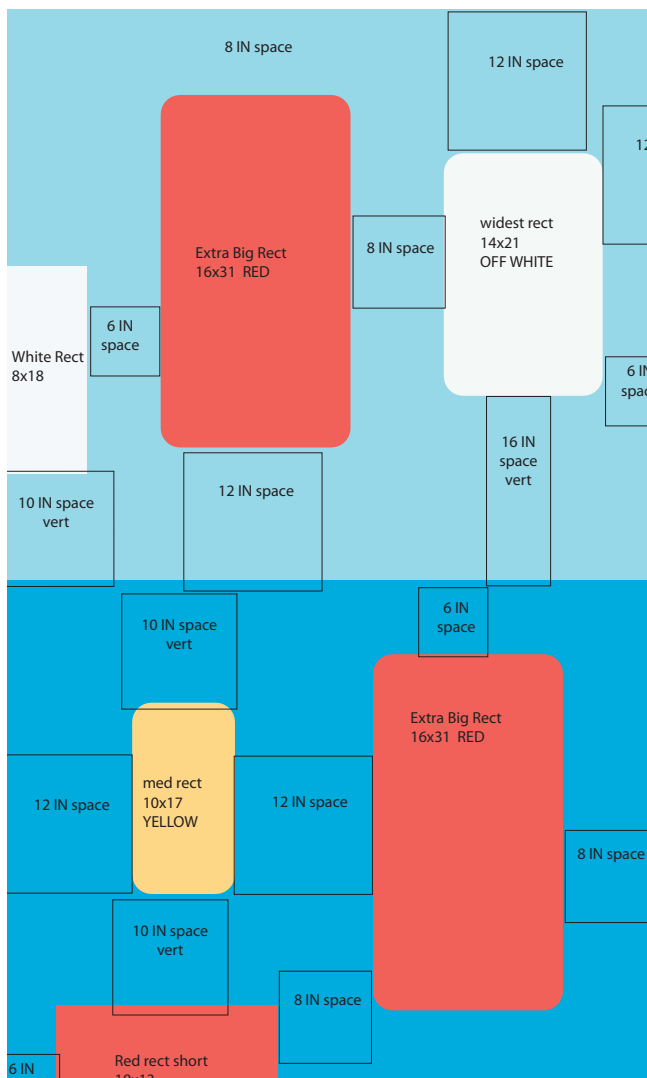


No blue prints or measurements were available for the back of the building and its asymmetrical assortment of windows. So after many on site pencil sketches I drafted a workable scaled drawing of the area, to design a mural over 100 feet wide.

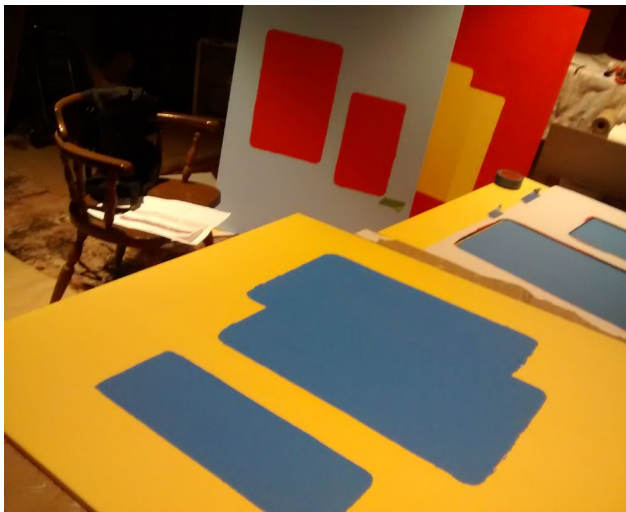
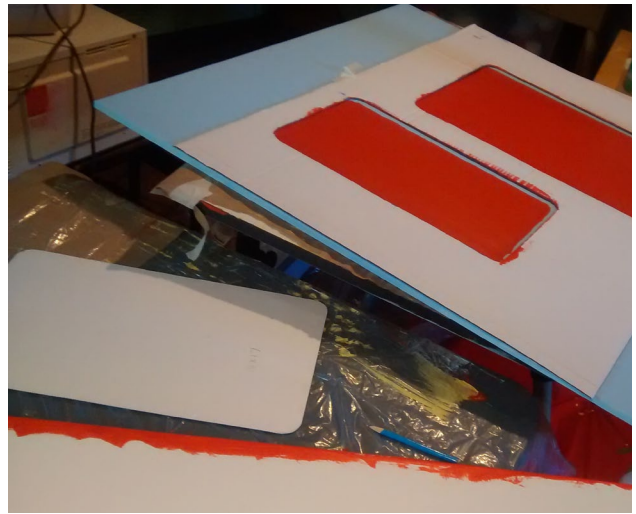
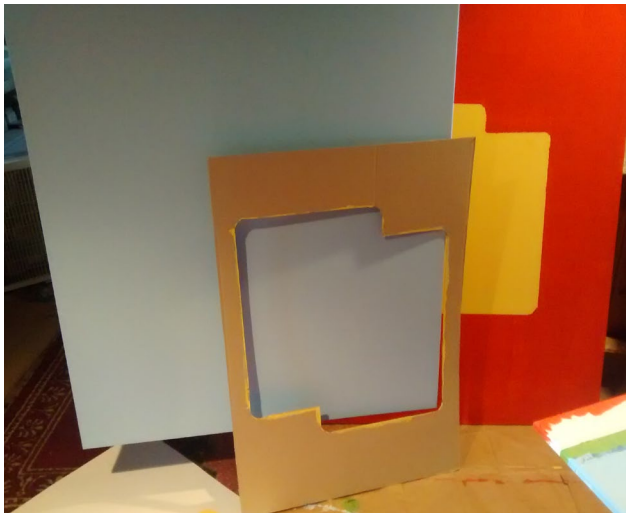


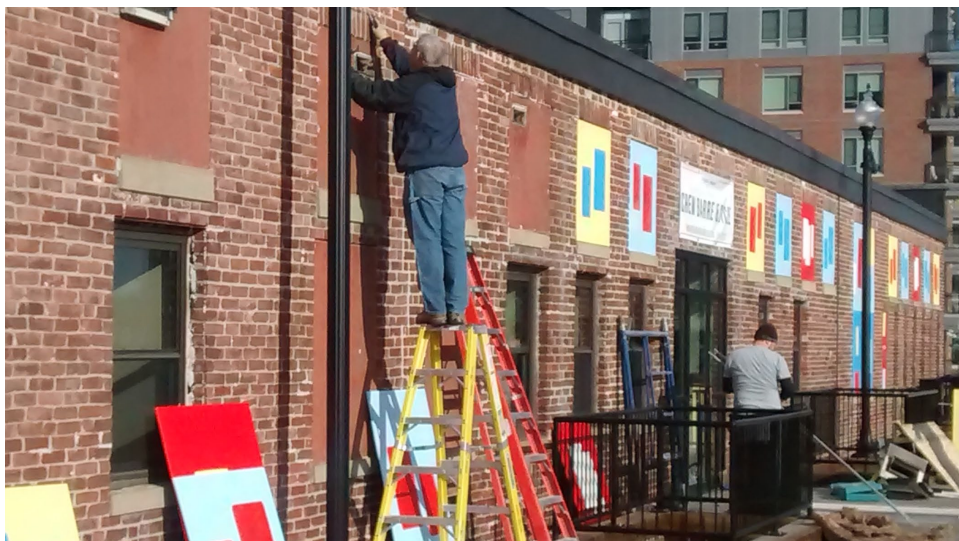
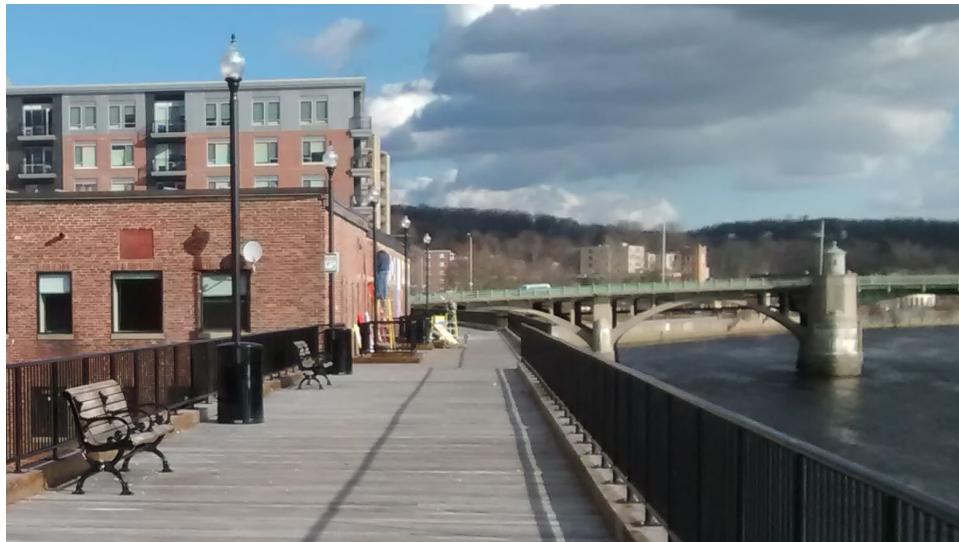
Measurements were refined by carpenter Tim Frahm, and designs were fine tuned in Adobe Illustrator. After weeks of discussing materials/installation and possible variations, a final design based on original sketch was approved.





I began creating stencils and painting offsite in fall 2017. PVC boards were purchased, cut to size, and primed to handle outdoor conditions. Semigloss acrylic house paints were selected to match the 5 color design.





The final painted boards were eventually transported and installed on December 17, 2017.









A public ribbon cutting ceremony was held on May 5, 2018 with the Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce.

Thanks to the visiting team from Better Block: Jonathan Braddick, Andrew Howard, and Hayrettin Günç for sharing public art experience and inspiration.

Special thanks go to Gerry McSweeney of City North Development, Ira Gold of White Street Paint, Carpenter Tim Frahm, lettering stencils by Jenny Arndt of Creative Haverhill, and Hailey Moschella of the O+ Art and Health Festival.