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the onerous responsibility of trying to preserve something that may wash out any year in the winter ice.

The pier is something of a symbol to DelDeo, who also loves the new pier. She said it's easier to enjoy the new pier with the old one standing right next to it.

She sees a symbiotic relationship between the two piers, both working wharves, one old, one new. Sympathetic cultures, she said, "are when old and young can enjoy each other. That's true for both people and artifacts."

One of the truly new features of the complex is the solar power. The Coast Guard wasn't anxious to put in solar heating. But U.S. Rep. Gerry Studds, a member of the Coast Guard subcommittee in Congress, and also a nearby condominium owner, leaned heavily on the Coast Guard to give it a try.

Every chance he got, Studds said, he would try to get the Coast Guard to agree to the solar heat. He said for a while every time he saw the Coast Guard commandant in the halls of Congress the commandant would tell him, "We're working on it. We're working on it."

The solar panels are no longer a joke between Studds and the commandant. The Coast Guard decided, with financial assistance from the federal Energy Research and Development Office, to try building two solar-powered stations. A station almost finished in Ft. Meyers, Fla. has solar power, which will be used to run the air conditioning system at the station.

The West End station has two solar heating systems, one passive and one active. The passive system in the storage building simply heats air in the solar collectors when the sun is shining. The heat is not stored.

In the main building, however, the collectors are used to store heat in water tanks under the building. The heat is used to warm the building and also to heat water for the occupants. Both buildings also have complete conventional back-up systems to augment the solar power.

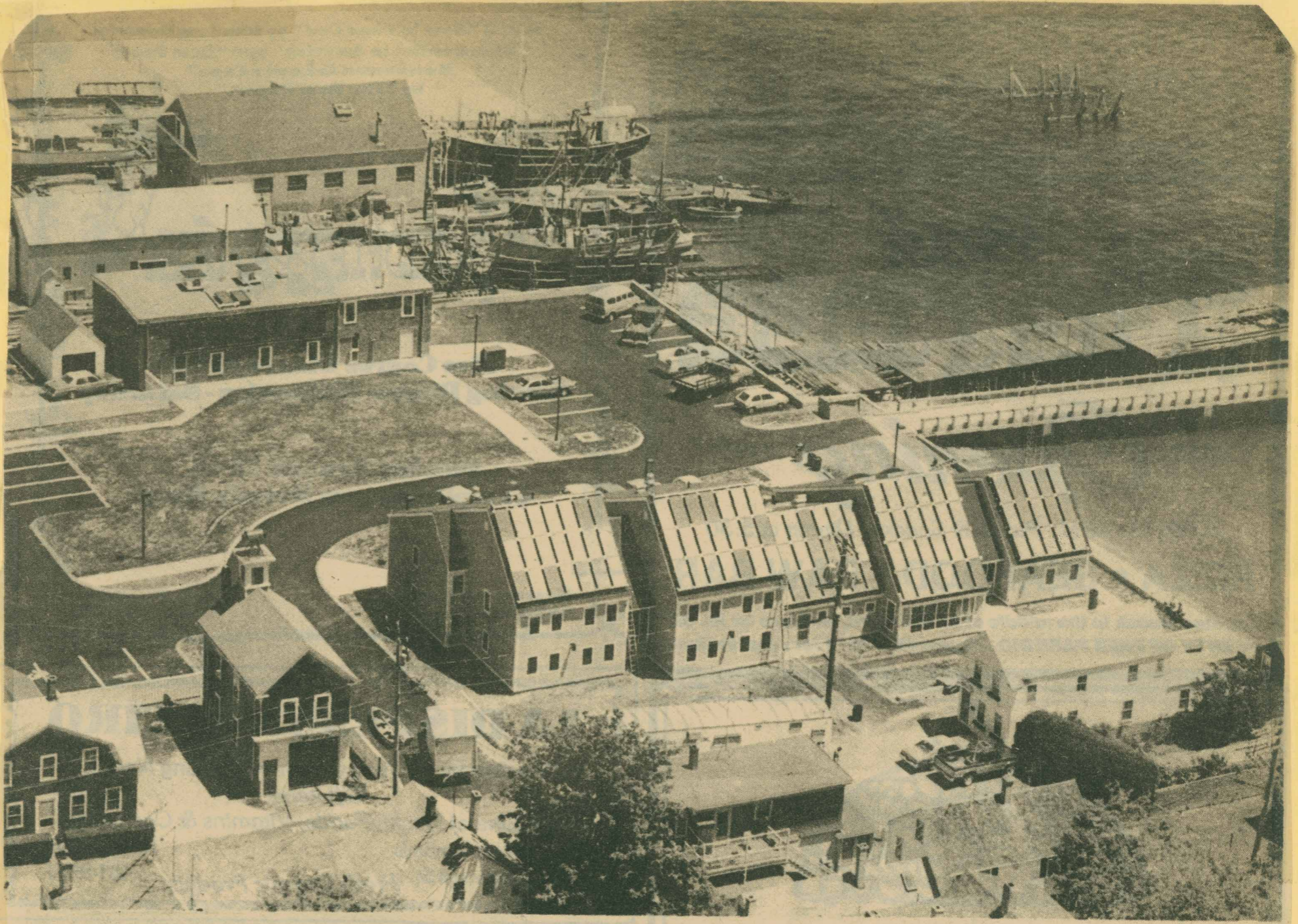
The solar design is part of a government program to familiarize contractors and designers with solar power. The engineering was done by Arthur D. Little Company of Boston. The Coast Guard's project director, Bill Yadisernia, said that one of the reasons so few solar systems are being installed now nationally is because so few designers and contractors know anything about the systems.

The solar system's efficiency will be monitored to see if it is cost-effective, Yadisernia said, but the evaluation really will be a guess without extensive measuring devices. He said he doesn't know if those devices will be installed.

The building is almost done now. The operations center is still waiting for a communications console. Some electrical supplies and station furnishings are still back ordered. The entire cost of the project is almost \$2.5 million.

Back at Race Point, the men are waiting anxiously for official word to move in. Knipple said everyone is packed and ready.

He said he wouldn't be surprised if he got a call one day and was told to move in that afternoon. He said he wouldn't mind a bit.



Aerial view shows how well new station blends into the surrounding community.

Aerial photo by Jim Gilbert, courtesy Provincetown-Boston Airlines

Left building with cupola, Pumper Fire Station #1 - Taves Boat Yard in the background