Planning and Execution

According to A Record of the Streets, Alleys, Places, Etc. in the City of Boston; compiled under the direction of the street commissioners and printed by order of the City Council from the date of the settlement of the town to 1910, all the streets in the Bulfinch Triangle were ‘laid out’ in 1807; however, this date only designates when Charles Bulfinch drew up the plan, which was not approved by the town selectmen until 1808. It should also be noted, when looking at the widely referenced Hales Map of 1814, that the streets of the Bulfinch Triangle were not completed until some 14-years after that map was published.

When Pond Street was finished in 1809, the west side of the Mill Pond had started to be filled by the Boston Mill Corporation. They had contracted with the same John Whitney who filled in the area east of Pond Street. Whitney acquired ‘clean earth and gravel’ from behind the State House, reducing Beacon Hill significantly. He then proceeded to fill over two acres of the pond between the Mill A floodgates seen on the 1743 Price Map (close to the West End Museum), the bottom of Gooch and Pitts Lanes, up to Portland Street; the filled area being level with Pond Street. South Margin and Merrimac Streets and part of Portland Street (formerly Cold/ Cole Lane) were the first streets created between 1810 and 1813.

Construction on the Mill Pond Canal was started c.1810, but had become a long and arduous process. Around the same time that the canal was being built, a stone seawall was constructed on the outer side of the mill dam from the canal to the floodgates (near Leverett Street). The canal and the West End side of Causeway Street were finished c.1815. Not long after, the triangular area between Merrimac and Lancaster Streets was filled, as well as the area from Merrimac Street, the canal and Market Street (the apex of the Bulfinch Triangle at Haymarket Square).