NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 10-90)

380

OMB No. 1024-0018

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lynn Fells Parkway, Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston

other names/site number Same

2. Location

street & number Lynn Fells Parkway N/A not for publication

city or town Melrose, Saugus N/A vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Middlesex & Essex code 025, 017 zip code 02176, 01906

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☒ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Cara H. Metz 3/21/03

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Cara H. Metz, Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

☑ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the National Register
☐ removed from the National Register
☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper — Patricia Andrus — Date of Action 5/9/2003

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

_ private
_ public-local
x public-State
_ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

_ building(s)
x district
_ site
_ structure
_ object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	building
1	0	sites
4	0	structures
0	0	objects
5	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

None

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE – outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE – park, natural feature
TRANSPORTATION – road related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE – outdoor recreation
LANDSCAPE – park, natural feature
TRANSPORTATION – road related

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

N/A

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/A
walls N/A
roof N/A
other asphalt, concrete, granite, plantings, steel

Narrative Description
See Section 7 Continuation Sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

x **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

_ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

x **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

_ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

_ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.

_ **B** removed from its original location.

_ **C** a birthplace or grave.

_ **D** a cemetery.

_ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

_ **F** a commemorative property.

_ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Community Planning and Development
Conservation
Engineering
Entertainment/Recreation
Landscape Architecture
Transportation

Period of Significance

1906-1937

Significant Dates

1906-1911: Lynn Fells Parkway constructed
1930: Boston & Maine Railroad Bridge rebuilt

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Charles Eliot, Olmsted Brothers

Narrative Statement of Significance

See Section 8 Continuation Sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

_ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
_ previously listed in the National Register
_ previously determined eligible by the National Register
_ designated a National Historic Landmark
_ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
_ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

_ State Historic Preservation Office
_ Other State agency
_ Federal agency
_ Local government
_ University
_ Other

Name of repository:
Metropolitan District Commission, Boston, MA

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approx. 23 acres

UTM References

1. 19 Zone	328980 Easting	4702800 (*Intersection with* Northing *Melrose/Stoneham Line*)	3. 19 Zone	332680 Easting	4703980 (*Intersect* Northing *Main St., Saugus)*
2. 19 Zone	330460 Easting	4703120 (*Intersection with* Northing *Green Street*)	4. 19 Zone	333880 Easting	4705100 (*Intersect* Northing *Newbury Turnpike*)

Verbal Boundary Description and Justification
See Section 10 Continuation Sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title V. Adams, S. Berg, E. Maass, T. Orwig, PAL with Betsy Friedberg, Michael Steinitz, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date March 2003

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps
A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Metropolitan District Commission

street & number 20 Somerset Street telephone (617) 727-5264

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02108

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.0. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Portions redacted

DESCRIPTION

The Lynn Fells Parkway, located in Melrose (Middlesex County) and Saugus (Essex County), Massachusetts, is a 4.83-mile-long two-lane connecting parkway in Boston's regional park system administered by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC). It is a moderately traveled arterial route through relatively low-density suburban residential neighborhoods with some commercial and institutional nodes, primarily in central Melrose. At its western terminus, the Lynn Fells Parkway connects with Fellsway East at the edge of the Middlesex Fells Reservation. The eastern terminus of the Lynn Fells Parkway is U.S. Route 1, the former Newburyport Turnpike. The Lynn Fells Parkway is described from west to east, the historical order of its development.

The western terminus of the **Lynn Fells Parkway (#1 on data sheet)** corresponds to the Melrose/Stoneham town line. West of this point, the roadway enters Stoneham and becomes Fellsway East within the boundaries of the Middlesex Fells Reservation (see separate nomination for the Middlesex Fells Reservation Parkways, NR 2003). A small miter (traffic island) at its beginning, where Holland Road **(Holland Road Miter, #2 on data sheet)** curves north to connect with the parkway, contains a modern sign welcoming visitors to Melrose and indicates the parkway's importance as a civic gateway. Lynn Fells Parkway has no medians along its length, and its path is gently sinuous and slightly hilly. As the roadway falls and rises in response to the topography of the surrounding area, the elevation of the roadway ranges from 40 to 145 feet above sea level. More specifically, from its western terminus at the Middlesex Fells Reservation, the parkway declines from 145 feet down to 40 feet above sea level near Ell Pond. After that point, the roadway gently slopes between 60 and 80 feet above sea level until it reaches Oakland Vale in Saugus, where it declines further to a low point of 40 feet above sea level near the Breakheart Reservation area. Views are primarily down the corridor, as residential areas and woodlands close off any middle- or long-distance views. In Melrose, the Lynn Fells Parkway is uniformly 40 feet wide, with two 20-foot travel lanes that contain intermittent parking lanes and have vertical granite curbing. It is generally paralleled by six-foot-wide planting strips and nine-foot-wide sidewalks in both sides. Lights are generally cobra heads on metal poles.

From the beginning point until just past Sewall Woods Park, the Lynn Fells Parkway is moderately hilly, running northeastward through an early 20th-century residential neighborhood of two-story house (PHOTO #3). This section has the oldest trees of the route, mature oaks that are 50 to 75 years old, which form a lofty, distinctive canopy over the roadway **(Lynn Fells Tree Canopy, #3 on data sheet).** The Sewall Woods Park edge on the northern side of the roadway is

(continued)

dense mature woodlands. Sewall Woods Park (nine acres) is the first of two significant municipal open spaces sited along the parkway.

Between Vinton Street and Tremont Street, the Lynn Fells Parkway passes under a steel plate girder bridge **(former Boston & Maine Railroad Bridge, #4 on data sheet)** for the Western Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad line, with concrete abutments (PHOTO #2). This bridge was built in 1906 as a single-span through-plate girder bridge to carry the pre-existing rail line over the parkway, and was rebuilt in 1930. The 1930 replacement consists of three girders with I-beam floor beams and a steel deck with concrete abutments. This bridge and its abutments are within the boundaries of the Lynn Fells Parkway and considered a contributing structure.

Between Tremont and Melrose Streets, both sides of the parkway offer distinctive open-space settings in one of the few relatively flat and open section of the Lynn Fells Parkway. To the south of the parkway is Ell Pond, owned by the City of Melrose, separated from the parkway by a grassy park, an access road, and parking areas surrounding The Knoll, a designed landscape planted with trees commemorating the city's war dead. Soccer fields flank The Knoll, while tennis courts bound Ell Pond at both its northwestern end (near Tremont Street/Lynn Fells Parkway intersection), and its northeastern end (at the intersection of the Lynn Fells Parkway with Melrose and Crystal Streets). Just west of Crystal Street, the parkway passes over two culverts, which provide drainage for a stream that runs into the northwestern end of Ell Pond. These culverts are considered together with other culverts (described below) as a contributing feature of the parkway **(Lynn Fells Culvert Drainage System, #5 on the data sheet).** To the north of the parkway, at the intersection with Tremont Street, is Morelli Field, a baseball and athletics complex, and east of that is the distinctive 1932 Art Deco former high school (currently the Veterans Memorial Middle School) and annex, fronted by a lawn and reached from the parkway by a formal oval drive. Further to the east, the ca. 1970 Melrose High School building, also containing the Central School Administration offices, is linked to the middle school's annex by a bridge. A small playing field, Federal Field, fronts the high school, while a large parking lot serving the high school is located at the complex's southeastern corner, at the intersection of the Lynn Fells Parkway and Melrose Street. The trees in this stretch of roadway are evenly spaced, an allee of half-grown deciduous trees, primarily maples and ashes (PHOTO #1).

The section of the Lynn Fells Parkway near its intersection with Melrose's Main Street (formerly the Reading Turnpike) is the most commercial and most densely settled area along the corridor through Melrose. The parkway runs predominantly northeast in this section. Although the

(continued)

roadway remains 40 feet wide, the former parking lane is intermittently used as a second, narrow travel lane. Much of this section of the parkway has intermittent Belgian block and quarter-round curbing, but the curbing ends altogether at Albert Street.

Just past Clifford Street, the parkway turns more to the east and begins paralleling the course of a small meandering brook, a tributary of the Saugus River known as Cranberry or Crystal Brook. The parkway crosses the brook by culvert, after which point the streambed continues south of the parkway, crossing the edge of the privately owned Bellevue Golf Course. Intermittent views are available to the south, through the stream's trees, across the golf course. To the north the parkway is bordered by mid-20th century residential developments. Past the end of the golf course the parkway again crosses the stream over a culvert. These appear to date from the early to mid 20th century and are considered together as a contributing feature of the parkway **(Lynn Fells Parkway Culvert Drainage System, #5 on data sheet).**

After its intersection with Rivers Lane, the Lynn Fells Parkway crosses into Saugus; unlike the Melrose portion, the Saugus section has fewer cross streets and less densely spaced housing along its right of way, until it reaches Main Street in Saugus. From Rivers Lane eastward for the rest of its course, the Lynn Fells Parkway generally parallels Bennett's Pond Brook, a larger waterway that Cranberry Brook joins just east of the Melrose city limits. The Lynn Fells Parkway crosses this brook by culvert three more times before the brook joins the Saugus River. While the parkway does not run alongside any public open spaces until it reaches Breakheart Reservation, the brook corridor gives it a more pastoral setting than in Melrose. Sidewalks in this section are more intermittent.

In Saugus, the roadway narrows to 30 feet, with standard 14- to 15-foot lanes east- and westbound, and intermittent quarter-round curbing. Beyond the planting strip, asphalt sidewalks parallel the roadway on both sides. Beyond the sidewalks, intermittent SS-type barriers on steel I-beams have been erected along the brook corridor. East of Main Street, the corridor turns to the north-northeast and becomes more densely residential, with more cross streets, predominantly mid-20th century ranch and split-level housing, and driveway curb cuts. Street trees increase in number in this area, but are generally a standard residential mix of deciduous species, and are not very large.

The roadway changes character markedly just past Forest Street, the entry to the MDC's Breakheart Reservation (covered in a separate nomination). Recently rebuilt and resurfaced, this section has newer vertical granite curbing and wide but intermittent concrete sidewalks. Sherwood Forest Lane is a late 20th-century suburban development. Beyond that, on both sides of

(continued)

the Lynn Fells Parkway, is a mid- to late-20th century commercial strip development, which includes large chain stores with parking lots. The Lynn Fells Parkway ends at the western edge of U.S. Route 1 at a heavily traveled mid- to late-20th century figure-eight ramp intersection, with commercial development occupying this island.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American resources have been identified within the boundaries of the Lynn Fells Parkway, sites may be present.

Environmental characteristics are also present in the area favorable for the presence of ancient Native American sites. Well-drained, level to moderately sloping terraces and other landforms are present in several areas in close proximity to the parkway corridor. Ell Pond and Bennett's Pond (Crystal Pond) are located within 1,000 feet of the right of way, and the parkway crosses Cranberry or Crystal Brook, a tributary of the Saugus River.

Documentary resources are also known that indicate a favorable potential for the presence of historical resources in the parkway locale. European settlement has been documented in the area since the 17th century, and a wide variety of domestic, industrial, and commercial resources are known in the region and in the vicinity of neighboring parkways. Additional historical and archaeological research can document specific resources in the vicinity of the Lynn Fells Parkway.

In spite of the high potential for locating ancient Native American and historic resources in the vicinity of the Lynn Fells Parkway, the potential to recover significant site survivals, both ancient Native American and historic, within the nominated boundaries of the parkways is low. The Lynn Fells Parkway is classified as a two-lane connecting parkway. The roadway typically included two lanes and ranges from 40 feet wide in Melrose to 30 feet wide in Saugus. The nominated area includes the paved roadway, six-foot adjacent planting strips, nine-foot sidewalks, culverts, granite curbing, roadway barriers and electric light poles. Given the impacts associated with construction of the parkway facilities, potential historical archaeological and ancient Native American resources within the nominated parkway area have been destroyed. Truncated features and/or deeply buried fragments of sites may survive, but the overall integrity of these sites has been compromised.

(end)

SIGNIFICANCE

The Lynn Fells Parkway, a 4.83-mile-long roadway in Melrose and Saugus, Massachusetts, is significant as a relatively unaltered example of a single-carriageway parkway. Designed for the Metropolitan Parks Commission (MPC) by the Olmsted Brothers, it is emblematic of the firm's principles of parkways creation. The Lynn Fells Parkway possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It meets National Register Criteria A and C in the significance areas of community development and planning, engineering, landscape architecture, and transportation at the state level and fulfills the Parkways Registration Requirements for the associated Connecting Parkways property subtype, under Section F of this Multiple Property Documentation Format nomination. The period of significance for the Lynn Fells Parkway is from 1906, the beginning of construction, through 1937, when improvements were made to the parkway.

First proposed in 1897, the Lynn Fells Parkway derived its name from its planned course as the parkway link between the Middlesex Fells and Lynn Woods. The MPC Annual Report reasoned, "At present one can pass from one of these reservations to the other through an agreeable country, and for the most part, over tolerably smooth and pleasant roads; but in course of time, when these roads become more closely occupied by buildings and have to provide for a larger tide of travel than at present, they will be inadequate."[1] Since development pressure were less intense here than elsewhere, though, the project was considered of lower priority than other parkways. An MPC long-range planning map from 1900 projected it as a central link in a northern parkway system stretching from the Mystic Valley Parkway through the Middlesex Fells to Lynn Woods and Revere's Point of Pines.

(continued)

[1] MPC Annual Report, January 1898, p. 67. All further quotes and dates are from subsequent editions of the Annual Report or plans in the MDC plans room, unless otherwise noted.

In 1899, following legislative direction, the MPC devised two preliminary plans for the parkway; a more northerly route through Wakefield and a shorter Melrose route, the eventual choice. In 1904 the MPC began surveying and drawing up takings plans for the eastern end of the parkway

in Melrose, from the Middlesex Fells Reservation to Elm Street. With the exception of the Perkins Street right of way from Sewall Woods Park to Ell Pond, the route avoided existing streets, to the extent of paralleling Howard Street in Melrose and Saugus, but keeping a block south of it.

Construction began in 1906, on the westernmost stretch from the Emerson Border Road (later part of Fellsway East) of the Middlesex Fells Reservation to Green Street. The MPC built a steel plate girder bridge for the Western Division of the Boston & Maine Railroad line, with concrete abutments, creating an underpass for the parkway. Sub-grade work through swampy land in Ell Pond Park necessitated the construction of a "mattress" of trees and tree limbs (cut from the Middlesex Fells Reservation), 80 feet wide and 1,700 feet long, to prevent settlement of the fill over soft mud 10 to 30 feet thick. Although adjacent sections of the parkway opened to traffic in 1908, the Ell Pond Park section of the parkway was not completed until 1911. Lack of further appropriations stalled construction beyond Bellevue Avenue, but the first segment of the parkway did provide access to the Middlesex Fells from Main Street in Melrose, an arterial north-south road once known as the Reading Turnpike.

Examination of plans from this initial construction campaign shows that the western end of the Lynn Fells Parkway maintains consistency with its original design as a single carriageway (designed without a median). The roadway was planned as a 40-foot-wide parkway (with two 20-foot travel lanes), with parallel six-foot-wide planting strips and nine-foot-wide sidewalks. The planting strips were planned, in some places, to hold 14-foot maples spaced 40 to 50 feet apart. The small traffic miter (triangular traffic island) at the Holland Road intersection also dates from the period of significance, according to Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) maps, from as early as 1927. While edgestone was used in initial construction, it appeared only at corners. Continuous edgestone may not have been used until the 1930s.

Further eastward, extension of the Lynn Fells Parkway stalled for fifteen years. In 1913, the MPC prepared plans and estimates for the extension of the parkway to the Lynn Woods, in accordance with Chapter 87, Resolves of 1913. However, no money was appropriated until 1926, when surveys and takings plans were once again drawn up for the extension, a distance of 3.03

(continued)

miles, as part of the Circumferential Highway. Acquisition finally began in 1927, and two years later a contract was awarded for the construction of the extension from Bellevue Avenue in Melrose to the Newburyport Turnpike (U.S. Route 1) in Saugus.

During the 1930s, changes to the Lynn Fells Parkway were mostly limited to resurfacing projects, such as that in Melrose in 1933, when the segment from Vinton Street to Melrose Street was regraded, resurfaced with "bituminous penetration macadam," lined with edgestone, and paralleled with "cement concrete" walks. In 1930 the Boston & Maine Railroad bridge crossing the parkway was replaced with a new three-girder through-plate girder bridge. In 1936 the segment from Bellevue Avenue in Melrose to the Newburyport Turnpike was "seal-coated with cut-back asphalt and pea stone." By 1937, maintenance was limited to the periodic patching, mowing, cleaning of gutters and catch basins, and raking of shrubbery beds.

In 1931, the MDC surveyed for an extension of the Lynn Fells Parkway from the Newburyport Turnpike to Walnut Street in Saugus, and acquired the land of the right of way the following year. In 1935, the MDC graded a segment of 40-foot-wide roadbed east of the Turnpike in anticipation of Public Works Administration funding for the construction, but the road was not finished. The MDC still owns the right of way for the Lynn Fells Parkway completion, extending from its U.S. Route 1 intersection in a curvilinear path eastward to Walnut Street at its intersection with Central Street. A later figure-eight series of exit ramps for U.S. Route 1 currently occupies part of this site. The section of right of way for the Lynn Fells Parkway from Route 1 to Walnut Street has not been considered for the purposes of this nomination.

Although the Lynn Fells Parkway has never actually reached Lynn Woods, it continues to be an important connecting parkway. Since 1930, the Lynn Fells Parkway has provided access to the Middlesex Fells Reservation from the Newburyport Turnpike (U.S. Route 1). The 1931 completion of the Fellsway East extension north through the Middlesex Fells Reservation opened the Lynn Fells Parkway to direct connection with the Middlesex Fells Reservation Parkways system. The Lynn Fells Parkway also provided direct access to Breakheart Reservation, which the MDC acquired in 1934 and developed in the latter half of that decade.

(end)

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION AND JUSTIFICATION

The National Register boundary for Lynn Fells Parkway is drawn to encompass property historically and currently associated with the roadway, including the parkway corridor and adjacent planting strips and sidewalks, where they exist. Where sidewalks and planting strips do not exist, the nomination includes all land that extends ten feet back from the current edge of the parkway. The boundary does not include adjacent MDC-owned parkland that is not directly related to the parkway. The specific termini for the parkway are as follows:

The western terminus for Lynn Fells Parkway corresponds to a line of convenience drawn at the Stoneham/Melrose town line in Melrose. The eastern terminus for the roadway corresponds to a line of convenience drawn along the western edge of U.S. Route 1 in Saugus.

(end)

Revised UTMs (February 19, 2008)

3 ~~1A~~: 19 329472E 4703263N
2 ~~1B~~: 19 329472E 4703136N
1 ~~1C~~: 19 329035E 4703095N

4 ~~2~~. 19 330460E 4703120N (Intersection with Green Street)

5 ~~3~~. 19 332680E 4703980N (Intersection with Main Street, Saugus)
6 ~~4~~. 19 333880E 4705100N (Intersection with Newbury Turnpike)

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS

Photographer: Emily Maass, PAL
Date: July 2002
Location of negatives: PAL, Pawtucket, RI

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION

PROPERTY NAME: Lynn Fells Parkway, Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston

MULTIPLE NAME: Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston MPS

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Middlesex

DATE RECEIVED: 2/29/08 DATE OF PENDING LIST:
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 4/13/08
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 03000380

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL:	N	DATA PROBLEM:	N	LANDSCAPE:	N	LESS THAN 50 YEARS:	N
OTHER:	N	PDIL:	N	PERIOD:	N	PROGRAM UNAPPROVED:	N
REQUEST:	N	SAMPLE:	N	SLR DRAFT:	N	NATIONAL:	N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

V ACCEPT ___RETURN ___REJECT 4.9.08 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

additional Documentation Accepted

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept

REVIEWER Edson Beall DISCIPLINE History

TELEPHONE _____ DATE 4.9.08

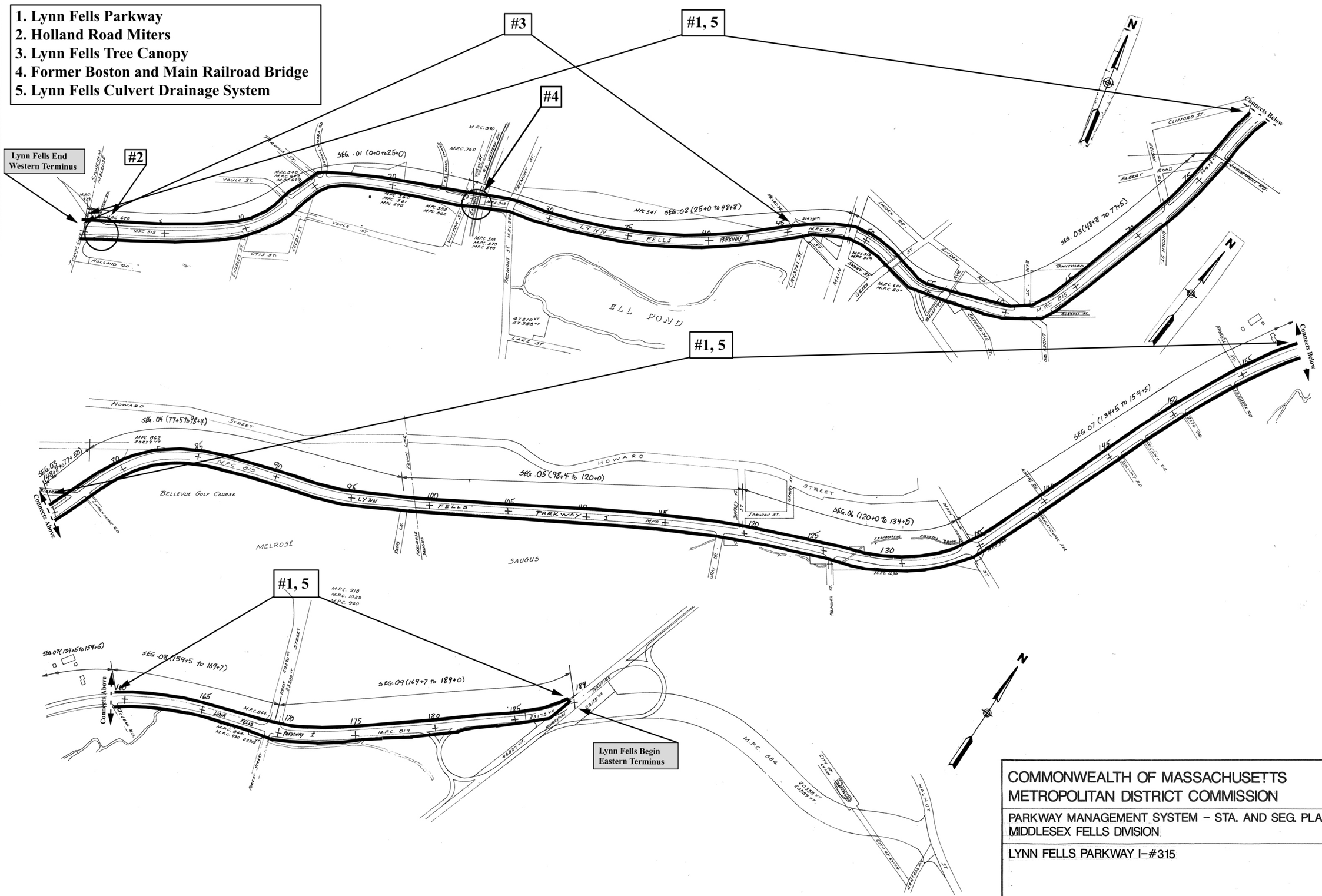
DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

Lynn Fells Parkway
Melrose/Saugus (Middlesex/Essex), MA
District Data Sheet

#	Name	Town	Location	Date	Status	Type
1	Lynn Fells Parkway	Melrose/ Saugus	Between Stoneham/Melrose town line and U.S. Route 1 in Saugus	1906-11; 1929; 1935-37	C	ST
2	Holland Road Miter	Melrose	Intersection of Lynn Fells Parkway and Holland Road	early 20th c.	C	ST
3	Lynn Fells Tree Canopy	Melrose	Between western terminus and Melrose Street	early 20th c.	C	SI
4	Railroad Bridge	Melrose	Between Vinton and Tremont Streets	1930	C	ST
5	Culvert Drainage System	Melrose/ Saugus	Four culverts in Melrose and three in Saugus that travel under Lynn Fells Parkway	early to mid 20th c.	C	ST

1. Lynn Fells Parkway
2. Holland Road Miters
3. Lynn Fells Tree Canopy
4. Former Boston and Main Railroad Bridge
5. Lynn Fells Culvert Drainage System



STATION AND SEGMENT PLAN: LYNN FELLS PARKWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION

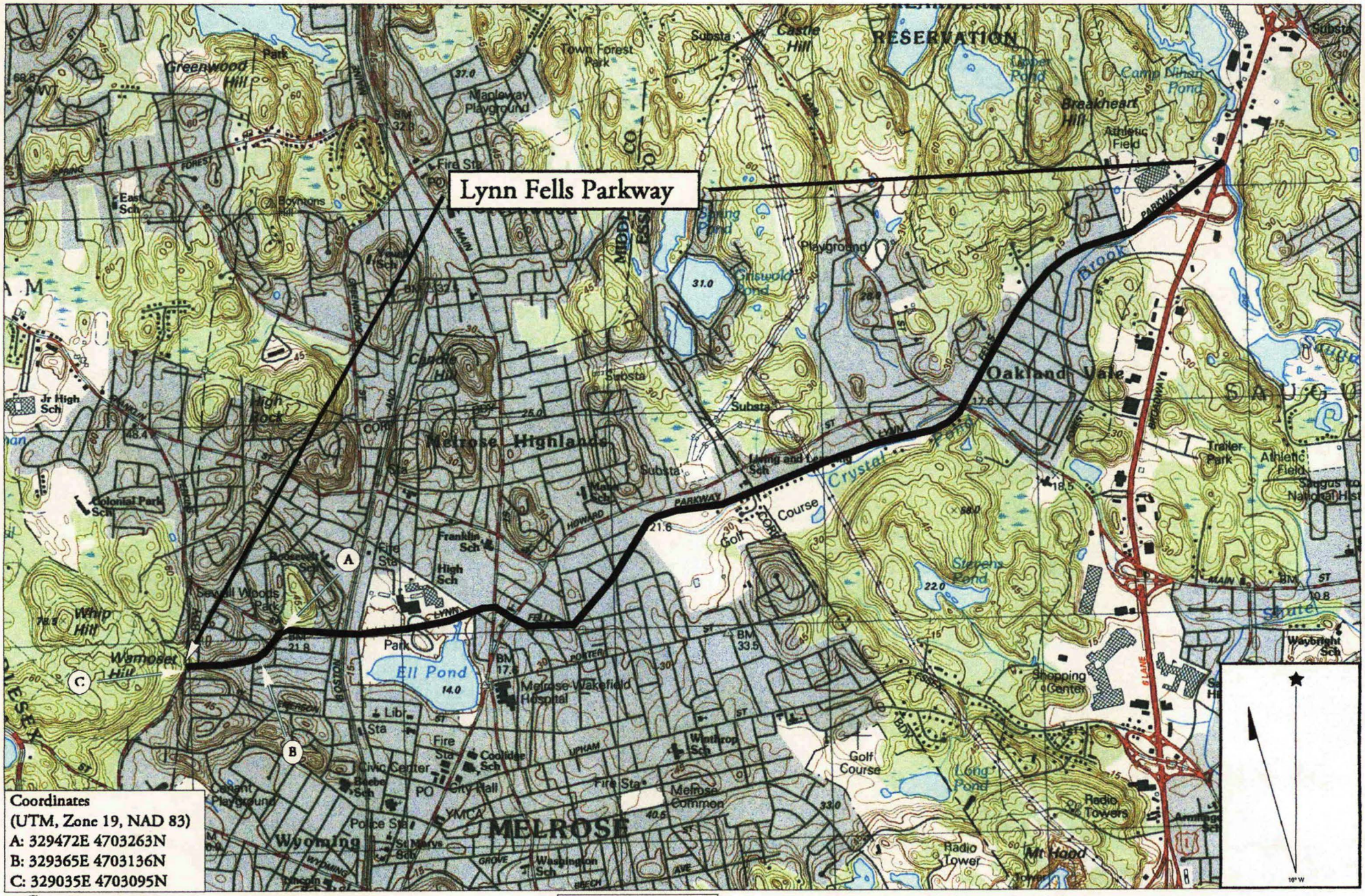
PARKWAY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM – STA. AND SEG. PLAN
MIDDLESEX FELLS DIVISION

LYNN FELLS PARKWAY I–#315

51773X

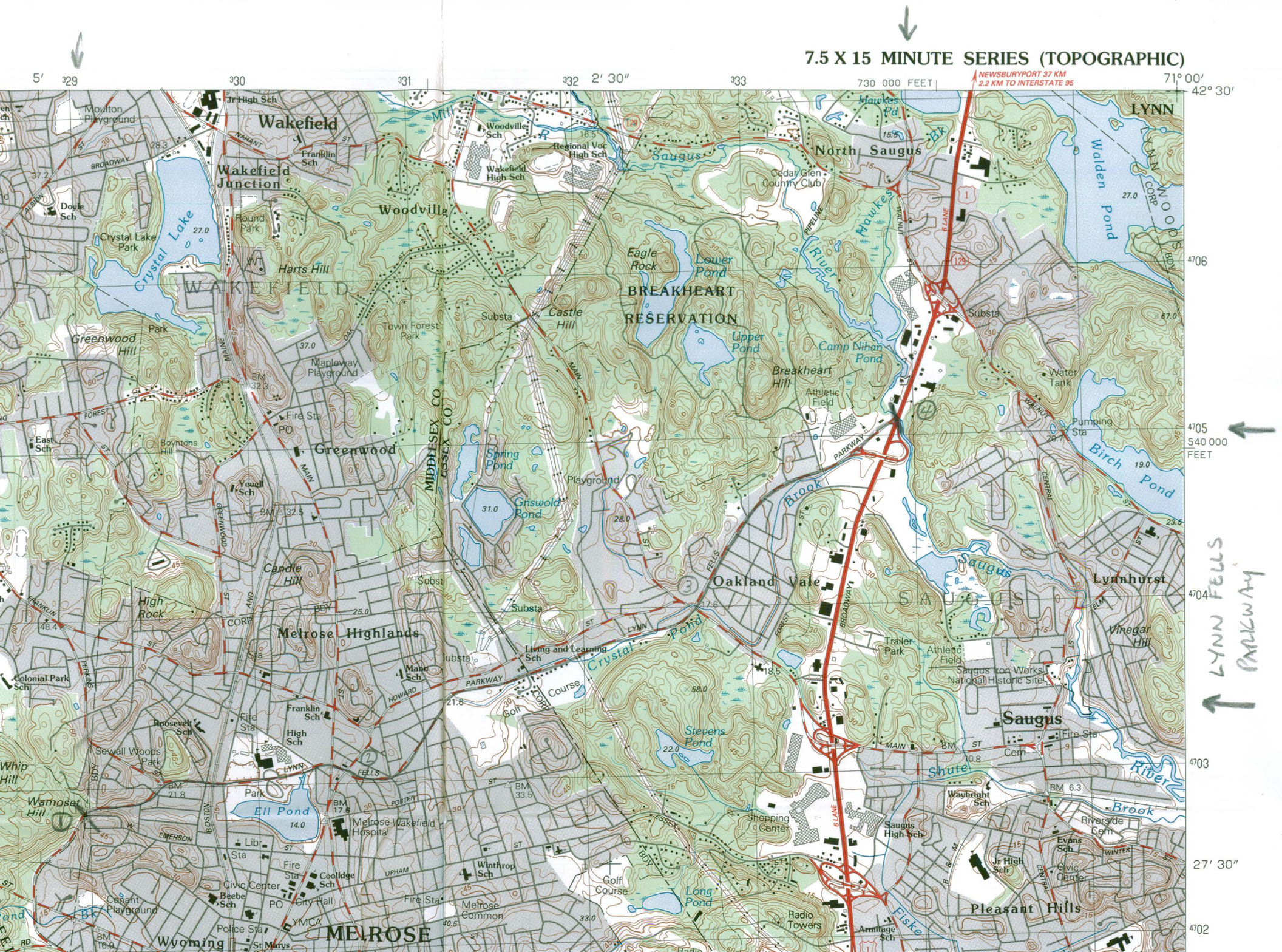
Vanasse/Hangen
Consulting Engineers & Planners
60 Birmingham Parkway, Boston, MA 02135
617/783-7000

DESIGNED BY	DATE	DRAWING NO.
VAG	APRIL, 1986	MF-1
DRAWN BY	SCALE	
NBF	NOT TO SCALE	
CHECKED BY	SHEET OF	JOB NO.
VAG	14 56	1120



Map Produced by: Massachusetts Historical Commission GIS
Date: 2/7/2008

Location: 042° 28' 05.1" N 071° 03' 21.0 W
Caption: Lynn Fells Parkway
Melrose, Saugus, Massachusetts


7.5 X 15 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
5'
2' 30"
730 000 FEET
71° 00'
42° 30'
NEWSBURYPORT 37 KM
2.2 KM TO INTERSTATE 95
4706
4705
540 000 FEET
4704
4703
27' 30"
4702
LYNN FELLS PARKWAY
Wakefield
Jr High Sch
Moulton Playground
Wakefield Junction
Doyle Sch
Crystal Lake
Crystal Lake Park
Round Park
Harts Hill
WAKEFIELD
Greenwood Hill
Park
Maplevay Playground
Fire Sta
PO
Greenwood
East Sch
Boynton Hill
Yeuell Sch
Candle Hill
High Rock
Melrose Highlands
Colonial Park Sch
Roosevelt Sch
Sewall Woods Park
Whip Hill
Wamoset Hill
Ell Pond
Melrose-Wakefield Hospital
Libr
Civic Center
Beebe Sch
City Hall
YMCA
Police Sta
Coolidge Sch
Winthrop Sch
Fire Sta
Melrose Common
MELROSE
Wyoming
St Marys
Woodville
Woodville Sch
Wakefield High Sch
Regional Voc High Sch
Saugus
Eagle Rock
Lower Pond
BREAKHEART RESERVATION
Castle Hill
Upper Pond
Camp Nihan Pond
Breakheart Hill
Athletic Field
Town Forest Park
Spring Pond
Griswold Pond
Playground
Oakland Vale
Living and Learning Sch
Crystal Pond
Golf Course
Stevens Pond
Long Pond
Shopping Center
Golf Course
Radio Towers
Armitage Sch
Pleasant Hills
Saugus
Saugus Iron Works National Historic Site
Trailer Park
Athletic Field
Fire Sta
Cem
Waybright Sch
Saugus High Sch
Evans Sch
Jr High Sch
Civic Center
Riverside Cem
Lynnhurst
Vinegar Hill
Water Tank
Pumping Sta
Birch Pond
Walden Pond
LYNN
North Saugus
Hawkes Pd
Cedar Glen Country Club
Lynn Woods Corp Bdy
Middlesex Co
Essex Co
Mill R
Saugus R
Hawkes Brook
Shute River
B & M
Fiske
Pipeline
Subst
Sta
Mano Sch
Franklin Sch
High Sch

Lynn Fells Parkway



1. View looking west near Ell Pond and surrounding parks
   (Photographer: Emily Maass, July 2002)



2. Looking west toward the former B&M Railroad bridge.
   (Photographer: Emily Maass, July 2002)

Lynn Fells Parkway



3. Between B&M Railroad bridge and Middlesex Fells Reservation.
   (Photographer: Emily Maass, July 2002)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

February 19, 2008

Mr. J. Paul Loether
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005

RE: Lynn Fells Parkway, Melrose and Saugus (Middlesex/Essex counties), Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston (Parkways) MPS

Dear Mr. Loether:

I am writing with a technical correction to the above nomination. The path of the parkway at its southernmost end, as indicated in the USGS map submitted with the nomination in 2003, is incorrect. The enclosed USGS map indicates the correct path, and revised UTMs. The following UTMs A, B, and C take the place of UTM #1 in the 2003 nomination.

A.: 19 329472E 4703263N
B: 19 329365E 4703136N
C: 19 329035E 4703095N

In addition, I am enclosing a revised final page for the NR cover form, to take into account this correction.

The text of the nomination, and the verbal boundary description and justification, are otherwise correct.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
(617) 727-8470 • Fax: (617) 727-5128
www.state.ma.us/sec/mhc

NPS Form 10-900-b
(Revised March 1992)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

X New Submission ___ Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston

B. Associated Historic Contexts

(Name each associated historic context, identifying theme, geographical area, and chronological period for each.)

Parkways, 1893-1956

C. Form Prepared by

name/title Virginia H. Adams, Senior Architectural Historian, PAL; Emily Maass, Architectural Historian, PAL; Ileana Matos and Caitlin Riley, Project Assistants, PAL; with Shary Page Berg, Historic Landscapes Preservation Consultant; and Timothy Orwig, Consultant, and Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC
organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date December 2002
street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470
city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Archaeology and Historic Preservation. (See continuation sheet for additional comments [ ].)

Cara H. Metz 12/20/02

Signature and title of certifying official Cara H. Metz, State Historic Preservation Officer Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheet in *How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form* (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

Page Numbers

E. Statement of Historic Contexts
(If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)

Page 1-51

F. Associated Property Types
(Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)

Page 1-9

G. Geographical Data

Page 1

H. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods
(Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)

Page 1-2

I. Major Bibliographical References
(List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)

Page 1-2

Primary location of additional data:

[X] State Historic Preservation Office
[ ] Other State Agency
[ ] Federal Agency
[ ] Local Government
[ ] University
[X] Other

Name of repository:
Metropolitan District Commission

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 120 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

Portions redacted

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXT:
METROPOLITAN PARK SYSTEM OF GREATER BOSTON

I. INTRODUCTION

This multiple property documentation covers the conception and early development of the Metropolitan Park System in the greater Boston area of Massachusetts. The regional park system established by the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1893 is significant for its internationally recognized contribution to the American park movement of the nineteenth and early twentieth century. It is considered the first regional park and parkway system in the country and a work of visionary regional planning.

A century after its creation, the Metropolitan Park System consists of nearly 20,000 acres of reservations, parks and parkways. There are seven woodland reservations, three river reservations, ten ocean reservations, 162 miles of parkway and a variety of recreational facilities, historic sites, and playgrounds in 37 cities and towns in the Boston metropolitan area. All are located within 15 miles of the Massachusetts State House and are an integral part of the regional open space and transportation system used daily by residents of the greater Boston region.

The historic context generally traces the development of the Metropolitan Park System from its origins in 1893 through 1956, a major postwar transition point. This 63-year time frame comprises the period of significance for the Metropolitan Park System. A select number of properties dating to the period of significance but added to the system after 1956 are also included in this context. These properties have been included because they reflect the design intent and possess physical characteristics that are consistent with properties that were created and continually maintained by the MDC prior to 1956.

In order to understand how and when properties were added to the system, they have been organized into seven time periods. These time periods were determined based on: movements within the Metropolitan Park System; local politics and initiatives for roadway design, care and management; trends in transportation and recreation; and/or national events such as wars and the Great Depression. These things greatly affected the way properties were created, managed, and, in some cases, acquired for the Metropolitan Park System. The time periods created for the purposes of organizing this context are as follows:

- **Creation of the Metropolitan Parkway System (1890-1893)**
- **Early Years of the Metropolitan Park System (1893-1905)**
- **Expansion and Public Use of the Reservations and Parkways System (1905-1919)**

(Continued)

- **Metropolitan District Commission (1920-1956)**
  - **Depression Era Initiatives (1933-1941)**
  - **World War II and Beyond (1941-1956)**
- **Post 1956 Revolution**

The current nomination includes only the metropolitan roads and parkways; additional property types such as parks and reservations will be addressed in subsequent nominations. All of the roads and parkways of the Metropolitan Park System included in this nomination fall within the Parkway property type, which includes five subtypes: Border Roads, Internal Roads, Connecting Parkways, River Parkways and Ocean Parkways. All share the overall characteristics of the Parkway type, but are distinguished by specific design characteristics derived from their function within the system and the existing natural topography and environment at that location. Elaboration on the distinctive characteristics of subtypes is contained in the registration requirements and within each time period throughout this context. A short discussion has also been added under each subtype regarding construction features and materials that are typical of each period. It is important to note that this information is based solely on research of MDC plans and annual reports as well as field surveys done for the parkways included in this multiple property nomination only. Based on this level of research, notable character-defining features include, but are not limited to, the construction characteristics outlined in the following pages. This is an area that deserves additional study.

The reservations, parks and parkways of the Metropolitan Park Commission (known since 1920 as the Metropolitan District Commission) are considered the first regional park system in the United States, a pioneering effort that has been called: "the first of its kind, a source of inspiration and encouragement to other metropolitan communities everywhere" by nationally renowned landscape architect Norman Newton and recognized in a recent history of American city government as: "the most notable scheme of comprehensive metropolitan park planning" in the United States.[1]

The comprehensive planning and swift execution of the Boston metropolitan parks were acclaimed in this country and in Europe, both in the publications of the newly emerging professions of landscape architecture and planning, and through exhibits at a number of international expositions. Soon after their creation the metropolitan parks were presented at the Paris Exposition of 1900 and in an exhibit in Berlin in 1910 where they received international

[1]Norman T. Newton, *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 330-331; Jon C. Teaford, *The Unheralded Triumph: City Government in America, 1870-1900* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), pp. 256-257.

praise as a model for park development and regional planning. The acclaim of planners and civic officials at the turn of the century is sustained by the judgment of modern urban historians, who have written, for example, that it was in America: "that open space first emerged as a potential structural element for the entire city," and that the early plans of the MPC constitute: "the most notable scheme of comprehensive metropolitan park planning" in the United States.[2]

The Metropolitan Park System represents the most significant accomplishment of landscape architect Charles Eliot and journalist Sylvester Baxter who planned and directed the acquisition of almost 7,000 acres of reservations, parkways, and waterfront lands in the Commission's first two years. After Eliot's death in 1897, the Olmsted firm, where he had been a partner, assumed responsibility for the work. Their role in the landscape design of the metropolitan parks continued through the early 20th century and was followed in the 1920s and 30s by that of Arthur Shurcliff. William D. Austin (1856-1943) was the primary architect for many early MPC buildings, while Wheelwright, Haven and Hoyt designed several early bridges for the agency.

In addition to areas of significance addressed in the current nomination, the MDC system also has multiple areas of prehistoric and historic significance that have already been recognized. These range from prehistoric sites to industrial sites to coastal forts to 1950s Nike bases. Included in the park system's inventory of historical resources are 83 buildings, structures and archeological sites that are currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Three properties, Fort Warren, Brook Farm, and the Great Blue Hill Weather Observatory, have been designated National Historic Landmarks. In addition, three sites, the Charles River Basin, the Granite Railroad terminus, and Echo Bridge, are National Civil Engineering Landmarks.

The principal sources of historical information for this context are: the Annual Reports of the Metropolitan Park Commission (until 1919) and the Metropolitan District Commission (since 1920); the MDC archives; and the MDC engineering files collection. Additional agency records, primarily photographs, were also consulted at the Massachusetts State Archives. This historic context relies heavily upon an earlier draft National Register nomination by the staff of the MDC Planning Office.

II. CREATION OF THE METROPOLITAN PARK SYSTEM (1890 - 1893)

[2]Anthony Sutcliffe, *Toward the Planned City: Germany, Britain, the United States, and France, 1780-1914* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981), 197; Jon C. Teaford, *The Unheralded Triumph:City Government in America, 1870-1900* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 256-257.

Park and Parkway Precedents

The 19th century park movement paralleled the explosive growth of European and American cities, and was linked by many contemporary observers with increasing concern for the public health of the urban poor. The cholera epidemics of 1832 and 1849 prompted recommendations to protect public water supplies and to increase the open space of the fastest-growing cities. While the royal parks and estates in many large European cities were made accessible to the public, such large undeveloped spaces were lacking in most of America's most dense urban environments. Travelers to Europe often described the contributions to public welfare of and the enjoyments of the pleasure-grounds of London and Paris. Journalists in the 1840s campaigned for similar "breathing spaces" that would reflect American democratic ideals. While the need for parks was linked with concern for public health and welfare, park advocates also recognized that well-planned public parks had a positive effect on the value of adjacent real estate, and cited demonstrated results in New York's Central Park to generate support for new parks in other cities and towns.

Boston was a leader in the 19th century American municipal park movement. Early park advocates such as H.W.S. Cleveland, Robert Morris Copeland and Uriel H. Crocker offered initial visions for Boston's municipal parks, but landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted Sr. was responsible for refining these concepts and for enlarging the definition of urban park to include parkways and park systems. First in Buffalo and later with Boston's Emerald Necklace, he demonstrated the broad appeal of this concept. The Emerald Necklace is a ring of Boston parks that extends from the Common and the Public Garden, along Commonwealth Avenue to the Back Bay Fens, continuing upstream on both sides of the Muddy River to Jamaica Pond, the Arnold Arboretum, and then to Franklin Park, with all units of the system linked by tree-lined parkways.

Olmsted's park designs were grounded in two major principles. He believed strongly in the social value of parks as places where people of all classes could mingle. His smaller parks and portions of the larger parks were designed to meet this need. He also embraced the restorative value of nature and felt that parks should be places where people could escape completely from urban sights and sounds and find tranquil surroundings that would act as an antidote to the pressures of urban life. This he accomplished in large areas that he called landscape parks, where the natural landscape was subtly enhanced to heighten the experience of the park user. Olmsted felt strongly that it was important to preserve the attractive natural features in a city, and that doing so would be less expensive than filling in the streams and forcing them into underground culverts. His design for Boston's Back Bay Fens, which transformed sewage-infested tidal flats into a meandering lagoon, was a brilliant expression of this ideal.

The second component of the park system that Olmsted designed for Boston was a network of parkways, which he envisioned as continuous pleasure roads linking residential neighborhoods with

(Continued)

parks. The inspiration for such roads was derived in part from European boulevards, especially those in Paris, where Olmsted was impressed with the separation of carriages from carts and other heavy traffic, and the wide strips of lawn and rows of trees. However, unlike the straight European boulevards, Olmsted's parkways followed the contours of the land. Some parkway corridors even expanded to integrate natural features such as streams, as along the Muddy River.

Other late-19th century American precedents for a system of parks connected by parkways include Chicago, Buffalo, and Minneapolis. Chicago's park system, like that of Boston, consists of a series of parks linked by boulevards. While the parks incorporate naturalistic scenery, the roads are more formal and geometric than those in Boston, in part because of the gridlike pattern of the city. The Olmsted firm and H.W.S. Cleveland were among those responsible for its creation. The Chicago park system was also unique in that it was not part of city government but was established as a separate park district, which continues to the present day. Olmsted conceived of the Buffalo park system in the late 1860s as a network of three parks connected by a series of parkways that linked the parks and extended out into the surrounding neighborhoods. The Minneapolis park system was the work of H.W.S. Cleveland, who in the 1880s created a system of connected lakes, parks, and parkways that were integral to the development of the city.

The Movement to Create Regional Parks

By the late 19th century, Boston had expanded to such an extent that it was having difficulty maintaining an adequate municipal infrastructure. The threat to the public water supply in the region prompted the first discussions of metropolitan solutions, both the advantages of annexation and the creation of regional authorities. In the early 1870s, journalist Sylvester Baxter proposed a "County of Boston" to join all the towns within a ten-mile radius of the State House. Though the county proposal was not acted upon, Boston did expand substantially between 1867 and 1874, annexing Roxbury, Dorchester, Charlestown, Brighton, and West Roxbury. A more modest approach to metropolitan problems was the idea of regional agencies to address the growing issues of water supply and sewerage**.** Finally, in 1887-1889, the State Health Board conducted a study for the "General System of Drainage for the Valleys of the Mystic, Blackstone and Charles Rivers." This study recommended a regional sewerage system to be managed by a central authority that could override town boundaries and jurisdictions. As a result, the Metropolitan Sewerage Commission was established in 1889.

The two people primarily responsible for the creation of the Metropolitan Park System were Charles Eliot, a young landscape architect who had apprenticed at the Olmsted firm, and journalist Sylvester Baxter of Malden, who was a strong advocate for a comprehensive metropolitan approach to solving urban problems and a long-time advocate for preservation of the Middlesex Fells. With the precedent of the Metropolitan Sewerage Commission in mind, Eliot and Baxter joined together in the

(Continued)

creation of the Trustees of Public Reservations, and later in the establishment and planning for the metropolitan parks.

In February 1890, Eliot wrote one of his best-known essays, "The Waverly Oaks: a Plan for their Preservation for the People." He suggested that there should be a private association incorporated to hold land "just as the Public Library holds books and the Art Museum pictures -- for the use and enjoyment of the public."[3] Baxter, for his part, wrote a series of articles that same year in the Boston Herald promoting the creation of a metropolitan park system. Eliot drew on his friendships with members of the Appalachian Mountain Club to organize a meeting to consider a plan for preserving the natural scenery of the greater Boston area. A committee was organized, with Eliot as secretary, to draw up legislation for the 1891 session. A year after his proposal on the Waverly Oaks was published, the Trustees of Public Reservations was organized and chartered by the legislature. Among the organization's first tasks was consideration of a park system for metropolitan Boston. With the sponsorship of the Trustees, Eliot called a meeting of officials from the cities and towns within a ten-mile radius of Boston. Out of this group came a bill recommending a temporary metropolitan park commission to study the problem of parks and open space. By June of 1892, the bill was signed and the temporary commission, chaired by Charles Francis Adams, Jr., was appointed. A permanent commission was established the following year. Eliot was hired as landscape architect to the commission and Baxter was appointed secretary. Together they were responsible for the commission's report.

Establishment of the Metropolitan Park Commission (1893)

In a paper presented at a conference on parks, Eliot offered a compelling argument for the need for parks and laid out the fundamental principles of the proposed Metropolitan Park System. He argued that open space was an essential feature of urban communities, placing it in the same category as water supply and sewage treatment, but noted that because of other priorities, most communities were not able to act boldly to acquire parkland.

Eliot and Baxter's three-part report of January 1893 began with a summary of the physical and historical geography of the metropolitan district that emphasized the diverse scenery of the Boston basin, ranging from oceans to estuaries to the wooded hills that ringed the city. Eliot continued with an analysis of how this geography should govern the selection of park sites and finally offered a review of available opportunities for setting aside new open spaces. The report proposed five types of landscapes for inclusion in the metropolitan system: ocean frontage; shores and islands of the

[3]Charles Eliot, *Charles Eliot Landscape Architect* (Freeport, New York, Reprinted 1971), 318.

inner bay; tidal estuaries; forest uplands; and small squares and playgrounds in populated areas. For each of the landscape types identified, recommendations were offered regarding specific properties.

There was little precedent at the time for public acquisition of ocean frontage, but Eliot argued persuasively for the acquisition of Revere Beach on Boston's north shore, to reclaim it from commercial development. His recommendations for the shores and islands of the inner bay focused on preservation through judicious planting, with no specific facilities provided for recreation. For the estuaries, he recommended that land be acquired on both sides of Boston's three large tidal rivers, the Mystic, the Charles and the Neponset, including specifically the Mystic Lakes, Hemlock Gorge on the Charles, and the Neponset marshes. Two large areas of wooded upland were recommended, Middlesex Fells on the north and Blue Hills on the south, with smaller natural areas at Beaver Brook in Belmont and Waltham (with the Waverly Oaks) and Muddy Pond Woods (later known as Stony Brook) on the Hyde Park line. The small squares, playgrounds, and parks, which Eliot felt were rightly the responsibility of the municipalities, were already provided by many of the cities and towns.

The recommendations of the report were well received and a Park Act was passed June 3, 1893. The act established a permanent five-member Metropolitan Park Commission (MPC,; granted it appropriate powers including the right of eminent domain, set up a fund of one million dollars, and specified the 12 cities and 24 towns comprising the Metropolitan Park District. As the nation's first regional park agency, it soon became a national model.

III. EARLY YEARS OF THE METROPOLITAN PARK SYSTEM (1893-1905)

Reservations (1893-1905)

The metropolitan parks were created with unprecedented speed. During its first decade the Metropolitan Park Commission acquired eleven reservations and seven parkway rights-of-way totaling more than 9,000 acres, nearly half of the park system that exists today. These reservations fall into property subtypes for the purposes of this nomination: natural and scenic reservations; ocean reservations; and river reservations. Large natural and scenic reservations were established at Middlesex Fells and the Blue Hills, with smaller natural and scenic areas at Hemlock Gorge, Beaver Brook, and Stony Brook. Revere Beach was the first ocean reservation, followed a few years later by Nantasket, Lynn Shore, and Winthrop Shore. Land acquisition for river reservations was begun on the Mystic, Charles, and Neponset River Reservations. The initial focus of the Metropolitan Park Commission was on acquiring land, restoring damaged landscapes, and providing public access. The MPC also had a new responsibility that had not been in Eliot and Baxter's original proposal, construction of parkways to link the parks with one another and with the city.

(Continued)

In spring 1893, Charles Eliot joined the Olmsted firm as a partner and the office was renamed Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot. A few months later, the firm was hired to prepare a plan for the metropolitan parks, with Eliot having primary responsibility for the project until his untimely death in 1897, when the work was taken over by John Charles Olmsted and his brother Frederick Law Olmsted Jr.

One of the landscape architects' first tasks was to establish an approach to land acquisition. They recommended that the boundaries should include lands belonging to the same topographical unit and exhibiting the type of scenery characteristic of each reservation and that if possible the boundaries should be established on public roads to create clear separation between parkland and the rest of the community. They also recognized the need to make exceptions for properties with unusual scenic or recreational value, such as Hemlock Gorge along the Charles or Houghton's Pond in the Blue Hills.

The term "reservation" was usedfor the MPC properties, rather than "park," to distinguish them from smaller, more urban parks and to emphasize that the land was being reserved in more or less its natural state. In several articles on landscape forestry, Eliot articulated general principles for the large reservations, which he saw as managing the forests so as to preserve the inherent scenic qualities of the landscape. His writing also stressed the value of general plans as a safeguard against wasted effort and urged that systematic forest management be carried out in accordance with such plans. A major concern was that land acquisition was moving so quickly that there was little time to plan for the reservations. The landscape architects favored proceeding slowly, urging that time be allowed for careful observation of the condition of each landscape. Eliot recommended that only absolutely necessary roads should be opened in the reservations and that only essential clearing for fire protection should be done. He also urged that a thorough study of the historical evolution and present state of each landscape be conducted to increase the effectiveness and the accessibility of that reservation.

Once the land was acquired, the next task was construction and upgrading of roads to and through the reservations (see parkways section below). The vast majority of the early work involved construction of administrative roads within the Blue Hills and Middlesex Fells Reservations and the clearing of trails for a width of 200 to 300 feet to prevent the spread of fire. Another issue that arose early on was the cost of maintaining the reservations, especially the cost of policing, which included not only "violations of the peace" but also protecting the reservations from fire.

Natural and Scenic Reservations (1893-1905)

The large natural upland areas were the centerpieces of the system. Natural and Scenic Reservations developed during this time were Beaver Brook Reservation, the Blue Hills

Reservation, Hart's Hill Reservation, Hemlock Gorge Reservation, Middlesex Fells Reservation and the Stony Brook Reservation. Blue Hills and Middlesex Fells, the two largest reservations, were developed concurrently during the mid-1890s after a lengthy and complex land acquisition process. The smaller reservations, such as Beaver Brook and Hemlock Gorge, progressed more quickly because land acquisition was easier and fewer improvements were needed.

Beaver Brook Reservation

Beaver Brook in Belmont and Waltham was known in the 1890s primarily as the home of the Waverly Oaks, which had inspired some of Charles Eliot's early thinking about the preservation of natural scenery. In 1890 there were 26 giant oaks, which were reported to be 80 to 90 feet tall with branches extending at least 40 feet from the trunks. Beaver Brook was also the site of a 19th century fulling mill and the Plympton house (ca. 1835). Even before it was acquired for public use, the site was a popular local attraction where the painter Winslow Homer had reportedly sketched and which poet James Russell Lowell had praised as one of the loveliest spots in the world.

In 1893, Beaver Brook was the first reservation to be set aside by the Metropolitan Park Commission, with the acquisition of 59 acres, a portion of it by donation. The site was in two parts, which were divided by Trapelo Road. In the steeper northern section, Beaver Brook flowed through two cascading ponds, while the southern section, which contained the oaks, was more level. The primary purpose of acquiring Beaver Brook was to preserve the natural beauty of the site and the oaks, but the Metropolitan Park Commission also realized that the area was heavily used and that accommodations would need to be made for the public. Early public facilities included a path system and sanitaries, the latter built at the rear of the superintendent's house.

Blue Hills Reservation

Blue Hills Reservation in Milton, Quincy, Randolph, Canton, and Braintree is the southern counterpart of the Middlesex Fells Reservation. Since its inception, it has been the largest of the metropolitan parks. By 1899 it was 4,858 acres, more than double the size of the Middlesex Fells and over half of the total acreage of the Metropolitan Park System at that time. The reservation boasts twenty hilltops that range in elevation from 259 feet to the 635-foot Great Blue Hill, the highest point along the Atlantic Coast south of Maine.

At the Blue Hills, there was more early emphasis on providing public access than at Middlesex Fells. As early as 1894, a buckboard service was recommended to allow those without horses to enjoy the reservation. It traversed the reservation twice daily between Readville and West Quincy. By 1897 a carriage road was built through the reservation from the foot of Great Blue Hill to

(Continued)

Quincy, a distance of eight miles. At the time, it was the only east-west road through the reservation. Facilities constructed at Hoosic Whisick (later known as Houghton's) Pond in the 1890s included three bathhouses, an old barn adapted for public use, a boat landing, and a lunch and bicycle stand named Marigold Lodge. There was also a skating pond in Pine Tree Brook Valley created in 1901.

Provisions were made for administrative facilities as well. In 1897 the architectural firm of Andrews, Jacques & Rantoul was hired to design a headquarters building, with a stable byWilliam D. Austin of the firm Stickney and Austin added in 1899 and a superintendent's house in 1900. In 1904 a police station/superintendent's office was built. The following year, an old farmhouse near the stable was altered for use as police and employee dormitory.

The opening of the street railway to the base of the Great Blue Hill in 1903 brought a sudden increase of visitors to that part of the reservation. Eight thousand people ascended the Great Blue Hill on a single Sunday, and it became necessary to construct a new path up the hill to the outlook at the top, which was designed as a memorial to Charles Eliot (completed in 1904). A waiting room and platform were built at the foot of Great Blue Hill by the Blue Hill Street Railway Company in 1904, soon followed by a sanitary and a refectory. Additional facilities were added in the years that followed.

Hart's Hill Reservation

Hart's Hill Reservation, located along Main Street in Wakefield across from Crystal Lake, was acquired by the MPC in 1900 but was transferred in the same year to be cared for and managed by the Town of Wakefield. Hart's Hill Reservation was renamed Round Memorial Park in 1952.

Hemlock Gorge Reservation

In an 1894 letter urging its prompt acquisition, Charles Eliot described Hemlock Gorge along the upper reaches of the Charles River between Newton and Needham as "the most strikingly picturesque spot within the metropolitan district" and lamented that "the Hemlocks are annually ravaged for Christmas green." Eliot's 1894 report to the Metropolitan Park Commission again urged acquisition, noting, " . . . it will be worse than regrettable if another Hemlock is permitted to be removed, or another obtrusive building to be inserted." [4]

[4]Charles Eliot, *Charles Eliot Landscape Architect* (Freeport, New York, Reprinted 1971), 465, 598.

By 1895 the MPC had acquired 24 acres at Hemlock Gorge. It was a dramatic natural site along the Charles River, noteworthy in part for Echo Bridge (NRIND 1980), a stone-arched aqueduct built over the Charles River in 1877. Hemlock Gorge was initially purchased for its scenic qualities but within a few years, as land acquisition proceeded along the river, it was considered part of the Charles River Reservation.

Middlesex Fells Reservation

Acquisition of the Middlesex Fells, a large rocky upland located about ten miles north of Boston, was an early priority of the Metropolitan Park Commission. Like many of the reservations proposed for the park system, the Fells crossed the boundaries of several cities and towns -- Medford, Malden, Melrose, Stoneham, and Winchester -- and the proposed acquisition was therefore a good example of the need for a regional (rather than municipal) park system. Unlike the areas around some of the other proposed reservations, the towns surrounding the Fells were growing rapidly in the early 1890s, increasing the urgency of acquisition.

Middlesex Fells Reservation was pieced together from a wild rocky landscape previously exploited for its natural resources: pasture, timber, granite, gravel, waterpower, water, and ice. The area was already a popular recreation area for the residents of the surrounding communities and had been proposed as a park since the 1860s. Its outstanding features included Spot Pond, two reservoirs for the city of Winchester, the area known as Virginia Wood (which had been acquired by the Trustees of Public Reservations in 1891), and Bear Hill, the highest point in the Fells, which had been acquired as parkland by the Town of Stoneham. Charles Eliot emphasized the diversity of the landscape, which:

> " . . . pleases chiefly by reason of the intimate mingling of many types of scenery and objects of interest. Here is a cliff and a cascade, here a pool, pond or stream, here a surprising glimpse of a fragment of blue ocean, or again a faint blue vision of a far distant mountain."[5]

When the Middlesex Fells Reservation was established, much of the area was already publicly owned as watershed land and nearly 1,600 acres was transferred to the MPC from the adjacent municipalities. By 1899, the reservation had grown to nearly 2,000 acres, including 13 miles of pre-existing roads that traveled through forested land and eight miles of town roads, the basis of many of today's park roads. Upgrading existing roads and building new roads was the first priority in the 1890s. In the early 1900s, a major forest-cutting project was begun in the Fells to

[5]MPC Annual Report, January, 1895, p. 30.

combat the problem of gypsy moths. Olmsted Brothers emphasized that the work was consistent with the previously developed plans for forest management, though the moth infestation hastened the speed of the work.

In 1904 the landscape architects developed a forestry plan for the Middlesex Fells Reservation that exemplified their approach to management of the large natural reservations. It divided the Fells into three landscape zones, each to be managed in accordance with one of three distinct types of landscape: (1) “close woods” with an unbroken leaf canopy; (2) "open woods" where trees were spaced far enough apart to allow their lower branches to develop and to leave sunny openings and glades; and (3) "open ground," which included meadow, pasture, swamp or other areas where the eye could range freely, although there might be occasional scattered trees. Secondary characteristics, such as the dominance of certain kinds of trees, were also noted where such distinctions seemed important.

Within a decade of its creation, visitation to Middlesex Fells Reservation had increased dramatically. By 1904 the Fells Parkway (commonly known as The Fellsway, described below in the parkway section) had been completed and was already being expanded. In 1905 the MPC acquired Fellsmere Park, a former Malden city park located along Fellsway East (discussed below in the parkway section), and an adjoining estate on Vista Street.

As at Middlesex Fells, establishing the boundaries was the first task, followed by improving existing roads and constructing new ones. By 1894 there were 11.5 miles of roads constructed and some of the old trails were linked together at the landscape architects’ direction to allow access to remote portions of the reservation. Once the basic roads were in place, Olmsted Brothers designed additional roads, which were laid out to facilitate access to the reservation and to provide maximum exposure to the scenery. There were also separate bridle paths for those on horseback.

Stony Brook Reservation

Stony Brook Reservation, located between the Hyde Park and West Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston, was somewhat different from the other early natural reservations in that it had a dual function of preserving the Stony Brook Valley and providing a route for future parkways that would link the Blue Hills Reservation with Boston. The area, also known as Muddy Pond Woods, was considered scenic in its own right but was valued even more for its location between Boston and the Blue Hills.

While most of the early reservations and parkways were distinct entities with different characteristics and use, Stony Brook combined elements of each, a situation that became far more common with the second generation of reservations and parkways. The Stony Brook project also involved acquiring

land for the West Roxbury Parkway, which was initially turned over to the Boston Park Commission (and eventually returned to the Metropolitan Park System), another example of the increasing complexity of the Metropolitan Park System.

The first land acquisition, in 1894, consisted of 475 acres. By 1898 Turtle Pond Road (later known as Enneking Parkway and Turtle Pond Parkway) was completed from Washington Street through the reservation to West Glenwood Avenue, Hyde Park. It had a gravel surface and was 26 feet wide. At its northern end, it connected with Washington Street. At its southern end, it became Neponset Valley Parkway.

Ocean Reservations (1893-1905)

The shore areas presented a type of challenge to the MPC very different from the natural and scenic reservations. In most cases, the landscape was already degraded by commercial development and the goal was to reclaim its natural beauty and make it available for public use. There was little precedent for such actions and the reservation at Revere Beach (discussed below) became a national model. In almost all cases, the shore reservations consisted of a coastal parkway and some beach area.

Lynn Shore Reservation

Lynn Shore Reservation was developed early in the first decade of the 20th century. The reservation was created to reclaim the shoreline from King's Beach to Nahant Bay, both in Lynn. The focal point of this reservation was a 1.4-mile-long reinforced concrete seawall built along the shore (in Lynn from Nahant to Swampscott) between 1904 to 1907. This seawall represented an important milestone in engineering at the turn of the century. This seawall, built in two sections, literally set the foundation for Lynn Shore Drive, which was opened to the public in 1910. As part of the original design, the seawall also included stairs leading to the beach and pipe rails along the top of the seawall. Much of the seawall, stairs, and rails were replaced as a result of repairs and maintenance that took place between 1966 and 1981.[6] Both the reservation and its adjoining parkway are listed as part of the Diamond Historic District National Register Nomination (NR1996).

Nahant Beach Reservation

As early as 1900, the MPC was preparing takings plans for the acquisition of 68.99 acres of land along a narrow stretch of the Nahant Peninsula between Lynn and the town of Nahant. The MPC hoped to establish a beach reservation along the peninsula in order to take advantage of the adjacent

shore and dramatic sweeping views from the peninsula. Plans also included a parkway and an electric rail line that would not only service the beaches, but more importantly, would serve as the sole ground transportation link between Nahant and the mainland. A bathhouse was built at the north end of the reservation in 1901. Further development of the reservation as a recreational destination, complete with beach shelters, benches, and a bridle path, occurred in the early years of the 20th century. The parkway and the reservation were changed extensively in the 1930s.

Nantasket Beach Reservation

The Nantasket area of Hull on Boston's south shore had been a popular summer destination since the middle of the 19th century, when resort hotels were developed there to take advantage of the ocean breezes and sweeping vistas. Paragon Park, an amusement park developed at the turn of the century (since demolished; only the Carousel, NR1999, survives), was another popular Nantasket attraction. Convenient transportation in the form of steamship service and an electric railroad added to the appeal of the area. As with many of the other properties that the Metropolitan Park Commission acquired, Nantasket was a regional resource, but the cost of acquiring and improving it for public use was beyond the means of a single municipality.

By 1900, the MPC had acquired about 25 acres at Nantasket, which included roughly one mile of shoreline extending north from Atlantic Hill. The initial appropriations provided for only minimal facilities, such as a bathhouse and a few incidental buildings, so the MPC made use of some of the existing buildings. The remainder of the old resort buildings were eventually torn down. The roller coaster and merry-go-round were allowed to remain temporarily. The MPC was given control of County Road (now Hull Shore Drive), as it owned land on both sides of the road.

The MPC found itself in the unusual position of managing a resort. The area was so busy in August 1900 that bathhouses and sanitary accommodations were inadequate and eleven policemen were needed for the summer months to ensure order. Additional funds were provided in subsequent years to remove unwanted buildings, to clean up the area, and to build necessary facilities such as a police station, superintendent's office, emergency room, men's sanitary, bathhouse, and boardwalk. The new bathhouse, designed by William D. Austin of Stickney & Austin in consultation with Olmsted Brothers, opened in 1902. Austin also designed a laundry at Nantasket Beach, where the bathing suits rented at the bathhouse were washed. In the early part of the 20th century, the popularity of Nantasket Beach continued to grow, and the MPC made repeated requests to the state legislature for funds to build additional facilities.

Quincy Shore Reservation

(Continued)

Eliot wrote persuasively of the value of developing an oceanfront reservation in Quincy. This shoreline, he wrote, had "fine views across the water to the rounded hills of the distant islands of Boston Bay, with glimpses of open sea between the islands. To the right and left are seen the extended arms of Hough's Neck and of Squantum, embracing between them Quincy's own bay of open water, two and a half miles wide from cape to cape, and two miles deep." Beyond aesthetic appreciation of the view, Eliot saw a host of reasons for a reservation to control this land, all connected to "enlightened self-interest" whereby "American communities are free to work their own good will." In private ownership, only those lots on the shoreline profited from the resource. But if the shoreline were publicly owned, homeowners whose lots fronted the ocean would still realize its value, while "every house-lot for a mile back will possess an enhanced value." Two other considerations were important to Eliot: "Public ownership would also tend to ensure the water front from encroachment by the sea, and from occupation by value-depressing trades."

For public ownership and control to operate effectively, the access provided by an ocean parkway was essential. Eliot argued, "It will doubtless be ultimately desirable that the public should possess a driveway along the shore [with] easy connection with the streets of the city." Eliot argued for the immediate acquisition of the shoreline between East Squantum Street and Black's Creek, and the future acquisition of shoreline on Hough's Neck as far as Nut Island.

The MPC Annual Report for January 1897 took up Eliot's case for the acquisition of a Quincy Shore Reservation: "The available seashore of the district is limited, and is being shut out from the public for private pleasure and profit more and more each year. There remain, however . . . six miles on Quincy Bay, which may now be secured at little more than the nominal cost of building a road between the ocean and the private land beyond. The opportunity ought at once to be embraced, or it will soon be lost." Despite the larger plan, only two miles of the Quincy shoreline ultimately became a reservation.

In 1897 the MPC conducted topographical surveys and made parkway maps, and by 1900 it had acquired most of the land from the Neponset River Bridge to Black's Creek, including 38 acres along two miles of coastline. "The width of the taking," the MPC stressed, "is sufficient to provide for a roadway along the edge of the bay." The MPC filled some low spots and in 1903 arranged locations for two local yacht clubs, on piers extending out from the parkway into the Bay.

Revere Beach Reservation

After the construction of the Eastern Railroad in 1839, Revere Beach on Boston's North Shore developed rapidly as a resort and entertainment area. By the 1880s, conditions on the beach had deteriorated due to rowdyism and drinking. In response to this problem, alcohol was prohibited,

which in turn led to an economic decline, particularly along the southern end. Charles Eliot's recommendation that Revere Beach become a park was not a new idea; a beach park and boulevard had previously been proposed by others. However, with inclusion of the bathhouse and a virtual monopoly on the rental of bathing suits, Eliot's plan was an innovation in the development of public recreation areas.

In discussions regarding the acquisition of Revere Beach Reservation (NRDIS 1998), the preliminary Commission wrote:

> "(At Revere) matters have been so long neglected and things allowed traditionally to take their own course wholly without direction, that to disentangle the existing complication will be a difficult task. . . . the mischief has to a large extent been done."[7]

Acquisition at Revere Beach, which is located entirely within Revere, began in 1895; by 1899 a total of 66 acres had been acquired. Once the land was purchased, initial expenditures were made for relocating the railroad away from the water, constructing a boulevard along the vacated railroad bed, and removing 81 existing structures on the beach. The projected cost was an unprecedented one million dollars. The reservation opened to the public with temporary improvements that same year and was an immediate success. The neighboring resort entered a renaissance, attracting a substantial collection of amusements, dance halls, hotels and restaurants, establishing Revere Beach as the premier beach resort of metropolitan Boston.

Work on the reservation continued through the 1890s. Facilities included temporary bathhouses, terrace walls, and wells to provide a source of fresh water, as well as a superintendent's house at the southern end. Construction of Revere Beach Driveway (now Revere Beach Boulevard) adjacent to the beach began in 1897. The circle at the southern end was named Charles Eliot Circle (discussed as part of the Revere Beach Boulevard nomination) in honor of its designer.

The Metropolitan Park Commission considered the project a success from the beginning.

> "Revere Beach is unique. Its accessibility and safety and the beauty of its crescent shape and of the view from it have never left any doubt as to the wisdom of acquiring it in advance of any other shore reservations. . . An examination of the report of the Secretary will show the enormous use of Revere Beach during the past

[7]MPC Annual Report, January, 1896, pp. 59-60 (from the 1893 Report of the Preliminary Commission).

> year, and that, in spite of an increase of charges at the bathhouse, the patronage increased beyond its capacity."[8]

Revere Beach Reservation is significant as a largely intact example of the visionary regional planning and subsequent landscape design by Charles Eliot for a substantial reservation. The current configuration of beach, roadway, and location of structures is a direct result of Eliot's design, which emphasized the natural crescent of the barrier beach by reclaiming the form of the beach prior to development, by deliberate placement of the boulevard to exaggerate the appearance of the crescent, and by careful placement of new structures. Buildings constructed in accordance with Eliot's plan were designed by William D. Austin of Stickney and Austin beginning with shelters in 1904 and eventually including a police station/administration building (ca. 1899) and a public bathhouse (ca. 1897, demolished in 1961-1962); four pairs of slate-roofed, steel pavilions (1897-1905); a bandstand (1897); and an Italianate Superintendent's House (1905).

Winthrop Shore Reservation

Arguments for the creation of a beach reservation in Winthrop like the one created at the Quincy Shore began in 1897. Three miles of property not yet under private ownership was selected for acquisition. Eliot was concerned that the opportunity to develop this land for public use would soon be gone:

> The available seashore of the district is limited, and is being shut out from the public for private pleasure and profit more and more each year. There remain, however, three miles at Winthrop…which may now be secured at little more than the nominal cost of building a road between the ocean and the private land beyond. The opportunity ought at once to be embraced, or it will soon be lost.[9]

High prices kept the commission from purchasing land until 1899. A storm had washed out Winthrop Beach in 1898. In an effort to repair the damage and construct features that would prevent a similar washout in the future, the Legislature helped the MPC acquire a stretch of land along the affected shoreline in Winthrop from the United States Government land at Grover's Cliffs to Great Head located 1.3 miles to the south. As part of the acquisition, the Legislature appropriated $75,000 for the construction of Winthrop Shore Drive that would include a seawall, sidewalks, and a promenade. The new parkway was designed to follow the alignment of a previously established roadway, Crest Avenue, which paralleled Winthrop Beach. Construction of the new parkway was

[8]MPC Annual Report, January, 1899, p. 11.

[9] MPC Annual Report, January, 1897, p.14.

completed within the year. By the turn of the century, the total land holdings for the Winthrop Beach Reservation had reached 16.79 acres.

River Reservations (1893-1905)

Land acquisition began on the river reservations soon after the Commission was established, but proceeded more slowly than at the large natural reservations because the river areas were more built up and the parcels were smaller. The three rivers identified by Charles Eliot for preservation and restoration were the Charles, the Mysti,c and the Neponset. River reservations included the river channel and land along one or both sides. In 1897 the Commission reported:

> ". . . there remain only the banks of the Mystic and Neponset rivers to bring to completion the whole system of reservations which your Commission set before itself as its aim when it entered upon its duties in 1893. Not only are these river banks extremely beautiful and interesting in their present condition, but the rivers are already being so seriously polluted by an indiscriminant occupation of their banks at certain points as to make them a growing nuisance . . . different problems of a no less difficult nature are likely to arise in the near future if the streams are not protected by a reservation of as much of their banks as is still to be secured at reasonable cost . . ."[10]

Charles River Reservation

The Charles was the first of the three rivers to be addressed by the Metropolitan Park Commission. In 1894, a report on the Charles River was issued jointly by the Metropolitan Park Commission and the State Board of Health, which together had been mandated to investigate the sanitary condition of the river and to prepare plans for the removal of nuisances and the improvement of its beds, shores, and waters. The report determined that the pollution of the river was indeed severe enough to endanger public health and recommended that the lower section of the river be dammed near the harbor, transforming it from a tidal estuary to a basin with a permanent water level.

In the meantime, Charles Eliot refined his ideas for the lower basin, which were quite different from those for the rural reservations in that they were based more on the model of an urban park. On the Boston side, he envisioned a continuous seawall with “promenades and plazas - broad gravel-ways well shaded by trees afford[ing] pleasant out-of-door halls where crowds may mingle

[10]MPC Annual Report, January, 1898, pp. 65-66.

in an easy social life. . .” He also proposed “. . . concert grounds, outdoor halls, nurseries, playgrounds, gymnasia, and gardens,” which could be combined so that no individual feature would take more than a small space, and also “a roadway which will serve as a pleasure drive and also as an approach to the buildings on the abutting estates.”[11] Eliot was an articulate and effective spokesman for improvements to the Charles River basin, but he died in 1897 before his ideas were implemented.

After the initial concepts for the Charles River Basin (NRDIS 1978) had been established, civic activists such as James Jackson Storrow campaigned to gather support for the project. In 1903, the State Legislature authorized building of the dam and established the Charles River Basin Commission to oversee construction, which was completed in 1910.

While the primary focus at the Charles River during the 1890s was on the lower basin, the Commission did not neglect the upper reaches of the river. A "Report of the Joint Board Upon the Improvement of the Charles River" published in 1897 strongly advocated public control of the river's banks and recommended that the Charles River from the Watertown dam to the Dedham line should be made a portion of the Metropolitan Park System. Public officials took the recommendations to heart.

Among the principal work of 1898 was the preparation of plans for acquisition of the shores of the Charles River from Watertown to Newton Upper Falls, which the MPC characterized as equal in importance to those already made on the lower reaches of the river. Between 1897 and 1898, approximately 300 acres were acquired along the upper Charles River, from Watertown to Hemlock Gorge in Newton. The intent was to protect the undeveloped shoreline, and where possible to construct a road or footpath along the river edge. The first road built in the Upper Charles was Quinobequin Road in Newton, constructed in 1900 along a particularly scenic section of the Charles River downstream from Hemlock Gorge. It reflects Charles Eliot’s concept of a border road along a river reservation, providing a scenic drive and clear separation of public and private land.

Mystic River Reservation

The Mystic River, the third river proposed for acquisition by the MPC, begins in Winchester and flows southeasterly through Arlington, Medford, Somerville, and Everett before joining with Chelsea Creek near Boston’s Inner Harbor. Early efforts by the MPC focused primarily on acquisition of the more pristine upper reaches of the river, particularly the area from Medford Center to Winchester. Land acquisition began in 1895 based on principles similar to those

[11]Charles Eliot, *Charles Eliot Landscape Architect* (Freeport, New York, Reprinted 1971).

employed at the Charles River Reservation, which involved primarily purchase of areas with scenic or natural value and undeveloped lands. The twofold goal was to protect the river from future pollution and to provide readily accessible open space. There was strong public interest in this project, and the MPC effort was supplemented by municipal contributions and private donations.

Mystic River Reservation was much smaller than the other two river reservations, with fewer than 300 acres acquired by 1899, but was valued because of its recreational potential. The Mystic Lakes, at the upper reaches of the river, were the focal point of the Reservation, although only land along the eastern edge of the lakes was acquired by the MPC. Another integral component of the Mystic River Reservation was Mystic Valley Parkway, which served as a pleasure road and also provided a connection to other units of the MPC system. It is discussed in more detail in the following section.

Neponset River Reservation

By 1901 the total area of riverbanks acquired by the Metropolitan Park Commission along the Neponset River was 928.83 acres in Boston, Milton, Canton, Hyde Park, Dedham, and Westwood. The Reservation extended from Fowl Meadow in Canton and Dedham to the Granite Avenue Bridge on the Boston/Milton line. In 1903 the landscape architects reported that the land acquisition program at the Neponset had been successful but identified several areas where additional land was needed. A primary justification was preservation of public health, particularly in the Fowl Meadow area where water pollution was a substantial concern.

In 1898 Olmsted Brothers outlined their land acquisition strategy at the Neponset River:

> "As was the case with the Charles River Reservation, it was not proposed to interfere with the existing mills or with other very expensive properties, but to acquire a narrow margin of the river, where the land is not closely occupied, in order to preserve its beauty. At most points the lines were so devised that it would be possible to construct a boundary drive and walk upon one side of the river or the other when it may be thought needful."[12]

One of the most unusual early acquisitions of the Metropolitan Park Commission was the Dorothy Quincy Homestead in Quincy, bordering the Furnace Brook Parkway. In 1904 the MPC acquired the Homestead in cooperation with the Massachusetts Society of Colonial Dames. While

[12]MPC Annual Report, January, 1899, pp. 54-55.

many of the MPC reservations had archaeological resources and historic structures, this was the first house museum to be owned by the Commission.

Parkways (1893-1905)

Within the parkway type, there are five subtypes of parkways: Internal Roads, Border Roads, Connecting Parkways, Ocean Parkways, and River Parkways. The following discussion of parkways includes parkways associated with the reservations described above.

Internal and border roads were an integral part of the MPC plans for natural and scenic, river and ocean reservations from the beginning. Connecting parkways were not part of Eliot and Baxter's initial proposal for the Metropolitan Park System, however, but were added almost immediately and have subsequently become a prominent feature of the agency. In 1894 the State Legislature passed the Boulevard Act to relieve unemployment, and added construction of parkways associated with several of the reservations to the tasks assigned to the Metropolitan Park Commission. Baxter was a strong proponent of the parkways, but Eliot was initially skeptical, in part because of the need to construct the roads quickly without adequate time to prepare the necessary plans. Despite the difficulties, Eliot was soon persuaded of their value in tying the various parts of the system together and providing convenient access for the public. As the system evolved, parkways were included in almost all of the metropolitan parks and became an integral part of Boston's regional transportation system.

In 1896 the landscape architects offered an initial concept for parkways that would accommodate multiple modes of transportation.

> ". . . parkways built by the Metropolitan Park Commission . . . ought to provide, in addition to roadways for the use of carriages and bicycles, 'separate passageways for the cheap, agreeable and rapid transportation of the multitude by electric cars.' . . . it is plain that the reservations cannot benefit the people as they ought to unless they can be made agreeably accessible."[13]

By 1899 Middlesex Fells Parkway, Blue Hills Parkway, Mystic Valley Parkway, Revere Beach Boulevard,and Revere Beach Parkway were well underway, while Fresh Pond Parkway and Neponset Valley Parkway were in the early stages of construction. Although they had been in existence for only a few years, there was general agreement that the parkways were an asset. The

[13] MPC Annual Report, January 1897, pp. 55-56.

threefold goals of making the reservations accessible, uniting the reservations and local parks into one system, and providing pleasant driving conditions between the parks and the communities of the metropolitan district had been accomplished. In 1903 Olmsted Brothers reiterated the success of the parkways as approaches to the reservations and provided an updated perspective that emphasized their value as part of the regional transportation system, stressing the fact that this could only be accomplished by a regional agency.

Connector Parkways Between Reservations and other MDC Parkways (1893-1905)

Blue Hills Parkway

The Blue Hills Parkway was the second major parkway built as part of the metropolitan parkway system. Like the Fellsway Connector Parkways, it was mandated by the Boulevard Act but later became an integral part of the overall Metropolitan Park System, and a major contributor to the success of the Blue Hills Reservation. Blue Hills Parkway was initially proposed as two distinct sections, which demonstrate how the Metropolitan Park Commission differentiated between boulevards and parkways. The northern section, which linked with Blue Hill Avenue (an existing city street) at Mattapan Square, was a straight road heading due south towards the Reservation, referred to as a boulevard. Like The Fellsway, it had five lanes for most of its length. An electric trolley had initially been proposed along with the parkway, but it was never built. Trees were regularly spaced along the outer edges of the carriageway and along both sides of the median.

The southern section of the Blue Hills Parkway as initially planned was distinctly different in character and soon became a park road known as Unquity Road. South of Canton Avenue, the road corridor widened to about 500 feet and became curvilinear, winding for a portion of its area along the valley of Pine Tree Brook. In 1902 the MPC reported that the main drive was closed at times to allow for speeding, with the adjacent border road left open to traffic. Apparently it was thought that if speeding were allowed in designated areas, it would be less likely to occur in other places. Unquity Road was one of the earliest MPC roads running through a wide landscaped corridor with ample parkland on either side, establishing a transition from the city to the Reservation. By 1901 both sections of Blue Hills Parkway were completed. Architect Edmund M. Wheelwright designed the bridge over the Neponset River near Mattapan Square.

The Fells Connector Parkways

After the Boulevard Act was passed in 1894, the Commission addressed the issue of access from Boston to the Middlesex Fells. There was already a dense street network in Boston, Cambridge, and Somerville so Eliot began his route at Somerville's Broadway Park (now Foss Park) near the Mystic River. The southern segment of the parkway was designed as a double carriageway with central

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median to be occupied by an electric trolley. Trees were spaced regularly along the outer edges of the parkway and both sides of the median. Just south of Fellsmere Pond in Malden, the parkway split, with the eastern branch (known today as Fellsway East) traveling north to Bear's Den Hill in the eastern part of the Fells while the other branch (Fellsway West) continued west and then north to the central portion of the Reservation.

The Fellsway was a multi-modal road corridor, with sidewalks for pedestrians and bicyclists, roads for carriages, and tracks for electric trolleys. A unique feature was that one roadway was three lanes wide while the other was only two lanes wide. The wider of the two roadways was restricted to pleasure carriages, while the narrower road served as a more general-purpose route. Construction of the Fells Connector Parkways began in 1895. By 1898 the Metropolitan Park Commission had completed construction of all the Fells Connector Parkways, 8.68 miles of roadway.

Fresh Pond Parkway

Fresh Pond Parkway, located entirely in Cambridge, linked Gerry's Landing in the Charles River Reservation initially with Fresh Pond Park (owned by the City of Cambridge) and later with Alewife Brook Parkway. The parkway was first discussed in the late 1890s and was built in the early 1900s. It was 70 feet wide, with two travel lanes in each direction, and 0.54 mile long.

Furnace Brook Parkway

Furnace Brook Parkway in Quincy is a two-lane roadway 3.92 miles long, extending from Wampatuck Road at the Blue Hills Reservation east to Quincy Shore Drive at the Quincy Shore Reservation. The parkway runs parallel to the valley of Furnace Brook. The names of both the brook and the parkway were taken from the iron furnace established nearby in 1643. The Metropolitan Park Commission first discussed this parkway in 1897. Construction was completed in 1906. A police substation was constructed on Furnace Brook Parkway at Cross Street, West Quincy, in 1907, one of many such structures necessitated by the increased use of the parkway system by automobiles.

Neponset Valley Parkway

Neponset Valley Parkway was developed in three segments from 1898 to 1956. The parkway was intended as a link extending from the foot of the Stony Brook Reservation and the foot of the Blue Hills Reservation. The parkway essentially serves as the major connection between MDC properties located in western and central Metropolitan Boston and the wooded and shore properties located to the east. The first taking for Neponset Valley Parkway was made in 1898; it was a pre-existing municipal street named

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Neponset Avenue, which today is Neponset Valley Parkway Segment Two. Neponset Avenue was a boulevard that traveled through an established residential area from Wolcott Square east to Brush Hill Road in Milton. The remaining segments of the parkway, to the east and west of Segment Two, were developed later.

Revere Beach Parkway

Revere Beach Parkway is a connecting parkway that links Revere Beach Reservation with the Mystic River and Middlesex Fells Reservations. It was among the most ambitious of the MPC's early parkways. The right-of-way runs west from the southern end of Revere Beach Boulevard for five miles to a junction with the Fellsway near Wellington Circle. Land for the parkway was acquired beginning in 1897 and the initial construction was completed in 1903. Initially a single carriageway, it was widened to dual carriageways after 1920. Later changes include the Broadway Overpass at the Revere and Chelsea city lines in 1932 and the Sweetser Overpass in Everett, constructed in 1954.

Internal and Border Roads in Natural and Scenic Reservations (1893-1905)

There are two parkway subtypes that typically occur in association with the larger natural and scenic reservations: internal roads and border roads. Some of these were pre-existing roads that were integrated into the parkway systems of the reservations, while others were laid out by Eliot or the Olmsted firm specifically for the purposes of the reservation. Some roads were used primarily by MPC staff for forestry purposes, such as fire control, while others were constructed as carriage roads for the visiting public. As use of the reservations grew, the informal roads of the earliest years soon gave way to more heavy-duty routes that could accommodate automobile traffic as well as carriages and handle larger volumes of users.

The border road subtype, which is found at almost all of the larger metropolitan reservations, was unique to the Metropolitan Park Commission. Their distinguishing feature originally was that they defined the boundaries between reservation land and private property. Eliot felt that this increased the visibility of the reservation to the public and was less likely to result in future land disputes. Many of the border roads are called Border Road and still function as intended, with reservation land on one side and private property (usually residential) on the other side. In some cases there has been additional land acquisition so the border road is now internal to the reservation. Many of the border roads were pre-existing roads that were acquired and improved by the Metropolitan Park Commission, while others were created specifically by the MPC. Most were initially gravel roads about twenty feet wide, allowing one travel lane in each direction. Some have parking areas on the reservation side to provide access into the reservation.

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Blue Hills Reservation Parkways

The Blue Hills Reservation Parkways are 9.98 miles of interconnecting roads that provide vehicular access to the Blue Hills Reservation in Braintree, Canton, Milton, and Quincy, Norfolk County, Massachusetts. A curvilinear single-roadway system consisting of Blue Hill River Road, Chickatawbut Road, Green Street, Hillside Street, Unquity Road, and Wampatuck Road, the Blue Hill Reservation Parkways are primarily internal roads and one border road, Green Street, that travel through a thick second-growth forest. All but one of the above parkways, Green Street, was added to the system during this period. Many were established along existing carriage roads and trails while others were built entirely on new alignment. Green Street, which was built in the 1930s as a municipal road, was added to the system in 1942 after the MDC acquired additional lands for the Blue Hills Reservation thereby extending the western boundary of the reservation past Canton Road/Washington Street to Green Street.

Middlesex Fells Reservation Parkways

Many of the internal and border roads of the Middlesex Fells were already in existence before the creation of the Reservation. These were the basis of many of today's park drives and trails, including Elm, Woodland, Pond, and Ravine roads. Most required significant improvement and sometimes realignment. New roadways developed by the MPC for the Middlesex Fells Reservation beginning in 1896 to 1905 included (portions of) Fellsway East, East Border Road, South Border Road, Fellsway West, and North Border Road.

The MPC began building park border "drives" in 1896, including Emerson Border Road (now the northernmost segment of Fellsway East) in Stoneham, from Wyoming Avenue to Emerson Street at the edge of Melrose. East Border Road in Malden also dates from 1896, extending westerly from the Bear's Den entrance of Fellsway East to Highland Avenue; plans show that it was 20 feet wide and had paved gutters at its steeper grades. A gift of land enabled the construction in 1900-01 of South Border Road, beginning at the Mt. Vernon entrance to the Fells, south partially along the existing Rockfield Ridge Drive to West Dam (South Reservoir), and from there along Meeting House Brook Road to the Fellsway West. This 20-foot-wide gravel border road also functioned as a link between the Fellsway and the northern terminus of the Mystic Valley Parkway. North Border Road, planned in 1903, was completed in 1906, at a width of 25 feet. Generally, though, border roads were 20 feet wide. In 1905, the MPC began extending the

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Fellsway West road and its accompanying trolley line northward from the edge of the Fells into the park.

Stony Brook Reservation

Unlike the Middlesex Fells or the Blue Hills reservations, there were no pre-established roads within the newly established Stony Brook Reservation as of 1894. The Stony Hills Parkways were built entirely on new alignment. Only portions of the five roadways that make up the Stony Brook Reservations Parkways system today were built during this time period. In 1897, Turtle Pond Parkway was built as a north-south artery through the reservation, Washington Street in Hyde Park to the southern edge of the reservation at the Mother Brook in Readville. Today, this roadway has been renamed as two separate roadways: Enneking Parkway (Segment One) and Turtle Pond Parkway. A second roadway, Bold Knob Road, was built in 1900 to extend across the Reservation from west to east. Today, Bold Knob Road makes up what is now known as Dedham Parkway (within the Reservation) and the east-west portion of Enneking Parkway (later known until at least 1947 as East Boundary Road). From the turn of the century to 1912, Turtle Pond Parkway and Bold Knob Road were the only parkways to have been built within the Stony Brook Reservation.

Ocean Parkways in Ocean Reservations (1893-1905)

The typical overall cross-section of an ocean parkway from this time period consisted of a travel corridor comprised of two lanes of varying widths, depending on the traffic generated by the adjoining ocean reservation, parking, curbs, and wide sidewalks on either side of the roadway. Parking, diagonal and parallel, often defined the outer edges of the roadway. A wide promenade backed by a sea wall usually defined the ocean side of the parkway, while the inland side usually featured a wide sidewalk where development was usually a mix of residential and commercial buildings.

Border roads resemble an internal park road on the side that borders the reservation. The non-reservation side of the road was designed to encourage residential development, if it did not already exist, with curbs, curb cuts for driveways, planting strips, and sidewalks. Vegetation in the planting strip consisted of varying deciduous types including oaks, elms, maples, and beech trees. A number of these trees still exist. Where they have not survived, they typically have been replaced in-kind. Curbs from this period generally consisted of vertically placed granite block (commonly referred to as “vertical granite”). These have generally been replaced in-kind; however, in certain cases, they may have been replaced with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones (commonly referred to as “quarter-round”) or with cement concrete quarter-round edge

stones that have been inlaid with granite block mosaic (commonly referred to as "Belgian Block"). Paving materials used during this time period were usually dirt or gravel.

The conditions described above generally reflect the existing conditions for an internal or border road today. A few things have changed either as a result of technology, improved and updated engineering standards, more rigorous safety standards, or as a result of insensitive development and modernization. Generally, however, improvements have been made that are in keeping with the original design and aesthetic character of the parkways, thereby resulting in a high level of integrity for the parkways outlined in this nomination.

Quincy Shore Drive

The Quincy shore was one of Charles Eliot's original priorities for beachfront acquisition. He valued the dramatic views across the islands of Boston Bay to the city beyond and the long stretch of beach frontage. His concept included a parkway that would provide access to the shore area and define the boundary of the Reservation in the same way that Revere Beach Boulevard served as the inland edge of that reservation. Quincy Shore Drive, begun in 1903, also was important to the regional scheme of reservations and parkways, with potential to connect to the Blue Hills through Furnace Brook. The parkway initially included a short connecting section at the north end and a roughly two-mile section along the shore. A connecting section to Sea Street at the south end was added in 1927. The parkway is located entirely in Quincy.

Revere Beach Boulevard

Eliot's vision for reclaiming and cleaning up the rundown beaches at Revere with the creation of the Revere Beach Reservation included a grand boulevard that would attract the public to the renewed beach. By 1896, the MPC had begun to prepare plans for the new boulevard. According to an MPC Annual Report dated 1897, Eliot specified that Revere Beach Boulevard "…has from the first been designed to be a curve, conforming as closely as possible to the natural and singularly beautiful sweep of the beach." A contract was awarded in 1897 to begin construction of the roadway from its southerly circle (i.e Eliot Circle) to Revere Street. Citing the enormous success of this first segment of Revere Beach Boulevard, the MPC was making arguments for an extension of the parkway to "meet the bridge over the Saugus River in Lynn…" as early as 1898.[14]

[14] MPC Annual Report, January 1899, p.11.

1904 marked the year that the boulevard was extended to its existing length (from Eliot Circle to the Lynnway). While the reason was never cited in any MPC Annual Reports, the idea to extend Revere Beach Boulevard to the Saugus River in Lynn was abandoned and it was extended from Revere Street to a "northerly circle" at Point of Pines instead. Acquisitions for the northerly extension were made from the abutting property owners and grading began early in 1906. Construction was complete by July 31, 1906.

Winthrop Shore Drive

The MPC acquired storm damage land along the Winthrop Shore for the creation of a new ocean reservation in 1899. As part of the acquisition, the Legislature appropriated $75,000 for the construction of an ocean parkway, Winthrop Shore Drive, that would include a seawall, sidewalks, and a promenade. The new parkway was designed to follow the alignment of a previously established roadway, Crest Avenue, which paralleled Winthrop Beach. Construction of the new parkway was completed within the year.

River Parkways at River Reservations (1893-1905)

Charles River Reservation Parkways

The parkways that line the banks of the Charles River, established beginning with the creation of the Charles River Reservation in 1890, are among the best known and most heavily used roads of the Metropolitan Park System. Parkways are continuous along both sides of the Charles River Basin from the Charles River Dam to Watertown Square and intermittent in the Upper Charles. Most of them combine elements of the river parkway and border road types of MDC roads. The Charles River road system is unusual in that segments of existing municipal roads have been integrated into the parkway system in several sections of the basin to create a continuous parkway route.

The Charles River Reservation Parkways were established between 1890 and 1964. Those built between 1893 and 1905 included Soldier's Field Road (ca. 1899)and Quinobeguin Road (ca. 1900), as well as small portions of Arsenal Road (ca. 1899), Charles River Road (ca. 1901), and North Beacon Street (ca. 1901).

Mystic Valley Parkway

The initial plan for the Mystic Valley Parkway was prepared by Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot in 1895. Along with the MDC Parkways developed to border the Neponset River, it is an early example of the Metropolitan Park Commission's river parkways, which integrated a wide park-

like corridor along the riverbanks and lake shores with a relatively natural road treatment. Plantings were generally informal masses of trees, with more evenly spaced trees as the parkway moved away from the river into more urban areas. Construction on the first section of Mystic Valley Parkway, from High Street in Medford north to Main Street in Winchester, began in 1896 with a 36-foot-wide roadway and was completed the following year.

The second phase of the Mystic Valley Parkway was to improve the connections of the Mystic Valley Parkway to other MPC parkways, making it an integral part of the system rather than an isolated fragment. In the late 1890s, the MPC began the connection of the northern end of the Mystic Valley Parkway to the Middlesex Fells Reservation. The 70-foot taking allowed for a 40-foot roadway with planting strips and sidewalks on both sides. Acquisition for an extension south along Alewife Brook was begun in the 1890s, but construction of the Alewife connection was deferred until 1908.

IV. EXPANSION AND PUBLIC USE OF THE RESERVATIONS AND PARKWAYS SYSTEM (1905 – 1919)

This period in the system's history extends from the completion of the first, pre-automobile phase of development to the reorganization of the MPC into the MDC in 1919. A recent report summarized the status of the Metropolitan Park System during the early years of the 20th century.

> "Although parkway and facility construction had begun in the park system's first decade. . . the early priority had clearly been the acquisition of significant natural lands. With the advent of the automobile and streetcar access to the reservations, however, the priority shifted quickly toward facility construction. Parkway construction and maintenance became the defining theme . . . From as early as 1906, it was clear that automobile traffic posed a threat to the parklike qualities of parkways intended for the use of horse-drawn vehicles."[15]

By 1905 the core of the park system was in place, with more than 9,000 acres of land acquired for reservations, parks, and parkways. The Commission's first dozen years had been a time of idealism, when an abstract vision was transformed into a successful reality. Even the parkways, which had seemed initially like a distraction from the reservations, had strengthened the park system and linked it more closely with the communities it served. From the beginning the shore reservations had received heavy visitation and the Commission had been forced to accommodate

[15] Green Ribbon Commission. "Enhancing the Future of the Metropolitan Parks, Final Report and Recommendations of the Green Ribbon Commission." Boston: Metropolitan District Commission, 1996.

visitors as best it could. The opening of street railways to the Blue Hills and Fells brought similar pressures to the large natural reservations. The Commission shifted its focus from planning and land acquisition to operational issues such as policing, maintenance, and facility construction.

Expansion of Existing Reservations and the Creation of New Reservations (1905-1919)

The two largest natural and scenic reservations, Blue Hills and Middlesex Fells, were already well established by 1905. Major activities during the period that followed were land acquisition, construction and upgrading of roads, construction of new facilities, and forestry. Blue Hills was the larger and more actively used of the two reservations so it received the most attention. Land acquisition focused on adding minor parcels to round out the boundaries. Once the boundaries were established, several new border roads were constructed, which were intended for fire fighting and forestry purposes and were also used by the public. In 1915 some of the roads through the Reservation were widened and straightened to make them safe for automobile traffic.

Two major forestry issues from this period were gypsy moths and chestnut blight, both requiring intensive forest management. Chestnut blight was discovered in the Blue Hills in 1911, resulting in the need to immediately cut down and burn all diseased trees, a project that continued for more than a decade and devastated the forest. Pine seedlings were planted as a replacement, with 1,500,000 in the Reservation by 1918. As part of the war effort, food was raised on sections of the Reservation; crops included corn, potatoes, carrots and turnips.

The intensive use of the Blue Hills resulted in the need for many new facilities. These included sanitaries, bathhouses, ballfields (including a field occasionally used for polo), a bandstand, and an addition to police headquarters. There were also several memorials erected, including one to Charles Eliot and a fountain at the top of Great Blue Hill dedicated to Lawrence Rotch, founder of the observatory in 1885.

The Fells was less intensively used, so it saw fewer changes during the early twentieth century. Fellsway West was extended into the central portion of the Reservation in 1905-08, soon followed by a trolley line operated by Boston Elevated Railroad. Bear Hill Observatory, a concrete and iron tower that visitors could climb to gain a distant view, was constructed in 1911, and replaced an earlier Appalachian Mountain Club observatory**.** In 1913, additional land was acquired at Fellsmere Pond (a small park south of the Middlesex Fells Reservation) to create parkways, West Border Road and Boundary Road, in this area. These parkways, which border Fellsmere Pond, are included in this nomination as part of the Fellsmere Park Parkways.

The popularity of the shore reservations continued unabated during the early 20th century. At Revere Beach and Nantasket, many of the facilities that had been proposed around the turn of century were

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built, including the first automobile stand (parking lot) constructed at Nantasket in 1906. Older facilities, including roads, buildings, and utilities, were already in need of rebuilding and expansion. The first concrete seawalls were built to protect the shoreline, a recurring theme at the oceanfront beaches. They were underway at Lynn Shore by 1907, Revere Beach from 1910 on, and at Nantasket from 1916 on.

The most dramatic changes were at the Charles River Basin, the most urban of the metropolitan parks. On July 1, 1910, the Charles River Dam and Basin, including the embankment, parks and parkways, were turned over to the Metropolitan Park Commission. The esplanade along the northern edge of Back Bay was widened and redesigned between 1910 and 1915, creating a paved walkway along the river with a rail fence, decorative light fixtures, benches with striped awnings, and a strip of turf. Crosswalks connected the promenade with the Boston streets. Once the dam was completed and a constant elevation was established for the lower section of the river, boating and rowing increased in popularity, with several new boathouses and landings constructed.

The Charles River Reservation, particularly the upper Charles, was not neglected either. Between 1897 and 1898 approximately 300 acres had been acquired along the upper section of the river from Watertown Square to Hemlock Gorge in Newton. Whenever possible the goal was to provide a road or trail along the river's edge. These key land acquisitions were followed by a twenty-year period of river improvement and park construction. Waterfront parks such as Hemlock Gorge, Auburndale, Riverside, and Norumbega were completed and were used heavily for canoeing, boating, swimming, walking, and fishing. The upper Charles River Reservation became one of the most popular recreation spots in metropolitan Boston.

At the Neponset and Mystic River Reservations there were also improvements to facilitate water access, but these areas were less heavily used than the upper Charles. Parkway construction was a major theme at Mystic Valley Reservation.

The diversity of resources managed by the Metropolitan Park Commission increased with the addition of Bunker Hill Monument in Charlestown, which was transferred to the Commission in 1919. It was transferred to the National Park Service in 1976 and is not included in this nomination. No new natural and scenic or ocean reservations were created during this period. Two new reservations, Alewife Brook, a river reservation, and Fellsmere Park, a natural and scenic reservation, were created during this period.

Natural and Scenic Reservations (1905-1919)

Fellsmere Park

Fellsmere Park, a small park established in 1913, occupies land that was developed on either side of Fellsway East just south of the Middlesex Fells Reservation. The focal point of this park is Fellsmere Pond, a small body of water with exceptional scenic qualities. Two border roads, West Border Road and Boundary Road, were built along the eastern and western edges of the park to take advantage of views from the hills surrounding the park.

Ocean Reservations (1905-1919)

No new ocean reservations were established during this time period.

River Reservations (1905-1919)

Alewife Brook Reservation

The major new reservation established between 1905 and 1919 was Alewife Brook Reservation in Cambridge, Arlington, and Belmont, a link between the Charles River and Mystic Valley. This connection was discussed as early as 1897, with several alternate routes proposed. The route along Alewife Brook was ultimately selected because of its moderate cost and the appeal of the adjacent stream. Issues regarding water quality at Alewife Brook were raised in 1907 and land was acquired the following year for sanitary improvements. Land takings for the Reservation and parkway were underway by 1909, but the road construction was not begun until 1916. The parkway serves as a vital link between the Fresh Pond and Mystic Valley parkways, connecting the Middlesex Fells with the Charles River Reservation. Alewife Reservation remains a relatively undisturbed stream and adjacent wetland in an otherwise densely developed urban area.

Expansion of Existing Parkways and the Creation of New Parkways (1905-1919)

The parkways were the aspect of the Metropolitan Park System that changed the most during the early 20th century. The first generation of metropolitan parkways provided direct access from urban areas to major reservations, defined the edges of shore reservations, or traveled along the edges of Boston's major rivers. The second generation of parkways was primarily connectors to link various parts of the system. Many of the earliest parkways had been built quickly without adequate sub-base and could not handle the high volumes of traffic. Automobiles were increasingly using the parkways, which had not been designed for their higher speeds and wider tires. By 1905 the impact of automobiles was becoming clear.

> "The wear and tear of the roadways have been seriously increased by swift moving automobiles, which tear off the surface; and the expense for repair has correspondingly increased beyond what was reckoned upon when the roads were

> built. With a view to securing an improved surface, experiments have been made with tar and petroleum treatment, but no satisfactory result has been secured thus far. It is evident, however, that effective construction and maintenance will require increased expense . . ."[16]

In the following decade, issues of policing came to dominate the parks, and by 1923, when Sylvester Baxter wrote a long review of the metropolitan parks, he concluded that the problem of cars had completely overwhelmed the commission's other activities. In addition to maintaining and upgrading the existing parkways, the Metropolitan Park Commission was also faced with expanding existing parkways and constructing new parkways, which were increasingly part of the regional road system rather than separate pleasure roads.

Among the roads that were added to during this period was the Mystic Valley Parkway, which was extended southeast along the Mystic River in Medford beginning in 1906. The roadwork was part of a larger plan to improve water flow in the river, in anticipation of the construction of a dam and tide gates at Cradock Bridge in Medford. In 1908, the MPC treated the gravel roadways north of High Street with a mixture of coal tar and water gas tar and began surfacing the parkway south of High Street in bituminous macadam. Mystic Valley Parkway was also extended south to meet the new Alewife Brook Parkway (see below).

Connector Parkways Between Reservations and other MDC Parkways (1905 – 1919)

Alewife Brook Parkway

The concept of establishing a connection between Mystic Valley Parkway and Fresh Pond Parkway was first proposed by the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1897. Several routes were discussed, but the project was deferred while work was undertaken to improve sanitary conditions of the waterway. Ultimately a route along Alewife Brook was selected that would combine a parkway with a reservation running along the shore of the brook. Land takings were completed in 1909 and the parkway was opened to traffic in 1916. In 1917, a further acquisition allowed the widening of the roadway. Final grading and surfacing occurred in 1919. Alewife Brook Parkway is located in Cambridge, Arlington, and Belmont.

Lynn Fells Parkway

[16]MPC Annual Report, January 1906, pp. 12-13.

The 4.8-mile-long Lynn Fells Parkway in Melrose and Saugus was first conceived in 1899 as the parkway link between the Middlesex Fells and Lynn Woods. Initial acquisitions were made in 1906 and by 1910 the roadway was completed as far as Bellevue Avenue in Melrose as a single carriageway (i.e. one lane in each direction with no median). The parkway was later extended across Saugus as far as Route 1, but the connection to Lynn Woods was never completed.

Lynnway

The original Lynnway was conceived in 1899 as a connection from the northern end of Revere Beach Reservation to the site of a proposed bridge across the Saugus River. Construction of the Saugus River Bridge was completed by the Metropolitan Park Commission in 1905; the roadway connection between the bridge and Revere Beach was completed in 1906. A connection further north to Lynn Shore Drive was constructed by the State Highway Commission in 1905. This roadway was transferred to the MDC in 1954 and subsequently reconstructed into a dual carriageway road.

Internal and Border Roads in Natural and Scenic Reservations (1905-1919)

Dedham Parkway

Land was acquired for Dedham Parkway, a short connector from the western edge of the Stony Brook Reservation (where Bold Knob Road's western terminus) southwest to Boyden Square in Dedham, between 1913 and 1919. Construction began in 1915 and the parkway opened in 1921.

Fellsmere Park Parkways

Two very short parkways, West Border Road and Boundary Road, were built along the eastern and western edges of Fellsmere Park, which was established by the MPC in 1913. Both of these roads possess characteristics that are consistent with other border roads found within the larger natural and scenic reservations, such as the nearby Middlesex Fells or the Blue Hills Reservation.

Ocean Parkways in Ocean Reservations (1905-1919)

Nahant Beach Parkway

Nahant Beach Parkway extends south from the intersection of the Lynnway and Lynn Shore Drive to Nahant, a community linked to the mainland by a narrow causeway. The first takings, which occurred in 1900, included an existing road and the adjacent beach. The roadway was substantially upgraded in the 1930s.

Old Colony Parkway (Morrissey Boulevard)

The roadway known initially as Old Colony Parkway and now called Morrissey Boulevard formed a connector between Columbia Road in South Boston and the Neponset River. Survey and plans were completed in 1913 and land acquisition started the following year. This nearly three-mile-long roadway along the Boston shore was challenging to construct. One of the biggest issues was the design of the bridge over the Neponset River between Boston and Quincy. Old Colony Parkway was also more closely linked with the regional transportation system than some of the earlier parkways, serving as a commuter road more than a parkway.

Winthrop Parkway

Winthrop Parkway was conceived as the link between Revere Beach Reservation and Winthrop Shore Reservation. Acquisition was begun in 1905 and initial construction followed in 1906. The parkway area includes a stretch of beach in Revere between Roughan's Point and the town line known as Short Beach. In 1916 the parkway was extended to the south end of Short Beach in Revere.

River Parkways in River Reservations (1905-1919)

Charles River Reservation Parkways

Between 1905 and 1919, extensive work was done on the roads along the Charles River upstream of Eliot Bridge to create continuous roadways on both sides of the river between Harvard Square and Watertown Square. Roads built during this period included: the section of Greenough Boulevard behind the Watertown Arsenal; Charles River Road extension to Watertown Square; and Nonatum Road, which was extended into Newton just south of Watertown Square. A popular feature during this period was the Speedway in Brighton, a half-mile oval track that had been constructed in 1900 to provide a place for fast driving of carriages but which has since been removed.

Mystic Valley Parkway

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Beginning in 1905, the MPC started planning an eastern extension of the Mystic Valley Parkway along the southern edge of the Mystic River from High Street to Main Street, both in Medford. The new section of the roadway, constructed in 1906, connected with the newly constructed Alewife Brook Parkway, creating a link between the MPC properties in and around the Fells and MPC properties located to the south such as Fresh Pond Parkway and the Charles River Reservation Parkways.

V. METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION (1920 – 1956)

Overview: Creation of the Metropolitan District Commission

In 1919 the State Legislature created the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), which merged the Metropolitan Park Commission with the Metropolitan Water and Sewerage Board. The move responded to the desire for a governmental organization that could address the regional needs of the diverse metropolitan community, which included the independent jurisdictions of 37 cities and towns and four counties. Initial steps towards creation of the Metropolitan District Commission began in 1899, when the Sewer Board was barely ten years old, and resulted in the 1901 merger of the Water and Sewer Commissions. The Park Commission was initially suggested for inclusion, but because its activities were less controversial, it was omitted.

The new MDC was empowered to provide metropolitan parks, parkways (which were quickly becoming the major arteries of the region), policing, and water supply and sewerage services to the respective communities. The MDC comprised four divisions, Parks (incorporating Police), Water, Sewer, and Parks Engineering. In terms of labor alone, Parks was unquestionably the largest division. Fiscally, the Commission's activities were supported by assessments on the member cities and towns.

The first year was largely taken up with administrative matters, but by 1921 the MDC reiterated its mission as a regional agency. The reorganization drew the MDC more deeply into regional planning issues. A logical outgrowth of this was the creation in 1923 of the Metropolitan Planning Division within the MDC to develop a cooperative approach to planning for the entire district. In 1926 the MDC reported that the activities of the Metropolitan Planning Division during its first three years included: plans for the approaches, underpasses, and general design of the Cottage Farm (now Boston University) Bridge; the project to unite the northern and the southern portions of the district with a thoroughfare (Northern Artery) connecting the northern parkways at Somerville with the parkways of the Charles River Basin; a plan for the coordinated development of railroad transportation lines of the district; various projects for the extension of main thoroughfares, chiefly circumferential roadways intended to enable traffic to find its way around centers of congestion such

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as the Southern Artery; and the proposal for a main circumferential route around the south, west, and north sides of the district from Braintree to Lynn (later constructed as State Route 128).

MDC Reservations (1920 – 1933)

The MDC brought several new properties into the MDC park and parkway system, including the Chestnut Hill Reservation (see below) and additional land along the Charles River. In 1920 the City of Cambridge transferred its parkland along the northern edge of the Charles River to the MDC, including Cambridge Parkway and Charles River Road (renamed Memorial Drive in 1924 in honor of state casualties in World War I). Both roads are included within the existing Charles River Basin Historic District (NR1978).

The MDC's 1921 Annual Report indicated a total of 10,716 acres acquired to date.[17] Reservations accounted for 90% or 9,266.49 acres. The two large, natural reservations, Middlesex Fells and Blue Hills, accounted for nearly two thirds of this. There were also four smaller natural areas: Stony Brook, Beaver Brook, Hemlock Gorge and Hart's Hill (a 23-acre property in Wakefield that had been acquired in 1900), as well as the Bunker Hill Monument. The Charles and Neponset rivers were the largest river reservations, while the Mystic Reservation was much smaller. There were a total of 61.13 miles of riverbank. The oceanfront reservations, with 13.08 miles of seashore, included Lynn Shore, Nahant Beach, Nantasket Beach, Quincy Shore, Revere Beach, and Winthrop Shore reservations. With a few exceptions, acquisitions after 1920 tended to be additions to existing holdings such as the Ponkapoag Pond area at Blue Hills in 1932 and 1934 and the Lawrence Estate at the Fells in 1925.

By the 1920s, the same forces re-shaping the parkways, particularly increased affluence, greater leisure time, and much higher volumes of use, fueled demand for greater recreational opportunities and more sophisticated facilities. There was pressure for more playgrounds and for athletic fields to accommodate increasingly popular organized sports. Outdoor ice skating was offered in four locations and the first artificial skating rink was constructed in the Blue Hills in 1927. A master plan for the Charles River Basin, developed by landscape architect Arthur Shurcliff in 1928 and implemented in the 1930s, emphasized the need for year-round activities that provided a range of recreational opportunities suited to a variety of park users. The huge popularity of golf in the 1920s lead to the creation of two MDC golf courses, one at Ponkapoag and one at Riverside.

[17]MDC Annual Report, January 1922, pp. 30-31.

Natural and Scenic Reservations (1920-1933)

Chestnut Hill Reservation

Chestnut Hill Reservoir (initially developed by the City of Boston as part of its municipal water system and acquired by the Metropolitan Water Board in 1898), which included the parkland surrounding the reservation and the Chestnut Hill Drive, was placed under the auspices of the MDC Police 1920 because of its heavy recreational use during this period.

Ocean Reservations (1920-1933)

No new ocean reservations were created at this time.

River Reservations (1920-1933)

No new river reservations were created at this time.

MDC Parkways (1920 – 1933)

(Continued)

In 1921 there were 18 parkways: Alewife Brook Parkway; Blue Hills Parkway; the Fells Connector Parkways; Fresh Pond Parkway; Furnace Brook Parkway; Hull Shore Drive-Nantasket Boulevard; Lynn Fells Parkway; Lynn Fells Parkway; the Lynnway; Mystic Valley Parkway; Nahant Beach Parkway; Neponset Valley Parkway; Quincy Shore Drive; Revere Beach Boulevard; Revere Beach Parkway; West Roxbury Parkway; and Winthrop Shore Drive; together, these included 1,451.11 acres. Land had also been acquired for Hammond Pond and Old Colony parkways. In addition to the parkways, there were 81.21 miles of automobile roads in four of the more heavily used reservations (Blue Hills, Charles River, Fellsmere Park, Middlesex Fells, and Stony Brook) and 42.08 miles of carriage roads in the above four reservations, plus Beaver Brook. Between 1922 and 1932, 14 new parkways and park roads were initiated and three roadways were transferred to the Metropolitan District Commission.[18] Much of this activity was in conjunction with improvements at the Charles River Basin, where several new roads were added. The major projects are discussed below.

From the beginning, the parkways were envisioned to serve both a park function and as important arteries in the growing metropolitan district. Streets and roadways in urban areas were crowded with commercial traffic and electric-powered streetcars, and their condition was poor. Federal assistance for roadway construction was limited to rural areas while highways between cities had deteriorated with the rise of the railroads in the nineteenth century. Parkways therefore filled a distinct need for pleasurable uninterrupted driving as well as providing a means for meeting the metropolitan needs for regional roads. The destiny of these roadways was determined almost immediately by the emergence of the automobile, which represented a new type and level of use. Mass production and increasing affluence combined to greatly popularize the auto and radically change the previous patterns of suburban growth.

Automobiles also meant changes to the configuration of parkways. In 1921 the MDC began a re-surfacing program, while in 1925 the standard width of parkways was changed from 24 to 40 feet, one-way traffic was explored, and a program for lighting the parkways was undertaken. As traffic increased, attempts were made to preserve the flow and pleasure of driving by constructing traffic circles and overpasses such as the first traffic circle at Wellington (1931), the Memorial Drive underpass at Massachusetts Avenue (1931), and the Broadway Overpass on the Revere Beach Parkway (1931). By the end of the decade, the Fellsway had become the principal metropolitan artery to the northwest, and Revere Beach Parkway was a major cross-town arterial.

[18] Green Ribbon Commission, "Enhancing the Future of the Metropolitan Park System" (Boston: MDC, 1996), p 16.

Accommodation of automobiles was not a rejection of the parkway standard. Changes were understood to occur within a park context. Indeed, the parkway served as a model for the first generation of super-highways because its physical and legal form offered distinct advantages. The limited access highway was an outgrowth of the parkway concept, because until passage of a freeway bill after World War II, the parkway was the only legal mechanism for restricting access to the abutters of a roadway.

The Metropolitan District Commission and local assessments continued to be a funding source for a variety of highway improvements, although not always related to parkways, such as the Southern Artery in Boston (Gallivan Boulevard) and Quincy; the reconstruction of the Carlton Street approach to the Cottage Farm Bridge in Boston and Brookline; and the development of the Circumferential Highway (State Route 128). The latter roadway ran in good measure across existing parkways such as Lynn Fells Parkway, Hammond Pond Parkway, and Blue Hill River Road.

A distinguishing feature of the MDC roads was its policy of keeping large trucks and buses off the parkways. In 1926 the MDC reiterated its commitment to this policy as the roads were too narrow and crowded for such vehicles and could not accommodate their heavier weight.

Connector Parkways Between Reservations and other MDC Parkways (1920-1933)

Hammond Pond Parkway

Hammond Pond Parkway provides access from Hammond Pond Reservation in Newton to other park and parkway holdings, especially the southern reservations, for residents of Brookline and Newton. The parkway travels south from Beacon Street in Newton to West Roxbury Parkway and Newton Street in Brookline. In addition, it provides parkway access to popular urban open spaces such as the Arnold Arboretum, Franklin Park, and Jamaica Pond.

The primary land takings for the parkway took place in 1931. The entire parkway was constructed in 1932. Landscape plantings were done along the parkway in 1935. In 1936 additional lands were taken for park purposes. The last record of work on the parkway is some resurfacing and minor road improvements done in the early 1950s.

Neponset Valley Parkway

The final segment of Neponset Valley Parkway was a short connecting segment intended to link the first and second segments of the parkway that had already been built, respectively, in Readville and Hyde Park with the Blue Hills Reservation to the east. When finished, Neponset Valley Parkway would essentially act as a continuous link between the Stony Brook Reservation and the Blue Hills

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Reservation. This final segment, Segment Three, had been proposed nearly 30 years earlier than it was actually constructed.

The first segment, from River Street east of Mother Brook to the MBTA Bridge at Wolcott Square in Readville, was a reconstruction of an earlier municipal roadway that had been acquired by the MPC and was completed by the MDC between 1924 and 1929. The second segment from Wolcott Square (Prescott Avenue) to Brush Hill River Road was constructed around 1930. The final section from Brush Hill Road to Blue Hill Avenue was a realignment of an earlier road.

Northern Artery

Plans for a Northern Artery to connect the parks north of Boston with those south of Boston by a parkway from Mystic River to Charles River through Somerville and Cambridge were first discussed in the landscape architects' report of 1894. A bill authorizing the Commission to proceed with the project was passed in 1913 but no action took place at that time. In 1923 an alternate route was adopted, running from Wellington Bridge at the Fellsway in Somerville to the Charles River Dam. Surveys and plans were begun the following year, and construction was completed in 1927. The Northern Artery was typical of a later generation of roads that was more clearly part of the regional transportation system and differed from the earlier parkways in being intended for all classes of vehicles.

Ocean Avenue

Ocean Avenue, an existing city street running parallel to and west of Revere Beach Boulevard, was acquired by the MDC in 1933.

VFW Parkway

The Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Parkway provides a link from the Charles River Reservation to West Roxbury Parkway, Centre Street, or Hammond Pond Parkway. From VFW Parkway, park users can get to any MDC reservation except Beaver Brook traveling solely on the MDC parkway system. The parkway was constructed in sections, the majority of which took place between 1931 and 1938. An extension from Spring Street to Washington Street in Dedham in 1941, known as VFW Highway, has always been under the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts DPW. At the Washington Street Rotary, VFW Highway connected to the 1931 Providence Turnpike, one of the most important achievements of the "Super Highway" program of the early 1930s.

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West Roxbury Parkway

Land was acquired for the West Roxbury Parkway connecting Hammond Pond Parkway in Brookline with Stony Brook Reservation in West Roxbury as early as 1894 but construction of the parkway was not begun until 1919. West Roxbury Parkway extends from Hammond Pond Parkway in Brookline south to the entrance of Stony Brook Reservation in West Roxbury where it links with Enneking Parkway. It is primarily a two-lane roadway except for a brief stretch in Brookline where it separates into two, two-lane roadways with a landscaped median. The section between Nikisch and Anawan Avenues in West Roxbury contains border roadways to service the residential neighborhoods along both sides of the parkway.

Land acquisition was begun in 1894 by both the Boston and the Metropolitan Park Commissions for the proposed parkway, which was intended to connect the Boston park system with Stony Brook Reservation. In accordance with an agreement between the two boards, the Boston Park Commission assumed the construction, care, and maintenance of the portion taken by the Metropolitan Park Commission for a term of 999 years. Construction occurred in phases between 1919 and 1929.

Internal and Border Roads in Natural and Scenic Reservations (1920 – 1933)

Ocean Parkways in Ocean Reservations (1920 – 1933)

No new ocean parkways were added to the system during this period.

River Parkways in River Reservations (1920 – 1933)

No new river parkways were added to the system during this period.

VI. DEPRESSION ERA INITIATIVES (1933-1941)

The Metropolitan Park System benefited from several Depression-era work programs, which provided labor primarily for beautification and recreation projects. Early state-funded efforts included much-needed forestry work such as cutting brush and clearing woods within the reservations. The two major federal programs involved were the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA), both of which made a substantial contribution to the MDC reservations.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a federal program established by President Franklin Roosevelt to provide employment opportunities for young men and to improve the forest and

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recreational resources of the country, worked primarily in the Middlesex Fells, Blue Hills, and the newly established Breakheart reservations. Projects included: repairing and installing telephone signal lines; clearing roadside brush and fallen trees for fire protection; clearing and improving forests; repairing and upgrading service roads and paths; constructing footpaths; building and improving picnic grounds; control for gypsy moths; and construction of several new parking areas.

While the CCC concentrated on specific projects, the federal program that eventually became the Works Progress Administration (WPA) was involved in more diverse tasks, which constituted a large percentage of the work accomplished in the metropolitan parks from 1933 through 1941. Usually the WPA supplied the labor and the sponsoring agency provided material and equipment.

Typical projects included forestry; construction of truck trails and service roads; improving unsightly areas; minor construction projects; and other similar work. WPA workers also served as lifeguards, rebuilt the police communication system, and undertook a traffic survey throughout the Metropolitan Park System. In the late 1930s there was a focus on forestry projects at Stony Brook Reservation, Neponset Valley Parkway, West Roxbury Parkway, Dedham Parkway, VFW Parkway, and Turtle Pond Parkway. Work included removing dead and diseased limbs, removing tree stumps, and filling tree cavities.

Recreation was another major area of WPA involvement. In fall 1936, the Metropolitan District Commission, in collaboration with the Massachusetts Committee to Further Outdoor Recreation, submitted a proposal to the WPA to provide supervision and instruction in skating and other winter sports in the Charles River Reservation and other suitable MDC areas. The primary purpose was to encourage residents (especially children) of large cities to actively participate in winter sports as a healthful form of recreation, and to publicize the many natural assets contained in the Metropolitan Parks District. The winter of 1936-37 was so mild that no winter sports were possible, so a program of hikes, nature walks, and supervised play was substituted instead. The personnel of the project comprised 29 staff members, who were used as instructors and to interest churches, societies, boy and girl scout troops, and YWCAs in the activities of the project. Weekly notices of all scheduled functions were mailed to interested groups and individuals. This program was very popular, with approximately 400,000 persons participating in the activities during 1937. The program continued to grow; by 1939 there were over one million participants who enjoyed activities as diverse as basketball, fishing, football, hiking, horseshoes, and moonlight walks. Nature walks, hiking, skating, band concerts, and baseball were the most popular activities.

During the Depression there was pressure from individual communities and from the Legislature for the MDC to add new park areas, to build additional facilities such as skating rinks and golf courses, and to get more involved in the regional transportation system. However, most of these requests were not supported by additional funding and were not implemented.

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Responsibility for zoning rested with the local communities, which were often lax in preventing intrusive commercial and industrial uses adjacent to the parkways. Consequently the parkways were under constant pressure from adjacent commercial development that changed the character of the parkway corridor. The MDC lamented in 1936 that the limited land area it owned along certain parkways, and the disregard of the communities for controlling land use adjacent to the parkways, caused serious degradation of the parkway character.

The last major reservation, to be added to the system before 1956, Breakheart, occurred during the Depression era. It is discussed in detail below.

Natural and Scenic Reservations (1933-1941)

Breakheart Reservation

The most notable addition to the MDC reservation system during the Depression was Breakheart Reservation, a 640-acre property in Wakefield and Saugus that was acquired in 1934. Arthur Shurcliff, who was chief landscape architect for the MDC for several decades, was responsible for the design. Shurcliff's forest improvements, selective clearing and thinning based on a set of interlocking principles, were designed to preserve selected species, leave 25% of any site untouched, reduce fire load, and open up vistas. He also designed a series of one-way motor roads with small parking pullouts, which he explained in the MDC's Annual Report:

> "In general, these roads are widely spaced and do not attempt to penetrate the recesses of the woodlands. Every incentive is given to lead visitors to enjoy the woodlands on foot, and motors are to be kept out of sight as much as possible."[19]

Parkways (1933-1941)

Internal and Border Roads in Natural and Scenic Reservations (1933-1941)

[19] MDC Annual Report, January 1935.

The Breakheart Reservation Parkways

A former hunting preserve acquired in 1934, the Breakheart Reservation was one of the last reservations added to the Metropolitan District Commission park system during its period of significance, and the one that most completely reflects the work of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in its roadways. The Breakheart Reservation Parkways consists of four paved roads. Three internal roads, Hemlock Road, Elm Road, and the Pine Tops Road Loop, were designed as single-lane automobile or truck roads but are now restricted to pedestrian traffic. The parkways also include Forest Street, a short divided connecting parkway that provides vehicular access to the Reservation from the Lynn Fells Parkway.

Connecting Parkways Between Reservations and other MDC Parkways (1933-1941)

Breakheart Reservation Parkways

See Breakheart Reservations Parkways: Forest Street (above)

VII. WORLD WAR II AND BEYOND (1941-1956)

During the early 1940s, funds were diverted to the war effort, staff was in short supply, and the MDC could provide only the most basic maintenance of its facilities. However, even during the war, the MDC began to plan for a postwar program of highway projects, which were chiefly to repair the severe deterioration that had occurred during the War when materials and manpower were not available. In 1945 the state provided nine million dollars for a six-year program for construction and reconstruction of parkways, bridges, and other facilities.

The extension of federal highway assistance to urban areas in 1944 provided the Department of Public Works with a means of financing highway construction in the metropolitan area separate from the MDC. This allowed the focus to shift away from the concept of the parkway to that of a highway. While recommendations were made for improvements to the parkway system, a new major limited-access highway system was proposed. The Metropolitan District Commission was represented on the Post War and Metropolitan Master Plan boards by its Commissioner while agency engineers served on technical committees.

The Metropolitan Highway Plan of 1948 expanded on earlier regional transportation master plans. Ambitious projects of this period include the Casey Overpass (Arborway, 1954), Malden River Bridge (Revere Beach Parkway, 1954), reconstruction of Broad Street Lynn as an extension of the Lynnway (1954), Sweetser Overpass (Revere Beach Parkway, Everett, 1956), McCarthy Overpass/Squires Bridge over Washington Street Somerville (McGrath Highway Former Northern

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Artery 1955-1957) and the McGovern Overpass (1957) on Morrissey Boulevard (Old Colony Parkway).

1949 marked the first of several major transfers of property from the financially stressed City of Boston to the MDC. The first major transfer was recorded in the MDC Annual Report of 1949, Chapter 509. This act transferred all city-owned properties along the Dorchester Bay in South Boston (now known as the Old Harbor Reservation) to the MDC. Parkways along the south shore, in addition to the Strandway (renamed William J. Day Boulevard in 1950), which was built by the MDC, were added to the system six years later. These roadways included Old Colony Parkway (north of Kosciusko Circle), Columbia Boulevard and Gardner Way. In 1956, many additional Boston parkways that had long been interconnected with the MDC roads system by design, were transferred to the MDC primarily because of the financial inability of the City of Boston to maintain them. According to the Annual Report of 1956, Act 581, the following parkways were transferred to the MDC: Gallivan Boulevard, Morton Street, Arborway, Jamaicaway, Riverway, Fenway, Park Drive, Boylston Street, Charlesgate West, Charlesgate East, Agassiz Road, Centre Street, Hyde Park Avenue, Milton Street, Perkins Street, Francis Parkman Drive, Chestnut Street, Riverdale Parkway, and Willow Pond Road. All of these parkways were built during the period of significance for the Metropolitan Park System. Morton Street in particular represents characteristics that are in keeping with the registration requirements for this multiple property nomination. Morton Street is an excellent example of the connecting property sub-type and has, therefore, been included in this nomination. Truman Parkway, built by the City of Boston in the 1930s and transferred to the MDC 40 years later, also fits this category and has been added to this nomination as an excellent example of the connecting parkway sub-type.

VIII. POST 1956 REVOLUTION

The mid-1950s marked a major transition point in the history of the Metropolitan District Commission. By this time the major period of parkway construction and re-configuration was over and only maintenance and minor reconstructions occurred until the 1980. In 1959 the State Legislature investigated a transfer of MDC parkways to the Department of Public Works. However, the unique nature of the parkways as both traffic ways and open space was advanced to argue successfully against the transfer.

> "In the field of highway planning, the Metropolitan District Commission properly stressed the point that its primary duty is the preservation of public lands. With an ever increasing population, industrial expansion,

> automation, shorter work weeks and a steadily growing number of motor vehicles, the need for preserving public park lands and recreational areas for all the people becomes stronger and stronger. Metropolitan District Commission highway planners bear that thought in mind, but claim that the Department of Public Works does not."[20]

In response to ongoing demand for expansion and new facilities, the agency commissioned the 1956 General Plan, prepared by the engineering firm of Edwards, Kelcey and Beck. This was the first comprehensive planning effort for the parks since the Charles Eliot and Sylvester Baxter plan of 1893. The plan, however, excluded parkways and limited consideration to recreational facilities and open space acquisition. Overall, the plan recommended more than eighty million dollars in long-range improvements, chiefly for active recreational facilities such as pools, skating rinks, and golf links but also for substantial land acquisitions. The plan also called for development of a Metropolitan Zoo.

The General Plan was a qualified success; nearly all of its recommendations for rink, and pool development were acted upon over the ensuing decade. Its bold recommendations for acquisitions and park expansion were considerably less successful. The cause may have been a public disinterest or reluctance to acquire public open space during a time of large-scale suburbanization when the need was perceived as less critical.

The General Plan of 1956 also documented a disturbing trend of the postwar period, the sale or transfer of parkland. The report noted that since the end of the War, more than 200 acres of parkland had been transferred or sold and that this loss had been offset by only 100 acres of new acquisitions, principally for parkways. The report anticipated even further losses to ongoing highway expansions. Indeed, major highway expansion continued to take parkland along the Charles River for extension of the Massachusetts Turnpike, through the Mystic River for Interstate 93, and through the Fowl Meadow section of the Blue Hills for Interstate 95. In addition Interstate 93 divided the Middlesex Fells Reservation in half. More than 100 acres were lost at Breakheart Reservation for construction of a regional vocational high school. Many more acres were taken for other schools, churches, and social and fraternal organizations as well as city and town facilities in a trend begun in the1920s. But by far the most notorious transfer was a sale of portions of the Hammond Pond Reservation for commercial development, today the site of regional shopping malls and related parking.

[20]Brown, Samuel; *Memorandum Relating to the Transfer of Metropolitan District Commission Parkways to the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts Department of Public Works, Legislative Research Bureau, August 12, 1959.*

The 1970s witnessed the beginnings of renewed interest in the Commission's reservations and natural areas. This environmentally inspired movement reached a high point in the late 1980s when an expanding state economy offered an opportunity for a major land acquisition campaign. Development of parkland along the shores of the Mystic River (behind the newly constructed Amelia Earhart Dam, following construction of Interstate 93), was the major park development of the 1970s. Also along the Mystic was the construction of Mary O'Malley Park on a portion of the former Chelsea Naval Hospital. During this same period, Stodder's Neck was developed on the site of a former gravel pit border in the Weymouth Back River.

The 1980s also witnessed the development of the first completely new reservation since the 1930s with the establishment of the Belle Isle Marsh Reservation in East Boston. Also in Boston, the Commission established the Dorchester Shores Reservation with construction of Victory Road Park (on a reclaimed illegal landfill) along with other acquisitions for future development. In all these activities, the Commission continued the historic tradition of reclaiming damaged sites.

Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston Archaeological Context Statement

The archaeological potential of the Metropolitan Park System and its parkways is implicit in the region where the parks are located and the landscapes chosen for individual parks. All components of the Metropolitan Park System are located in the Greater Boston area, within 15 miles of the Massachusetts State House. Most of this area is included in the Mystic, Charles, and Neponset River drainages, all of which drain to Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay. The area is a documented locus of ancient Native American settlement containing regionally dense concentrations of archaeological sites representing every period of Native settlement known for the Northeastern United States from the Paleoindian (12,000 B.P.) through historic periods. A wide variety of site types and sizes are represented in this area ranging from larger, complex habitation sites to smaller, low- density campsites and rockshelters, burials, lithic workshops, shell middens, and other special-purpose site types. The Metropolitan Park System includes 20,000 acres within which 162 miles of parkways are present. Charles Eliot and Sylvester Baxter in 1893 proposed five types of landscapes for inclusion in the Metropolitan Park System. The areas included ocean frontage, shores and islands of the inner bay, tidal estuaries, forest uplands, and smaller squares and playgrounds in populated areas. These locations, which came to characterize the Metropolitan Park System, represent most of the upland, freshwater wetland, and marine-related ecosystems important for Native American subsistence and settlement activities. River parkways and ocean parkways also exemplify environmental settings that correlate with ancient Native American site locations recorded on the Inventory of Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth. Known archaeological sites and the presence of environmental criteria such as

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level to moderate slope, good soil drainage, and proximity to wetlands (less than 1,000 feet) can be used to assess the archaeological sensitivity of specific locations.

Environmental characteristics indicate a high potential for the presence of ancient Native American sites in many of the parks and related parkways in the Metropolitan Park System.

Many other Metropolitan Park System Parkways are also located in the vicinity of recorded archaeological sites and site concentrations, possibly core areas of Native settlement and land use.

(At least one, the Blue Hills Parkway, contains no recorded sites in its general area.) The parks and parkways clearly reflect the high site density and high archaeological sensitivity of the Boston Basin and contiguous uplands.

The significance of known and predicted ancient Native American sites in the Greater Boston area can also be hypothesized as a result of a long history of amateur and professional activity in this area. Artifact collectors and amateur archaeological research dating from the early to mid twentieth century combined with professional archaeological surveys of the Boston Basin and its river drainages in the late 1960s and early 1970s provide data to interpret the region's chronology and infer changes in settlement and subsistence patterns. Professional research from the 1970s to the present has elaborated on those temporal and interpretative contexts by refining and contributing details for the subsistence and settlement activities that occurred within various culture periods. Recent research, often completed through cultural resource management surveys, has contributed systematically collected intra-site information from which sites can be evaluated and compared.

potential National Register significance in the absence of temporally diagnostic artifact types when datable organic samples are present.

Regional comparative information was used together with the formal characteristics of unfinished tools to hypothesize a Late Archaic or Woodland Period (circa 5,000-450 years ago) date for the sites. The discovery of a soil anomaly interpreted as an ancient cultural feature provided the potential to recover datable and identifiable organic samples.

On a broader scale, the sites also help to understand ancient Native American resources in the Greater Boston area. Systematic research and results similar to the Spot Pond sites obtained or predicted from other sites in the Metropolitan Park System locale can also help identify and evaluate the significance of sites located near other reservations and parkways described in this nomination. Known and potential sites in the Metropolitan Park System area may contribute important information relating to ancient Native American settlement, subsistence, ceremonial, technological, social, and economic contexts.

Known sites, high local and regional site concentrations, and high ancient Native American site potential are documented for most of the parks and parkways included in this nomination. However, the potential for locating significant Native resources within the parkway boundaries established for this nomination is low. The parkways included in this nomination encompass a corridor that extends 10 feet from the current edge of the park roads, an area that has been affected by numerous roadway construction and maintenance activities since the late 19th century. Grading and paving represent the major impacts within the parkway right-of-way. Most of the parkways were initially designed as carriage road, then widened and upgraded to accommodate automobile traffic in the 1920s-30s. Some parkways were constructed over pre-existing roadways. Other impacts within the right-of way include paved sidewalks, plantings, utilities, traffic signs and signals, and drainage systems. These construction and maintenance episodes would have had an adverse effect on any ancient Native American resources that may have been located in the parkway right-of-way. Fragmented portions of archaeological sites including deeply buried artifact concentrations and truncated features may survive within the right-of-way; however, it is doubtful that NR-eligible sites survive. Known sites that existed within or extended into the parkway right-of-way have been essentially destroyed.

Environmental characteristics, documented Colonial settlement patterns, known historic archaeological sites, and the presence of National Register-listed properties and districts also indicate a high potential for locating historical archaeological sites in the vicinity of many parkways. European settlement has been documented in the vicinity of the Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston since early in the 17th century. Structural evidence and artifacts related to residential, commercial, civic, industrial, and water supply-related resources may have been originally located within or abutting the nominated area. The significance of potential historic resources can also be hypothesized on the basis of the proximity of different parkways to National Register-listed properties. For example, segments of the Middlesex Fells Parkways abut the Middlesex Fells Reservoirs Historic District (NR 1990) that is listed as part of the National Register Thematic Resource Area Nomination for the Water Supply System of Metropolitan Boston (1990).

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and properties listed as part of the Stoneham Multiple Resource Area (NR 1992).

Given the same impacts associated with construction of the parkways described for ancient Native American resources, the potential for recovering intact and significant historical archaeological resources is also low within the parkway right-of-way. Roadway construction has also destroyed potential historical archaeological resources within the nominated parkway area. Truncated features and/or deeply buried fragments of sites may survive, but the overall integrity of these sites has been compromised.

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ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES
PARKWAYS

Description

Parkways in the Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston are automobile roads designed and constructed as components of an integrated circulation web within and between MDC reservation units. The parkways were built primarily between 1893 and about 1920.

The parkways are typically two lanes, but sometimes four lanes wide. Traffic control features such as medians, rotaries, islands, or jug handles may define travel lanes and intersections. The vertical and horizontal engineering geometry usually follows topography, creating curving road alignments and changes in elevation. Roadway edge definition elements such as sidewalks, planting strips, and curbing vary in different locations both among and within parkways. Similarly, plantings, including grass, trees, and shrubs range from formal allees of trees and mowed lawns to natural grasslands and woodlands. Bridges and culverts may exist where parkways cross watercourses. Drainage systems are may include culverts under the roadbed, catch basins, and outlets. Lighting, traffic signs, and signals universally post-date the period of significance.

The rich variety in setting along the parkways reflects the comprehensive experience imbedded in the design intent for the parkway system. Settings include MDC reservation lands that encompass woodlands, rivers and streams, buildings, structures, monuments, and associated parking areas. Parkways may travel through 19th and 20th century residential neighborhoods and sometimes through commercial concentrations. Views may be limited to the parkway corridor, or may be punctuated by clearings that offer middle and far distant views, or may be open fully to the expanse of oceanfront and sweeping vistas to distant points.

The parkways overall demonstrate their original design intent during the period of significance for this property type. Roadway geometry, engineering features, the relationship of the parkways to their settings, and important views are generally very well preserved. Original plant materials may have been replaced due to age or poor condition, but the quality of formal plantings and natural landscapes remains intact. Typical changes during the period of significance include grading, resurfacing, modifications and repairs to sidewalks and curbs, additions to or updates of drainage systems, bridge modifications or replacements, landscape updates or replacement, and general maintenance and routine repairs. The year 1956 marking the end of the period of significance ushered in a program of improvements, as well as an era of new design standards that evolved from the newly established federal highway program. Major classes of modifications after the period of significance include replacement of lights and plantings, new traffic signals and signs, the modification or addition of traffic management features such as miters, islands and

rotaries, as well as general maintenance and routine repairs. None of the modifications described compromise the overall integrity of the nominated, or eligible, examples of the parkways property type.

Five subtypes exist within the Parkways property type group: Border Roads, Internal Roads, Connecting Parkways, River Parkways, and Ocean Parkways. All share the overall characteristics of the parkway type, but are distinguished by specific design traits derived from their function within the system and the existing natural topography and environment at that location. Elaboration on the distinctive characteristics of subtypes follows.

Border Roads typically define the edges of the MDC parks and reservations. The parkside setting is the natural wooded landscape and may have retaining walls in steeply sloped areas. The non-parkside setting may also be a wooded landscape, but it may also be 19th and 20th century residential neighborhoods. Some original Border Roads now function as Internal Roads due to the acquisition by the MDC system of lands previously outside the reservation and parklands. Border Roads and Internal Roads within a MDC reservation may be discontiguous. These parkways may be connected by local roads (usually pre-existing) or other MDC parkways considered separately within the multiple property nomination, to create an interconnected parkway system in the reservation.

The typical cross-section of a border road built during the period of significance consists of an undivided narrow travel corridor comprised of two travel lanes (varying from 10 to 12 feet wide). The reservation side of the road is similar to that of an internal road (see below), with no curbs, planting strips, or sidewalks. Narrow dirt shoulders or gravel ditches may define the edge of the roadway; however, vegetation from the park usually abuts the roadway directly. Barriers and/or stone retaining walls may be present where there are severe dips and or rises in the adjoining terrain. Historic barriers were typically the "wooden rustic fence," a documented MDC standard from the early 20th century. As these have deteriorated over time, they have been replaced with modern wooden rustic fences or metal barriers such as the SS-type made of galvanized steel. This is not considered a historically significant barrier.

The non-reservation side of a border road tends to be more developed with curbs, planting strips, and sidewalks. Original plans for many of the border roads show curb cuts for anticipated residential development. As a result, the non-reservation side of the border is typically bordered with homes today that face the reservation. Curbs from this period usually consisted of granite edgestones (commonly referred to as "vertical granite"). These have generally been replaced in-kind; however, in certain cases, they may have been replaced with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones (commonly referred to as "quarter-round") or with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones that have been inlaid with granite block mosaic (commonly referred to as "Belgian Block"). Plantings within the planting strips consisted of varying deciduous types including oaks, elms, maples, and beech trees. A number of these trees still exist. Where they have not survived, they have usually been replaced in-kind. Paving materials used in the early years of the MPC were usually dirt or gravel. Because these materials were continually replaced as a result of maintaining the

parkways, they have not been considered for the purposes of determining integrity for any of the parkways regardless of age or subtype. All of the parkways are covered with bituminous or cement concrete today.

The existing condition of border roads that are outlined in the multiple property nomination generally reflect the physical specifications listed in the previous paragraphs. A few things have changed either as a result of technology, improved and updated safety and engineering standards, or as a result of insensitive development and modernization. Generally, improvements have been made that are in keeping with the original design and aesthetic character of the parkways, thereby resulting in a high level of integrity for the parkways outlined in this nomination. Where original features still exist, such as curbs, rails, and general geometry, they should be recognized as historically significant. Furthermore, changes that are not original to the parkway but were made within the period of significance should also be considered historically significant.

Internal Roads serve as the circulation system within MDC parks and reservations. They typically follow natural topographical contours and take advantage of scenic elements associated with the park. Elevation changes tend to be more dramatic than in other subtypes. The setting on both sides is the natural landscape and is usually wooded. Retaining walls may exist in steeply sloped areas. The forest setting may be punctuated in places by clearings, parking areas, and overlooks that offer middle distance views within the park, such as across a pond, and far views beyond the park to the Boston skyline or other notable vistas. Border Roads and Internal Roads within a MDC reservation may be discontiguous. These parkways may be connected by local roads (usually pre-existing) or other MDC parkways considered separately in the multiple property nomination, to create an interconnected parkway system in the reservation.

The typical cross-section of an internal road built during the period of significance consists of an undivided narrow travel corridor comprised of two travel lanes (varying from 10 to 12 feet wide). Both sides of the road are undeveloped without curbs, planting strips, or sidewalks. Narrow dirt shoulders or gravel ditches may define the edge of the roadway; however, vegetation from the reservation usually abuts the roadway directly. Barriers and/or stone retaining walls may be present where there are severe dips and/or rises in the adjoining terrain. Local granite boulders may be used as barriers where there are environmentally sensitive areas such as wetlands. Retaining walls were usually built out of local stone as well. Historic barriers also included the “wooden rustic fence,” a documented MDC standard from the early 20th century. As these have deteriorated over time, they have been replaced with modern wooden rustic fences or metal barriers such as the SS-type made of galvanized steel. This is not considered a historically significant barrier.

Internal roads were never designed with parking, however, parking pull-outs are often located at trailheads and scenic overlooks along the roadway. Today, internal roads have retained this simple design. Often minor culverts, undiscernible from the roadway, have been built under the roadway to allow for

drainage or to allow small watercourses to travel freely under the roadway. However minor, where they exist these culverts should be considered historically significant as a component of the larger drainage systems that have been established in each of the reservations. Larger culverts are mentioned individually as contributing features of the individual nominations. Paving materials used in the early years of the MPC were usually dirt or gravel. Because these materials were continually replaced as a result of maintaining the parkways, they have not been considered for the purposes of determining integrity for any of the parkways regardless of age or subtype. All of the parkways are covered with bituminous or cement concrete today.

The existing condition of internal roads that are outlined in the multiple property nomination generally reflect the physical specifications listed in the previous paragraphs. Some alterations have resulted from technology changes, improved and updated safety and engineering standards, or insensitive development and modernization. Generally, improvements have been made that are in keeping with the original design and aesthetic character of the parkways, thereby resulting in a high level of integrity for the parkways outlined in this nomination. Where original features still exist, such as curbs, rails and general geometry, they should be recognized as historically significant. Furthermore, changes that are not original to the parkway but were made within the period of significance should also be considered historically significant.

Connecting Parkways create links between different discrete units of the MDC park reservation and parkways system. They tend to follow natural contours, but are not necessarily defined directly by a specific linear natural feature. Connecting Parkways may be defined by sidewalks adjacent to the edge of road pavement or separated by a planting strip, or they may incorporate green spaces along the road corridor. The immediate setting of connecting parkways is usually similar on both sides of the corridor – comprised of built-up residential neighborhoods, commercial nodes, and perhaps a prominent natural landscape element that punctuates the route. In most cases, there are few opportunities for long distance views.

The typical cross-section of a connecting parkway built during the period of significance would have consisted of a broad travel corridor comprised of four to six travel lanes (varying from 12 to 14 feet wide), a wide planted median (varying from 24 to 40 feet wide), curbs along the median and outer edges of the parkway, planted turf strips (from two to four feet wide), and sidewalks (varying from four to nine feet wide) on either side of the roadway. Electric rail lines or dirt bridle paths often traveled through the center of the median; however, only remnants of these features are extant today. Almost all connecting parkways include traffic rotaries and/or miters (triangular islands used to separate travel lanes or to assist in traffic maneuvers) at major intersections where traffic flow is a concern. Rotaries were incorporated into the MDC system of parkways as early as 1897 and have remained an integral feature of parkway design for three of the five subtypes: connecting parkways, river parkways, and ocean parkways.

Rotaries, and sometimes miters, in the MDC system are typically landscaped as miniature parks that usually include a memorial monument or marker of some kind. Unless they have been entirely reconstructed or are modern, rotaries, miters and the landscaping of these features should be considered historically significant where they are present.

Plantings along medians typically consisted of varying deciduous types including oaks, elms, maples, and beech trees. A number of these trees still exist. Where they have not survived, they typically have been replaced in-kind. Curbs from this period generally consisted of vertically placed granite block (commonly referred to as "vertical granite"). These have generally been replaced in-kind; however, in certain cases, they may have been replaced with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones (commonly referred to as "quarter-round") or with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones that have been inlaid with granite block mosaic (commonly referred to as "Belgian Block"). Paving materials used in the early years of the MPC were usually dirt or gravel. Because these materials were continually replaced as a result of maintaining the parkways, they have not been considered for the purposes of determining integrity for any of the parkways regardless of age or subtype. All of the parkways are covered with bituminous or cement concrete today. Other features included rails and barriers. Used primarily for safety, barriers from the period of significance were typically "wooden rustic fences" or pipe rails, both MDC standards from the early 20th century. Many of these barriers have been updated or replaced as a result of improved safety standards. It is not unusual, however, to find pipe rails from the 1930s (called "Boston Pattern" type rails) still in place along many of the parkways.

The existing condition of the connecting parkways outlined in the multiple property nomination generally reflect the physical specifications listed in the previous paragraphs. Some alterations have resulted from technology changes, improved and updated safety and engineering standards, or insensitive development and modernization. Generally, improvements have been made that are in keeping with the original design and aesthetic character of the parkways, thereby resulting in a high level of integrity for the parkways outlined in this nomination. Where original features still exist, they should be recognized as historically significant. Furthermore, changes that are not original to the parkway but were made within the period of significance should also be considered historically significant.

River Parkways conform to the curving alignment of an inland watercourse and are usually within a linear MDC reservation unit. Typically, River Parkways follow one side of the defining landscape element. The setting of the riverine side is characterized by a natural, sometimes wooded, landscape. Middle distance views are across and along the river. The side opposite the watercourse is usually late 19th and 20th century single-family homes, with small commercial pockets. In most cases, there are few opportunities for long-distance views.

The cross-section of a river parkway built during the period of significance varies from that similar to a connecting parkway to that of a border road or internal park road. This is the most versatile of the

parkway subtypes. A single parkway can resemble different subtypes, depending on the character of the area it travels through.

Plantings along medians typically consisted of varying deciduous types including oaks, elms, maples, and beech trees. A number of these trees still exist. Where they have not survived, they typically have been replaced in-kind. Curbs from the period of significance generally consisted of granite edge stones (commonly referred to as "vertical granite"). These have generally been replaced in-kind; however, in certain cases, they may have been replaced with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones (commonly referred to as "quarter-round") or with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones that have been inlaid with granite block mosaic (commonly referred to as "Belgian Block"). Paving materials used in the early years of the MPC were usually dirt or gravel. Because these materials were continually replaced as a result of maintaining the parkways, they have not been considered for the purposes of determining integrity for any of the parkways regardless of age or subtype. All of the parkways are covered with bituminous or cement concrete today. Other features included rails and barriers. Used primarily for safety, barriers from the period of significance were typically "wooden rustic fences" or pipe rails, both MDC standards from the early 20th century. Many of these barriers have been updated or replaced as a result of improved safety standards. It is not unusual, however, to find pipe rails from the 1930s (called "Boston Pattern" type rails) still in place along many of the parkways. River parkways often features major culverts and/or bridges where the adjoining river passes under the parkway or where the parkway spans a minor inlet from the adjoining watercourse. Other more minor culverts and drains, usually not readily visible, may also exist and should be considered historically significant whenever they are found.

The existing condition of the river parkways outlined in the multiple property nomination generally reflects the physical specifications listed in the previous paragraphs. Some alterations have resulted from technology changes, improved and updated safety and engineering standards, or insensitive development and modernization. Generally, improvements have been made that are in keeping with the original design and aesthetic character of the parkways, thereby resulting in a high level of integrity for the parkways outlined in this nomination. Where original features still exist, they should be recognized as historically significant. Furthermore, changes that are not original to the parkway but were made within the period of significance should also be considered historically significant.

Ocean Parkways relate to maritime coastal components of the MDC park and reservation system and are usually within a linear MDC reservation unit. They follow the undulating shoreline, close to the littoral edge. The immediate setting is beach on the shore side, which may be separated from the road by parking, sidewalks, and retaining walls. The open terrain affords middle views of harbors and bays, and far views to distant points of land, islands, and the Boston skyline. The inland side is characterized by residential neighborhoods, usually of late 19th and 20th century single-family homes, with small commercial pockets. The inland side may also include parks and reservation areas focused on tidal creeks and marshes that offer middle and distance vistas. Sections of Ocean Parkways may serve as berms and

control for flood management and beach erosion control. Ocean Parkways may also include approach segments at either end that are more similar to Connecting Parkways.

The cross-section of an ocean parkway built during the period of significance varies, usually consisting of two wide lanes traveling in either direction that are bordered on either side by parking and wide sidewalks or promenades. A few of the ocean parkways are four lanes and/or have been divided by a narrow modern median. All of the ocean parkways feature seawalls along their outer edges on one or both sides. Often these seawalls are surmounted by pipe-rail or modern chain-link fences. Unlike any of the other parkway subtypes, ocean parkways typically feature erosion and flood control features such as tidegates.

Ocean Parkways are often edged by curbs (if a seawall does not directly abut the parkway) from the period of significance. These generally consist of granite edge stones (commonly referred to as "vertical granite"). Usually these have been replaced in-kind; however, in certain cases, they may have been replaced with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones (commonly referred to as "quarter-round") or with cement concrete quarter-round edge stones that have been inlaid with granite block mosaic (commonly referred to as "Belgian Block"). Paving materials used in the early years of the MPC were usually dirt or gravel. Because these materials were continually replaced as a result of maintaining the parkways, they have not been considered for the purposes of determining integrity for any of the parkways regardless of age or subtype. All of the parkways are covered with bituminous or cement concrete today. Other features included rails and barriers. Used primarily for safety, barriers from the period of significance were typically "wooden rustic fences" or pipe rails, both MDC standards from the early 20th century. Many of these barriers have been updated or replaced as a result of improved safety standards. It is not unusual, however, to find pipe rails from the 1930s (called "Boston Pattern" type rails) still in place along many of the parkways. Ocean parkways often features major culverts and/or bridges where the adjoining river passes under the parkway or where the parkway spans a minor inlet from the adjoining watercourse. Other more minor culverts and drains, usually not readily visible, may also exist and should be considered historically significant whenever they are found.

The existing condition of the ocean parkways outlined in the multiple property nomination generally reflects the physical specifications listed in the previous paragraphs. Some alterations have resulted from technology changes, improved and updated safety and engineering standards, or insensitive development and modernization. Generally, improvements have been made that are in keeping with the original design and aesthetic character of the parkways, thereby resulting in a high level of integrity for the parkways outlined in this nomination. Where original features still exist, they should be recognized as historically significant. Furthermore, changes that are not original to the parkway but were made within the period of significance should also be considered historically significant.

Statement of Significance

Parkways are associated with the Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston historic context theme. Parkways are significant at the local level in the areas of conservation, recreation, transportation, architecture, landscape architecture, and engineering. They meet National Register Criterion A, embodying the vision and design intent of the creators of the MDC reservation and parkways system at the turn of the century. They hold associations with Charles Eliot and with the design firms of Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot, and its successor firm, Olmsted Brothers, preeminent landscape architects of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Under Criterion C, the parkways are excellent examples of roads, either individually or as part of a reservation, integrating recreation and transportation functions through an engineering and design program based on maximizing the benefits of the natural landscape and topography for residents, commuters, and visitors. The period of significance is 1893 to 1956.

Registration Requirements

Parkways within the MDC system should retain sufficient integrity of design, location, and setting to demonstrate the original design intent and construction of the road. Alterations should not substantially diminish the historic function, alignment (vertical and horizontal), cross-section, and original route of the road. Overall integrity of setting is also important. Major scenic vistas and associated natural features should be largely intact. Any other features that have historically contributed to the setting of the resource such as residential, commercial, and recreational structures should also remain largely intact.

Each parkway should retain integrity of workmanship and materials for engineering features associated with the parkway's function and character. In addition to bridges, large and small-scale engineering features such as retaining walls, sea walls, curbs, parking areas, bikepaths, sidewalks, medians, grade separations, and drainage systems should be intact. Other character-defining structures such as benches, signage, monuments, etc. (where they historically existed) should also remain largely intact and unchanged.

The loss of, or changes in, certain features including roadside vegetation and elements that have been updated with replacement materials as part of road maintenance and safety programs (e.g., trees, shrubs, road and sidewalk paving, lighting, guard rails) does not necessarily render a resource ineligible.

Parkways within the MDC system should typically date from the period of significance, defined as 1893-1956. However, a small number of parkways now in the MDC system were built before the beginning date of the period of significance and/or were built or acquired by MDC after the end date of the period of significance. If these parkways were created with a design intent similar to that of the core group of MDC parkways and have retained characteristics consistent with other parkways in the MDC system, then they are eligible for inclusion in this MPDF nomination.

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

The geographical area of this Multiple Property Documentation Form nomination encompasses the Metropolitan Park System property owned and maintained by the Metropolitan District Commission in Essex, Middlesex, Norfolk, Plymouth, and Suffolk counties, Massachusetts. Property is located in the communities of:

Arlington
Boston
Braintree
Brookline
Cambridge
Canton
Chelsea
Dedham
Everett
Hull
Jamaica Plain
Lynn
Malden
Medford
Melrose
Milton
Nahant
Newton
Quincy
Revere
Saugus
Somerville
Stoneham
Wakefield
Watertown
Weston
Winchester
Winthrop

SUMMARY OF IDENTIFICATION AND EVALUATION METHODS

The development of this Multiple Property Documentation Format National Register nomination for the Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston used National Register criteria and methodologies to: identify resources significant for their historic design and associations; define areas and periods of significance; explain how the resources retain integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and/or association; and discuss how the resources meet Criteria A, B, C, and/or D of the National Register of Historic Places.

The methodology included research and data collection, fieldwork, analysis, writing, and graphics preparation. The Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) and the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) provided preliminary lists of target reservations and parkways. The MHC Inventory and National Register files were reviewed to determine those elements of the system already included in the National Register, as well as the level of survey information available for parklands, parkways, bridges, buildings, objects, and other components of the MPDF nomination. The MDC also provided: a list of MDC-owned bridges and other facilities; a large-scale overview map of the system; mylar segment and station drawing plans of the parkways prepared by Vanasse/Hangen in 1986; and a draft history of the MDC parkway system. The present statement of historic context in particular incorporates extensive text from the 585-page, two-volume Metropolitan Park System Draft National Register Nomination completed by the staff of the Metropolitan District Commission Planning Office in October 1995. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management provided some background materials and other resources through a simultaneous Historic Parkways Initiative Project of the Executive Office of Environmental Management.

Background research on all parkways was conducted at the MHC, as well as in the Archives and the Planning and Engineering files at the MDC. The 1986 mylar maps were scanned for use as base maps. Relevant secondary sources on the history of American landscape architecture, and the landscape architects responsible for the founding and development of the MDC parks and parkways systems, were consulted.

Fieldwork began with a series of preliminary driveovers by MHC staff and the project team to collect data on character-defining features, geographical distribution, level of integrity, and organizational approaches for the parkways. Once a field strategy was developed, the project team drove in two directions over each parkway that was selected for inclusion in the nomination. The team recorded notes in a standardized format and took photographs of the parkway, as well as its contributing resources, character-defining features, setting, and vistas.

The development of the historic context for the MDC park system and for the parkways property type drew on extensive research and chronological information previously assembled by the MDC through a

review of annual reports, acts and resolves, and other primary documentary materials. The National Register project team supplemented this data with general landscape history information and historical information postdating 1935, the cut-off date for the MDC chronology.

Topics addressed by the team in consultation with the MHC included approaches to organizing the parkways into typological groups, the level and format of data detail to be recorded for contributing and noncontributing resources, standards for boundary definition of parkways, the appropriate framework for assessing level of integrity, relevant areas of significance, and the proper beginning and end dates for the period of significance.

The results of these efforts were integrated in the analysis phase, resulting the preparation of this MPDF nomination for the development of the park system and separate nominations for parkways encompassed in the Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston.

(End)

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