

FORM F - STRUCTURE

AREA FORM NO.

	UF 98
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MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
80 BOYLSTON STREET
BOSTON, MA 02116

Town Newton, Mass. MRA
NEWTON (Upper Falls)/Needham

Address Needham St. at Charles River

Name Needham Street Bridge

Ownership: X Public
Private

Type of Structure (check one):

<u>bridge</u> <u>X</u>	<u>pond</u> _____
<u>canal</u> _____	<u>powder house</u> _____
<u>cut</u> _____	<u>street</u> _____
<u>dike</u> _____	<u>tower</u> _____
<u>ditch</u> _____	<u>tunnel</u> _____
<u>farmhouse</u> _____	<u>wall</u> _____
<u>other</u> _____	<u>windmill</u> _____



Sketch Map: Draw map showing structure's location in relation to nearest cross streets, buildings and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.

(SEE ATTACHED MAP)

DESCRIPTION

Date 1875

Source datestone

Architect Engineer/Designer (if known):
Wm. Wheeler & Hiram Blaisdell

Construction material stone

Alterations (with dates) none

Condition excellent

Moved no Date ---

Acreeage less than 1 acre

Setting carries busy commercial
artery between Rt. 128 and industrial,
commercial strip.

Recorded by Peter Stott

Organization Newton Historical Comm.

Date April 1986

UTM REFERENCE 19.317220.4685960

USGS QUADRANGLE NEWTON, MA

SCALE 1:25,000

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

As a well-preserved example of a once common bridge type, and for its association with a known engineering firm, the Needham Street Bridge meets criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important design features and evaluate in terms of other structures within the community.

The Needham Street Bridge is a three-span stone-arch bridge with an overall length of 95 feet. Each of the three elliptical stone arches have a span of 27 feet, providing a waterway of 81 feet and a roadway of 40 feet. The entire length of the bridge and wingwalls is 150 feet. In the center of the downstream side is carved the date, "A.D. 1875."

The Needham Street Bridge was completed within a few months of Upper Falls' more famous arched structure, Echo Bridge (NR-4/9/1980), part of the City of Boston's Sudbury Aqueduct and for many years the second longest masonry arch in the nation.

Unlike other stone-arch bridges across the Charles which have been widened in the early 20th century for increased traffic capacity, the Needham Street Bridge has seen no alterations and remains one of the best examples of stone-arch construction in the Boston area.

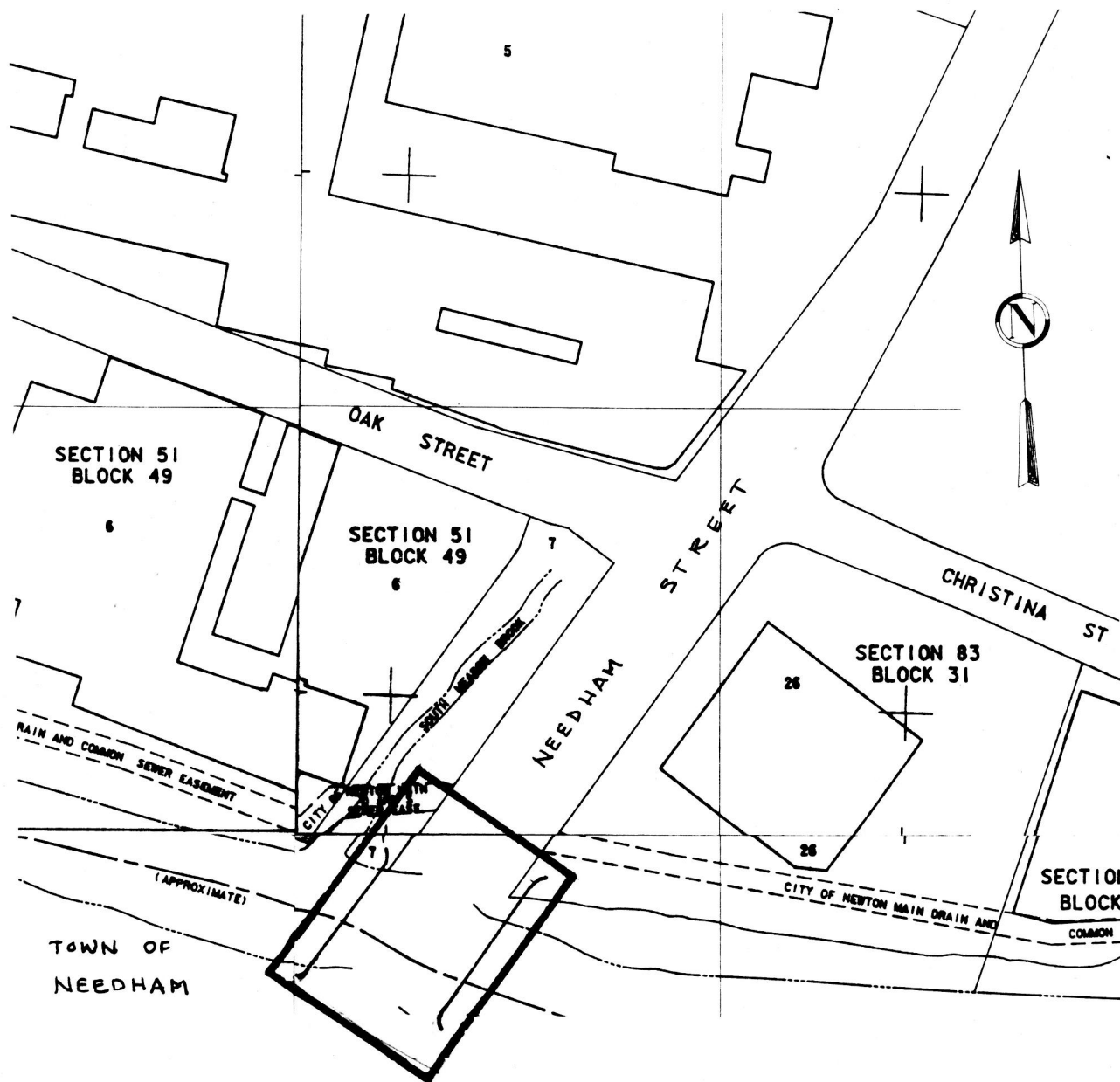
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of structure and how the structure relates to the development of the community.

Although the Needham Street Bridge is one of the oldest of Newton's bridges, it is one of the most recent of Needham's nine stone bridges over the Charles River. Needham Street was laid out in 1875 to link Newton Highlands and Centre Street with Newton Upper Falls and the town of Needham. The bridge was formally accepted by the selectmen of Needham and the highway committee of Newton on Saturday, November 13, 1875.

Engineers responsible for the design of the bridge were Hiram Blaisdell and William Wheeler, two young civil engineers from Concord, Mass., both just starting out on their careers. The pair were also responsible for several stone bridges in their native town, and further investigation may show a wide influence in Boston-area towns. In 1876, the firm was responsible for the design of Lyons Bridge over the Charles, between Needham and Dedham. Although Lyons Bridge utilized a single 54-foot arch span, like the Needham Street bridge, it prominently displays a central datestone.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Newton Republican 20 November 1875.



City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheets 135,136,143,144
Metric Series. 1979
Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA
Needham Street Bridge
Newton Upper Falls