

FORM H - PARKS
AND LANDSCAPE

Massachusetts Historical Commission
80 Boylston Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Assessor's number

Parcel 413/
Prop Ownership
Map Sheet 118

USGS Quad

LOWELL

Area(s) Form No. Forms within

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Town Lowell

Place *.(neighborhood or village)* Acre

Address or Location North Common

Name North Common

Ownership *Public* *Private*

Type of Park or Landscape Feature *(check one)*:

- park farm land
- green/common mine/quarry
- garden training field
- boulevard/parkway
- other *(specify)* _____

Date of Construction 1845 deeded to City as park

Source Lowell Historic Board

Landscape Architect unknown

Location of Plans Parks Department

Alterations/Intrusions *(with dates)* c.1970 Carol Johnson Associates; Michael Weinmayr, 1973

Condition shows considerable wear/use.

Acreage 9.88 acres (+1.98 acres for State land)

Setting residential with large public housing project on north and east sides

Recorded by Christine Albright

Organization DRA Architects, Inc.

Date May 16, 1991

Photograph

(3"x 3" or 3"x 5", only black and white)

Staple onto the left side of the form. Indicate the address of the property on the back of the photo.

Indicate the roll and film number of the negative here on the form.

roll	film number

Sketch Map

Draw a map of the area indicating property's location in relation to geographic features and nearby cross streets. Indicates all buildings or features within and surrounding the inventoried property. Indicate North.

PARKS AND LANDSCAPES FORM

VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT *see continuation sheet*

Describe topography and layout. Note structures such as bandstands, gazebos, sheds, stone walls, monuments, and fountains. Note landscaping features such as formal plantings, agricultural plantings, and bodies of water. If possible, compare current appearance with original.

The North Common is a gently sloping park for both passive and active recreational uses. The uphill or western section is for passive recreation. It has mature shade trees lining the existing asphalt paths. There is a small amphitheater at the northern section and a seating plaza along Clark Street. Contemporary wood slat and metal frame benches and contemporary light fixtures on poles also line the paths. Grass areas infill the areas between paths. The existing path system in this section of the park is similar to the original design.

The topography of the lower section of the park, the eastern section, is flat. This section is used for active recreation including tennis and basketball courts and a baseball field. The active recreational use of this area has been the predominant use since the 1970's when the courts were erected and the ballfield improved.

The proposed Acre Elementary School is in the lower section of the park. The school moves the existing basketball and tennis courts and comfort station still within this lower section to an area adjacent to the existing state swimming pool. The ballfield would remain in approximately the same location. Thus, the active recreational activities would remain in the same area and respect the existing use. With this site selection the uphill or western section would retain its existing character and use as a shaded, grassed passive recreational area.

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE *see continuation sheet*

Discuss history of use. Evaluate the historical associations of the landscape/park with the community.

The North Common was purchased and constructed in 1845 as a park for the use of the residents of the Acre neighborhood. Municipal records of 1905 and 1906 indicate considerable filling and regrading to address drainage problems. In 1906 there is a reference to a back-stop for a ballfield, presumably on the flat, or eastern portion of the site. This indicates that the park had active recreational uses at this time.

The uphill, or western section of the site had a bandstand which was demolished prior to the 1970's.

In 1972 Carol Johnson and Associates renovated the park with Block Grant Funds. The emphasis was on active recreational uses. The improvements included a baseball diamond, new trees, tennis courts, site lighting, and an amphitheater. At this time the State constructed the swimming pool on its adjacent land.

In 1973 Michael Weinmayr and Associates designed the seating plaza along Clark Street.

In previous years an elementary school, the Morrow School, was on a site adjacent to the North Common along Adams Street. The school was demolished c.1970.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES *see continuation sheet*

Lowell Historic Board - Kathleen Brooker

Center for Lowell History, Martha Mayo

Lowell, A Study of Industrial Development; Margaret Parker; Kinnikat Press, Port Washington, New York.

Cotton Was King, A History of Lowell, Arthur Eno, editor; New Hampshire Publishing Company, 1976.

Lowell City Documents 1906-07, 1905-06.

The Lowell Neighborhood, An Historical & Architectural Overview, Elizabeth Durfee Hengen, 1981.

- Recommended for listing in National Register of Historic Places. *If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.*

D·R·A

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**Acre
 Elementary
 School**
 Lowell
 Massachusetts

SITE PLAN

Scale: 1" = 40'
 Date: 10/1/78
 Drawn: J.C.C.
 Checked: J.C.C.





