



AREA

FORM NO.

TP	74-8
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Town Lowell

Address Westford Street

Name Tyler Park

Ownership: Private

Public x

Local x State Federal

Type of Park or Landscape Feature (check one):

Park x

Green/Common

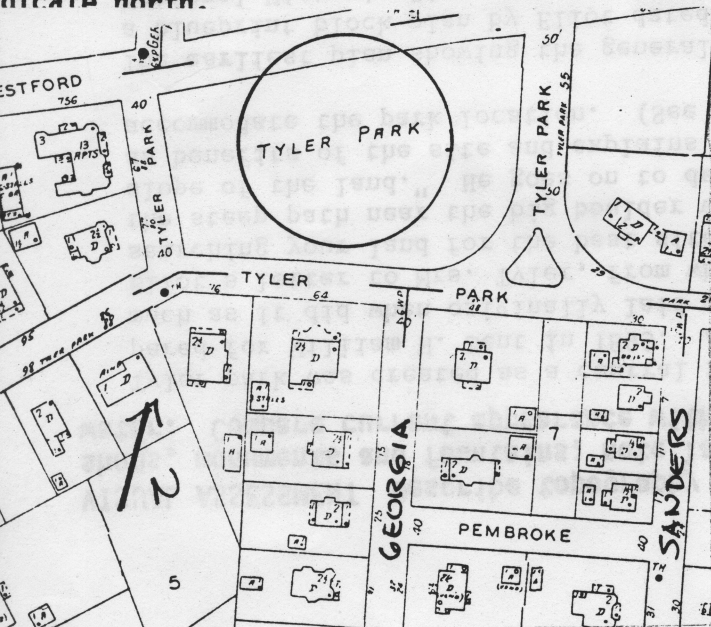
Garden

Training Field

Boulevard/Parkway

Other

relationship to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all structures within inventoried property and buildings between and nearest cross street. Indicate north.



REFERENCE

QUADRANGLE

SCALE

DESCRIPTION

Date 1893

Source plans & correspondence

Landscape Architect (if known) Charles Eliot

& John Charles Olmsted

Location of Plans (if known) Lowell City

Hall-Engineer's Office;

F.L.Olmsted National Historic Site-FLO job # 632 & 1372.

Alterations (with dates) central fountain

drinking fountain altered to rockery (1906): installed NE corner

Condition Fair to good. Need additional plan-

tings, path system needs repair, turf in

Acreage 2.74 acres

Setting Mixed residential neighborhood of

single and multifamily dwellings.

Recorded by Stephen Conant

Organization Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Department of Environmental

Management

Date December, 1986

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable):

VISUAL ASSESSMENT Describe topography and layout. Note structures such as bandstands, gazebos, sheds, monuments and fountains; note landscaping features such as formal plantings, bodies of water. Compare current appearance with original, if possible.

Tyler park was created as a central feature in a subdivision plan which Charles Eliot prepared for William H. Bent in 1893. All documentation indicates that Tyler Park appears much as it did when originally laid out. The earliest description of the site is found in Eliot's letter to Mrs. Tyler, from whom Bent purchased the land, on February 4, 1893, "In searching your land for the best site for a two acre park," he writes, "I soon hit upon the steep path near the big boulder where a little hollow makes a sort of dimple in the slope of the land." He goes on to describe the rock, hollow, good trees and a fine view as benefits of the site and explains how he turned his street plan around in order to accommodate the park location. (See Fig. 1.)

The earliest plan showing the general outline of the park within the Tyler subdivision is a blueprint block plan by Eliot dated February 4, 1893. (On file at Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Job No. 632.) The area is bound by Westford and Pine Streets (con't.)

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Discuss types of use and major period of use, evaluate importance with town.

Tyler Park's major significance to Lowell is that it is the City's only park designed and laid out exclusively by Charles Eliot and the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted. At the time Tyler Park was commissioned Eliot and the Olmsted firm were the nation's foremost landscape architects working on numerous projects which gathered national attention. Eliot was known for establishing the Trustees of Reservations in Massachusetts and the Boston Metropolitan Park Commission, the first metropolitan park commission in the country. The Olmsted firm was in the middle of designing the landscape of the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago.

Tyler Park also represents the Olmsted firm's introduction to the City of Lowell. Once a relationship was established with the local park commission through the firm's work on Tyler Park they then went on to make recommendations and designs for other parks in the city. None of these parks was exclusively Olmsted designed and laid out, however. The North and South Commons dated from the 1840s. Rogers Fort Hill Park was originally designed in 1886 by . It is this purity of design which sets Tyler Park off from the others in the city and also points to its national significance.

The Tyler Park Subdivision of which the park is a central feature was typical of what was occurring throughout the country at this point in time. Situated at the end of a newly installed electric trolley line which ran down Westford Street, the same type of suburban residential growth associated with this new transportation system was common. Urban spaces were becoming more congested, so the marketing of lots in the subdivision emphasized the park-like attractions of the neighborhood. "IMMEDIATELY SURROUNDING THE NEW PARK" is emphasized in bold capital letters in the advertisement for the Tyler Park Subdivision. (con't.)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Norman Newton, Design on the Land The Development of Landscape Architecture, Belknap Press, 1971, See Chap. 22.
- Lowell City Documents, 1903-1907.

(con't.)