

ACCESSIBILITY AND REHABILITATION PLAN
NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND
NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

NEWTON PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT
70 CRESCENT STREET, NEWTON MA 02466



JUNE 2006

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NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

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Cover image from 1909 City of Newton Public Documents [Annual Report]

All contemporary photographs are by Walker-Kluesing Design Group unless otherwise noted



Sledding, December 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Newton Centre Playground is a 17.9 acre historic park centrally located in the community. It has served as a central gathering point for both active and passive recreation, formal civic functions and as an informal meeting place for citizens year round for over 110 years.

Created as a result of civic interest and involvement, Newton Centre Playground was conceived of as both a playground and a park. The intent was to serve a broad audience by balancing the activities of a playground with the calming qualities of a park. It was the first playground in the city and one of the earliest in the nation. The initial design was prepared by the firm of Frederick Law Olmsted & Co. in 1890.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

The purpose of this study is to develop an accessibility and rehabilitation plan and implementation plan for the entire playground that can be used as a guide for both long and short term planning and improvements.

General goals include making the playground accessible, rehabilitation of this historic resource in a contemporary context, reinforcement of an overall image that is compatible with the historic background of this playground, and increasing passive recreation opportunities while maintaining the active recreation components.

METHODOLOGY

The study began with on site investigations and a review of available historic and current materials found in the files of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site, Newton Parks and Recreation Department, Newton Public Library and Newton Historical Society. Correspondence files of the Olmsted firm at the Library of Congress were not examined, although not for lack of effort. Files at the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities [SPNEA] and other repositories of historic information were also not examined. The Massachusetts Historic Commission has not been contacted in regard to records of any archaeological investigations that may have taken place in the playground. Public meetings were held to develop and refine the concepts presented here.

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

ORGANIZATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document is organized for easy reference by the Newton Parks and Recreation Department and others who may participate in completing components of the rehabilitation, restoration, preservation and maintenance efforts.

General information is presented first with some historic background on the development and evolution of Newton Centre Playground. This is followed by a site specific overall plan for the playground including an assessment of existing conditions and specific recommendations. It includes general recommendations for the rehabilitation of historic and other components, prioritized cost estimates for work in the playground, and administrative and maintenance management issues and recommendations. The appendix contains a chronology of the playground, a list of Olmsted firm correspondence related to the playground, a list of available drawings and a selected bibliography for further reading.

LANDSCAPE PRESERVATION STANDARDS

The 1996 Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* addresses four treatments: preservation; rehabilitation; restoration; and reconstruction. "Of the four, Preservation standards require retention of the greatest amount of historic fabric, including the landscape's historic form, features and details as they evolved over time. Rehabilitation standards acknowledge the need to alter or add to a cultural landscape to meet continuing or new uses while retaining the landscape's historic character. Restoration standards allow for the depiction of a landscape at a particular time in its history by preserving materials from the period of significance and removing materials from other periods. Reconstruction standards establish a framework for recreating a vanished or non-surviving landscape with new materials, primarily for interpretive purposes."

This property is historically significant for a number of reasons. It should be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, although no such attempt has been made to date.

Given the historic nature of the property, the overall treatment goal for the site is rehabilitation. This is the only appropriate treatment because current conditions require acceptance of nonconforming activities.

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATIONS

Newton Centre Playground is a significant historic public landscape that expresses the design vision of the Olmsted firm. In a relatively small space it exemplifies the important qualities of a larger Olmsted park. The basic historic structure of the park is intact although much of the detail is missing.

Overall Concept

The primary goal is to recreate the image of Newton Centre Playground in accordance with that envisioned by the Olmsted firm in 1890 and 1891, and as later modified by Herbert Kellaway, while adapting selected areas to accommodate existing and proposed changed needs and conditions using design principles established for the park at that time. Newton Centre Playground was Newton's first playground and is still considered by many as Newton's most important character defining public open space. It created a strong sense of civic pride in the center of the city that remains today. The intent of the plan is to rehabilitate the playground, thereby restoring the central character of the community.

The following summary includes the most significant recommendations for achieving that goal.



Accessibility and Rehabilitation Plan
NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND
City of Newton Parks and Recreation Department
Newton, Massachusetts

Walker-Klusing Design Group
Bellata 3 Design
Judith Nimsch-Engineering, Inc.
May 2006
Scale: 1" = 40'
North Arrow



Existing Conditions
 Accessibility and Rehabilitation Plan
NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND
 City of Newton Parks and Recreation Department
 Newton, Massachusetts

Walker-Kluesing Design Group
 Bellalta 3 Design
 Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc.
 January 26, 2006
 scale: 1" = 60'



Accessibility and Rehabilitation Phasing Plan
NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND
 City of Newton Parks and Recreation Department
 Newton, Massachusetts

Walker-Kluesing Design Group
 Bellalta 3 Design
 Judith Nitsch Engineering, Inc.
 May 2006
 Scale: 1" = 60'
 NORTH

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

DETAILED COST ESTIMATES

PHASE ONE - Early Action

Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Total
Site Preparation					
Site clearing & preparation	12,450	sf	\$0.35	\$4,358	
Erosion control	800	lf	3	2,400	
Tree pruning and removals	3	ea	500	1,500	
Tree protection	200	lf	18	3,600	
Remove bit. paving @ Mason-Rice	5,100	sf	2.50	12,750	
					\$24,608
Earthwork					
Strip and stockpile topsoil	16,400	sf	0.25	4,100	
Fill at Mason-Rice drive	100	cy	15	1,500	
					5,600
Paving					
Bituminous walks	6,200	sf	3	18,600	
Handicap marking @ Mason-Rice		ls		1,500	
Repair stepped ramp @ Recreation Center		ls		5,000	
					25,100
Site Improvements					
Metal bollards	4	ea	1,500	6,000	
					6,000
Lawns and Planting					
Spread topsoil	300	cy	10	3,000	
Fine grade, hydroseed	16,300	sf	0.35	5,705	
					<u>8,705</u>
					70,013
General Conditions					
Contingency					10,502
Other Project Costs					8,085
					<u>17,400</u>
Total					\$106,000

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

PHASE ONE - Completion

Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Total
Site Preparation					
Site clearing & preparation	26,200	sf	0.35	9,170	
Erosion control	1,000	lf	3	3,000	
Tree pruning and removals	14	ea	500	7,000	
Tree protection	120	lf	18	2,160	
Remove existing fence @ brook	480	lf	4	1,920	
Remove bridge	20	lf	25	500	
Remove bituminous walk @ Homer St.	920	sf	2.50	2,300	
Remove stonedust walk @ Homer St.	2,075	sf	1.50	3,112	
					29,162
Earthwork					
Strip and stockpile topsoil	42,000	sf	0.25	10,500	
Fill at Homer Street	775	cy	15	11,625	
					22,125
Paving					
Bituminous drive w/chip seal	23,150	sf	3.75	86,872	
Bituminous walk w/chip seal	2,000	sf	4	8,000	
Chip seal early action paving	9,800	sf	0.50	4,900	
Handicap parking signs Bowen & Homer		ls		2,000	
					101,772
Fences and Gates					
Fence @ Hammond Brook edge	410	lf	20	8,200	
					8,200
Site Improvements					
Metal bollards	2	ea	1,500	3,000	
					3,000
Lawns and Planting					
Spread topsoil	780	cy	10	7,800	
Fine grade, hydroseed	42,250	sf	0.35	14,788	
Mulch, 3" depth	10	cy	60	600	
Evergreen trees	4	ea	600	2,400	
Deciduous trees	56	ea	750	42,000	
Evergreen and deciduous shrubs	40	ea	75	3,000	
					70,588
Concrete					
Bridge floor, vehicular	240	sf	25	6,000	
Bridge floor, pedestrian	160	sf	15	2,400	
					8,400

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

Masonry

Stone walls @ vehicular bridge	64	lf	1,000	64,000
Stone walls @ pedestrian bridge	58	lf	1,000	58,000
Stone wall @ Homer St. entry path	60	lf	350	21,000

143,000

386,247

General Conditions

57,953

Contingency

44,400

Inflation, 1 year @ 5%

24,400

Other Project Costs

103,000

Total

\$616,000

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

PHASE TWO

Item & Description	Qty	Unit	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Total
Site Preparation					
Site clearing & preparation	12,500	sf	0.35	4,375	
Erosion control	600	lf	3	1,800	
Tree removal and pruning	40	ea	500	20,000	
Tree protection	250	lf	18	4,500	
Remove practice court	2,140	sf	2.50	5,350	
Remove tennis court backboard		ls		2,000	
Remove CLF @ tennis courts	720	lf	5	3,600	
Remove gates @ tennis courts	3	ea	100	300	
Remove CLF along Tyler Terrace	723	lf	4	2,892	
Remove benches @ tennis courts	6	ea	200	1,200	
Remove drinking fountains	2	ea	500	1,000	
Remove basketball paving	840	sf	2.50	2,100	
Remove basketball lighting	4	ea	600	2,400	
					51,517
Earthwork					
Strip and stockpile topsoil	28,700	sf	0.25	7,175	
Fill @ Bowen Street	1,200	cy	15	18,000	
					25,175
Paving					
Bituminous concrete walks w/ chip seal	8,100	sf	4	32,400	
Tennis practice court paving/color coat	2,140	sf	6	12,840	
Basketball court paving repairs	840	sf	6	5,040	
					50,280
Site Improvements					
Identification signs	6	ea	2,000	12,000	
Regulatory signs		ls		8,000	
Benches	14	ea	2,500	35,000	
Trash receptacles	7	ea	2,000	14,000	
Drinking fountains	2	ea	8,000	16,000	
					85,000
Fences and Gates					
Wood barrier rail	2,000	lf	45	90,000	
Tennis court fencing	710	lf	35	24,850	
Tennis court pedestrian gate	1	ea	800	800	
Tennis court vehicular gate	1	ea	3,250	3,250	
					118,900

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

Lawns and Planting

Spread topsoil	530	cy	10	5,300
Fine grade, hydroseed	28,700	sf	0.35	10,045
Mulch, 3" depth	20	cy	60	1,200
Evergreen and deciduous shrubs	75	ea	75	5,625
Evergreen trees	26	ea	600	15,600
Deciduous trees	34	ea	750	25,500

63,270

Masonry

Stone gate posts	16	ea	3,500	56,000
Tennis backboard, reinforced CMU	620	sf	20	12,400

68,400

462,542

General Conditions

69,358

Contingency

53,200

Inflation, 2 years @ 5%

59,900

Other Project Costs

130,000

Total

\$775,000

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

PHASE THREE

Item	Quantity	Unit	Unit Cost	Subtotal	Total
Site Preparation					
Site clearing & preparation	15,000	sf	0.35	5,250	
Erosion control	2,400	lf	3	7,200	
Tree removal and pruning	40	ea	500	20,000	
Tree protection	430	lf	18	7,740	
Remove brook walls	1,250	lf	20	25,000	
Remove brook floor	10,625	sf	3.50	37,188	
Remove utility poles and lights	by others				
					102,378
Earthwork					
Strip and stockpile topsoil	41,000	sf	0.25	10,250	
Excavation for brook naturalization	4,500	cy	18	81,000	
Spread excavated material	4,500	cy	10	45,000	
					136,250
Paving					
Bituminous paths w/ chip seal	3,270	sf	4	13,080	
					13,080
Site Improvements					
Metal bollards	2	ea	1,500	3,000	
					3,000
Lawns and Planting					
Spread topsoil	760	cy	10	7,600	
Fine grade, hydroseed	41,120	sf	0.35	14,392	
Restoration of disturbed areas		ls		20,000	
Mulch, 3" depth	25	cy	60	1,500	
Evergreen and deciduous shrubs	600	ea	75	45,000	
Evergreen Trees	17	ea	600	10,200	
Deciduous Trees	50	ea	750	37,500	
					136,192
Concrete					
Walk near Mason-Rice School	1,200	sf	5	6,000	
Bridge floor, pedestrian	160	sf	15	2,400	
Repair concrete steps @ tennis courts	26	ea	100	2,600	
					11,000

NEWTON CENTRE PLAYGROUND

Masonry

Cobblestones @ brook	400	cy	28	11,200
Boulders along brook	100	lf	100	10,000
Stone walls @ pedestrian bridge	58	lf	1,000	58,000
Repair brook walls, 2'-0" ht.	300	lf	80	24,000
Repair brook walls, 3'-0" ht.	150	lf	120	18,000
Repair stone brook floor	250	sf	15	3,750

124,950

Electrical

Upgrade existing lighting	6	ea	12,500	75,000
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75,000

601,850

General Conditions

90,250

Contingency

69,250

Inflation, 3 years @ 5%

120,650

Other Project Costs

176,000

Total

\$1,058,000