

Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System

Scanned Record Cover Page

Inventory No:	BKL.900
Historic Name:	Anderson, Larz Park
Common Name:	
Address:	Goddard Ave Newton St
City/Town:	Brookline
Village/Neighborhood:	Goddard - Weld; Larz Anderson Park
Local No:	1
Year Constructed:	
Architect(s):	Platt, Charles Adams
Architectural Style(s):	
Use(s):	Park
Significance:	Community Planning; Landscape Architecture; Recreation
Area(s):	BKL.Q: Anderson, Larz Park Historic District BKL.W: Brookline Multiple Resource Area
Designation(s):	Nat'l Register District (10/17/1985); Nat'l Register MRA (10/17/1985)
Building Materials(s):	



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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard, Boston, Massachusetts 02125
www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc

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WELD - GODDARD
LARZ ANDERSON

NRDIS/MRVA

FORM H - PARKS AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES

PR- 12/31/98

Area	Form No.
Q,W	900

BKL.900

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02108



Indicate north.

View of Boston from top of Larz Anderson

1. Town Brookline
Address Newton St. & Goddard Ave
Name Larz Anderson Park
2. Ownership:
 Public
 Private
Present owner Town of Brookline
3. Type:
 Park
 Reservation
 Town Green/Common
 Boulevard or Parkway
 Playground or Athletic Field
 Training Field
 Other
4. Description:
Date Estate became park-1949
Size (approx. acreage) 61.7 acres
Landscape architect(s) (if known)
Estate was designed by Charles Platt
Location of Plans (if known) _____
Site Plan-Brookline Engineering
Setting _____ Dep't
In residential area; abuts Boston _____
Current Condition Good
Recorded by Carla Benka
Organization Brookline Hist. Com.
Date June 1983

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

Larz Anderson Park, just under 62 acres, contains a number of topographical features, ranging from rolling hills to open meadows. The western half of the park is dominated by a lake which can be crossed by "The Causeway." At the east end of the lake is a small, classical temple. The southern and eastern sections are the locations for a number of historic structures (see individual inventory forms), the largest of which is a carriage house which accompanied the mansion which once stood in the north east, now the site of a skating rink. A parking area is located in the western section and is accessible via Goddard Avenue. A playfield, including football field and baseball diamond are also found in the western section, along with a children's play area, shelter, and picnic area. Community gardens, once "Victory Gardens" during the Second World War, are located to the south. There is also a parking area near the carriage house which is approached by a winding road which begins on Newton St. and exits onto Avon St. There is also a paved road to the picnic grounds and a walk laid

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Discuss types of use, major period of use, evaluate importance within town. out around the lake. Remnants of the estate's gardens (pergola, urns, walls, specimen plants) are found on the hilltop, near the skating rink. There is also a tree allee in the northern section, near Goddard Avenue. Unfortunately, town-owned buildings behind the carriage house, used by the parks department, detract from the overall quality of this park.

The largest park in Brookline, Larz Anderson Park was named for the husband of Isabel Weld Anderson, a granddaughter of William Fletcher Weld I, a successful merchant and shipbuilder. Weld purchased a number of parcels of land between 1841 and 1881 to create "Weld", his country estate. Upon his death, the property passed to his son, William Fletcher Weld, II who built a house on the site of the original Weld home as well as the carriage house. Dying heirless, Weld left the estate to his cousin, Isabel, who also inherited 17 million dollars from her grandfather. She and her husband, who served as an ambassador of the United States during the administrations of Presidents Harrison and Taft, lived in Washington for much of the year, but nevertheless lavished a great deal of care on their Brookline home. Anderson hired the landscape architect Charles Pratt to design the gardens and grounds. Its design has been characterized as reminiscent of an English Park, i.e. "a conscious manipulation of the landscape so that the eye is guided in its appreciation of the surroundings by the placement of trees or minor architectural features." One unique aspect of the park is the view of Boston which is unsurpassed by any other site on Brookline.

The main portion of the estate was bequeathed to the Town in 1948 by Mrs. Anderson whose will stipulated that the buildings and land be used for educational and recreational purposes. It is of particular interest to know

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Site Plan, Olmsted Brothers, Brookline, MA. February 4, 1957; revised Jan. 9, 1961. In files of Brookline Engineering Department-N2 1A 7735A

Brookline Historical Commission, "Larz Anderson Park", unpublished paper by Carla Benka and Leslie Larkin, 1982

"The Carriage House and Stable - Larz Anderson Park", by Nora Lucas, unpublished, 1981, in files of Brookline Historical Commission

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:
Brookline

Form No:

Q-1

Property Name: Larz Anderson Park

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.

that the land here was once part of the first private polo field in New England, so there is historical continuity in the fact that the site is still used for recreational purposes. Although there is no polo, the park is used by both Brookline residents and people from neighboring Boston. A variety of activities take place here including: sledding, skating, cross-country skiing, picnicking, kite flying, baseball, football, and quiet contemplation of nature.



Architectural remnants
from Anderson estate garden.
(April, 1983)



Iron fence w/flowerpot
finial design. Goddard
Ave, nr. Grove St.
April, 1983

Stable to Inventory form