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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower

other names/site number Clocktower Park

2. Location

street & number 305 Washington Street not for publication

city or town Wellesley (Wellesley Hills) vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Norfolk code 021 zip code 02481

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant ☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon

April 13, 2007

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon, Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission, State Historic Preservation Officer

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

☒ Entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined eligible for the
National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.

☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register

☐ removed from the
National Register

☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Edson H. Beall

Date of Action

6-5-07

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Name of Property

Norfolk, Massachusetts
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

☐ building(s)
☐ district
☒ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
0	0	building
1	0	sites
1	0	structures
1	2	objects
3	2	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation/park
RECREATION AND CULTURE/monument
LANDSCAPE/park

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/outdoor recreation/park
RECREATION AND CULTURE/monument
LANDSCAPE/park

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL REVIVAL/Georgian Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	stone
walls	fieldstone, bluestone
	Indiana limestone
roof	copper
other	wood

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

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7. Description

Wellesley is an affluent suburban community in the principal western corridor of metropolitan Boston. Bordered by Weston on the north, Newton on the northeast, Needham on the southeast, Dover on the south, and Natick on the west and northwest, Wellesley is situated within the loop of the Charles River, which defines both the northeast and southern borders. Wellesley is located in rocky highlands with prominent elevations in the central part of town, "rather rugged country for agriculture," except in the western section and along the river. Stony soil drains into the Charles River from several directions; the major system is the Morses Pond-Lake Waban drainage in the western part of town. [MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report, 1]

Elm Park, 305 Washington Street, Wellesley (1908, photos 1-10, see sketch map) is a roughly triangular parcel of land encompassing 1.24 acres at Wellesley Hills Square, one of the town's principal commercial and institutional cores. The park is situated at the western corner of the intersection of two regional arteries, Washington Street (MA Route 16) and Worcester Street (MA Route 9). This crossroads defines the square, with the business and institutional area at Wellesley Hills extending along Washington Street roughly one-quarter mile to the northeast and one-half mile to the southwest. In 1932, the path of Worcester Street was altered to pass north of the Wellesley Hills business district, leaving the original roadway, bordering Elm Park, intact as a parkway-style access ramp for Route 9.

Established and maintained for passive recreation, Elm Park constitutes the largest parcel of open space at Wellesley Hills Square. Defined by Washington Street on the south and Worcester Street on the north, the park borders the property of the Unitarian Universalist Society of Wellesley Hills on the west. The Cochituate Aqueduct Linear District (NRDIS 1990), which is associated with the Water Supply System of Metropolitan Boston (NRTRA 1990), passes across the western end of Elm Park between Washington Street and Worcester Street (see enclosed assessors' maps). No evidence of the underground aqueduct is visible within the park grounds. The Cochituate Aqueduct (1845-1848) at this location is currently owned by the town of Wellesley.

A focal point at the center of Elm Park is the Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower (1928, MHC #919, photos 1-3, 5, 6), designed by Benjamin Proctor, Jr., AIA of Wellesley and built by John W. Duff, Inc. of Boston. The Georgian Revival-style tower is a four-sided structure of rough-cut local fieldstone, rising approximately 75' from the ground to the bottom of the weathervane. The octagonal base is reinforced concrete with a bluestone platform. Bluestone also is used on the treads and buttress caps of the two flights of stairs from the ground to the platform. Capping the tower is an octagonal cupola (photo 5 for detail) of classical design, mounted on a square base with paneled aprons and carrying a copper-clad wood roof. Above the main cupola is a smaller, copper-covered wood cupola with a weathervane. Other ornamental features of the tower include a wood batten door with oversized iron strap hinges set within a classical surround of Indiana limestone (photo 6), corner quoins, a wood cornice with triglyph frieze, and a turned balustrade at the roofline with decorative urns at the corners. The tower entry faces Wellesley Hills Square to the east, and the two flights of stairs on the base are located on the east and west elevations (photos 2, 3, and 6). The interior of the tower contains an iron service stair to the top; interior walls are finished with cement parging over the stone walls. The tower houses a bell and clock given to the community in 1874, both of which were relocated to the new tower in 1928, after their removal in 1924 from a public school building demolished by the town. The bell was cast in 1874 by William Blake & Company of Boston. The clock, which has circular dials set in stone surrounds on all four sides of the tower and numbers rendered in Roman numerals, was manufactured in 1874 by Edward Howard of Roxbury (Boston).

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Four bronze plaques were added to the tower in the 1940s. Flanking the door are two plaques installed in 1940. The plaque to the left of the door (photo 7) notes:

THE CLOCK AND BELL IN THIS TOWER/WERE PRESENTED IN 1874 BY/JOHN W. SHAW/"TO
THE TOWN OF NEEDHAM/FOR THE VILLAGE OF GRANTVILLE"/AND LONG SERVED IN THE
PUBLIC/SCHOOL WHICH CARRIED HIS NAME./TO HIS MEMORY AND THAT OF "THE
LITTLE/GROUP OF GOOD CITIZENS OF THE 1860'S/AND 1870'S TO WHOM WE OWE SO
MUCH"/THIS CLOCK TOWER WAS ERECTED BY/PUBLIC FUNDS IN 1928

The plaque to the right of the door (photo 8) reads:

THIS TABLET/IS TO THE MEMORY OF/BENJAMIN PROCTOR, JR., A.I.A./(1878-1939)/WHO
DESIGNED THIS MEMORIAL TOWER/HIS TASTE AND SKILL IN/ARCHITECTURE DID MUCH TO
BEAUTIFY/THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY IN WHICH/HE LIVED FOR MANY YEARS

Two plaques were installed on the tower in 1948. The plaque over the entry records the name of the structure: ISAAC SPRAGUE/MEMORIAL TOWER. On the rear elevation of the tower (photo 9), the last plaque states:

NAMED IN MEMORY OF/ISAAC SPRAGUE/A DEVOTED CITIZEN/TO WHOSE VISION AND
GENEROSITY/HIS HOME TOWN/OWES MUCH OF ITS DEVELOPMENT/1860-1934

Deciduous trees line the Worcester Street (north) and Washington Street (south) frontages of Elm Park, as well as the western property line with the Unitarian church. Scattered deciduous and evergreen trees dot the turf. Trees bordering the Worcester Street frontage are planted in large beds that include plantings dominated by rhododendrons and yews, with smaller numbers of juniper, ilex, and euonymus. These plantings provide a buffer from highway traffic on Worcester Street and serve to screen the elevated portion of the highway immediately adjacent to the park. Also bordering the Worcester Street frontage is ornamental iron fencing (ca. 1932, photo 3, foreground). Additional planting beds, in which rhododendron dominate, frame the base of the Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower, as viewed from Washington Street. Other border plantings of low deciduous shrubs and annuals frame components of the pedestrian circulation scheme. Since 1957, the Hills Garden Club of Wellesley has collaborated with the town's Department of Public Works in the design, planting, and maintenance of Elm Park.

While the western end of Elm Park is largely turf dotted with trees, the eastern end of the park, closer to Wellesley Hills Square, displays a concentration of pedestrian-oriented improvements. A pedestrian path (ca. 1908, see sketch map, photo 10) through the eastern third of the park, crossing southwest to northeast from Washington Street to Worcester Street, is a feature surviving from the park's earliest days, appearing in early 20th-century postcard views. This path passes in front (east) of the Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower (1928). Today, the path is surfaced with brick pavers. About midway across the path, directly in front of the tower, is an elliptical brick patio (photo 4, see sketch map, photo 10) constructed since the mid-1980s. The patio features an iron, pedal-operated drinking fountain (early 20th century, photo 4), manufactured by Murdock Manufacturing & Supply Company, of Cincinnati, Ohio. The original location of the drinking fountain within the park has not been determined; site plans for Elm Park that date to the period of significance (1908-1955) have not been located.

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**Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA**

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Since 2002, the town of Wellesley, through the Department of Public Works, and in conjunction with the Hills Garden Club of Wellesley and the Wellesley Rotary Club, has enhanced the appearance and function of Elm Park with improvements to pedestrian access, lighting, fencing, and plantings. These recent improvements do not compromise the historic integrity of Elm Park. A pair of six-foot high stone pillars (2004, photo 4, center background), designed and built by John Guigli, has been installed to create a formal pedestrian entrance to the park fronting Wellesley Hills Square. A brick and cobblestone walkway at the entrance draws pedestrians onto a second brick patio (2004, photo 4, center background), where a granite surface medallion of a clock face shows the time of 4:06 with the inscription TOWN OF WELLESLEY EST APRIL 6, 1881, a reference to the date and time the town was established. Eighty feet of ornamental iron fencing (2004, photo 4 background), with the stone pillars, marks the park entrance. A lighting system installed in October 2004 illuminates the four sides of the clock tower, the inside of the cupola, and lanterns on top of the entrance pillars. Contemporary ornamental iron and wood benches of Victorian design are scattered throughout the park, principally along Washington Street, on the elliptical patio in front of the tower, and on the new (2004) patio at the entrance opening onto Wellesley Hills Square. Picnic tables also are scattered throughout the park interior. Plans for future landscape improvements include the installation of ornamental iron fencing and additional border plantings at the western end of Elm Park, to better define the park boundary at that location and to unify the western and eastern ends of the park.

Archaeological Description

While no ancient Native American sites are located on the Elm Park property, sites may exist. One site is located in the general area (within one mile). The town of Wellesley is located in the greater Boston locale and Charles River basin, a known locus of ancient Native American settlement. In general, however, environmental characteristics of the property do not represent locational criteria (slope, soil drainage, proximity to wetlands) that are favorable for the presence of ancient sites. Soil strata in the park were disturbed by construction of hotel, stable, and related facilities in 1808. The hotel and stable were demolished in 1908 after their purchase by the town. The park area was subsequently filled and graded. Extensive subsurface disturbance also resulted from construction of the underground Cochituate Aqueduct in the western end of the park between Washington and Worcester Streets. Given the information presented above, the relatively small size of the park (1.24 acres), the soil classification of the park area as urban land, and the lack of natural wetlands within 1,000 feet of the park, a low potential exists for locating significant ancient Native American resources in the park.

A low to moderate potential also exists for locating significant historic archaeological resources in the park. Structural evidence of the Elm Park Hotel, stables, outbuildings, and occupational related features (trash pits, privies, wells) may survive in the park area; however, many of these resources were either buried and protected by filling after they were demolished or they were destroyed by grading. Archaeological evidence of construction features and active portions of the Cochituate aqueduct should also survive. Structural evidence may also exist from structures and objects built for the maintenance and operation of the park after 1908. For example, a pedal-operated drinking fountain originally existed within the park; however, its location has not been determined.

(end)

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Name of Property

Norfolk, Massachusetts
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Community Planning and Development

Social History

Period of Significance

1908-1957

Significant Dates

1928 (construction of clock tower)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Proctor, Benjamin, Jr. Howard, Edward

Blake, William, and Company

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Wellesley Free Library, Town of Wellesley

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Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

Narrative Statement of Significance

A well-preserved public park at Wellesley Hills Square, Elm Park, 305 Washington Street, Wellesley (1908, photos 1-10, see sketch map), has provided vital open space in a historically congested business and institutional center for nearly a century. Unlike other town parks established in Wellesley in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, realized through gifts of land from prominent citizens, Elm Park was created through the combined efforts of business leaders, local residents, and the town of Wellesley. The Georgian Revival-style Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower (1928, MHC #919, photos 1-3, 5, 6) at the center of the park is a unique structure in Wellesley. Designed by local architect Benjamin Proctor, Jr., the tower was built to house the first recorded gifts to the town, a bell and clock donated by John W. Shaw, chairman of the committee that brought about Wellesley's incorporation in 1881. Taken together, Elm Park and the Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower illustrate village improvement in Wellesley, accomplished through civic involvement and long-term recognition of the community's history. Retaining integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, Elm Park and the Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower meet Criteria A and C of the National Register of Historic Places at the local level.

Wellesley is one of 14 towns created from the Dedham Grant (1636); the town's northern border incorporates a segment of the 17th-century boundary between Dedham and Watertown. Part of Dedham's common lands in the 17th century, by the early 18th century the territory also included mill sites on Lake Waban in the southwest part of town and the Charles River in the northeast part of town (present village of Lower Falls). Wellesley constituted the northwest section of Needham from the time of Needham's incorporation in 1711 to Wellesley's incorporation as a separate town in 1881. Upon its separation from Needham and incorporation as a town in 1881, Wellesley had a population of over 2,500 residents, more than one-half of Needham's original valuation of over four million dollars, four-ninths of the original town's 15,000 acres, an average school enrollment of 500, and a tax rate of \$9.50. Aside from milling activity, the town's economy was based primarily on agriculture and grazing, plus some winter lumbering. [MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report; Hinchliffe, 51; *Wellesley Post Card Album*; *Wellesley Residential Properties Survey*, Narrative History, 6-9]

Wellesley Hills, formerly North Needham, was known prior to separation as the village of Grantville, named for Moses Grant, a village property owner and civic activist. Encompassing the largely residential eastern end of town, Wellesley Hills developed a commercial and institutional focus at the intersection of two regional arteries, Washington Street (Route 16) and the Boston & Worcester Turnpike (1807-1810, now Worcester Street, Route 9). The village had a stop on the Boston & Worcester Railroad (opened 1834). The Shaw School, 7 Forest Street (1854, closed 1911, demolished 1924), at the corner of Washington Street, served as a community meeting hall. Both the Congregational and Unitarian societies established churches in the village. The area's attraction as a suburb of Boston became evident in the years prior to the Civil War, and its perceived salubrious climate drew convalescing consumption patients and summer visitors from the third quarter of the 19th century through the

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Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
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early 20th century. Accessibility to Boston and surrounding communities via the railroad, and to a lesser extent via the Worcester Turnpike, generated growth, principally in the form of land speculation, which began in earnest in the third quarter of the 19th century. In 1853, Daniel Ayer of Lowell began developing Bostonville, the town's first large-scale residential subdivision, over three hundred lots on approximately two hundred acres between Forest Street and Wellesley Avenue, situated midway between the villages at Grantville (Wellesley Hills) and Wellesley (present Wellesley Square vicinity). Ayer's subdivision, which targeted the Boston working class, proved unsuccessful. By contrast, the Wellesley Hills residential community by the late 19th century encompassed estate and middle-class suburban development, principally on Washington Street and connecting roads. Around the turn of the 20th century, gradual dissipation of local industry and improvements in transportation, namely the addition of street railway lines in 1896 (on Washington Street) and 1903 (on Worcester Street) to the Boston-bound passenger railroad already present through Wellesley Hills, fueled the village's continued development as a suburban community, centered on Wellesley Hills Square. [MHC Reconnaissance Survey Report; *Wellesley Residential Properties Survey*, Narrative History, 7-9]

The nascent town of Wellesley established a Park Commission in 1888 for the purpose of managing the town's open land. Wellesley's principal benefactor was Horatio Hollis Hunnewell (1811-1902), an investment banker and railroad entrepreneur whose Washington Street estate (NRDIS 1988) supplied the name for the new town. In addition to the Town Hall and adjoining public library building, 525 Washington Street (1883/1885, NRIND 1976), Hunnewell and his heirs donated nearly 35 acres of land to the town in four gifts made from 1887 through 1916. ["Gifts to the Town"] These actions established a precedent for subsequent gifts of land from individuals for park or municipal purposes; approximately 90 acres were conveyed to the town by 1920.

While most parks created in Wellesley before 1920 were established through gifts of land to the town, Elm Park at Wellesley Hills Square was created through the combined efforts of business leaders, local residents, and the town of Wellesley. A hotel occupied the park site from 1808 to 1908. Calvin Fiske and David Smith built the hotel adjacent to the Boston and Worcester Turnpike (1807-1810), now Worcester Street (Route 9). The hotel lost its turnpike-oriented business following the arrival of the Boston & Worcester Railroad in 1834 and the subsequent decline in turnpike travel. John W. Shaw *et als.* acquired the parcel from the City of Boston in 1856. In the conveyance, the city reserved the right to enter the property and dig up the land for any purpose connected with the repairing, care, management or safety of the Cochituate Aqueduct running beneath the parcel. The conveyance prevented the erection of any permanent structures with 29 feet of the conduit.¹ By the late 1850s, a day and boarding school known as the Elm Park Institute occupied the hotel, and later the building was operated as "a genteel boarding house." Under the ownership of Elisha Livermore, the hotel was renovated in 1883 and renamed the Elm Park Hotel, becoming a popular country resort for summer visitors to Wellesley, accessible by the electric street railway lines down both Washington Street (Route 16) and Worcester Street (Route 9). In the first decade of the 20th century, however, the hotel was once again in decline, a "ramshackly structure" with wooden fire escapes on the side elevation facing Wellesley Hills Square. ["Elm Park Hotel" newspaper clipping, Elm Park file, Wellesley Historical Society; "Plan Showing Elm Park Property" with remarks on Shaw acquisition]

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¹ The section of the Cochituate Aqueduct (NRDIS/TRA) that passes through the town of Wellesley is now owned by the town.

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Efforts to secure the Elm Park Hotel property for use as a public park were initiated in 1907. John D. Hardy, president of the Hills and Falls Village Improvement Society, observed in a period account:

The man who works with his hands, as well as every one else in Wellesley, is anxious to see the village improved by making this little park. Any one who comes to Wellesley by trolley from Boston first realizes that he has arrived when he reaches the square at the Hills, and we don't want the visitor to get any impression that he is not in the most beautiful village in Massachusetts. ("Beauty-making at Wellesley Hills")

The Village Improvement Society appointed a committee to ascertain a purchase price and raise the necessary money. The suggested price, described as "prohibitive," caused the committee to suspend its work. The following year, word of a pending change in the control of the Livermore estate prompted swift action to preserve the property for public use. In a move to save the hotel property "from the business uses which its prominent location would invite," Hardy and fellow Wellesley Hills resident Isaac Sprague purchased the parcel from the Livermore estate for \$20,000, with the intention of holding the property until sufficient funds could be raised to transfer title to the town. Half the purchase price was to be raised by subscription, with the remaining half to be funded by a town appropriation. Benjamin Curtis was chairman of the committee of 25 individuals who secured subscriptions; Clarence Alfred Bunker was treasurer. A fundraiser at the hotel on 13 May 1908, known as the May Breakfast, attracted over 700 attendees, with a menu of corn cakes, bacon, fried eggs, and fish balls. On 25 May 1908, Town Meeting voted unanimously to appropriate \$10,000 to purchase the Livermore property for the purpose of establishing a public park. ["Beauty-making at Wellesley Hills" newspaper clipping, Elm Park file, Wellesley Historical Society; *Wellesley Post Card Album*, 52; *Annual Town Report*, 1908] The town's Park Commission completed the acquisition subject to access to the Cochituate Aqueduct beneath the park. [Wellesley inventory/Natural Resources Commission]

Once the town of Wellesley acquired the Elm Park property,² the hotel and adjacent stable were removed. The town realized almost enough money from the sale of the buildings to pay for the filling and grading of the park, and the grading was nearly completed before the ground became frozen. In the spring of 1909, grading was finished, along with planting and seeding. Rhododendrons donated to the town by Mrs. Everitt St. John, formerly of Grove Street, were planted. "Superb specimens" of *picea pungens* (Colorado spruce) evergreens were contributed by Dr. Fletcher M. Abbott, a member of the Park Commission. The following November, bulbs were planted in the grass and borders, with bulbs planted annually thereafter. Frank D. Cavanagh, the town's superintendent of parks, supervised the ground crews working on Elm Park and other park properties under the jurisdiction of the Park Commission. [*Reports of the Park Commission*, 1908-1910]

A formal landscape design scheme does not appear to have been employed in the laying out of Elm Park. A period newspaper account written during the fundraising effort noted that George M. Babson, a Wellesley landscape architect, had volunteered to lay out the park free of charge, but no further mention of his connection to the park, or Babson's career, has been located. ["Beauty-making at Wellesley Hills" newspaper clipping, Elm Park file, Wellesley Historical

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² It should be noted that the "notch" of land at the northwest corner of the Elm Park property was not owned by the Livermore family and was not part of the parcel conveyed in 1908 to the town of Wellesley.

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Society] Landscape plans for the park during the period of significance (1908-1957) have not been located, except the 1912 detail plan noted below. Two early 20th-century postcard views of the park show an expansive lawn dotted with mostly deciduous trees, a screen of deciduous and evergreen trees at the western end (near the Unitarian church property), and planting beds of shrubs and flowers along the Worcester Street frontage. [post card file, Wellesley Historical Society] Some trees were newly planted; others were mature trees that appeared to have been in place at the time the park was established. In its year-end report in 1909, the Park Commissioners noted:

Elm Park seems to fit admirably into, and form a part of its environment. Its groups of trees and shrubs, its green turf and direct walk, will, we hope, commend it to our townspeople rather than a more elaborate display of landscape gardening. [*Report of the Park Commission*, 1909]

From its earliest days, Elm Park was intended to provide open space in what was generally considered a busy and densely developed business district at Wellesley Hills Square. The convergence of two regional arteries – Washington Street and Worcester Street – at the square, the operation of electric streetcars on both roadways, and the presence of a watering trough for horse teams at the center of the square, created traffic congestion. The original narrow point at the eastern end of Elm Park, nearest the square, was described as “an awkward, and at times when passengers are waiting for or entering or leaving the electric cars, a dangerous corner.” In 1912, after study by the Park Commission and the Board of Selectmen, a short roadway was built across the point of Elm Park, producing the rounded corner that survives today. The remainder of the point was reconfigured as an “island of safety,” preserving a 28-foot elm tree and a relocated fountain. [*Report of the Selectmen*, 1912, includes detail plan of improvements at this corner only] The traffic island was removed at an unknown date. The rounding of the corner reduced the size of Elm Park from its original 1.33 acres (57,965 square feet) to the present 1.24 acres.

Elm Park garnered little mention in annual reports of the Park Commission from 1912 to 1928. Encompassing just over one acre, the park was one of fourteen parks and landscaped triangles, totaling about 50 acres, owned and maintained by the town of Wellesley by 1912. The generosity of the Hunnewell family had set a precedent in Wellesley for subsequent gifts of land to the town for park or playground purposes, particularly before 1920. Parks created during the same period as Elm Park include Shaw Park, Laurel Avenue (deeded 1900, 0.47 acres); Hunnewell Playground, Washington Street (deeded 1902, also known as Hunnewell Field, seventeen acres); Sawyer Park, Forest Street and Wellesley Avenue (deeded 1912, one acre); and Ware Park, Washington Street (deeded 1917, 0.75 acres). Parks set aside for public use in new residential subdivisions were the twin parks at Abbott and Livermore Roads (deeded 1904 and 1912, 0.64 acres total), and the area known as Indian Springs, located at Hillside Road and The Waterway (deeded 1909-1910, 3.82 acres). [“Gifts to the Town,” *Annual Town Report*, 1955; *Wellesley Residential Properties Survey*, Narrative History, 9-10] Of these, it appears only Elm Park involved the coordinated effort of the citizenry to secure a park for the town.

The principal focus of the Park Commission in the first quarter of the 20th century was the development of Fuller Brook Parkway, now known as Fuller Brook Park or Path, a linear park that connects and defines several residential subdivisions in the south-central section of Wellesley. In 1899, Town Meeting appropriated \$25,000 to acquire and develop land along Fuller Brook as a parkway. Within the first ten years, the town had acquired about 75 acres and

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Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

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11,500 lineal feet of brook. In the 1910s, the Park Commission supervised considerable drainage of swamp areas along the brook, in preparation for construction of a vehicular parkway through the area. In its 1915 annual report, the Park Commission encouraged the town to begin the construction, building a part each year for anticipated completion within five to ten years. At the time, the town's holdings extended from Maugus Avenue via Caroline Brook and Fuller Brook to Cottage Street. Had the parkway construction been realized according to the Park Commission's timetable, Wellesley would have boasted one of the earliest automobile parkways in the nation. Though the town acquired additional land from Cottage Street to the Dover Road vicinity in 1920 and 1925, completing the present pedestrian landscape connection, plans for the automobile parkway were dropped by the late 1920s. [*Wellesley Residential Properties Survey*, Narrative History, 9-11; *Reports of the Park Commission*, 1910-1930]

The need to find a suitable location for Wellesley's Shaw clock and bell led to construction of the clock tower at Elm Park in 1928. In 1924, the town of Wellesley demolished the former Shaw School, 7 Forest Street (1874-1875, closed 1911), located at the corner of Washington Street. The clock and bell on the school building were gifts made to the village of Grantville (now Wellesley Hills) by the Honorable John W. Shaw (1818-1896). A real estate developer, Shaw served as chairman of the committee that brought about Wellesley's separation from Needham and incorporation as a town in 1881. He resided for many years at the Elm Park Hotel, formerly on the park site.

As the first recorded gifts to the town, the Shaw clock and bell had acquired some significance by the mid-1920s, particularly in light of the 50th anniversary of their donation to the community. The clock was made by Edward Howard (1813-1904) of E. Howard Watch & Clock Company in Boston. He was apprenticed to Aaron Willard, Jr., nephew of Simon Willard, the earliest clockmaker in Massachusetts. In the 1840s, Howard started his own clock factory in Roxbury, moving briefly to Waltham and returning to Roxbury in 1857 to start another factory known as the E. Howard Clock Company. The clock mechanism was electrified at a later date. Howard continued to make clocks and watches under various company names until his retirement ca. 1881. The bell was cast by William Blake & Company of Boston. The company, which operated from 1869 to 1890, is the successor foundry to both Henry N. Hooper & Co. (1830-1868) and Boston Copper Company (1823-1830). Paul Revere III, John W. Sullivan, and William Blake had operated Boston Copper Company, where Henry N. Hooper had served as agent. [*Wellesley inventory*; *Wellesley Post Card Album*, 67; Young; E. Howard Watch & Clock Company history; Hooper/Blake index]

On 9 January 1928, Town Meeting voted to appropriate \$12,000 for the erection of a clock tower and the installation therein of the Shaw clock and bell. The appropriation was to be expended under the direction of a committee of five appointed by the Moderator. Members of the Clock and Bell Tower Committee were Isaac Sprague, Holker Abbott, John B. Hopkins, Brainerd L. Bates, and Richard Henry. Sprague, Hopkins, Bates, and Henry were Wellesley Hills residents employed in the financial, legal, and publishing fields in Boston. Abbott was an artist residing on Linden Street. [*Annual Town Report*, 1928; *Wellesley directory*, 1927] Benjamin Proctor, Jr., AIA, a resident of Wellesley Hills since 1912 and a member of the Park Commission since 1925, was selected as the architect of the tower. The contractor was John W. Duff, Inc. of Boston. Isaac Sprague, chairman of the Clock and Bell Tower Committee, contributed stones for the construction of the tower and fill for the area around the base. Grading and seeding around the clock tower was completed in 1929, as well as planting of evergreen shrubbery at the base, undertaken by Paul Dove under Proctor's direction. A flagpole at Elm Park was relocated to Ware Park adjoining the Hills Branch Library on Washington Street. [*Report of Park Commission*, 1928, 1929; *Wellesley building permits*; *Wellesley inventory*; Proctor obituary]

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

Benjamin Proctor, Jr., AIA (1878-1939), architect of the clock tower, was active in Wellesley's planning and zoning affairs. In addition to being a Town Meeting member, he served on the Park Commission for fifteen years and the Board of Appeals for twenty years. Proctor apprenticed in the Boston firm of Chapman and Frazier. He designed many houses in Wellesley and other Boston suburbs, including Fisher Hill in Brookline, as well as on Cape Cod and in New York. His work in Wellesley included the Kingsbury School, Seaver Street (1924, MHC #415); the Wellesley Hills Trust Company Building, 342 Washington Street (1928, MHC #415); the Belvedere Apartments, 336 Washington Street (1930, MHC #414); the Perrin School, Thomas Road (1932, closed 1981, burned 1984); and the Warren School, 90 Washington Street (1934, closed as a school 1986, extant). Proctor also designed buildings for Roger Babson, founder of the Babson Institute of Wellesley (later Babson College), among them an office building; the Wellesley Community Playhouse, 370 Washington Street at Forest Street (1921); and houses for Babson and his daughter, Mrs. Winslow Webber. [Proctor obituary]

With the completion of the Elm Park clock tower and associated plantings in 1929, no major changes were made to the park during the remainder of the period of significance. In 1932, through-traffic on Worcester Street (Route 9) was routed to a new roadway that passed behind the business blocks fronting the north side of Wellesley Hills Square. This construction left the original path of Worcester Street, bordering Elm Park, as an access road for local traffic. There is no indication in town reports that the highway construction required changes to Elm Park. Continuing problems with traffic congestion and automobile parking at Wellesley Hills Square led the town to file a bill in the Legislature (enacted into law as Chapter 551 of the Acts of 1941), allowing the town to use park land to construct a roadway across Elm Park, with the approval of Town Meeting. The proposed road construction was voted down by Town Meeting in 1946, and the integrity of the original park footprint, as modified in 1912 at the eastern corner, is preserved today. A bus shelter was added to the eastern corner of Elm Park in 1942; the shelter was removed during landscape improvements in 2004. [Report of Park Commission, 1941, 1942, 1946; Wellesley Post Card Album, 55]

Four bronze plaques on the clock tower were installed in the 1940s. In 1940, following the death of Benjamin Proctor, Jr., architect of the tower, a citizens group donated the two memorial tablets flanking the entry. These plaques record the contributions of John W. Shaw and Benjamin Proctor, Jr. to the tower's significance and design. In 1948, two additional tablets were installed – over the entry and on the rear elevation of the tower – to recognize the contribution of Isaac Sprague (1859-1934), chairman of the Clock and Bell Tower Committee. Henceforth, the tower was known formally as the Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower. [Report of Park Commission, 1940, 1948] Sprague was a prominent Wellesley and Boston banker who also provided the stones and fill during the tower's construction. As a local real estate developer, Sprague created three land trusts in Wellesley between 1900 and 1903. The largest of these, Maugus Real Estate Trust, was associated with the completion or new development of several Wellesley subdivisions, among them Belvedere Estates (from 1909), lower Edmunds Road (from 1924), and portions of Atwood Street (1913/1922). Sprague's other achievements in Wellesley include development of the Daniell land off Oakland Street (from 1901), the McIntosh land off Sylvester Terrace (from 1909), Eaton Court (1906-1907), Marvin and Amherst Roads (1923-ca. 1933), and Audubon Road, which was underway at the time of his death. [Wellesley inventory]

In the first decade after World War II, several changes were made to the organization of the park-maintenance functions within Wellesley's town government. During that period, the work of the Park Commission fell into two divisions, the preservation and development of park lands, and the administration of the use of park lands by individual citizens or

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 7

**Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA**

groups. A vote of Town Meeting in 1946 established a community Recreation Department to operate in conjunction with the Park Department under the jurisdiction of a new five-member Park and Recreation Commission. The vote also created a new town position, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation, which was held by Britton F. Boughner until his death in 1952. By the late 1940s, town properties maintained and improved by the Park and Recreation Commission through the Park Department totaled 166 acres, including Fuller Brook Parkway, and the bathing beach at Morses Pond (not technically park land but maintained by the commission). The commission already was working in cooperation with Wellesley's garden club by the 1950s to beautify parkland, particularly public squares and traffic circles, and this arrangement continues today with the involvement of the Hills Garden Club of Wellesley in the design, planting, and maintenance of Elm Park. [*Report of the Park Commission, 1946; Reports of the Park and Recreation Commission, 1947-1955*]

Following a vote of Town Meeting in March 1954 to create a Board of Public Works, the maintenance and construction of park and playground areas in Wellesley was transferred to the Public Works Department. The former Park Department and Tree & Moth Department were dissolved, and their operations combined as the Tree & Park Division of the Public Works Department. Also created was the position of Superintendent of Public Works, held by Horace S. Estey. [*Report of the Superintendent of Public Works, 1955*]

Today, Elm Park is managed by the Natural Resources Commission and maintained by the Park & Highway Division of the Department of Public Works and the Hills Garden Club of Wellesley. The Park & Highway Division maintains all of the town's parkland, conservation land, and other open spaces, encompassing 255 acres of active recreation areas and 642 acres of passive recreation areas. In addition to Elm Park, passive recreation areas include seventeen other parks, six conservation reservations, three walking paths or parkways, the Town Forest, grounds at Wellesley's three libraries and the police station, ten municipal parking lots, seventy-five traffic islands throughout the town, and several traffic islands on Worcester Street (Route 9).

Recent improvements at Elm Park (2002-2005) have been undertaken by the Department of Public Works, in cooperation with the Hills Garden Club of Wellesley and the Wellesley Rotary Club. These improvements have utilized Community Preservation Act funding as well as private funds. Two stone pillars, designed and built by local resident John Guigli, have been constructed to create a formal entrance to the park from Wellesley Hills Square. A circular brick patio just inside the entrance features a granite surface medallion commemorating Wellesley's incorporation as a town. Border plantings are the work of the Park & Highway Division and the Hills Garden Club, which celebrated its 50th anniversary in June 2005, and has taken an active role in the design and planting of Elm Park since the organization's founding. Lanterns on the stone pillars were illuminated as part of a recently-installed lighting system for the park that focuses on the clock tower. The lighting project is funded by Community Preservation Act monies as well as donations and contributions obtained by the Wellesley Rotary Club. The Rotary Club celebrated its 100th anniversary in February 2005. ["Hills Garden Club of Wellesley has been hard at work;" Natural Resources Commission minutes, September-October 2004]

The National Register nomination for Elm Park and the Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower is funded by a Community Preservation Act grant obtained by the Wellesley Historical Commission, with the cooperation of the town's Natural Resources Commission.

(continued)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA**

Section number 8 Page 8

Archaeological Significance

Historic archaeological resources described above may contribute important information related to the growth and operation of 19th century turnpike transportation and lodging, late 19th century education, and early 20th century recreational activities. Documentary research combined with archaeological survey and testing can determine whether structural evidence of the Elm Park hotel, stables, outbuildings, and occupational-related features survive their demolition in 1908-09 and subsequent grading and filling of the park. Important evidence may exist that documents architectural features of the buildings described above and structural changes that occurred as their function changed from a turnpike-related hotel to the Elm Park Institute, a day and boarding school in the late 1850s, a "genteel boarding house," and renovation to the Elm Park Hotel in 1883. Detailed analysis of the contents of occupational-related features (trash pits, privies, wells) combined with structural evidence, may contribute important evidence related to the activities and living conditions at the hotel/school and how they may have changed under different ownership and from the early to late 19th century.

Archaeological resources may also contribute important information related to the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of the Elm Park from the early to mid 20th century. Site plans that date to the park's period of significance (1908-1955) have never been located indicating the importance of historical research and archaeological testing in documenting landuse patterns within the park and the location of the park's structures, objects, and landscapes. Research indicated above, combined with careful mapping, can help reconstruct the park as it was built in 1908 and changes that occurred through the mid 20th century.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

Section number 9 Page 1

9. Major Bibliographical References

Town of Wellesley records (filed at Wellesley Free Library unless otherwise noted)

Building permits. [Building Inspector's office, Wellesley Town Hall]

"Gifts to the Town." *Annual Report of the Town Officers of Wellesley, Massachusetts*. By the town, 1956.

Natural Resources Commission. *Minutes*, September – October 2004.

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"Report of the Park and Recreation Commission." *Annual Report of the Town Officers of Wellesley, Massachusetts*. By the town: 1947-1954.

"Report of the Superintendent of Public Works." *Annual Report of the Town Officers of Wellesley, Massachusetts*. By the town: 1955.

Wellesley Historical Commission. Wellesley historic properties inventory. Unpublished inventory forms, 1975 to the present (includes *Wellesley Residential Properties Survey*, 3 vols., June 1990).

Town of Wellesley plans

Board of Selectmen. "Proposed Improvement at Wellesley Hills Square [plan]." *Annual Report of the Town Officers of Wellesley, Massachusetts*. By the town, 1912.

"Clock Tower in Elm Park, Wellesley Hills, Mass., for the Town of Wellesley." Benjamin Proctor, Jr., Architect. 3 drawings. February 1928. [Engineering Division, Dept. of Public Works]

"Design Plan – Phase II Landscape Improvements." Cricket Vlass, CLD, for Town of Wellesley Department of Public Works. November 2004. [Park and Highway Division, Dept. of Public Works]

"Elm Park Landscaping Plan." Bill Sama for Hills Garden Club of Wellesley. 29 July 1985 (revised 18 November 1985). [Park and Highway Division, Dept. of Public Works]

"Plan of Land in Wellesley, 8 July 1908." Arthur P. French, Surveyor. Copy of part of plan filed in Norfolk County Land Registration Office, 14 July 1908. [Engineering Division, Dept. of Public Works]

"Plan Showing Elm Park Property, Wellesley, Mass., 8 July 1908." Arthur P. French, Surveyor. (plan shows placement of Elm Park hotel and stable before their removal) [Engineering Division, Dept. of Public Works]

Other sources

Guild of Carillonneurs in North America. "Index to carillons and chimes by Hooper/Blake."

www.gnca.org/data/IXfoundryHooperBlake (no date). 12 April 2004.

"Hills Garden Club of Wellesley has been hard at work." www.townonline.com/wellesley (11 November 2004).

(continued)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

Section number 9 Page 2

Hinchliffe, Elizabeth M. *Five Pounds Currency, Three Pounds of Corn. Wellesley's Centennial Story*. Town of Wellesley, 1981.

"Howard, E., Watch & Clock Company, Boston, Mass." *Antique Clock Guy* via www.clockguy.com (17 January 2005).

Massachusetts Historical Commission. "Reconnaissance survey report: Wellesley." Unpublished manuscript. January 1980.

-----, Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS). Buildings designed by Benjamin Proctor, Jr. (17 January 2005).

Proctor, Benjamin, Jr., Obituary. *The Townsman* (Friday, 22 December 1939), p.6.

Wellesley Historical Society. *The Wellesley Post Card Album*. Wellesley: The Wellesley Historical Society, 1999.

-----, Photo Archive and Post Card file (undated historic photos of Elm Park Hotel and Elm Park).

-----, Research files on Elm Park and Clock Tower, including undated newspaper clippings on Elm Park Hotel, the May Breakfast, the clock tower, and "Beauty-making at Wellesley Hills."

Young, George. "Clock tower history dates back to 1807." *The Wellesley Townsman* (6 April 1978). [clipping at Wellesley Historical Society]

(end)

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Name of Property

Norfolk, Massachusetts
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1.24 acres

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 19 312610 4686860
Zone Easting Northing

2 19 312470 4686710
Zone Easting Northing

3 19 312400 4686750
Zone Easting Northing

4
Zone Easting Northing
See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathleen Kelly Broomer, Preservation Consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date April 2007

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone (617) 727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Town of Wellesley

street & number 525 Washington Street telephone (781) 431-1019

city or town Wellesley state MA zip code 02482

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503. NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Rev. 10-90)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

**Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA**

Section number 10 **Page** 1

10. Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is shown on the accompanying Town of Wellesley assessors' maps (map 64 and map 74).

Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses the parcel continuously associated with Elm Park since its establishment in 1908.

(end)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

Section number 10 Page 1

Additional Documentation – Photographs

Historic Name: Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Location: 305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills (Wellesley), MA
Photographer: Kathleen Kelly Broomer
Date: October 2004
Location of Negatives: Wellesley Historical Commission, Town of Wellesley

Photo 1	View northeast on Washington Street side toward clock tower and Wellesley Hills Square.
Photo 2	View east from western edge of park toward clock tower and Wellesley Hills Square.
Photo 3	View southeast of clock tower (north and west elevations) from Worcester Street.
Photo 4	View northeast from elliptical patio/drinking fountain toward Wellesley Hills Square.
Photo 5	Detail, clock tower cupola, south and east elevations.
Photo 6	Detail, clock tower entry, east elevation.
Photo 7	Detail, bronze plaque in memory of John W. Shaw, left of clock tower entry.
Photo 8	Detail, bronze plaque in memory of Benjamin Proctor, Jr., right of clock tower entry.
Photo 9	Detail, bronze plaque in memory of Isaac Sprague, rear (west) elevation of clock tower.
Photo 10	View of pedestrian path and elliptical patio in front (east) of clock tower.

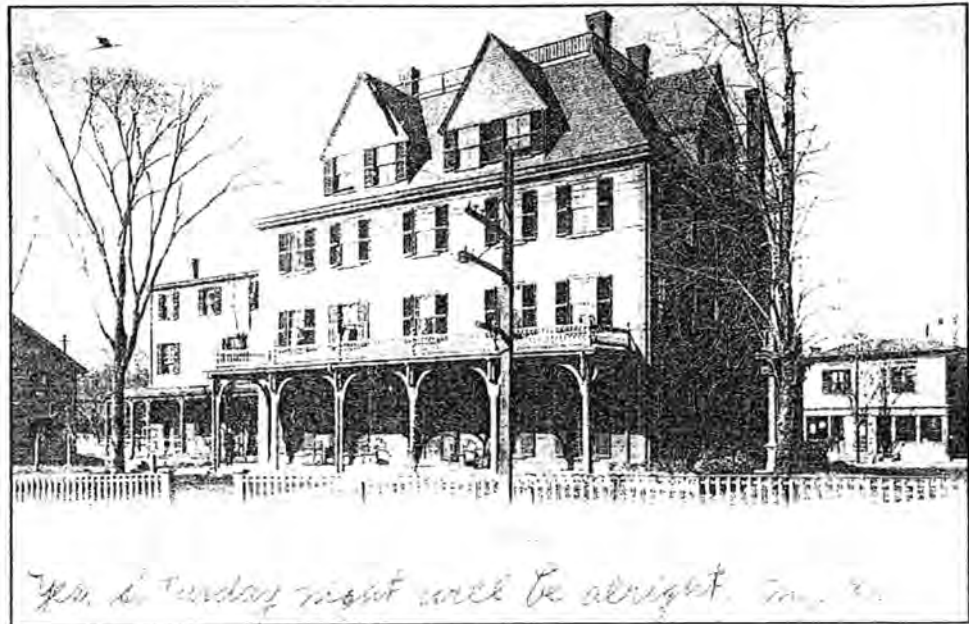
(end)

**Elm Park & Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Wellesley (Norfolk), MA
Data Sheet**

Map/Parcel	MHC#	Historic Name	Address	Date	Style	Type/Status	Photo
Maps 64, 74 Parcel 58		Elm Park (aka Clocktower Park)	305 Washington St.	1908		SI/C	1-10
	919	Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower		1928	Georg. Reviv.	St/C	1-3, 5-6
		drinking fountain		early 20 th c.		O/C	4
		stone pillars (2)		2004		2 O/NC	4

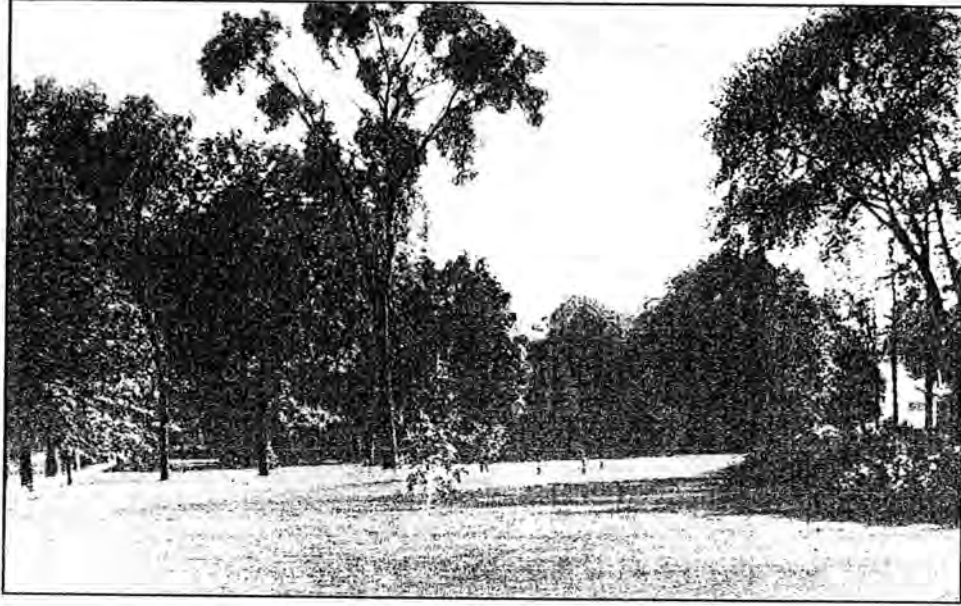
Note: landscape features such as fences, paths, and the patio have not been counted separately from the site known as Elm Park.

Number of resources: contributing: 1 site, 1 structure, 1 object (3 total)
noncontributing: 2 objects (2 total)



By 1908 the Elm Park Hotel (at Washington Street and the Worcester Turnpike) in Wellesley Hills Square was 100 years old, having been built to serve the stage-coaches on the new Worcester Turnpike. After the railroad came through in 1834-35, the hotel fell into disrepair, becoming a tavern, boarding school, boarding house and country resort. In May 1908, 700 turned out for a "May Breakfast" of corn cakes, bacon, fried eggs and fishballs to raise funds toward the \$20,000 needed to purchase and tear down the hotel. Citizens were trying to give visitors the impression that "one is in the most beautiful village in Massachusetts." Looking west on Washington Street (below), one can see the Natick & Cochituate trolley coming toward the Wellesley Hills stop in front of the Codwise house, now 278 Washington Street. Elm Park is on the right.





Elm Park as it looked from 1908 to 1928 before the clock tower was built. Landscape plans were developed in 1909 to include a lawn, with gifts of trees and rhododendrons as well as attractive flower beds. On the left is Washington Street and on the right the Worcester Turnpike. The Wellesley Hills Unitarian Society (below) was established in 1871. The present stone church was constructed in 1887. The most recent addition was built in 1960.





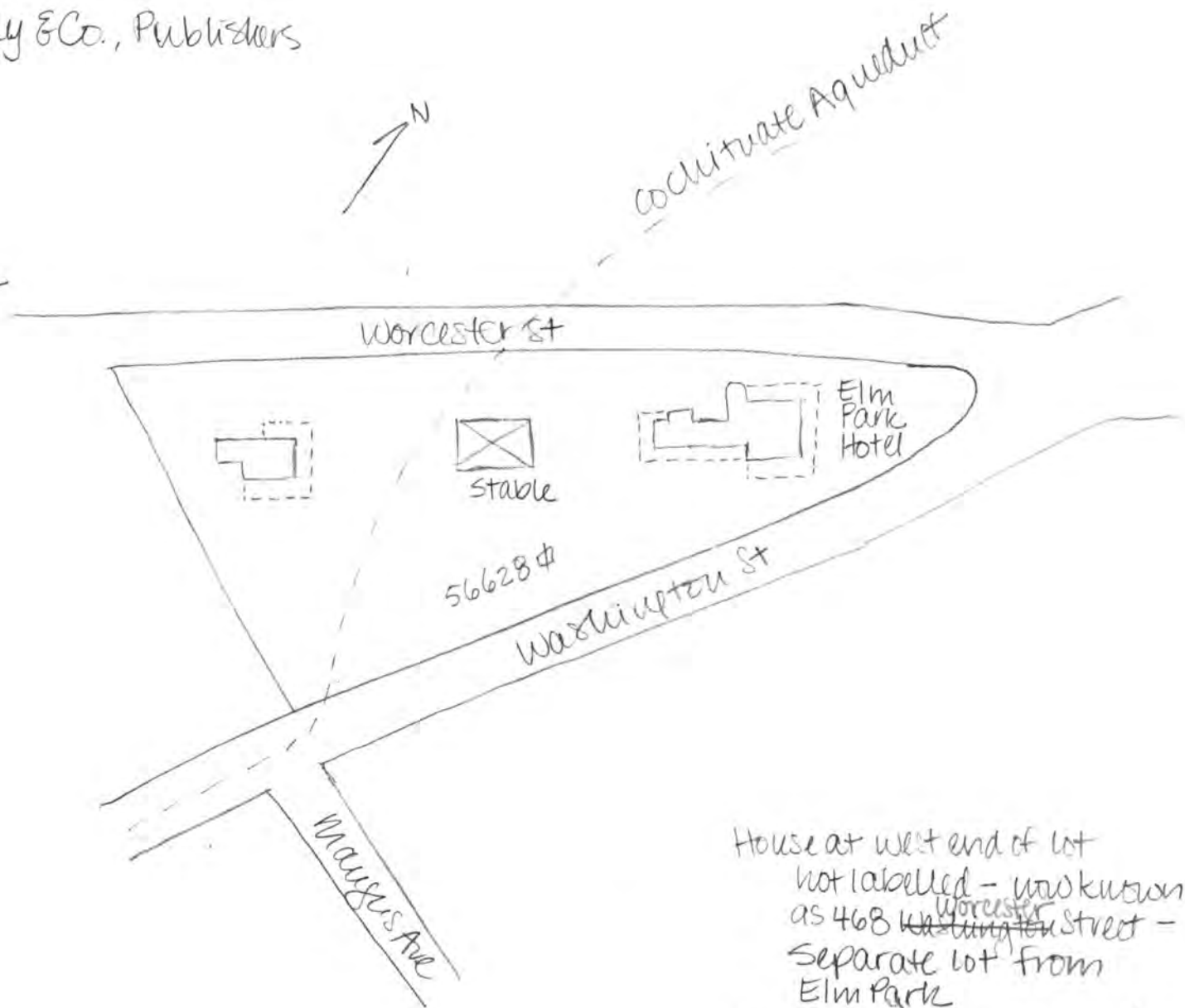
1970 An. 1111

Elm Park Hotel
Wellesley Hills
Wellesley Historical Society

Atlas of the Town of Wellesley,
Norfolk County, Mass.

Geo. W. Stadly & Co., Publishers
Boston
1897
Plate 2

not to scale



House at west end of lot
not labelled - was known
as 468 ^{Worcester} Washington Street -
Separate lot from
Elm Park
Worcester Street was widened
in 1932-1933

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Norfolk

DATE RECEIVED: 4/25/07 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 5/14/07
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/29/07 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 6/08/07
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 07000511

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 6-5-07 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.



Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk Co., Mass.

Photo 1



Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk Co., Mass.

Photo 2



Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk Co., Mass.

Photo 3



Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk Co., Mass.

Photo 4



Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Elm Park
305 Washington St, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk Co., Mass.

Photo 5



Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Elm Park

305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk County, Mass.

Photo 6

THE CLOCK AND BELL IN THIS TOWER
WERE PRESENTED IN 1874 BY

JOHN W. SHAW

"TO THE TOWN OF NEEDHAM
FOR THE VILLAGE OF GRANTVILLE"
AND LONG SERVED IN THE PUBLIC
SCHOOL WHICH CARRIED HIS NAME.
TO HIS MEMORY AND THAT OF "THE LITTLE
GROUP OF GOOD CITIZENS OF THE 1860'S
AND 1870'S TO WHOM WE OWE SO MUCH"
THIS CLOCK TOWER WAS ERECTED BY
PUBLIC FUNDS IN 1928

Shaw ~~plaq~~ plaque.
Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk County, Mass.

Photo 7

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK

THIS TABLET
IS TO THE MEMORY OF
BENJAMIN PROCTOR, JR., A.I.A.
(1878 - 1939)
WHO DESIGNED THIS MEMORIAL TOWER

HIS TASTE AND SKILL IN
ARCHITECTURE DID MUCH TO BEAUTIFY
THE TOWN OF WELLESLEY IN WHICH
HE LIVED FOR MANY YEARS

Proctor Plaque

Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower

305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills

Wellesley, Norfolk County, Mass.

Photo 8

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK

NAMED IN MEMORY OF
ISAAC SPRAGUE
A DEVOTED CITIZEN
TO WHOSE VISION AND GENEROSITY
HIS HOME TOWN
OWES MUCH OF ITS DEVELOPMENT
1860 — 1934

Sprague Plaque
Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower
Elm Park
305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk County, Mass.

Photo 9

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK



Circulation Path/ Elliptical Patio

Elm Park

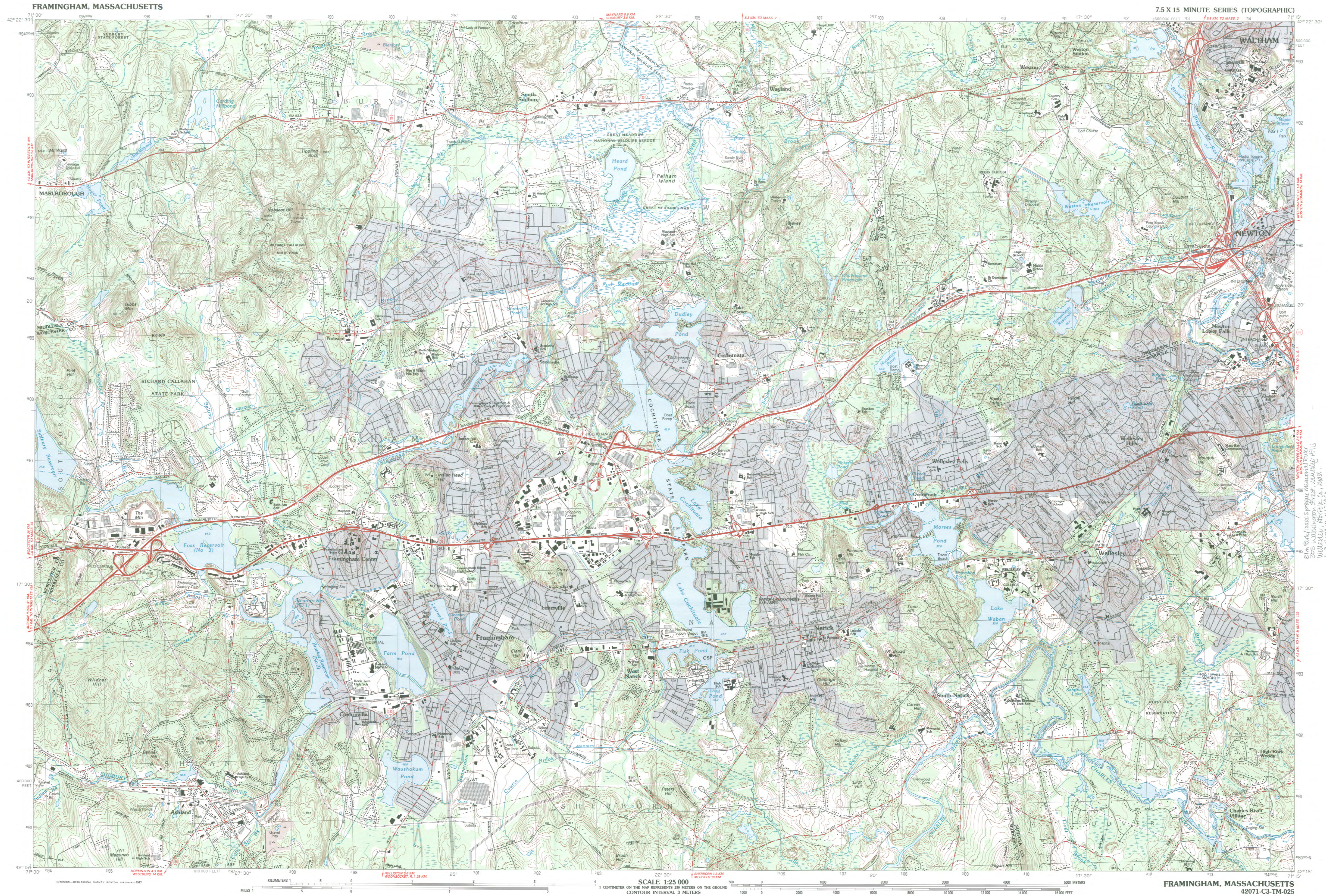
305 Washington Street, Wellesley Hills
Wellesley, Norfolk Co., Mass.

Photo 10

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK

DEC 2004 CAK



Framingham MASSACHUSETTS

1:25 000-scale metric
topographic map

ELM PARK AND ISAAC SPRAGUE MEMORIAL TOWER,
305 WASHINGTON STREET,
WELLESLEY HILLS
WELLESLEY, NORFOLK CO., MASS.
7.5 X 15 MINUTE QUADRANGLE
SHOWING

- Contours and elevations in meters
- Highways, roads and other manmade structures
- Water features
- Woodland areas
- Geographic names

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

1987

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
in cooperation with Massachusetts Department
of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of
Massachusetts agencies

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
taken 1978 and 1981. Field checked 1979 and 1982. Map edited 1987
Supersedes Framingham 1979 and Natick 1970
1:25,000-scale maps

Projection and 1000-meter grid, zone 19
Universal Transverse Mercator
10,000-foot grid ticks: Massachusetts coordinate system,
mainland zone
1927 North American Datum
To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983,
move the projection lines 6 meters south and
41 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

CONVERSION TABLE	
Meters	Feet
1	3.2808
2	6.5617
3	9.8425
4	13.1234
5	16.4042
6	19.6850
7	22.9659
8	26.2467
9	29.5275
10	32.8084

To convert meters to feet
multiply by 3.2808

To convert feet to meters
multiply by 0.3048

DECLINATION DIAGRAM	
UTM grid convergence (BM 1983) declination (M)	Diagram is approximate
1° 15' 236 MILS	

ADJOINING MAPS		
1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9

1 Hudson
2 Maynard
3 Boston North
4 Marlborough
5 Boston South
6 Millis
7 Needham
8 Needham Heights

ISBN 0-607-23455-5
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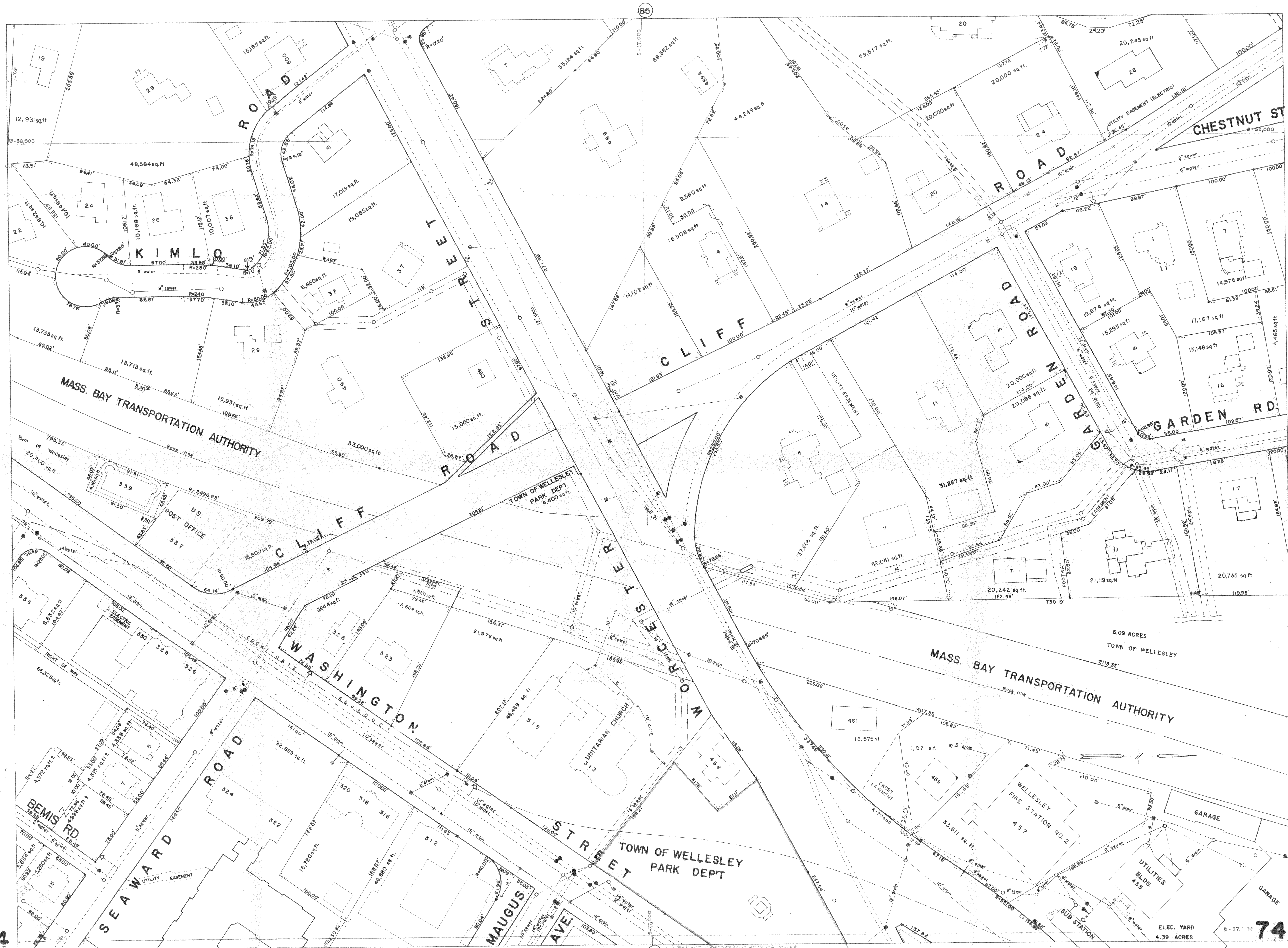
Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface	
Secondary highway, hard surface	
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface	.....
Unimproved road, trail	.....
Road marker: Interstate, U. S., State	.....
Railroad: standard gauge, narrow gauge	.....
Bridge: drawbridge	.....
Footbridge; overpass; underpass	.....
Build-up area: only selected landmark buildings shown	.....
House; barn; church; school; large structure	.....
Boundary:	.....
National, with monument	.....
State	.....
County, parish	.....
Civil township, precinct, district	.....
Incorporated city, village, town	.....
National or State reservation; small park	.....
Land grant with monument; forest section corner	.....
U. S. public lands survey: range, township, section	.....
Range, township, section line: location approximate	.....
Fence or field line	.....
Power transmission line, located near	.....
Dam; dam with lock	.....
Cemetery; grave	.....
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument	.....
Windmill; water well; spring	.....
Mine shaft; prospect; adit or cave	.....
Control: horizontal station; vertical station; spot elevation	.....
Contours: index; intermediate; supplementary; depression	.....
Disturbed surface: strip mine, lava, sand	.....
Bathymetric contours: index; intermediate	.....
Perennial lake and stream; intermittent lake and stream	.....
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small	.....
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp	.....
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodland	.....
Scrub; mangrove	.....

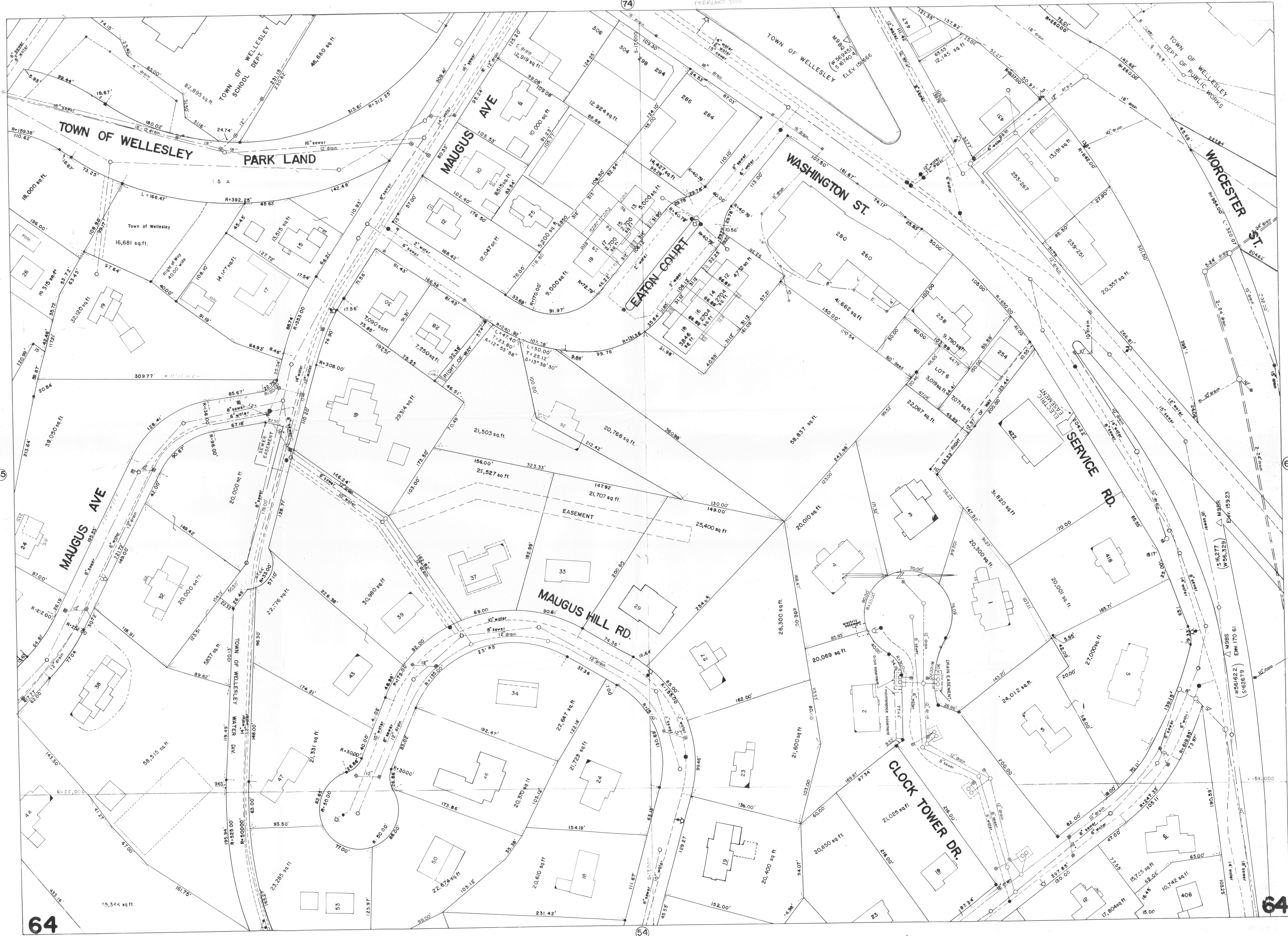
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request

TOTAL RECORDED FEET



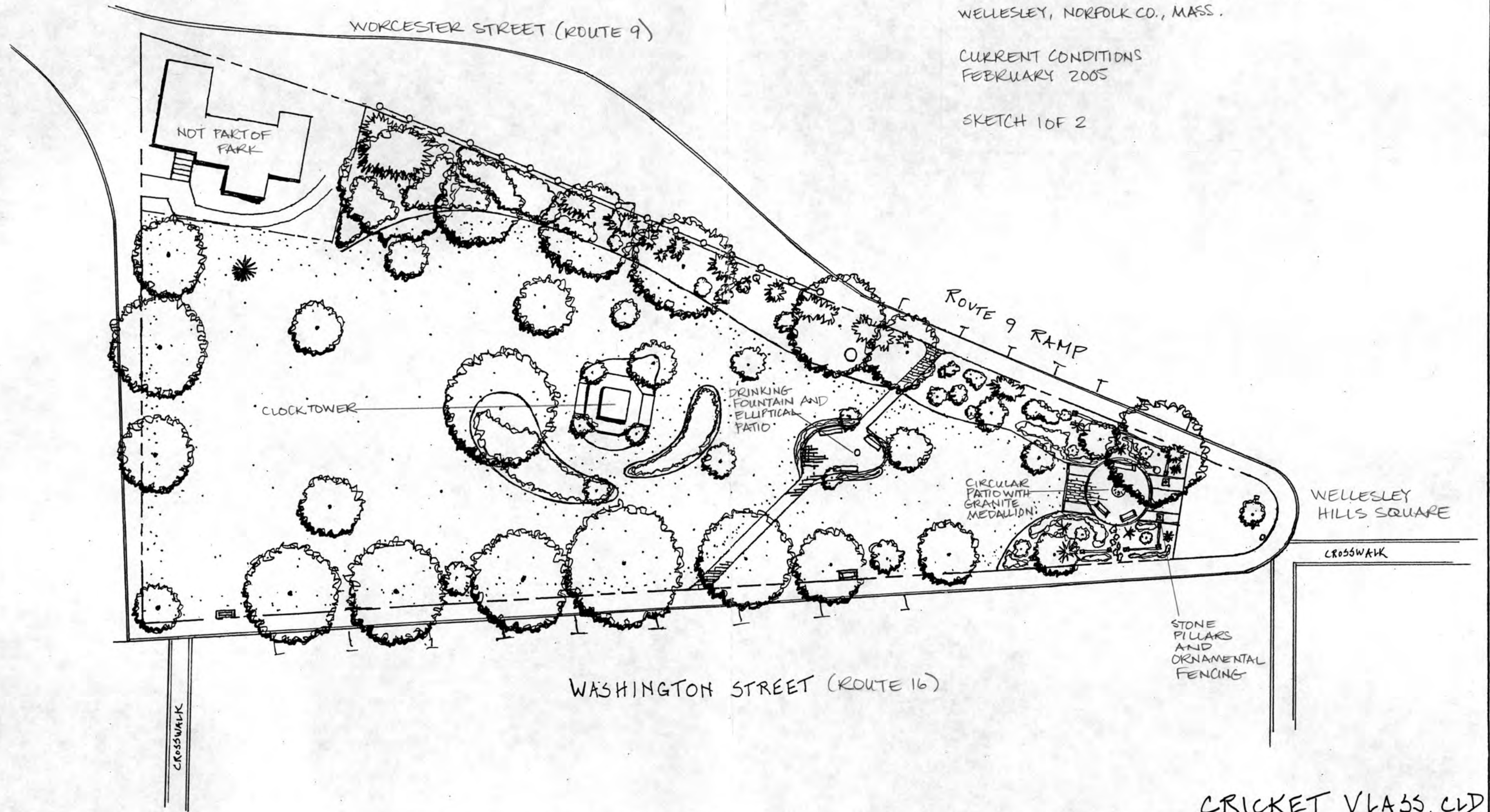
ELIA PARK AND ISAAC SPRAGUE MEMORIAL TOWER
305 WASHINGTON STREET, WELLESLEY HILLS
WELLESLEY, NORFOLK COUNTY, MASS.
TOWN OF WELLESLEY ASSESSORS MAPS 64 AND 74
SCALE 1" = 40'
FEBRUARY 2005



ELM PARK AND ISAAC SPRAGUE MEMORIAL TOWER
305 WASHINGTON STREET, WELLESLEY HILLS
WELLESLEY, NORFOLK CO., MASS.

CURRENT CONDITIONS
FEBRUARY 2005

SKETCH 1 OF 2



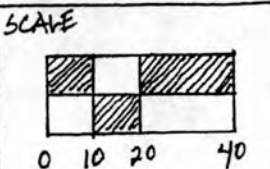
TOWN OF WELLESLEY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

ELM PARK

DESIGN PLAN - PHASE II
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

CRICKET VLASS, CLD

N
NOVEMBER, 2004

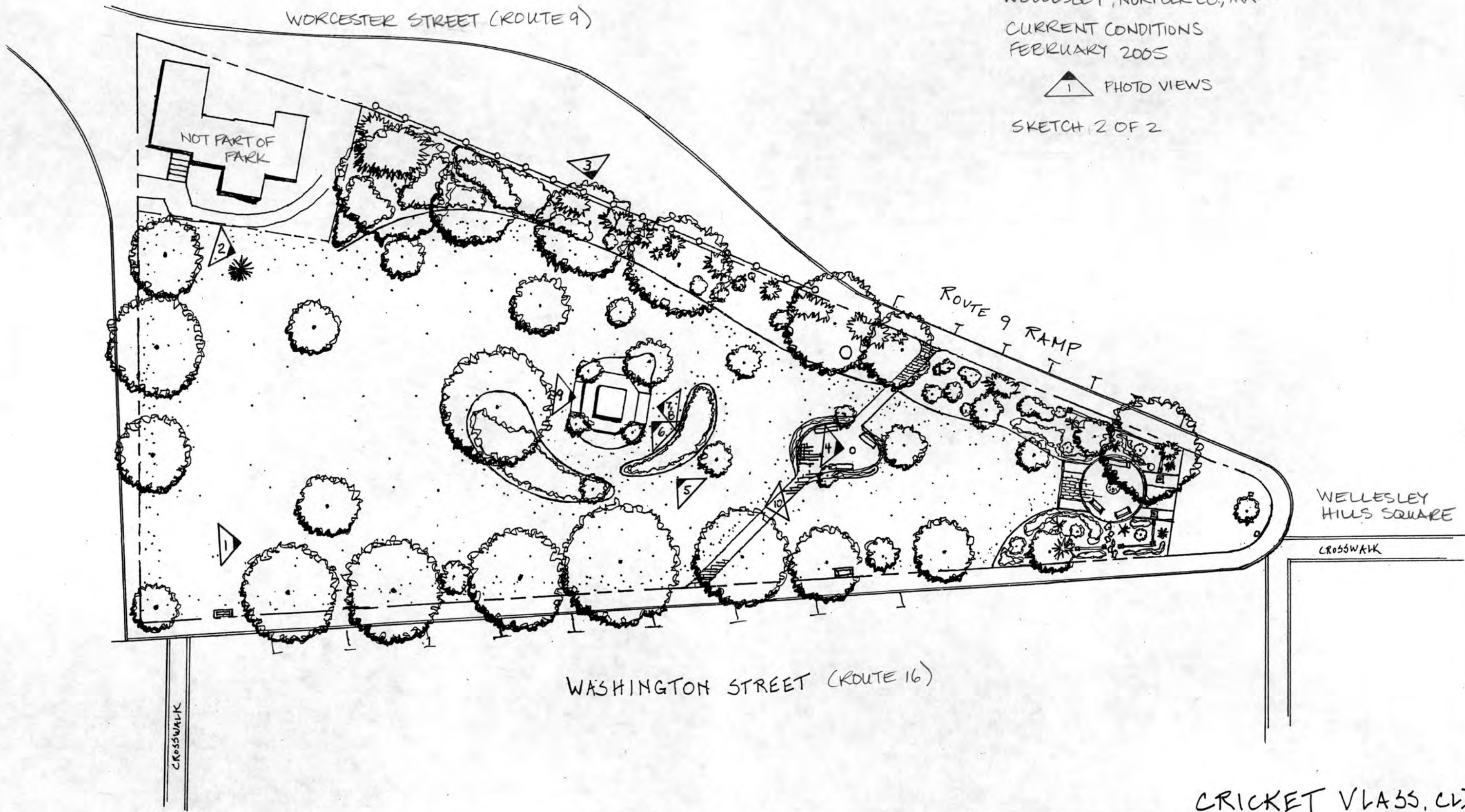


ELM PARK AND ISAAC SPRAGUE MEMORIAL TOWER
305 WASHINGTON STREET, WELLESLEY HILLS
WELLESLEY, NORFOLK CO., MASS.

CURRENT CONDITIONS
FEBRUARY 2005

▲ PHOTO VIEWS

SKETCH 2 OF 2



TOWN OF WELLESLEY
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

ELM PARK

DESIGN PLAN - PHASE II
LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS

CRICKET VLASS, CLD

N

NOVEMBER, 2004

SCALE

0	10	20	40
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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

April 13, 2007

Mr. J. Paul Loether, Chief
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
1201 Eye Street, NW, 8th floor
Washington, DC 20005



Dear Mr. Loether:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Elm Park and Isaac Sprague Memorial Tower, Wellesley (Norfolk), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 30 to 45 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

One letter of support has been received.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Betsy Friedberg".

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Kathleen Kelly Broomer, consultant
Linda Buffum, Wellesley Historical Commission
Katherine L. Babson, Jr., Chair, Board of Selectmen
Rick Brown, Planning Director

TOWN OF WELLESLEY



MASSACHUSETTS

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HANS LARSEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF GENERAL GOVERNMENT

September 8, 2006

Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA. 02125



Dear Commission Members,

The Wellesley Board of Selectmen would like to inform your Commission that despite the recent closing of the Wellesley Hills Branch Library due to budget issues, we fully support the nomination of this building to the National Register of Historic Places. This lovely little building, designed in 1927, is a treasure in our town and this distinction is one we would be proud to have bestowed upon it. This building was the first building constructed to be used as a branch library in our community.

At your request, we are also, for the record, fully in support of the Clock Tower/Elm Park nomination jointly submitted by the Wellesley Historical Commission and the Wellesley Natural Resources Commission.

We look forward to the spring of 2007 when we understand these nominations should be on the State agenda for review.

Very truly yours,

Katherine L. Babson, Jr.

Katherine L. Babson, Jr., Chairman

KLB:adh