

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA STATEMENT (if applicable)

As a well-preserved example of a once common bridge type, and for its association with a known engineering firm, the Needham Street Bridge meets criterion C of the National Register of Historic Places.

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE Describe important design features and evaluate in terms of other structures within the community.

The Needham Street Bridge is a three-span stone-arch bridge with an overall length of 95 feet. Each of the three elliptical stone arches have a span of 27 feet, providing a waterway of 81 feet and a roadway of 40 feet. The entire length of the bridge and wingwalls is 150 feet. In the center of the downstream side is carved the date, "A.D. 1875."

The Needham Street Bridge was completed within a few months of Upper Falls' more famous arched structure, Echo Bridge (NR-4/9/1980), part of the City of Boston's Sudbury Aqueduct and for many years the second longest masonry arch in the nation.

Unlike other stone-arch bridges across the Charles which have been widened in the early 20th century for increased traffic capacity, the Needham Street Bridge has seen no alterations and remains one of the best examples of stone-arch construction in the Boston area.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE Explain historical importance of structure and how the structure relates to the development of the community.

Although the Needham Street Bridge is one of the oldest of Newton's bridges, it is one of the most recent of Needham's nine stone bridges over the Charles River. Needham Street was laid out in 1875 to link Newton Highlands and Centre Street with Newton Upper Falls and the town of Needham. The bridge was formally accepted by the selectmen of Needham and the highway committee of Newton on Saturday, November 13, 1875.

Engineers responsible for the design of the bridge were Hiram Blaisdell and William Wheeler, two young civil engineers from Concord, Mass., both just starting out on their careers. The pair were also responsible for several stone bridges in their native town, and further investigation may show a wide influence in Boston-area towns. In 1876, the firm was responsible for the design of Lyons Bridge over the Charles, between Needham and Dedham. Although Lyons Bridge utilized a single 54-foot arch span, like the Needham Street bridge, it prominently displays a central datestone.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

Newton Republican 20 November 1875.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

7/23/86

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic GroupName Newton MRA
State Middlesex County, MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

91. Needham Street Bridge

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

92. Newton Street Railway
CarbarnEntered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

93. Nichols House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

94. Old Shepard Farm

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

95. Page, H.P., House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

96. Parsons, Edward, House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

97. Peabody--Williams House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

98. Potter Estate

Entered in the
National Register

Keeper

Melvyn Byers 12/23/86

Attest

99. Prescott Estate

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

100. Railroad Hotel

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvyn Byers 9/4/86

Attest

86001852

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Needham Street Bridge (Newton MRA)
Middlesex County
MASSACHUSETTS

- ☐ resubmission
☐ nomination by person or local government
☐ owner objection
☐ appeal

Entered in the
National Register

Working No. _____
Fed. Reg. Date: JUL 23 1986 2/3/87
Date Due: 8/21/86 - 9/6/86
Action: ☒ ACCEPT 9-4-86
☐ RETURN
☐ REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Substantive Review: ☐ sample ☐ request ☐ appeal ☐ NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☐ no

7. Description

Condition

- ☐ excellent ☐ deteriorated
☐ good ☐ ruins
☐ fair ☐ unexposed

Check one

- ☐ unaltered
☐ altered

Check one

- ☐ original site
☐ moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- ☐ summary paragraph
☐ completeness
☐ clarity
☐ alterations/integrity
☐ dates
☐ boundary selection

8. Significance

Period Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (*in one paragraph*)

- ☐ summary paragraph
- ☐ completeness
- ☐ clarity
- ☐ applicable criteria
- ☐ justification of areas checked
- ☐ relating significance to the resource
- ☐ context
- ☐ relationship of integrity to significance
- ☐ justification of exception
- ☐ other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title date

13. Other

- ☐ Maps
- ☐ Photographs
- ☐ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____

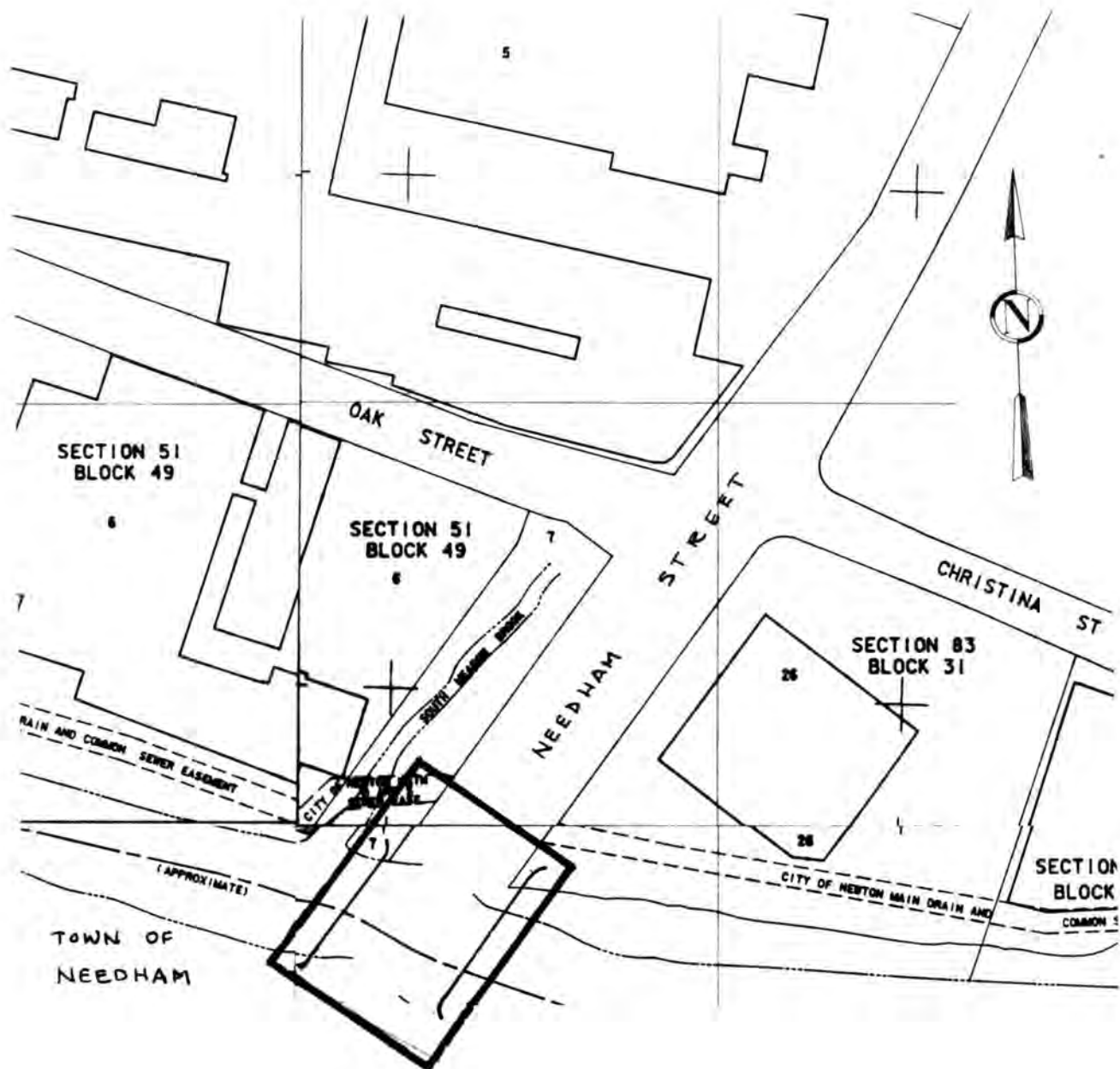


Newton, Mass. MRA
Needham Street Bridge
Newton Upper Falls
Inv. #UF 98

Newton, Mass. MRA

APR 1986





City of Newton Assessor's Maps. Sheets 135, 136, 143, 144
Metric Series, 1979
Scale: UTM grid line interval = 100 meters (328 feet)

Newton, Mass. MRA
Needham Street Bridge
Newton Upper Falls