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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

SEP 15 1989

NATIONAL REGISTER

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Lincoln Park

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number Bounded by Congress, Franklin, Pearl and Federal Sts. N/A not for publication

city, town Portland N/A vicinity

state Maine code ME county Cumberland code 005 zip code 04101

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
[X] public-local
public-State
public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
[X] district
site
structure
object

Number of Resources within Property

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows: buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this [X] 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 [X] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

Maine Historic Preservation Commission

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property [] meets [] does not meet the National Register criteria. [] See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- [X] entered in the National Register.
[] See continuation sheet.
[] determined eligible for the National Register.
[] determined not eligible for the National Register.
[] removed from the National Register.
[] other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/Park

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape/Park

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

No Style

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation N/Awalls N/Aroof N/Aother Cast Iron Fence & Granite Posts

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Lincoln Park was acquired by the City of Portland immediately following the Great Fire of 1866. The original 2 1/2 acre site was bounded by Congress, Pearl, Federal, and Franklin Streets. The Park, laid out by City Civil Engineer Charles R. Goodell, is the first public ground owned and improved by the city. There are 3 contributing structures, 1 contributing site and 1 non-contributing object.

The Lincoln Park site is roughly a parallelogram in shape. Charles Goodell's plan bisected the site on the north/south axis with a circular walk in the middle. Within each of the quadrangles he clumped three trees in each corner with a larger caliper tree in the center. The site was bordered by a sidewalk and fence. Drawings of the fence and gate were prepared by the City Engineer's Office, presumably by Goodell or under his direction. A sheet of bollard designs prepared by architect Matthew Stead presented six different styles, none of which were used. The 1868 Auditor's Annual Report lists an expenditure of \$14,823.77 "for purchase of material, stone and iron work for fence, painting fence, grading, trees and setting out, and general improvements of the grounds." The same Annual Report noted the purchase of the corner lot at Congress and Pearl for the price of \$4,420.

The fence consists of granite posts and cast iron upright rails. The square based granite posts sit on a projecting base, the middle sections contain a horizontally oriented recessed rectangular panel with a vertically oriented recessed rectangular panel above. Both panels have an incised rhomboid pattern. This shaft is capped by a cavetto molding, a fillet and a shallow square based pyramid. The fence consists of rhomboid shaped upright rails supported by a bottom rail with circular motif divided by radiating elements. The top rail is a simple metal band. The fence posts are on hexagonal granite blocks spaced ten feet on center.

Historic views of the park indicate the park path system was not constructed according to Goodell's plan, but was supplemented by diagonal paths originating at the four corners of the park meeting at the center. Goodell's planting was also not followed. Historic views, c. 1870, show deciduous trees, probably maples, along the perimeter, and lining the interior path walks. The city added a fountain in 1871 at a cost of over \$2,000 installed (1871-71 Auditor's Report).

See continuation sheet

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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The following newspaper description of 1888 gives a vivid picture of the park and suggests a seasonal bedding system was used:

Lincoln Park though not at all remarkable for its size as compared enclosures of this kind in larger cities has always been a square of local pride. How well located are those beautiful flower plots in their splendid emerald settings and how handsomely and artistically the host of admirably selected plants and flowers are arranged in them. These designs are not duplicates of those of preceeding years but are changed every season and in saying that this year's commendable patterns do not suffer in comparison with previous efforts, but if anything excel them, is only speaking strictly within bounds and is deservedly complementary to Mr. W.A. Ramsey, who has this business in charge. Take this oblong bed towards the end of the park which contains among other beautiful forms of plant life these excellent types of blue ageratum and scarlet geraniums with an appropriate border of golden feather. How it looks. Next comes a beautiful collection of red acryanthus jay goode and coleus. Towards Franklin Street you see silver and scarlet geraniums, celous sunset with a margin of lobolia. Here is a specially chosen collection arranged in heart shaped patterns and angle shapes. A century plant is in the center and radiating from this are rays like the spokes of a wheel. You meet with a circular plot in which silver and scarlet geraniums predominate in charming contrast. This collection of red plants, acryanthus, coleus, and jay goode excite the notice of the passerby and very pleasant are they indeed to look upon in all their striking loveliness. This mass of silver and scarlet geraniums and sunset celous close by with its labelia surrounding is also ably contrasted and agreeable to the eye.

The lot adjoining Lincoln Park to the west was acquired by the City and laid out with a path system in 1908 through the efforts of some of Portland's prominent and public spirited citizens. In the immediate vicinity of the Park the Federal Courthouse, Cumberland County Courthouse, and the Portland City Hall were under construction. "Old and unsightly structures [were] removed and the area they occupied [became] a beautiful Park annex." In 1923-24, the city constructed a Fire Station on the site.

Although the Park is in a deteriorated condition, its major architectural and landscape design elements survive. In the late 1960s approximately one-quarter of the east end of the Park was taken for the widening of Franklin Street. The fence was carefully relocated at the new eastern boundary of the Park. The original fountain survives, though its upper-most tier is missing.

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The following quote from the dedication of the Lincoln Park in 1909, articulates the importance of the public park:

From many points of view the ideal of a city's life is a public park. Here is the natural center of communal attraction. Here is the symbol of health, of quiet, of peace. Here is the garden of municipal intercourse, wither citizens resort in time of democratic association. And here when civic pride is strong enough and the direction of public interest is wise enough there gather such public buildings and such works of art and nature that the genius of a city is constantly set forth, her finer spirit symbolized in power, her hopes and her intellectual ideals objectified for the generations to come.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Landscape Architecture

Significant Person N/A

Period of Significance

1866

Significant Dates

1866

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Goodell, Charles, C.E.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Lincoln Park, as is the case with many urban parks, was created in response to a concern for health and safety. After the fire of 1866 which devastated Portland, the Lincoln Park site was acquired and improved with City funds. The Park is significant as Portland's earliest designed public space and is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion C for its landscape design.

On July 4, 1866, a fire broke out which devastated the city; 1,800 buildings were destroyed and 10,000 residents were left homeless. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow visiting Portland a month later wrote, "I have been in Portland since the fire. Desolation! Desolation! Desolation! It reminds me of Pompeii, the sepult city."¹ Immediately after the fire, the City Council appointed a committee "...to consider the expediency of buying land somewhere within the limits of the burnt district for a public square or park."² It was hoped that the site would serve as a firebreak in the event of another fire. The committee recommended and secured the tract bounded by Congress, Franklin, Federal, and Pearl Streets, with the exception of the corner lot of Congress and Pearl Streets, at a cost of about \$83,000. Mayor Stevens in his Annual Address of 1867 noted that, "a favorable contract has been made for enclosing the lot with a substantial iron fence and I hope to see the work of grading commenced as soon as the weather will admit. No time should be lost in making the park as pleasant and attractive as possible." Inspired by the recovery that the city made after the fire the new park was named Phoenix Square. The name was changed to Lincoln Park, in honor of President Lincoln in 1867.

Plans for the Park were prepared by the City Engineer's Office, presumably under the direction of Charles R. Goodell. Goodell's design and "as built" views of the park suggest Lincoln Park was conceived as a "promenade park", the object being less to display beautiful scenery but primarily afford an opportunity for fresh air and an ample uninterrupted promenade. This objective implied a preference for geometrical layouts as opposed to the naturalistic or picturesque style. The Daily Eastern Argus (March 11, 1911) reported:

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

City of Portland Auditor's Report. Portland: Ford & Rich, Printers.
1878 - 1930.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 1.8

UTM References

A

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3	9	8	8	0	0
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4	8	3	4	6	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property of 1.8 acres occupies the City of Portland tax map 28-B-1.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary embraces the remaining intact portion of Lincoln Park. This boundary deviates from the historical parcel in that it excludes that portion of the eastern end that was removed for the construction of the Franklin arterial highway.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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Every pleasant day Lincoln Park is thronged with people, who promenading its pleasant walks and enjoying its cooling shades and beautiful flowers enjoy and appreciate this delightful breathing place.

Charles Goodell (1832-1901) was educated in the neighboring Westbrook schools. After studying civil engineering, he became assistant City Engineer and later Civil Engineer of Portland. In addition to laying out Lincoln park and designing the fence, gates and posts, Goodell is credited with the design of the Renaissance inspired Portland Athenaeum in 1861 (the building was destroyed by the Great Fire of 1866). In 1879 Goodell's versatile design ability was applied to the construction of the "head dam" on the Presumpscot river for the S. D. Warren Paper Company.

In 1909, in observance of the one-hundredth anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln, a neighboring lot to the west was added to the site. Excerpts for the dedication day speeches offer insights into the emblematic meaning of the Park:

A new era is awakened by the extension of Lincoln Park into our midst and the erection at one time of a remarkable group of administrative buildings which will make this in architectural grandeur and civic importance one among the notable squares of America.

It is fitting that we dedicate it to-day while these buildings stand yet unfinished and the new forum itself is still encumbered with unworthy structures. If we waited to complete the memorial when could we say that the finishing touch had been added? The levelling of the ground is not enough, for it is not alone the park which we dedicate. Inseparably associated with it will be the courts of government which, seated here, will dignify it, the monuments to religion, to benevolence, and to education which will grace it, the lofty structures of administrative business which will overshadow it with the cares of daily life, and the embellishments not only of nature but of art, with which it will be endowed from the accumulated riches of a prosperous and enlightened citizenship.

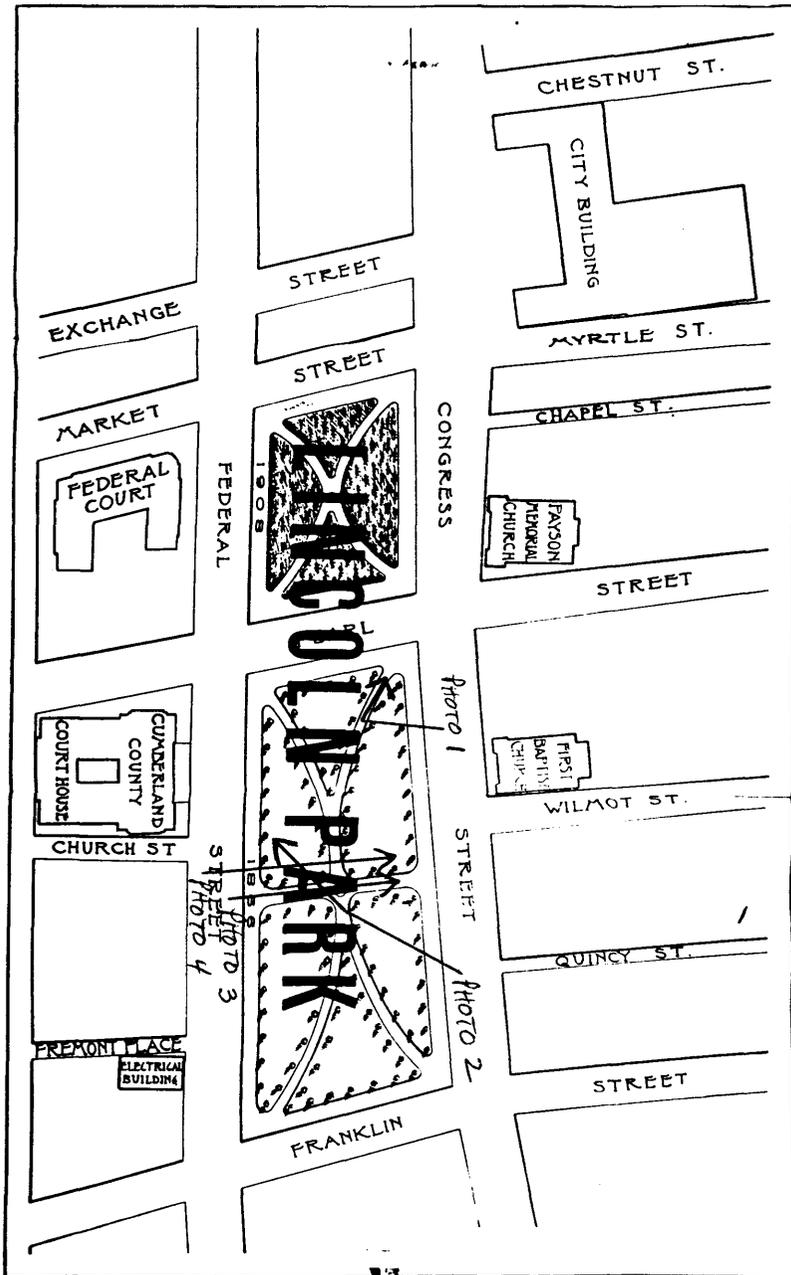
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Not knowing when all these prophecies are to be fulfilled, we will dedicate Lincoln Park to-day in the tumult and confusion of the new beginnings that already surround it, and will leave it to other generations in future years to perfect the tribute, and to make this civic center a still more adequate expression to the world of the beauty and the power which can spring from "government of the people, by the people, for the people".

The eastern end of the park was lost in 1970 with the widening of Franklin Street. However, the granite posts and iron fence were carefully relocated such that it continues to define the eastern boundary. Although the park is in a deteriorated condition, its major architectural and landscape design elements survive. The City has authorized the creation of the Friends of the Park, an appointed citizen advisory board, and includes members of the City Council, School Board and Planning staff. Despite years of deferred maintenance and limited City budgets Lincoln Park retains its integrity and with the support of the Friends of the Park there is renewed interest in maintaining its historic character.



LINCOLN PARK
Portland, Maine

