

FORM A - AREA

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 Washington Street, Boston, MA. 02108

Form numbers in this area	Area letter
N/A	E

Photo (3x3" or 3x5")
Staple to left side of form

Photo number PFNR-1-29/32

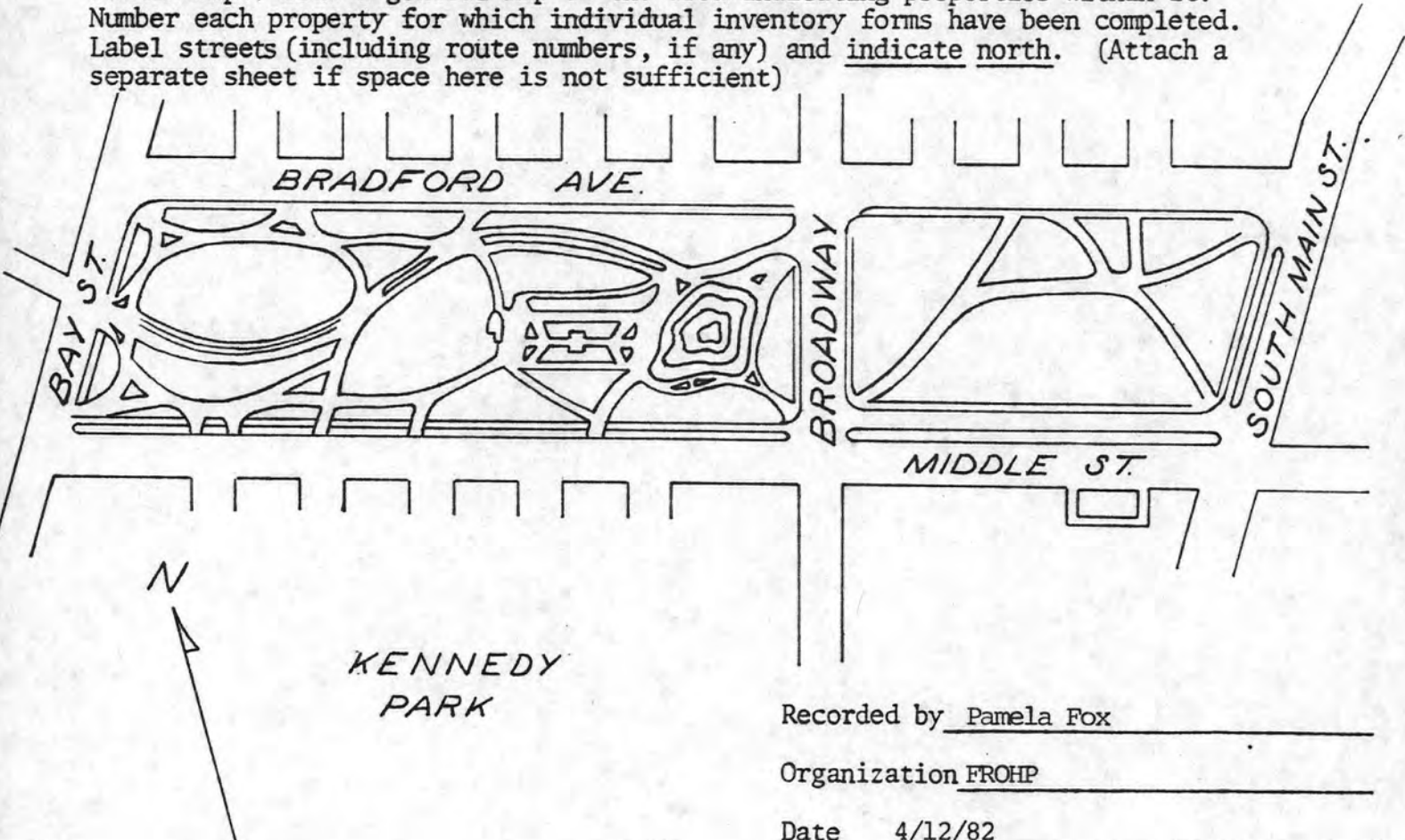
Town Fall River, MA

Name of area (if any) Kennedy Park

Bradford Avenue between Bay & South Main street:

General date or period 1868-present

Sketch map. Draw a general map of the area indicating properties within it. Number each property for which individual inventory forms have been completed. Label streets (including route numbers, if any) and indicate north. (Attach a separate sheet if space here is not sufficient)



Recorded by Pamela Fox

Organization FROHP

Date 4/12/82

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Describe physical setting, general character, and architecturally significant structures).

Kennedy Park, established in 1868, is the largest public park in Fall River and one of the city's principal open spaces. The long, narrow 57-acre parcel is located in the southwestern section of the city in a predominately middle and working class residential neighborhood. The eastern section of the park is flat, high table land with views of the city and Taunton River; to the west the land slopes gradually down to the water, and the changing grade provides a natural topographical interest.

Early photographs show a more sylvan scene than today, with more trees, shrubbery and flower gardens. Early features which do remain include a turn-of-the-century Colonial Revival shelter in front of the wading pool, an early bandstand, and the fieldstone base of a Shingle Style look-out shelter which burned in recent years. The fieldstone retaining wall around parts of the perimeter of the property, as well as the interior pathways, also remain. Originally, the flat upper section of the park was intended to be used for active sports and the more densely planted lower

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE of area. (Explain development of area, what caused it, and how it affected community; be specific).

Originally known as South Park, Kennedy is the city's largest and one of the two oldest parks and derives additional historical significance from its association with the nationally-known landscape architecture firms of Olmsted, Vaux & Co. and Olmsted Brothers.

The land for both South and Ruggles Parks was acquired by the city in 1868. According to one early history, city leaders were responsible for this enlightened purchase because they appreciated "the gregarious nature of a community of working people" and wished "to provide an easily accessible ground for their assemblage." During the 19th century, as America moved from a rural and agricultural to an urban, industrialized nation, the creation of public parks came to be seen as the proper response of civilized government to the phenomenon of urbanization. Recreation was understood to be a natural antidote to the nervous exhaustion of the age, produced by the intensity of commerce and industry.

Of those who stressed the importance of public recreation in an urban America, the most important was Frederick Law Olmsted (1822-1903) who, with Calvert Vaux (1824-1895) is considered the founder of the profession of landscape architecture. A theorist, designer and administrator and one of the first "city planners," Olmsted is best remembered for his winning 1858 design for Central Park in New York City, as well as his plans for the Boston park system, the Duke University and Stanford campuses, and public parks throughout the nation.

(cont'd)

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES

- Phillips, History of Fall River (1944-46), Fascicle II p 98-99
Fall River and Its Industries, p 158-159 (includes 1871 Olmsted Plan)
Fein, Albert, Landscape Into Cityscape (Van Nostrand Reinhold Company, 1967).
pages LX-XLX.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community: Fall River, Mass.	Form No: N/A
Property Name: Kennedy Park	

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

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Cont'd)

areas for passive recreation such as walking or bicycling. Tennis courts and tot lots have been inserted into spaces originally intended as open meadowlands.

Seven statues and monuments have also been placed within the park over the years, the most notable being the bronze World War II soldier by sculptor Aristide B. Cianfarani, erected by the American-Portuguese War Veterans Association in 1951. Cianfarani was associated with the Gorham Manufacturing Company for many years and designed the Nock Fountain and the statue of Bowen R. Church in Roger Williams Park in Providence. He believed in realism in sculpture, a position he maintained until the end of his life, when such a stand was clearly out of fashion. Other statues have included a 1951 replica of the Statue of Liberty, which was stolen from its granite pedestal. The five monuments are dedicated to Sargeant Timothy Foley of the Fall River Police Department, to Cosmo Cupolo, to labor union veterans, to Fall River soldiers killed in the Spanish-American War and World Wars I and II, and to those members of the Fall River Fire Department who died in the line of duty.

The architectural enframement of the park is dominated by the twin onion domes of the monumental St. Anne's Church on South Main Street. Houses along the perimeter of the park are typically late 19th and early 20th century multi-family units whose unbroken ranks provide streetscapes of pleasing harmony and rhythm.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

The firm of Olmsted, Vaux & Co. was hired by the city of Fall River to draw plans for the new South Park. An 1871 drawing, published in Fall River and Its Industries (1877) shows the upper section as an open parade and ballfield and the lower section as a densely planted "natural" area with meandering carriage and foot paths, a deer park, and an open meadow. The plan shows Olmsted's awareness of the need for active recreational spaces as well as his predilection for passive recreation—safe spaces for walking, running, skating or bicycling in an environment far removed from the congested urban streets. It is not known how much of the original Olmsted, Vaux plan was executed.

In 1901 the voters of Fall River, by a large majority, accepted the enactment of the Legislature allowing the appointment of a Park Commission. The members were appointed by Mayor Grime, with Reuben C. Small Jr. as chairman. According to the Phillips History of Fall River (1944-6), little had been accomplished in the city's parks up to that date. The newly appointed Park Commission, with an authorized loan of \$182,000, engaged the firm of Olmsted Brothers to make extensive improvements to South Park as well as to develop other park lands. At this time Olmsted Brothers consisted of a sole partnership between John C. Olmsted and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., the two sons of the pioneering 19th century figure. Although the names of the principals have changed over the years, the nationally famous firm has continued in operation through the present day. The 1903 Olmsted Brothers plan and the extensive planting lists survive today in the files of the Parks Department. These plans show many of the recreational features still present today, including the wading pool, shelter, bandstand and parade area, and lookout shelter, all suggestive of a trend toward more organized recreational facilities in a less "natural" environment.

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INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

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HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd)

Over the years, hurricane damage, vandalism, and scarcity of planting funds have taken their toll on South Park's trees and general landscaping. Also facilities for active recreation have continued to intrude into the peaceful natural park landscape which Olmsted designed for the weary residents of the 19th century industrial city.

Kennedy Park is significant (1) as a major civic improvement of Fall River's late 19th century expansion period, (2) as the city's largest and one of its oldest parks, serving a working class neighborhood, and (3) for its association with the nationally known landscape architecture firms of Olmsted, Vaux & Co. and the Olmsted Brothers; it meets criteria A and C of the National Register.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received 1/5/83
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 6 of 10

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

Name Fall River Multiple Resource Area
State MA

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- 51. ~~Kennedy Park~~ ~~Substantive Review~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____
- 52. Kerr Thread Mill ~~Substantive Review~~ ~~Determined Eligible~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION
Attest _____
- 53. King Philip Mills ~~Entered in the~~ ~~National Register~~ ~~for~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____
- 54. Laurel Lake Mills ~~Substantive Review~~ ~~Determined Eligible~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
DOE/OWNER OBJECTION
Attest _____
- 55. Lindsey, William, House ~~Entered in the~~ ~~National Register~~ ~~for~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____
- 56. Massasoit Fire House #5 ~~Entered in the~~ ~~National Register~~ ~~for~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____
- 57. Mechanics Mill ~~Entered in the~~ ~~National Register~~ ~~for~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____
- 58. Narragansett Mills ~~Entered in the~~ ~~National Register~~ ~~for~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____
- 59. North Burial Ground ~~Entered in the~~ ~~National Register~~ ~~for~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____
- 60. North Christian Congregational Church ~~Entered in the~~ ~~National Register~~ ~~for~~ Keeper 2/16/83 [Signature]
Attest _____

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Substantive Review

Kennedy Park (Fall River MRA)
Bristol County
MASSACHUSETTS

Working No. 115/83-B
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.7.84
Date Due: 2/3/83 - 2/19/83
Action: ACCEPT 2/16/83
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

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

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom. / Criteria A.C. / ACCEPT
Reviewer Na. Dwyer
Discipline A.H.
Date 2.16.87
 see continuation sheet

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

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category _____ Ownership _____ Status _____ Present Use _____
Public Acquisition Accessible

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 _____ Check one _____ Check one _____
 excellent deteriorated unaltered original site
 good ruins altered moved date _____
 fair unexcused

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

Acres of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT 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: 202 272 - 3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



Fall River MRA, Ma

PFNR-1-29

Kennedy Park Pavilion



Fall River MRA, Ma

PFNR-1-32
Kennedy Park

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000279