

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT NO.48.
REPORT OF THE BOARD OF
METROPOLITAN PARK
COMMISSIONERS, DECEMBER,
1909**

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COMMISSIONERS.

DECEMBER, 1909.



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Engineer.

JOHN R. RABLIN.

Law and Claims.

GEORGE LYMAN ROGERS.

Secretary.

JOHN WOODBURY.

OFFICES, 14 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

REPORT.

The Metropolitan Park Commission presents herewith its seventeenth annual report.

The area of the reservations and parkways remains substantially as at the time of the last report. Acquirements of small areas have been made to provide for minor improvements in the alignment of the reservations and parkways, and to complete the holdings required for the Alewife Brook improvement, and for the Fresh Pond Parkway connection to Concord Avenue, Cambridge, authorized by chapters 529 of 1906, 529 of 1907 and 651 of 1908. A table of the present areas and other data relating to the reservations and parkways is contained in the Secretary's report.

The most important new work of construction and development during the year has been as follows. The portion of Charles River Drive along the river front of the United States Arsenal at Watertown, upon land transferred by the United States Government, has been completed; the dam in Mystic River at Cradock Bridge has been completed; surfacing of Mystic River Driveway from the dam to Medford Street, Arlington, has been well advanced, and the portion between Boston Avenue, Somerville, and Medford Street, Arlington, is ready to be opened; Winthrop Parkway, from the southerly end of Revere Beach to Endicott Avenue, has been subgraded.

The sanitary improvement of Alewife Brook has been begun and well advanced under the special act authorizing this work at the expense of the cities of Cambridge and

Somerville and the towns of Belmont and Arlington. For most of the distance from Mystic River to Spy Pond the improvement consists in straightening, deepening and widening the stream as an open channel between sloping banks, but for part of the distance from Broadway to Massachusetts Avenue it has been necessary to provide concrete retaining walls instead of slopes. When the work is completed the water level will be that of Mystic River above Cradock Dam, which is low enough to prevent overflow of the banks in flood time. A connection between Revere Beach Parkway and Plymouth Street, Everett, has been completed under a special appropriation for that purpose. Further subgrading has been done upon the portion of Lynn Fells Parkway remaining unfinished across the meadow lands on the northerly side of Ell Pond, which were provided by the city of Melrose. It is hoped that settlement of the meadow has now ceased, and that surfacing may be done in the coming year.

Improvements have been made at various points in the reservations and parkways. Slight extensions have been made in the woods roads, and many portions of the more formal roads and parkways have been repaired and treated with surfacings intended to preserve and prevent dust. In the portion of Middlesex Fells within the city of Medford the work of repairing roads has been greatly facilitated by permission from the water and sewer commissioners of that city to take gravel, free of charge, from the nearby gravel pit belonging to the city. In the same Reservation the new police station, opened in February, has been connected by police signal system with all parts of the reservations and parkways of that division. The new car line of the Boston Elevated Railway was opened in August, and active work upon the extension of the Boston & Northern Railway from Stoneham to a connection with the Elevated Railway has been prosecuted with such vigor that it will probably be opened to travel in the spring of 1910. It is already evident that these lines will be very popular, and will bring a greatly increased use of the Reservation.

At Revere Beach inadequate police accommodations have been improved by rearrangement and slight enlargement of



MIDDLESEX FIELDS RESERVATION. — *Police Station.*



the police station; an incinerator for disposal of garbage and picnic refuse has been installed; and plans for alterations to provide increased sanitary accommodations at the bath-house have been prepared, and it is expected that the work will be completed before the next season.

At Nantasket a new kitchen, with fireproof walls and floors, modern apparatus and complete new plumbing and steam piping, has been built. These improvements, and the many repairs needed for a gradual renovation of the hotel, café and servants' dormitory, have to be paid for out of rentals derived from the hotel, and can be made only as rapidly as these funds will permit.

In the Blue Hills forestry work has been continued to the limited extent which maintenance funds have permitted. Pine seedlings to the number of 85,000 have been planted, making a total of 350,000 set out during the past few years. Preliminary report upon a forestry plan to be pursued with regard to the entire Reservation has been made by Professor Fisher of the Department of Forestry of Harvard University, and it is hoped that during the coming year this plan will be completed, and provide for a consistent method of work, which may be pursued from year to year as funds will permit, with a view to gradually bringing the forestry work of this great woods reservation to a self-sustaining basis. Water pipes from the Milton water main have been extended to headquarters to provide fire protection. The police signal system has been extended to Furnace Brook Parkway and Quincy Shore.

On Charles River a driveway through the woods overlooking the river has been subgraded from Weston Bridge to Norumbega Tower, a distance of 4,900 feet, and will be surfaced during the coming year if funds will permit. At the Speedway a show ring for horses has been partially built, and a circular or kite track one-half mile long is being constructed. These will be completed as funds permit. The material used for the subgrading is cinders mixed with road scrapings, and is that taken from the dike, which has not been needed since the construction of the dam at the foot of the Basin.