

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION	Area(s)	Form No.
GEO.904		

220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

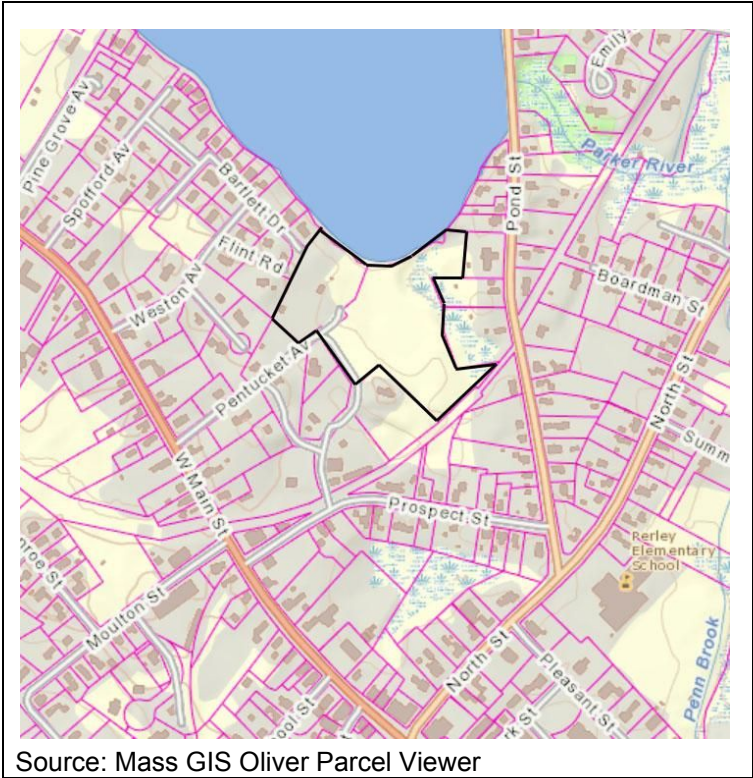
FORM H – PARKS AND LANDSCAPES

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
MASSACHUSETTS ARCHIVES BUILDING
220 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02125

Photograph



View looking north



Locus Map

INVENTORY FORM H CONTINUATION SHEET

GEORGETOWN

AMERICAN LEGION PARK

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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Assessor's Number Area(s) Form No. Forms within

11B-1

GEO.904

Recorded by: Kathryn Grover and Neil Larson

Organization: Town of Georgetown Historical Commission

Date (month / year): June 2017

Town/City: Georgetown

Place (neighborhood or village):
Pentucket Pond

Address or Location: Lee Way

Name: American Legion Park

Ownership: ☒ Public ☐ Private

Type of Landscape (check one):

☒ park ☐ farm land
☐ green/common ☐ mine/quarry
☐ garden ☐ training field
☐ boulevard/parkway

☐ other (specify):

Date or Period: 1946

Source: deeds, monument

Landscape Architect: unknown

Location of Plans: Town of Georgetown

Alterations/Intrusions (with dates):
none

Condition: good

Acreage: 8.69 acres

Setting: The park is situated at the southeast end of Pentucket Pond in a reclaimed industrial area in the core of the town center.

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☐ Recommended for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.

If checked, you must attach a completed National Register Criteria Statement form.

VISUAL/DESIGN ASSESSMENT

The American Legion Park was created in 1946 with the acquisition of 6.69 acres of land on the southeast shore of Pentucket Pond where ice houses and related harvesting and transportation equipment had been located. For many years it was fairly passive with few amenities other than a beach and picnic areas. The park was enlarged in 1966 with the addition of two acres on the west side of Pentucket Avenue. In recent years the Town of Georgetown has expanded the park by providing more amenities and active playing areas.

The topography of the park is flat with a gentle slope descending to the shoreline of Pentucket Pond. It is accessed from the east by Lee Way and the west by Pentucket Avenue. Both streets end in a large paved parking lot, which the park areas abut on the north and west. (See aerial view and key below.) A sandy beach distinguishes the pond's shoreline with a playground and picnic area on the west side and another picnic area with a pavilion and grills set within a grassy area on the east side. A large ballfield with lights for nighttime games is located east of the picnic pavilion, while a smaller ballfield with a comfort station and concession stand is sited on the west side. A bandstand has been constructed adjacent to the small ballfield. Other than lawns and mature trees, there are no other planted areas. A monument was erected near the parking lot recognizing the people who initiated the town's land purchases for the park.

The following numbered list corresponds with the aerial view below.

1. Bandstand
2. Small Ballfield
3. Comfort Station & Concession Stand
4. Playground & Picnic Area
5. Beach
6. Picnic Pavilion
7. Monument
8. Large Ballfield

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE

The first part of American Legion Park, on the south shore of Pentucket Pond, was created when Henry R. Johnson of Reading, Massachusetts, sold five acres there to the town of Georgetown.¹ Both this parcel and a parcel added to the park in 1966 had once been land owned and used by a succession of companies harvesting, storing, and shipping ice from Pentucket Pond. The pond and the adjoining ice hoists and ice houses became obsolete with the advent of electrical refrigeration in the 1930s, and by then the town was interested in pondside park land.

Of the four local histories, only the 1922 history by Benjamin F. Arrington discusses the local ice industry. Arrington noted that "Little and Tenney" had begun harvesting ice for commercial sale in 1853. Arrington was referring to George J. Tenney and Samuel Little, who had begun to harvest ice on Pentucket Pond probably by 1850.² They continued their operation until 1870,

¹ Henry R. Johnson, Reading MA, to town of Georgetown, 4 May 1946, SECD 3463:48.

² Clark Dean Tyler to George J. Tenney, 6 June 1850, SECD 429:152, conveyed to Tenney for \$5 Tyler's land adjoining Pentucket Pond as far as the water of the pond flowed onto that land, between land owned by Andrew Bettis on the west and the flume owned by Paul Dole on the northeast, "for the purpose of cutting and carrying away ice."

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when they sold it to two Newburyport men, Philip H. Blumpey and Henry Russell Perkins, who sold it three years later to a group of Georgetown men including Samuel Little who planned to incorporate an ice company. By 1880 the Tenney-Little operation had been sold to Martin L. and Charles N. Hoyt of Georgetown, who operated an ice business here until late December 1892. They sold it to Middlesex Ice Company, which had just organized in Melrose. The deed conveyed the right to cut ice on Pentucket Pond and the right to use adjoining land ““for the purpose of carrying away ice from said pond, and the right to carry ice over said land, also the right to carry ice from said Pond; also all the right to build and construct railroad tracks on said land, and to dig, carry away, and use what gravel may be necessary to build ice houses and grade railroad tracks on said land; also the right to build ice houses on said land and the right to pass and repass to and from the same to the Newburyport Railroad Depot in said Georgetown.”³

Middlesex Ice Company sold its Pentucket Pond property to Fells Ice Company of Malden in 1894, and in 1906 the latter company bought lots 20 to 24 in an 1883 subdivision platted by Boyd B. Jones and Ralph C. Huse on the pond shore. These lots were located on the south side of Pentucket Avenue and the east side of Lee Way; an ice house is shown abutting three of the lots on the 1883 plan.⁴ In 1913 Fells Ice Company sold most if not all of its Georgetown holdings to Pentucket Ice Company, which Alfred B. Fuller operated on the pond through at least 1918. Another concern, Highland Ice Company of Boston, had operated on a part of the Jones-Huse subdivision in the 1910s and sold part of its property that had been set aside for company president Ichabod Bunker to Nova Scotia native David Day Hemeon, who operated Pentucket Pond Ice Company from 1922 to at least 1932.⁵

Porter-Milton Ice Company of Kittery, Maine, apparently began harvesting and processing ice on Pentucket Pond in March 1919 on the shore abutting the Jones-Huse subdivision.⁶ According to Arrington, both Porter-Milton and Middlesex Ice Company (though apparently not in business in Georgetown under this name after 1900) did an “enormous business up to 1918 and 1920, when all of the houses belonging to these companies were destroyed by fire. At this time no ice is being cut except for local trade by Adams & Bailey.”⁷ In March 1937 Porter-Milton Ice Company sold much of its property to Henry R. Johnson of Reading, Massachusetts, who transferred title to the town of Georgetown in 1946.⁸

A granite marker on the grounds credit Barney Camenker and Henry Dea as having the vision for creating the park in 1946. Evidently, these men had a role to play in the transfer. Barney Abraham Camenker ran a poultry farm—Cambro Poultry Yard—at 188 East Main Street for many years with his older brother David; both men were bachelors. They had immigrated from Koretz, Russia, at different times, David in 1904 and Barney in 1909, and settled in Beverly where they started their poultry business. Barney was a veteran of the First World War, and when he applied for naturalization in 1919 he pointedly renounced his allegiance to “the present government of Russia.” He registered with the local draft board in 1942, but it is not clear if he actively served; he was then 49 years old. In 1957 he was director of the Northern Essex Veteran Service District. It likely was through this association that he acted to create a memorial park for the American Legion. Henry Dea was the town treasurer in 1940, as

³ George J. Tenney and Samuel Little to Philip H. Blumpey and Henry Russell Perkins, Newburyport, 28 September 1870, SECD 807:271 and 807:273; Philip H. Blumpey and Henry Russell Perkins to Samuel Little, Stephen Osgood, Joshua Howe, Sherman Nelson, and Milton J. Tenney, 28 November 1873, SECD 897:135. On the Hoyts and the town's ice business, see Benjamin F. Arrington, ed., *Municipal History of Essex County in Massachusetts* (New York: Lewis Publishing Co., 1922), 261-62.

⁴ Boyd B. Jones to Fells Ice Company, 22 November 1906, SECD 1847:212; Cora H. Huse, Marjorie Huse, and Malcolm N. Huse to Fells Ice Company, 22 November 1906, SECD 1847:214; H. Howard Noyes, George W. Noyes, and Cora H. Huse, guardians of Eleanor Huse, to Fells Ice Company, 22 November 1906, SECD 1847:216. See “Plan of a Lot of Land near Pentucket Pond, Georgetown, Mass. Property of B. B. Jones & R. C. Huse,” November 1883, SECP 1847:600.

⁵ Hemeon also had an ice operation on Rock Pond, identified as Lots 104 on “Property of Andrew M. Abbott in Georgetown, Mass.,” January 1919, SECP 32:2. The Pentucket Pond deeds are Edward Lee to Georgetown Ice Company, Boston MA, 18 March 1919, SECD 2407:587; Ichabod Bunker, Boston MA, to Highland Ice Company, Boston MA, 30 December 1921, SECD 2509:143; Ichabod Bunker, Boston MA, to Highland Ice Company, Boston MA, 30 December 1921, SECD 2509:143; Highland Ice Company, Boston, to David D. Hemeon, Georgetown, 4 May 1922, SECD 5215:199.

⁶ Wallace E. Adams to Porter-Milton Ice Co., Maine, 21 March 1919, SECD 2142:212.

⁷ Arrington, *Municipal History*, 262.

⁸ Porter-Milton Ice Co., Kittery ME, to Henry R. Johnson, Reading, 5 March 1937, SECD 3103:505.

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well as proprietor of the Lake View House at 83 West Main Street. Prior to this, Dea was also a poultryman and was possibly associated through this business with Barney Camenker.

One year before Porter-Milton sold its land, Pentucket Ice Company sold its land and rights to the pond to Donald C. and Harold H. Elliott of Georgetown, in business as coal and ice dealer Elliott Brothers. In 1966 Elliott Brothers Inc. transferred to the town 1.8 acres adjacent to the land Johnson had given the town two decades earlier.⁹ The American Legion Park includes a beach on Pentucket Pond, a playground, and a music shell.

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MAPS

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"Georgetown, Mass. 1887." Drawn and Published by George E. Norris, Brockton, Massachusetts. Troy, NY: Burleigh Lithographic Establishment, 1887."

⁹Pentucket Ice Company to Donald C. Elliott and Harold H. Elliott, 31 March 1936, SECD 3069:172; Donald C. and Harold H. Elliott to Elliott Brothers, 28 April 1954, SECD 4088:328; Elliott Brothers Inc., to Town of Georgetown, 18 February 1966, SECD 5356:406. The last deed states that the conveyed parcel was Parcel B on "Plan of Land in Georgetown, Mass., as Surveyed for the Town of Georgetown," January 1966, by Charles H. Morse and Son, but this deed has not been located on the Southern Essex County Registry of Deeds website.

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BK 2513
PG. 198

Property of Ichabod Bunker In Georgetown, Mass.

Scale 40 ft. = 1 in. May, 1920.

John T. Desmond
Civil Engineer
Haverhill, Mass.

Reserved by Bunker
May, 1920.

Ice House

Ice Run

Pentucket Pond

Ichabod Bunker
to Edward Lee
Nov. 1920

Ichabod Bunker
to Edward Lee
Nov. 1920

Porter--Milton Ice Co-

Salem Nov 5, 1922, Rec'd & Ent'd in Essex Reg.
Deeds (S.D.C.) With Assampt, Highland
Ice Co. to Edward Lee, Rec.B.253 P.190.
Attest: Walter T. Wilson Asst. Reg.

This plan is a copy. See original on file.

Follow Massachusetts Historical Commission Survey Manual instructions for completing this form.

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PHOTOGRAPHS (all photos by Neil Larson, 2017)



Aerial view from east with numbers indicating locations of park features. Source: bing.com/maps.

- 9. Bandstand
- 10. Small Ballfield
- 11. Comfort Station & Concession Stand
- 12. Playground & Picnic Area
- 13. Beach
- 14. Picnic Pavilion
- 15. Monument
- 16. Large Ballfield

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View of parking lot from south on Pentucket Ave.

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View of bandstand (1) and small ballfield (2) on west side of Pentucket Ave.

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Bandstand (1) on west side of Pentucket Ave.

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Comfort station and concession stand (3) on west side of Pentucket Ave.

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Playground and picnic area (4) on west side of Pentucket Ave.

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View of beach (5) looking NE from parking lot.



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View of beach (5), picnic pavilion (6) and monument (7) from west.



View of monument (7) and picnic pavilion (6) from parking lot.

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View of large ballfield (8) from SW.

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View of parking lot from Lee Way.