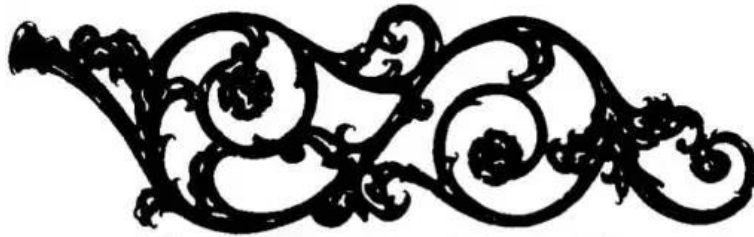


**THE CHESTER SQUARE NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATION RECORDS, 1858 – 2010,
BULK, 1992- 2010**



ABSTRACT: This collection documents the Chester Square Neighborhood Association's (CSNA) work in renovating the Chester Square Park in the famed South End neighborhood of Boston.

DATES: 1858 - 2010, bulk 1992-2010

EXTENT: 0.21 linear feet

REPOSITORY: The South End Historical Society

CREATOR: Chester Square Neighborhood Association

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection documents the Chester Square Neighborhood Association's (CSNA) work in renovating the Chester Square Park in the South End neighborhood of Boston. The collection contains CSNA's administrative materials, including meeting materials, press releases, membership, public outreach, and correspondence. Formats in this collection include meeting minutes, correspondence, notes, photographs and color slides, architectural drawings, and planning schematics.

HISTORICAL NOTE

Boston created Chester Square in 1850 as a grand boulevard and residential square for the South End's upper middle-class residents. It was one of the widest and grandest of the neighborhood's garden squares, with several walking paths and a three-tiered cast iron fountain situated in the center of the park. In 1894, all the unique Chester addresses were lost and renamed as Massachusetts Avenue, which still circled the park. A little over fifty years later, Boston put six lanes of traffic through the heart of the square to accommodate traffic from the newly constructed Southeast Expressway. The park was destroyed and the new street running through the square became a continuation of Massachusetts Avenue.

By 2009, the parks were underutilized and run down. The Chester Square Area Neighborhood Association (CSANA) spearheaded the petition to the Parks Department for change and plans for renovations began. Most of the records in this collection were used to draft the application submitted by CSNA for the Rudy Bruner Grant in 2010.

ORGANIZATION

This collection is arranged into four series. The original order of the series has been kept wherever possible; otherwise the materials are arranged chronologically. Series arrangement is as follows:

Series I: Administration starts with typed and handwritten histories of Chester Square Park. Included are parts of the 2010 Rudy Bruner Grant application and schematics of Chester Square Park in 1858 (photocopy) and 1952 (oversized). Correspondence covers topics of park design, Massachusetts Avenue reconstruction, area traffic studies, city allocations for park renovation from Mayor Thomas Menino's office, and feasibility studies. Formats include printed letters and printed emails. Meetings include agendas and minutes from CSNA, Mass Ave Task Force, and joint meetings between these groups and the Boston Redevelopment Association (BRA). Membership includes lists from the Mass Ave Task Force and Parks Sub-Committee, but no membership list for CSNA. Public Outreach consists of public meeting announcements, a press release, flyers, neighborhood groups lists, lobbying work sheet, and call lists with handwritten

notes. Memoranda of Agreements consists of several drafts with annotations of agreements between Friends of Chester Square Parks and Boston Parks and Recreation Department and examples of agreements with other organizations.

Series II: Planning consists of several area studies in the first sub-series, and oversized architectural plans and schematic proposals in the second. The draft Feasibility Study and the Traffic Volume Study contain handwritten notes and summaries prepared for CSNA members. The architectural plans consist of lighting schemes, Boston Gas Company schematic, master plan for Boston University Medical Center, CSP fountain schematics, and CSP landscape plans.

Series III: Publications contains four booklets regarding historic parks planning to contemporary park planning. “The Residential Square Transplanted: London to Boston” appears to be an unpublished manuscript.

Series IV: Photographs begins with reprinted historic photographs of Chester Park Square, courtesy of Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities (copyrighted photos will not be reproduced or used without expressed permission of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities). Many contemporary photographs are undated and the archivist arranged them according to date. Formats range from 3 x 5 black and white photos to 4 x 6, 5 x 7, and 8 x 10 color photos. Sites includes the Post Office Square renovated park, the Southeast Expressway, Copley Square Park, and various parks around the South End. One folder documents the building of the fountains in Chester Square Park.

ADMINISTRATIVE

RESTRICTIONS:

None

PROVENANCE:

The records of The Chester Square Neighborhood Association were donated to the South End Historical Society in 2016 by Sheila Cleimets.

PROCESSING INFORMATION:

Processed by Corinne Bermon, June 2018. This collection was processed with a Research Inventory Grant from Mass Humanities.

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CITATION:

The Chester Square Neighborhood Association Records, 1858 – 2010, bulk, 1992- 2010;
The South End Historical Society

FOLDER LIST

FOLDER DESCRIPTION	DATES	FOLDER
Series I. Administration		
History of Chester Square Park, 1858 - 2010	[Undated]	1
Correspondence	[Undated], 1992-2010	2
Meetings	1994 – 2001	3
Membership	[Undated]	4
Public Outreach	[Undated]	5
Memoranda of Agreements	1988 - 2010	6
Series II. Planning		
Subseries i. Area Studies		
Crosstown Ctr Project - Transportation Study	[Undated]	1
Traffic Volume Study	1994	2
Chester Square Survey	1995	3
Draft Feasibility Study	1999	4
Subseries ii. Park Plans		
Architectural Plans	1999 – 2008	1
Schematic Proposals	1996-2006	2
Options for Restoration	[Undated]; 1995	3
Series III. Publications		
South End/Lower Roxbury Development Policy Plan	1993	1
“The Residential Square Transplanted: London to Boston”	1994	2
Boston, Suffolk County: A Community Profile, 1995	1995	3
“Take Back Your Streets”	1995	4
Series III. Photographs		
Historic Photographs	[Undated]	1
Pre-Renovations, Chester Square Park	1983	2
Pre-Renovations, Black and White	[Undated]	3
Pre-Renovations, Various Locations	[Undated]	4
Pre-Renovations, Mass Ave and Chester Square	[Undated]	5
Pre-Renovations, Mass Ave and Chester Square	[Undated]	6
Fountain Construction	[Undated]	7
Pre-Renovation, Various Locations	2005	8
4x5 negatives	[Undated]	9
35 mm Negatives	[Undated]; 1983-2005	10

FOLDER DESCRIPTION	DATES	FOLDER
2 x 2 Slides	[Undated]	11
Negatives	[Undated]	12