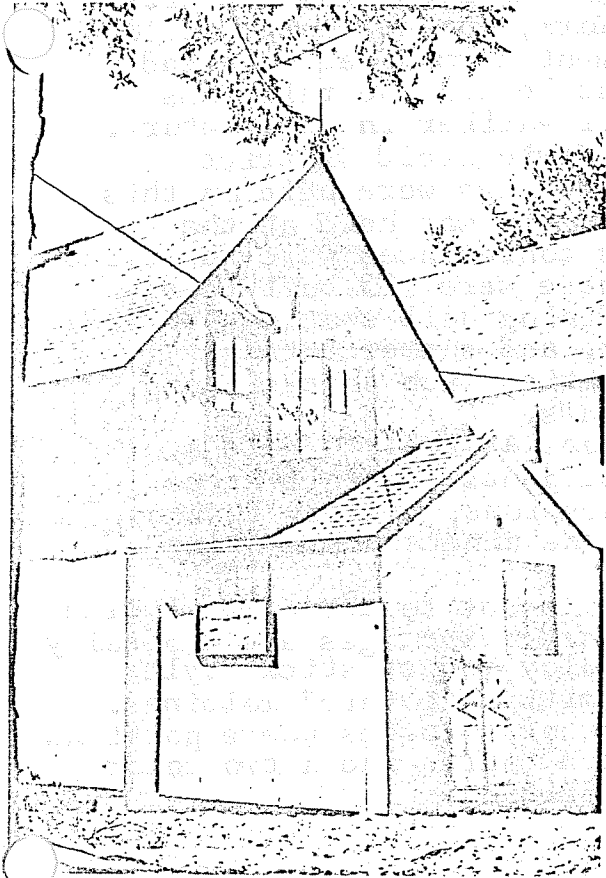


FORM A - AREA AND SITE SURVEY  
 MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

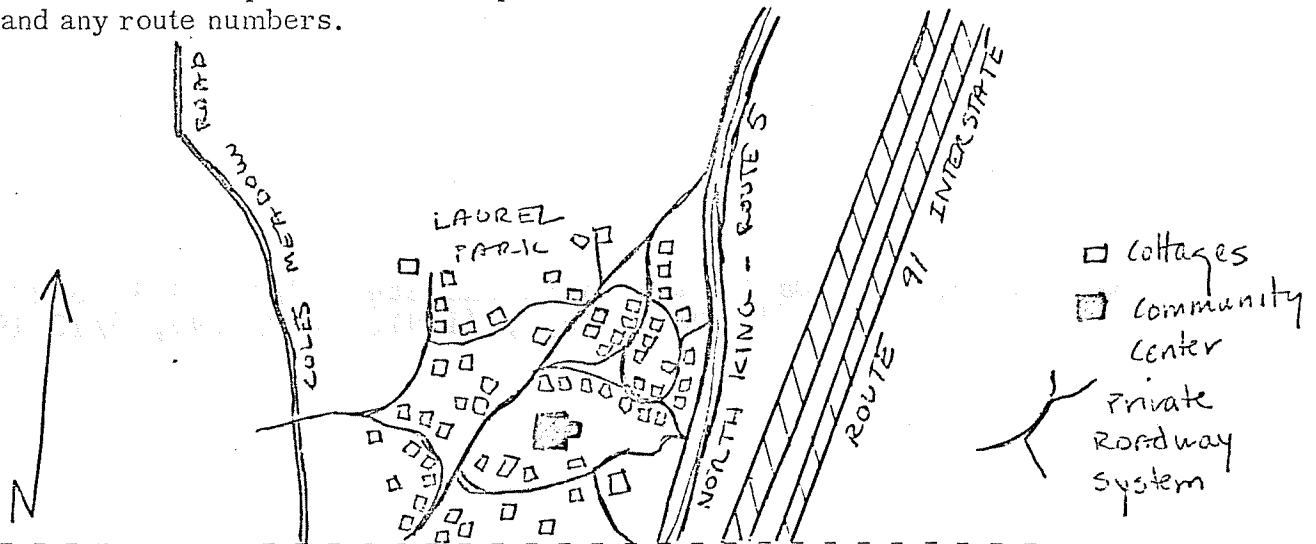
Boston

Area:



1. Town Northampton
2. Name of area or section North King Street  
Laurel Park/ Chautauqua
3. General Date or Period 1875-1900
4. Is the area uniform? yes  
 In style wooden cottages  
 In condition good to fair  
 In type of ownership private  
 In use (Explain) summer residential/  
religious/educational community
5. Is area potentially threatened? no  
 By Zoning no  
 By Roads no  
 By Developers no  
 By Deterioration no

Draw a general map of the area involved. Please indicate in red any known historic sites on which individual reports are contemplated on Form B. Indicate street boundaries of area and any route numbers.



Recorder C. Dubie

For Northampton Historical Commission  
 (Name of Organization)



NOTE: Recorder should obtain written permission from Commission or sponsoring organization before using this form.

8. Historical Significance:

The term "Chautauqua" designates a summer educational and cultural assembly lasting several days and derives from the first such gathering held at Chautauqua, New York, in the summer of 1874. The growing interest in cultural enrichment harmonized with and eventually supplanted (in Northampton, at least) the religious "camp" meetings organized in the open air earlier in the century.

"Laurel Park" opened in 1872 as the Springfield District Camp Meeting Grounds. Methodist camp meetings were held on this site. In 1888 the first Chautauqua assembly was held at the park and other events such as teacher's conferences were scheduled during the ensuing summers. In 1891 there were 125 buildings, including 40 chapels, at the park. A dining hall seating 500 and a pavillion seating 1000 had been built, and summer cottage vacationers were sharing the park facilities with participants in various conferences held on the grounds.

A typical Chautauqua or "Sunday School Assembly" held at the old camp meeting grounds drew participants from all areas of the Connecticut Valley. Elocution sessions, history lessons, and Bible hours were standard fare for the nineteenth century Chautauqua meetings.

The cottage community is similar in layout to the more stylish community at Oak Bluffs, Martha's Vineyard. Cottages are typically sided with vertical board siding and employ modest stick style decorative devices--vergeboards and primitive "gothic" moldings. Half timbering is alluded to in a number of cottages where portions of the wall surfaces are framed with thin boards and a two color paint scheme is used to accentuate the framing.

References: Daily Hampshire Gazette, 7/17/1888, 6/29/1891, 7/3/1891, 7/6,7,8/1891, 7/10/1893, 6/12/1935.