



Essex County Parks Archives

Essex County Department of Parks,
Recreation, and Cultural Affairs

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News:

Archives Collecting Photos

Be part of the 125th Anniversary celebration of the Essex County Parks. If you have old photos taken by your family in any of the Essex County parks, the Parks Archives would enjoy seeing them and hearing your cherished park memories as we prepare for this special anniversary in 2020. Send digital images and written stories to archives@parks.essexcountynj.org. If you have non-digital photos to share, but are unwilling to part with the original, call 973-735-6230 or email to make arrangements.

Upcoming: Grant Deadlines

If you represent a cultural organization interested in applying for an Essex County Local History Grant, here are some important deadlines.

Deadline for Submission: August 5 at 9 am.

Interim Report Deadline: July 15



Essex County Executive
Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.
and the Board of Chosen Freeholders

115 Clifton Ave., Newark, NJ 07104
www.essex-countynj.org
973-735-6231

Putting Essex County First

Other Park Systems

Despite being the first of its kind, the Essex County Park System has benefited from the experiences of city and municipal parks since its inception. In the Park System's first annual report from May 1894, two influential park organizations are mentioned: the New York Park Commission and the Park Commission of Boston.



Like the 1867 Park Commission of Newark, the first movement for a park system in New York also failed when plans to create a park on the East River above 66th Street fell through in 1851. However, the eventual, extraordinary success of Central Park, established in 1857, provided the most persuasive argument for a county-wide park system: money in the form of increased land values. The annual report notes that in 1856, before being developed, the area adjacent to Central Park was assessed at \$20,429,565. By 1873, the value of this same land skyrocketed to \$236,081,515, displaying more than a ten-fold increase.

Another influential city park system was that of Boston. On August 5th and 6th of 1896, the Essex County Park Commission visited and inspected the Boston parks accompanied by the Olmsted Brothers landscape architects.

The enabling legislation for the first Essex County Parks Commission was, "modeled to a great degree on the New York and Boston public park acts." Clearly, these two early city parks systems were crucial to the creation and development of the Essex County Park System.