Where is Charlesgate today?
Sanitary & Topographical Map of the City and Island of New York, (the Viele Map, Egbert Viele, 1865)
Aerial photograph of Manhattan (Google Earth, 2020)
Carte particulière du havre de Boston, 1780
The confluence of Stony Brook, Muddy River and the Charles River as it existed in the early 19th century, and the subsequently constructed area of the Back Bay Fens about 1903. (Freeman, 1903)
Back Bay and the Beacon Street Entrance at Charlesgate

Integration
Charlesgate Park around the turn of the century, postcard collection of H Parker James
Charlesgate circa 1930 (courtesy H. Parker James)
Re-think the River as Infrastructure
Where is Charlesgate today?
The Destructive Era of Urban Renewal In Boston 1948-1969

- Tobin Bridge, 1948-50
- Central Artery, 1951-59
- West End demolition, 1959-64
- I-90, 1961-65
- Prudential Center, 1960-64
- Storrow Drive, 1950-51
- Bowker Overpass, 1967-69 (Not constructed yet)
Section of New Highway in the Back Bay, Boston, Mass.

Storrow Drive at Charlesgate, Image: H Parker James, Charlesgate Alliance
Charlesgate and Hotel Braemore, circa 1890-1901 (courtesy H. Parker James)
1963 (realized) Charlesgate Park plans by Morice & Gary Landscape Architects
1963 (realized) Charlesgate Park plans by Morice & Gary Landscape Architects
2002, Muddy River Restoration demolition and staging plan
Bench Elevation

Section

Concrete Base (Clamping to Sidewalk Bearing)

Finished Grade

4 x 4" Inserts with Nails or Latex Slat and Married into Eyebolts Set in Base

Brick Walk

Note
Bench is to be precast concrete with smooth white finish (shop drawings required)

Plan

Bench Details
Figure 104: Back Bay Fens - Park area below the Bowker Interchange at Charlesgate (Jon Crispin Photography, 1999).
Today, under the Bowker
Water

Today, under the Bowker
1949: The Emerald Necklace continues to the Charles River under the Fens Pond Bridge
The meeting of the Muddy River and the Charles River Today
The meeting of the Muddy River and the Charles River Today
People
Friends of the Charlestown

Home About Photos Community

About

The Friends of the Charlestown is a group of concerned residents, businesses and institutions living and working in the environs of the historic Charlestown Park in the Back Bay/Kenmore neighborhoods of Boston.

57 people like this
58 people follow this
http://cgatepark.com/
Send Message
cgatepark@gmail.com
Community Organization

Create Post

Friends of the Charlestown

June 11, 2012

We strongly encourage you to attend tomorrow’s DOT meeting from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Boston Public Library – Mezzanine Conference Room on 700 Boylston Street, Copley Square, Boston, MA 02116 to show your support.

Decisions could be made there that will determine the long-term fate of both the Bowker and the Charlestown which could impact the quality of life in the city of Boston for many years to come.
3 YEARS OF CONTINUED COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#1 - IMPROVE MUDDY RIVER WATER QUALITY & HABITAT
- manage storm water with landscape systems
- provide habitat-rich landscape design

#2 - ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES
- provide amenity spaces that invite a variety of uses
- dog park!

#3 - RECONNECT BOSTON’S 3 PARK SYSTEMS & NEIGHBORHOODS ACROSS CHARLESGATE
- add bike accommodations
- safe pedestrian connections
- open up views

#4 - DESIGN FOR MAINTENANCE
- make the park, the water, and the bridge easy to maintain

#5 - CELEBRATE CHARLESGATE’S HISTORY
- preserve significant built elements and flora
- restore Charlesgate’s function as a water park
SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

2019 Olmsted rail replacement: Thank you DCR!

2018 & 2019 Charlesgate Chairs, with support from the Solomon Foundation, photo by Jules Milner-Brage

2019 Lighting fixed: Thank you DCR!

2019 Charlesgate Movie Night, with support from the Solomon Foundation!

2019 Tree pruning, supported by a Fenway Park Demonstration Grant

2019 & 2020 Charlesgate Alliance hires Project Place for ongoing cleanups, photo by Randall Albright
LONGER-TERM PLANNING MILESTONES

INITIAL MATCHING FUND FOR CONCEPT DESIGN, SOLOMON FOUNDATION

$250,000 IN 2019 ANNUAL BUDGET
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Thanks to elected Representatives Brownsberger, Livingstone, Rushing and Santiago!

$400,000 BOSTON COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT GRANT FOR DESIGN

FUNDRAISING UNDERWAY!
3 PROJECTS TO RESTORE THE CRITICAL LINK AT CHARLES GATE:

1. MassDOT 606728 - Storrow EB Bridge Replacement Project
   ADVOCATE

2. Emerald Necklace Conservancy & Charlesgate Alliance
   LEAD DESIGN
   FUNDRAISING
   SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

3. MassDOT 606496 - Bowker Overpass over Mass Turnpike
   ADVOCATE
Advocate for:

Maximum environmental restoration, including:
Daylighting the Muddy River & Stormwater Management

Best possible ped/bike connections between Emerald Necklace & Esplanade

Maximum parkland
~8 acres new or improved parkland
Existing Storrow Drive EB bridge needs to be replaced
Typically a temporary bridge would be built and traffic would be diverted onto this temporary bridge during construction of new bridge.
But what if two new bridges were built instead of building a temporary bridge?
Then, Storrow Drive WB could be elevated on this new bridge and moved alongside Storrow Drive EB.

The parkland on the Esplanade can be increased significantly.
A new connection can be built between the Esplanade and the Emerald Necklace, passing under the new bridges.
By eliminating the surface roads, it’s also possible to consider daylighting the last 270 feet of the Muddy River.
The connection between the Muddy River and the Charles River can be restored.
Daylighting 270 ft of the river restores:

- Water Quality
- Habitat Value
- Flood Management

Of the full 4 mile length of the Muddy River
#3: BOWKER OVERPASS OVER MASS TURNPIKE

Existing bad connection on west side
#3: BOWKER OVERPASS OVER MASS TURNPIKE

Existing bad connection on west side
#3: BOWKER OVERPASS OVER MASS TURNPIKE

Existing bad connection on east side
#1 MassDOT 606728 - Storrow EB Bridge Replacement Project
ADVOCATE

#2 Emerald Necklace Conservancy & Charlesgate Alliance
LEAD DESIGN
FUNDRAISING
SHORT-TERM IMPROVEMENTS

#3 MassDOT 606496 - Bowker Overpass over Mass Turnpike
ADVOCATE
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PRINCIPLE #1 IMPROVE MUDDY RIVER WATER QUALITY & HABITAT
Proposed: west edge of the Muddy, North Field

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LEGEND
- DOT SCUPPER ABOVE
- DOT STORMWATER PIPE ABOVE
- DOT DRAIN LEADER
- DOT STORMWATER PIPE
- DOT CATCH BASIN
- DOT DRAINSAGE MAN HOLE
- DOT DRAINSAGE AREA
- DOT BIORETENTION
- DOT SURFACE GRAVEL FILTER
- DCR STORMWATER PIPE
- DCR CATCH BASIN
- DCR DRAINSAGE MAN HOLE
- DCR DRAINSAGE AREA
- POSSIBLE DCR DRAINSAGE AREA
- DCR BIORETENTION
- DCR SURFACE GRAVEL FILTER
- MIXED DOT AND DCR STORMWATER PIPE
- MIXED DOT AND DCR CATCH BASIN
- MIXED DOT AND DCR DRAINSAGE MAN HOLE

BWSC STORMWATER PIPE
BWSC CATCH BASIN
BWSC DRAINSAGE MAN HOLE
BWSC DRAINSAGE AREA
POSSIBLE BWSC DRAINSAGE AREA
MIXED DCR AND BWSC STORMWATER PIPE
MIXED DCR AND BWSC CATCH BASIN
MIXED DCR AND BWSC DRAINSAGE MAN HOLE
MIXED DOT AND DCR AND BWSC STORMWATER PIPE
MIXED_DOT AND DCR AND BWSC CATCH BASIN
MIXED_DOT AND DCR AND BWSC DRAINSAGE MAN HOLE
PIPE W/ UNKNOWN CONNECTION

ABBREVIATIONS
CB = CATCH BASIN
DMH = DRAIN MAN HOLE
DL = DRAIN LEADER
SC = SCUPPERS ON BOWKER OVERPASS
OUT = OUTFALL
NF = NORTH FIELD
SF = SOUTH FIELD
CW = COMMONWEALTH AVE. AREA
DL-SF1 = EXISTING DRAINLEADER
DL-SF3 = PROPOSED DRAINLEADER
PRE-CB-SF1 = PROPOSED PRETREATMENT
(HOODED DEEP SUMP CATCH BASIN)
SGF-SF1 = PROPOSED SURFACE GRAVEL FILTER
BR-SF1 = PROPOSED BIORETENTION
PRINCIPLE #1 IMPROVE MUDDY RIVER WATER QUALITY & HABITAT
**PRINCIPLE #1 IMPROVE MUDDY RIVER WATER QUALITY & HABITAT**
PRINCIPLE #1 IMPROVE MUDDY RIVER WATER QUALITY & HABITAT
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES
PLAYGROUND

KEY
- Poured Rubber
- Placed Stone
- Asphalt
- Concrete
- Upland Vegetation
- Wetland Vegetation

OUTLINE OF BOWKER OVERPASS ABOVE
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES
PLAYGROUND

Charlesgate
14,000 sq ft

Esplanade
Playground
10,000 sq ft

Stoneman
Playground
6,000 sq ft

Stoneman
Playground
6,000 sq ft

Edgerly Rd
Playground
5,500 sq ft

Mother’s Rest
Playground
6,100 sq ft

Clarendon St
Playground
13,000 sq ft
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES
PLAYGROUND

Existing: from Beacon St looking south
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES
PLAYGROUND

Proposed: from Beacon St looking south
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES

DOG PARK
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES

DOG PARK

The South Field
Charlesgate Park
Boston

Zero New Washington Dog Park
Somerville

Carleton Dog Park
Southwest Corridor
Boston

Danehy Dog Park
Danehy Park
Cambridge

Dog Run
Peter's Park
Boston

Dog Park
Underground at Ink Block
Boston

Dog Park
South Boston
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES

DOG PARK

Existing: looking south from Commonwealth Avenue
PRINCIPLE #2 ACTIVATE THE SITE WITH NEW USES
DOG PARK
**PRINCIPLE #3**

*RESTORE CONNECTIVITY OF LANDSCAPE*

EXISTING
8 CROSSINGS
NEVER IN THE PARK!

PROPOSED
3 CROSSINGS
MOSTLY IN THE PARK!
PRINCIPLE #3
RESTORE
CONNECTIVITY OF
LANDSCAPE

RESTORE TREE CANOPY OF COMMONWEALTH AVENUE
PRINCIPLE #4 DESIGN FOR MAINTENANCE
PRINCIPLE #5 CELEBRATE CHARLESGATE HISTORY

Shurcliff, 1920’s

Olmsted, 1880’s
PRINCIPLE #5 CELEBRATE CHARLESGATE HISTORY

Fens Pond Bridge, before 1950

Fens Pond Bridge, 2019
PRINCIPLE #5 CELEBRATE CHARLES GATE HISTORY