

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Olmsted Parks and Parkways Thematic Resources

Continuation sheet Erie County

Item number 7

Page 10

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received MAR 27 1982

date entered

of the park, although they are slightly smaller than originally laid out (#16). Tennis courts occupy the northern edge of the playing field (#17). The original form and extent of the terrace can still be seen. In the center is a monument to Commodore Perry. At the western edge the view toward the lake has been obstructed by an unattractive brick building used as the superintendent's house and restrooms. In addition, the park visitor wishing to view the river must look through elevated lanes of the New York State Thruway, which occupies the right-of-way of the former Erie Canal. The southern end of Front Park possesses many mature trees, a curving entrance road, several winding paths, and grassy banks sloping down to the former edge of the canal (#18). A stone shelter stands in a grove in this area. In the southeastern corner of the park, a nondescript brick building houses a recreation center. In front of it an ice skating rink is surrounded by a chain link fence.

The following is a list of the major structures in Front Park:

Contributing Structures

Picnic Shelter, c.1900 (stone)

South end of park, near Porter Avenue

A rustic, open shelter, this structure is consistent with Olmsted's conception of park architecture.

Non-Contributing Structures

R. Hockey Rink Casino, c.1957 (brick)

West side, near Porter Avenue and Thruway

S. Tourist Information Center and Superintendent's House, c. 1957 (brick)

West side of park, near Thruway.

2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (formerly called The Parade and, after 1896, Humboldt Park)

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park was originally called The Parade by Olmsted and Vaux who conceived it as a place for military displays and active children's sports. The 56-acre slightly L-shaped plot is located in the eastern section of the city where, Olmsted said, "it is more near to the densely populated parts of the city than any other site having distinctive natural advantages." The park is bordered by Northampton Street and North Parade Avenue on the north, East Parade Avenue on the east, Best Street on the south, and the Kensington Expressway and West Parade Avenue on the west.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park is bisected by Fillmore Avenue, which divides the grounds into eastern and western portions. (In Olmsted's original plan, the street did not extend through the park; it was cut through in 1896 when John C. Olmsted presented a revised design and the name of the park was changed to Humboldt Park.) In the southeastern

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corner of the park stood a large wooden refectory designed by Calvert Vaux in 1874, but destroyed by fire in 1877. To the north of the refectory site a grove contained children's games. The western portion of the park was a large 20-acre parade field which was surrounded by a curving carriage drive. Humboldt Parkway, which linked The Parade to The Park (Delaware Park), entered the park in the area immediately north of the parade field. Another major entrance, with gates, was at the southwest corner, at the juncture of Best Street, West Parade Avenue and Herman Street.

In 1895, Olmsted's successor firm, Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot, was asked to present revisions to the original park design. The new plan placed the open parade field with several water basins, the most conspicuous of which was a large wading pool, 500 feet in diameter (#22). Fillmore Avenue was cut through the park north and south in a curving route, skirting the eastern side of the wading pool. The area of the children's playgrove gave way to the present picnic grove (#23).

Early twentieth-century changes to Olmsted's original scheme include the construction, in 1904, of a small brick shelter near the site of the former refectory. It still serves as an office and a lavatory. In 1907, the present greenhouses were built just north of the shelter building. In 1926, construction began on the Museum of Science, which occupies the northwest corner of the park where once was the grand Humboldt Parkway entrance. A large parking lot for the museum occupies a space 120 feet x 600 feet along the western edge of the park behind the building. On the eastern side of the museum building, a large, fenced rose garden (#24) contains several thousand bushes arranged in beds. A large brick casino, built in the 1920's, overlooks the wading pool on the west. To the west of the casino is an ice skating rink and basketball courts, the latter covering an area planned for a reflecting pool in the 1896 revised plan.

Today, the north and northeastern portions of the park (#25) are shaded by irregularly spaced trees. The northern and eastern borders retain their nineteenth-century iron fence (#26). The southeastern corner of the park is shaded by many mature trees and tall shrubs and suggests the appearance of Olmsted's original manner of border planting to screen neighboring city streets (#27). Tennis courts have been placed to the north of the greenhouses and a small picnic shelter stands to the west of the courts. Along the entire north edge of the park a variety of mature trees and shrubbery screens the park from the residences along North Parade Avenue. Otherwise, the park is open to the city streets which border it.

The following is a list of the major structures in Martin Luther King, Jr. Park:

Contributing Structures

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

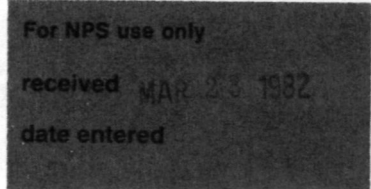
Olmsted Parks and Parkways Thematic Resources

Continuation sheet Erie County

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-Shelter House, 1904 (brick)
Next to the greenhouse, facing the original concourse
Robert A. Wallace, architect
This small structure occupies part of the site of the original
wooden shelter house which was designed by Vaux in 1876.

-Buffalo Museum of Science, 1926-27 (stone)
Northwest end of the park, south of Northland Avenue
Esenwein and Johnson, architects
The building is a good example of the Art Deco style.

-Greenhouse, 1907
East side of the park, facing the original concourse

-Humboldt Park Casino, c.1926 (brick)
Between the wading pool and ice rink
The casino was part of the remodeling of the park that took place
in the 1920's. Its main purpose was to provide lockers and rest-
rooms for the bathers using the wading pool adjacent to the west.

3. Cazenovia Park-South Park System

Heacock Place

Heacock Place (#20) is a 3-acre 350 feet x 350 feet green-
space traversed by a Y-shaped roadway which forms the beginning of
McKinley Parkway. Residences stand far back from the center of the
broad open space, which is bordered with young trees and shrubs.
Abbott Road bounds Heacock Place on the north and east, Remolino
Street defines the southern side, and Southside Avenue marks the
western edge. Heacock Place forms the beginning of the South Park-
way System serving Cazenovia and South parks.

McKinley Parkway (formerly called Southside Parkway)

McKinley Parkway joins Heacock Place to South Park. From the
southern edge of Heacock Place one travels southeast to McClellan
Circle at the juncture with Red Jacket Parkway, which runs eastward
to Cazenovia Park. From McClellan Circle, McKinley Parkway bears
southward to McKinley Circle. Beyond McKinley Circle, the parkway
bends southwest to South Park, which it enters directly across from
the conservatory. For its entire length, McKinley Parkway is a wide,
tree-lined central roadway bordered by modest residences set well back
from the streetline.

McClellan Circle (formerly called Woodside Circle)

McClellan Circle (#28) is a 500-foot right-of-way at the juncture

OME NO 1001
EXP 10/1/82

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Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources
Continuation sheet Erie County Item number 8

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2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park, originally called The Parade, was located somewhat further east than the site on High Street that Olmsted had originally favored. Of this site Olmsted said that the park would possess some special advantages. "The first is the most elevated ground in the city on High Street, near the old Potter's Field. From this a finer lookout may be had over the city than from any other point, and the distant wooded plains, backed by blue hills, make a beautiful background to the view on the south. It is nearer to the more densely populated parts of the city than any other site having distinctive natural advantages."¹⁹ This ground was designed as a neighborhood recreational pleasure ground. The park provided a field for military displays and sports, as well as a separate area for children's games, activities which Olmsted feared would disturb the tranquility of The Parade.

In 1895, Olmsted's successor firm, Olmsted, Olmsted and Eliot was asked by the Park Commission to present revisions to the original park design. John Charles Olmsted came to Buffalo and was informed of the aims and wishes of the commission. In January of 1896, a revised plan, which was different than the original, was received. The firm redesigned the area, replacing the playground with a picnic grove and introducing, on the site of the parade ground a series of water features that included a shallow circular basin over five hundred feet in diameter, a rectangular basin for aquatic plants, and a circular fountain area. When the new features were constructed during 1896, The Parade was renamed Humboldt Park. The reason for its original name, military displays on the grounds, was no longer appropriate. The 29th Annual Report in 1899 states that the elaborate and beautiful design for the improvement of the park was carried out. The park was then considered one of the most attractive spots in the city.

The name of the park was changed to Martin Luther King, Jr. Park in 1976 at the request of the surrounding community. Today the park retains historic design features from its periods of use as The Parade, Humboldt Park and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park and represents aspects of both continuity and change in park use and design as conceived by Frederick Law Olmsted and his successor firms.

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date entered

Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (Humboldt Park)

Buffalo NE Quad.

56 Acres

- Y. 676660/4752480
- Z. 676660/4752190
- AA. 675940/4752170
- BB. 676010/4752560
- CC. 676160/4752560

Verbal Boundary Description: Boundaries delineated on enclosed site map. (4)

Cazenovia Park-South Park System

Heacock Place

Buffalo SE Quad

2.8 Acres (350 ft. X 350 ft.)

- A. 677870/4746800

Verbal Boundary Description: Boundaries delineated on enclosed site map.

McKinley Parkway (Southside Parkway)

Buffalo SE Quad.

39.9 Acres (11,600 ft. X 150 ft.)

- A. 677870/4746800
- K. 677860/4743790

Verbal Boundary Description: Parkway extends 11,600 feet from Heacock Place to South Park and is bounded by adjacent property lines. Nominated property includes roads and plantings.

McClellan Circle (Woodside Circle)

Buffalo SE Quad.

4.5 Acres (500 ft. diameter)

- B. 678540/4745630

Verbal Boundary Description: Boundaries delineated on enclosed site map. (5)

Substantive Review

DUE 1/28/82 - 2/12/82

dnr-3

Name King, Martin Luther, Jr., Park (Olmsted Park and Parkway System)
State, County NY-Erie Fed Nom or Request-Agency Ther
Working Number 12-29-81-549 Federal Register Date Pass

Nomination
 Determination of Eligibility
 On Nomination Form

Bldg(s)
 Site
 Object
 Structure
 District

Within:
 Multiple Resource Area
 Thematic Group

Maps
Photos

Nomination prepared by:
 State Staff
 Local
 Other

Action:
 ACCEPT
 RETURN 2/12/82
 REJECT

Check if Appropriate:
 State Request for Review
 Keeper's Decision to Review
 2nd Return

I. Evaluation of Resource (cont. on back if necessary)

See back of cover sheet for comments
Travers
2/10/82

II. Evaluation of Nomination

	Good			Comments
	Adequate	Poor		
1. Descriptive Statement Short Format <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
2. Significance Statement Short Format <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				
3. Concepts/Integrity				
4. Concepts/Criteria				
5. Concepts/Boundaries				
6. Contextual Evaluation				

General Comments (cont. on back if necessary):

Reviewer/Date Travers 2/10/82

See Attached

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 2

Page 1

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Olmsted Parks and Parkways Thematic Resources
State NY

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

- | | | | |
|-----|---|------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. | Delaware Park-Front Park System
<i>Substantive Review</i> | Keeper | <u>Bruce M. Douglas</u> 3/30/82 |
| | | Attest | <u>[Signature]</u> |
| 2. | Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
<i>Substantive Review</i> | Keeper | <u>Bruce M. Douglas</u> 3/30/82 |
| | | Attest | <u>_____</u> |
| 3. | Cazenovia Park-South Park System
<i>Substantive Review</i> | Keeper | <u>Bruce M. Douglas</u> 3/30/82 |
| | | Attest | <u>_____</u> |
| 4. | Riverside Park
<i>Substantive Review</i> | Keeper | <u>Bruce M. Douglas</u> 3/30/82 |
| | | Attest | <u>_____</u> |
| 5. | Parkside East Historic District
<i>Substantive Review</i> | for Keeper | <u>Patrick Andrews</u> 10/17/80 |
| | | Attest | <u>Betty H. Savage</u> 10/17/80 |
| 6. | Parkside West Historic District
<i>Substantive Review</i> | for Keeper | <u>William B. Busby</u> 12/10/80 |
| | | Attest | <u>Betty H. Savage</u> 12/10/80 |
| 7. | | Keeper | <u>_____</u> |
| | | Attest | <u>_____</u> |
| 8. | | Keeper | <u>_____</u> |
| | | Attest | <u>_____</u> |
| 9. | | Keeper | <u>_____</u> |
| | | Attest | <u>_____</u> |
| 10. | | Keeper | <u>_____</u> |
| | | Attest | <u>_____</u> |

Substantive Review
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

2/26/82

EVALUATION / RETURN SHEET

Property: Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
State, County: NY
Federal Agency: _____

*(Martin Luther King Parkway
(Historic Resources))*

Working No. 12.29.81.549
Fed. Reg. Date: _____
Date Due: 5/7/82
Action: ACCEPT 3/30/82
 RETURN _____
 REJECT _____

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

photos _____
maps _____

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom. / Criteria C
Reviewer Wm. Boyd
Discipline Architectural History
Date 3/30/82
 see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: technical corrections cited below
 substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category Ownership Status Present Use
Public Acquisition Accessible

4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition: excellent deteriorated good ruins fair unexposed
Check one: unaltered altered
Check one: original site moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

SOME MAJOR CHANGES - ADDITION OF MUSEUM - NOT ADDRESSED IN ITEM 1 OF HOW IT EFFECTS ORIGINAL PARK SETTING/SETTING.

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8. Significance

Period _____ Area of Significance—Check and justify below _____

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

- summary paragraph *ONLY DESCRIBES ORIGINAL DESIGN. SIGNIFICANCE IS BOTH FOR EARLIER AND LATER.*
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance *NOT ADEQUATE*
- NA* justification of exception
- NA* other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UMT References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

_____ national _____ state _____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

Site _____ date _____

13. Other

- _____ Maps
- _____ Photographs
- _____ Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: 202 272-3504

Comments for any item may be continued on an attached sheet



11 MA row 3

11

DEC 29 1981

Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources

Buffalo, Erie County

Photo: P.M. O'Donnell

July 1979, Neg: at Div. for Hist. Pres.

View: M.L. King Park, south
view acrossed wading pool

27 of 36



11 MA row 4 # 15

Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources

Buffalo, Erie County

Photo: P.M. O'Donnell

July 1979, Neg. at Div. for Hist. Pres

View: M.L. King Park, southeast picnic grove with greenhouse in background

23 of 36 DEC 29 1981



12 MA row 4 #46

Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources

Buffalo, Erie County DEC 29 1981

Photo: P.M. O'Donnell

July 1979, Neg. at Div. for Hist. Pres.

View: M.L. King Park, southeast
Detail in Rose Garden shows rose
beds, iron fence and stone wall
with bench #24 of 36



12 MA row 5 #49

25

Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources

Buffalo, Erie County

Photo: P.M. O'Donnell

July 1979 Neg: CT Div. for Hist. Pres,

View: M.L. King Park southeast
grove along northern edge,

buffers view to residential

25 of 36

DEC 29 1981



12 MA row 2 #35

25
76

Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources

Buffalo, Erie County

Photo: P.M. O'Donnell

July 1979, Neg. at Div. for Hist. Pres.

View: M.L. King Park, southwest
park entry along eastern edge
shows decorative iron fence

26 of 36

DEC 29 1981



28
27

12 MA row 1 #30

Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources

Buffalo, Erie County

Photo: P.M. O'Donnell

July 1979, Neg. at Div. for Hist. Pres.

View: M.L. King Park, southeast
winding pathway, trees and
shrubs along southern edge

#27 of 36

DEC 29 1981



27A

11 MA row 2 #8

70

Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources

2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park

Buffalo, Erie County

Photo: P.M. Sherk, 7/79

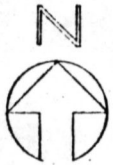
MAR 23 1982

Neg: Division for Historic Preservation

View: northwest detail of stone wall with

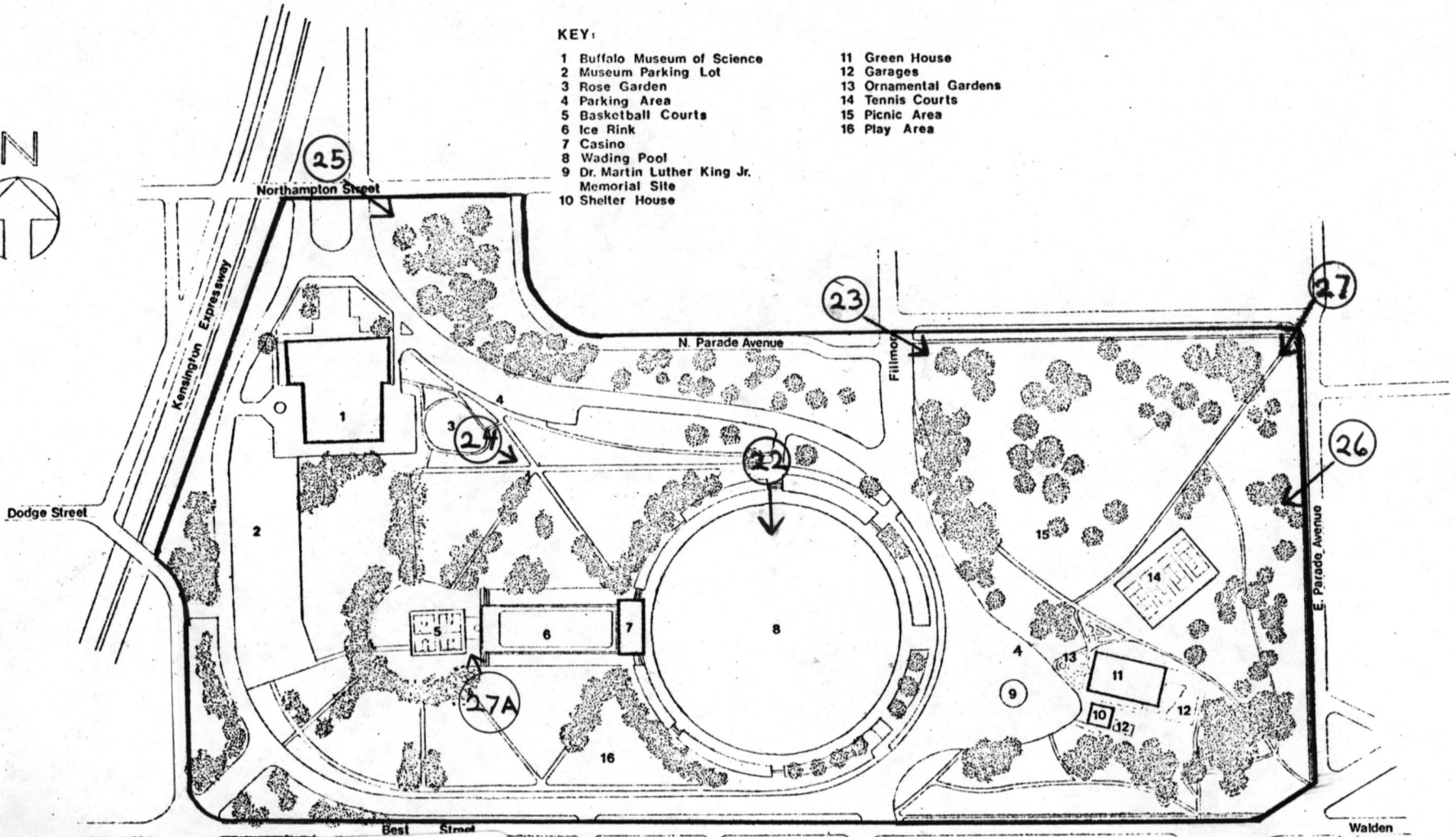
Buffalo head

27A of 36



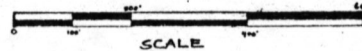
KEY:

- | | |
|--|-----------------------|
| 1 Buffalo Museum of Science | 11 Green House |
| 2 Museum Parking Lot | 12 Garages |
| 3 Rose Garden | 13 Ornamental Gardens |
| 4 Parking Area | 14 Tennis Courts |
| 5 Basketball Courts | 15 Picnic Area |
| 6 Ice Rink | 16 Play Area |
| 7 Casino | |
| 8 Wading Pool | |
| 9 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Site | |
| 10 Shelter House | |



Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources
 2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Park
 Buffalo, Erie County
 Buffalo Division of Planning
 Key: Park boundary-black line
 Photographs #22-27, 27A

DEC 2 1981
 MAR 23 1982



Martin Luther King, Jr. Park	
DEPT. OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BUFFALO N.Y.	
Illustrative Site Plan	
EXISTING CONDITIONS	
DATE	SCALE
DRAWN	SHEET NO.
CHECKED	DRAWING NO.

8 of 14 maps
 WITH LOT 1

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000580

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

STATE NEW YORK

Date Entered MARCH 30, 1982

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Olmsted Parks & Parkways Thematic Resources	Buffalo Erie County
King, Martin Luther, Jr., Park	Buffalo Erie County
Delaware Park/Front Park System	Buffalo Erie County
Cazenovia Park - South Park System	Buffalo Erie County
Riverside Park	Buffalo Erie County

Notified

Honorable Henry J. Nowak
Honorable Daniel P. Moynihan
Honorable Alfonse D'Amato

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, NPS
North Atlantic Regional Office, NPS

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mr. Orin Lehman
Commissioner, Office of Parks
Recreation & Historic Preservation
Agency Building #1
Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12238