

September 11, 2024

Concord 250 Permanent Memorial Subcommittee (PMS) observations regarding the archaeological study under discussion by the Concord Historical Commission (CHC).

1. The PMS understands that CHC desires that an archaeological study be conducted to determine if archaeological artifacts exist below the ground surface in the vicinity of the proposed permanent memorial at parcel 1693. The PMS selected this site in large part because of its position at the heart of so many significant events over the centuries, and supports the goal of documenting archaeological artifacts that may remain.
2. However, historical maps and narratives indicate that the proposed memorial site has been occupied by several generations of buildings and adjacent site uses. By 1900 all of the buildings on parcel 1693, including private homes, stables, a bowling alley, and the Middlesex Hotel, were razed, foundations removed or filled, and the site leveled for parking, a driveway, and open lawn areas. In 2009 the site was further disturbed by the installation of an underground sediment chamber and associated storm lines for managing stormwater from town streets. The 14' x 8' x 12' high concrete chamber is located in the center of the lawn area and its excavation was 17 feet deep requiring removal and backfilling of soil for a significant area surrounding the chamber and its pipe system. There is seven feet of fill over the top of the tank.
3. Given the ongoing disturbance of the memorial site soils over many generations, including the most recent significant disturbance and replacement of soil in 2009, the PMS does not see the need for further archaeological exploration of the top three to four feet of soils as justified for any parts of the proposed memorial site.
4. If the CHC feels that an archaeological study can be justified, they should describe in detail the most efficient methods that would be used to determine the archaeological potential of the memorial site and that might be adopted in the exploration of the site. Additionally, we would expect that they would provide a justification and plan for resources to fund the expenses needed to complete such an archeological exploration to the Town Manager.