

## Overview:

Little Rock, Arkansas's Boyle Park contains a total of eight known examples of Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) construction, all of which were built during the mid-1930s. These include five buildings -- two pavilions, a spring house, a caretaker's cabin, and the remains of the water tower/pump house/garage -- as well as three structures: a low water bridge and two culverts. All were built in the Rustic style popular for CCC construction throughout the state.

Boyle Park is considered significant by virtue of its direct associations with the Civilian Conservation Corps, the Depression-era public works agency that oversaw the construction of all of the surviving historic buildings and structures therein during the mid-1930s. However, it is also important as one of the last ensembles of Rustic architecture remaining in the entire state that largely retains its original appearance and its organic relationship with the splendid natural landscape of which it was designed to be an integral part.

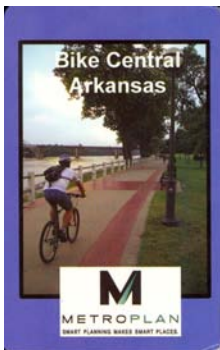
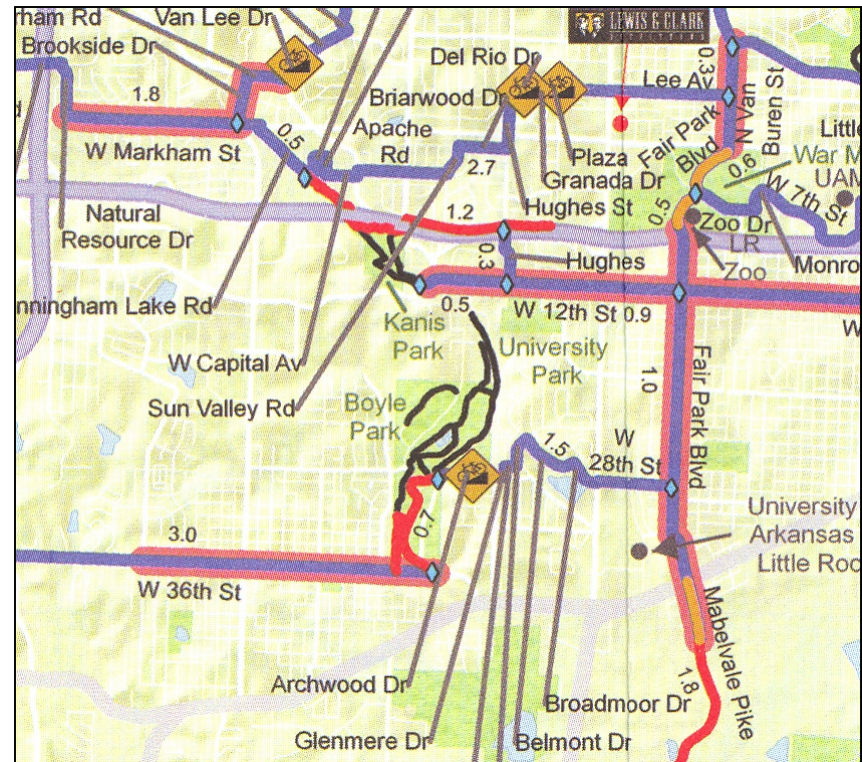
The park also contains non-contributing structures: three modern metal equipment maintenance sheds, two modern pavilion buildings, and a modern rest room.

## Bike or Hike Boyle Park!

Getting there by car: From the 1900 block of South University, turn west on Boyle Park Road. This will take you to the northeast corner of the park.

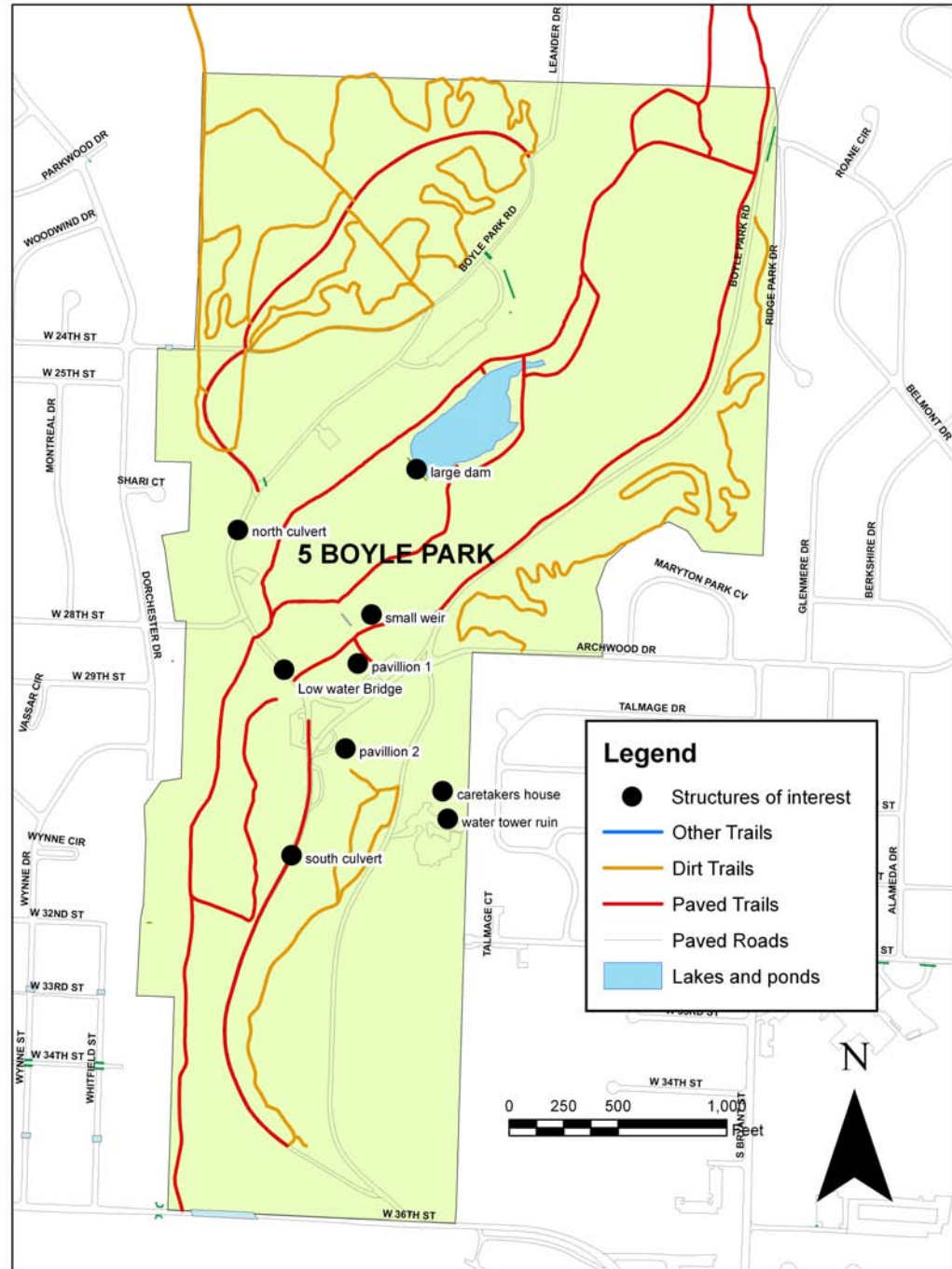
Getting there by bike along Bike Routes per map to the right: As shown by the blue line, follow Fair Park Boulevard, Broadmoor Drive, Belmont Drive, Berkshire Drive, Lakeshore Drive, Glenmere Drive, Archwood Drive to Boyle Park Road. This will take you to the center of the east side of the park.

Map courtesy of Metroplan [www.metroplan.org](http://www.metroplan.org)



## Map of Boyle Park with structures of interest shown.

Located near the intersection of the western and southwestern neighborhoods of the city of Little Rock, Boyle Park is an approximately 250-acre tract of largely unimproved woodland donated to the city by Dr. John F. Boyle in 1929. Located thereon are a total of eight known examples of Civilian Conservation Corps construction, all of which were designed and built in the Rustic style that characterizes their architectural projects. The map to the right shows the location of the structures.





## Pictures of the contributing structures:

The springhouse, located roughly between the two pavilions, is a hexagonal, single-story building with a vertical wood log post and stone pier supporting the roof at each of the six corners. The western entrance is flanked by low stone walls that lead into the stone spring box in the center of the building. The roof is covered with wood shakes and accented with the exposed log rafter tails.



*The Springhouse from the south.*



*A Pier of the Springhouse.*



*Interior beams of the Springhouse.*



*Stone spring box*





*Pavilion #1 from the east.*



*Pavilion #1 from northwest showing exterior fireplace and stone wall.*



*Interior of Pavilion #1. Note flagstone floors.*



*Southernmost corner of Pavilion #1.*



The two pavilions are identical. Both are a single-story in height and finished with a spreading gable roof (now roofed with asphalt shingles but originally covered with wood shakes) that is supported by stone piers at the corners and vertical log posts on the sides and front. The pediments of the gable ends are sheathed with vertical boards, and the rear of each pavilion is anchored by a large stone chimney with a firebox on each side. A flagstone floor completes each building.



*Pavilion #2 from the west.*



*Corner detail of Pavilion #2*



Interior of Pavilion #2 is similar to the other pavilion



Steps on Pavilion #2.



The watertower/pumphouse/garage building retains the massive, bouldered stone walls that sheltered the pump and the stone foundations that supported the roof of the garage sections. In 1995, the garage and the wood log tower above the pumphouse were gone, but enough remains of the original construction to qualify it as contributing. Later, the Parks and Recreation Department added a roof to the structure to convert it to a storage facility. **This building and this area of the park is not open to the public.**



*Water Tower/ pumphouse/ Garage ruin. The Water tower is shown on the left, the pumphouse area to the center with raised floor and a partial view of the garage area to the right. View from the southeast.*



*Water Tower shown from the west.*



The caretaker's cabin is a single-story, wood log, intersecting gable roof residence that retains its two massive stone chimneys. It features a projecting, gable roof porch on its southern side that is supported upon vertical logs and another shed roof porch on the northern side, between the projecting gable roof bays, that is also supported upon vertical log supports. The walls are horizontal logs and the roof is covered with asphalt shingles. **This building and this area of the park is not open to the public.**



*Caretaker's cabin rear façade from south showing addition of gabled porch and garage to the right.*



*Caretaker's cabin front façade from south.*





*South elevation of low water bridge.*



*Piers on north side of the low water bridge over Rock Creek.*

The low water bridge is a long, low stone bridge that spans Rock Creek. It features low stone balustrades on either side and short, squat stone piers that support the deck above the creek bed.

The northernmost culvert is an arched stone culvert with random-cut stone endwalls. The southernmost culvert is capped with flat lintel and finished with rough stone walls that line the sides of the culvert.



*Northern culvert.*



## **More information from the nomination:**

Located near the intersection of the western and southwestern neighborhoods of the city of Little Rock, Boyle Park is an approximately 250-acre tract of largely unimproved woodland donated to the city by Dr. John F. Boyle in 1929. The warranty deed authorizing the transfer of title to the land explicitly stipulated that the park be used for "recreational purposes" only and that should this property ever cease to be used as such the title would revert back to the family and its heirs. At the time of its donation, it was only the third public park in the city of Little Rock (the others being MacArthur Park and Allsopp Park).

The park remained largely unimproved until the mid-1930s, when the Civilian Conservation Corps boys arrived (though there seems to be some uncertainty about exactly when the actual construction work began, two different contemporaneous sources reveal that as of the spring of 1935 work had not yet begun, but that by the spring of 1937 work was complete and the unit involved in finishing the work within the park -- the 3777th company, originally from West Fork, where they were supposed to be involved in the ongoing construction at Devil's Den State Park -- were wondering where they would be shipped next). The CCC boys camped at Fair Park (approximately one mile to the northeast) and worked on such improvements to Boyle Park as walls, signage, rest room facilities and a concession building in addition to the resources that survive. Their work on Boyle Park was considered sufficiently characteristic of the Rustic style to be included in the second edition of National Park Service architect Albert H. Good's book Park and Recreation Structures.

All of the eight extant resources included within this nomination are excellent examples of the Rustic style of architecture for which the CCC became so well known in Arkansas and several surrounding states. As such, Boyle Park forms an historic district that is significant by virtue of its associations with the men that built it, the enrollees of the Civilian Conservation Corps Company 3777, and by virtue of their being outstanding and remarkably intact examples of the Rustic architectural style. This district relates to the historic context "Recreational Facilities Constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps in Arkansas, 1933-1942" (See Section E, I.).

Portions of the above text are courtesy of the Arkansas Historic Preservation Program's nomination of Boyle Park to the National Register written by Kenneth Story, Architectural Historian dated 8/8/95.