

# COMMONWEALTH AVENUE.

## What Has Been Done in the Last Ten Years.

### Alderman Lee Says Lack of Money is Only Handicap.

### While Driving is Possible, the Grade Still Prevents Building.

It was just 10 years ago that Alderman Lee submitted an order to the city government providing for the extension and widening of Commonwealth av., and so far, with the work about half completed, it has cost the city \$900,000 for construction and land damage and the work is now delayed pending the acceptance of the next loan bill in which there will be an item of \$200,000 to continue the work.

Alderman Lee, who represents that district in the upper branch, is quoted as saying that the great handicap and only one was the lack of funds, and that as soon as the money is appropriated work will be pushed as rapidly as possible, for, he adds, the city government knows how important the work is and also that it ought to be finished up at once.

An exact presentation of the status of the improvement as it is today is surely interesting at this time.

Already \$900,000 has been expended, and an expenditure of nearly \$1,000,000 more will undoubtedly be necessary ere the work is finished.

The filling to grade of about two-thirds the width of Commonwealth av., between the forks of the road, i. e., Beacon and Commonwealth av. and the bridge at Cottage Farm, is about completed, leaving the surfacing of that portion of the roadway to be made, and about 73 feet of the roadway on the south side of the avenue, between these points, to be filled to the same grade as the northerly two-thirds, and the surfacing of the same.

Between Cottage Farm and Malvern st., northerly, two-thirds of the avenue is cut and filled to grade, excepting that portion adjoining the bridge of the Boston & Albany, where the high fill crossed the marsh for about 400 feet and where the fill settled so considerably last fall.

This fill is now probably permanently settled, and if so can be filled to grade, which together with the surfacing would complete the northern roadway exclusive of the bridge at Cottage Farm over the Boston & Albany railroad, the building of which is not as yet commenced, from the forks of the road to Malvern st.

There remains to fill to grade the southerly third of the avenue from Cottage Farm to Malvern st. and to surface the same.

From Malvern st. to Chestnut Hill reservoir a roadway has been completed to grade, finished and surfaced about 60 feet wide, leaving about 140 feet of the roadway of the avenue between these points yet incomplete.

Between the bend in the avenue at Malvern st. and Harvard st. the work of grading is practically completed on the northern side, so that a surfaced road could be established to the full width of the avenue on that side.

On the southern side the roadway is not as yet graded.

Between Harvard st. and Allston st. the work of grading, cutting and filling is completed, and the roadway only remains to be surfaced. On the southerly side of the central roadway the grading is only commenced and the road requires grading and surfacing.

Between Allston st. and Washington st. the roadway was cut through rock, so that the original plan of widening the roadbed at grade has been abandoned in order to make a new roadway at a higher grade, for the purpose of giving access to the avenue from the adjoining property.

The new southerly roadway is practically graded and needs only the surfacing.

The work of grading the northerly roadway of this section has been started.

Between Washington st. and Howard pl. the roadway again cuts deep through rock, and it has been determined, as the property on this side of the avenue lies near to grade, to remove this rock cut by blasting it away to grade.

It is under consideration to allow the contractor who is working a quarry on Howard pl. in the rear of the avenue to blast through into the present roadway of the avenue at a small compensation per cubic yard of rock so obtained by him.

This work has carried him in some places already over the line of the avenue. On these two sections of the avenue this change of grade of the side roadways is estimated to make a great saving of time and money, probably exceeding \$200,000.

From Howard pl. to Chiswick st. grading has been almost completed on the southerly side, and from Chiswick st. to Chestnut Hill av. more or less grading has been completed and partially completed to the reservoir on both sides of the avenue.

Practically, therefore, while one can drive from the intersection of Beacon st. and Commonwealth av. to the reservoir on Commonwealth av. the whole way, yet most of the roadway is so located, either above or below the grade of adjoining property, that it is not available for building purposes.

For instance, while driving is possible on old Brighton av., now Commonwealth av., from the forks of the road to the bridge at Cottage Farm, yet the grade of the old roadway is four or five feet below the grade of the new avenue, and building is thus rendered prohibitive until this portion of the roadway is filled to grade.

From the bridge to Pleasant st. the same condition exists.

At Pleasant st. the roadway is nearly even with the property adjoining, so that building could be begun at present on the southerly side, but on the northerly side the unfinished roadway precludes haulage of materials and consequent building.

The reason for the petition of property owners is thus at once explained. The owners of property, while taxed, are practically unable to improve their property as yet on the line of the avenue.

The length of the avenue on its centre line, between the forks of the road and the bend at Malvern st., is 7650 feet, and the width of the finished avenue is 160 feet.

The construction proposes a central grass plot with two roadways and sidewalks 25 feet wide, of which the outer 10 feet are to be graded, and contain the sewer, gas and water pipes, so that any repairs or connections will not necessitate the digging up of the roadbed proper.

The electric car lines are to be carried over the central grass plot.

The length of avenue between Malvern st. and Chestnut Hill av. is 10,080 feet, and the width of the finished avenue will be 200 feet between these points.

The general arrangement of the avenue here is for a triple roadway or a central, two-side street, divided by two grass plots.

The sidewalks are projected  $7\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide.