

Preservation Master Plan

for the

*Old Burying Ground
Kingston, Massachusetts*

*prepared for the
Kingston Historical Commission*

by

*Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC
Fannin-Lehner Preservation Consultants
Structures North Consulting Engineers, Inc.*

2020



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Kingston Historical Commission
*Town of Kingston
25 Evergreen Street
Kingston, Massachusetts 02364*

by

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2020

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and...

the citizens of Kingston, past, present and future.

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INTRODUCTION

The Old Burying Ground, established in ca. 1717, is the oldest known place of interment in Kingston. Located at the northwest intersection of Main and Green Streets and tucked behind the First Parish Church, the property lies at the heart of the Kingston Center Historic District and at the geographic center of the town. It began as a two-acre gift from Major John Bradford to the citizens of the then North Precinct of Plymouth and served as the sole burial place in what became Kingston for nearly 150 years. Two additions of land brought it to 3.5 acres, and it remains this size today. It contains the burials of Kingston's earliest settlers, as well as individuals and families influential in the development of the town, and many graves bear the work of local artisans known as the "Kingston Carvers." No longer an active cemetery, the Old Burying Ground now draws history enthusiasts and genealogists, as well as those with an interest in early American funerary art.



Kingston's Old Burying Ground, located near the corner of Main and Green Streets, contains the graves of the town's early settlers. The funerary art of the "Kingston Carvers" appears on many of the gravestones.

Town of Kingston crews have regularly maintained the burying ground, cutting lawns, and removing leaves and dead tree branches, and overall the landscape appears in good condition. Despite these ongoing efforts, portions of the landscape have become worn. Perimeter stone walls have aged and cast iron fencing has rusted. Many of the mature deciduous and evergreen trees show signs of decline and several are dead. Bulky tree roots have emerged above ground, threatening to upheave gravestones, and the stones themselves are leaning, cracked and/or broken. The lack of a defined entrance and clear circulation route, combined with missing information signs, detracts from visitors' experiences.



A crown on the top rail of the east gate marks the property at the "Old Burying Ground."

Concern about the Old Burying Ground's condition emerged in the early 2000s, following the property's listing on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Kingston Center Historic District. Kingston's Historical Commission addressed the concern by applying to the town's Community Preservation Act grant program. A 2018 award allowed the commission to begin planning for the burying ground's long term protection, and the foregoing Preservation Master Plan is the result of this award.

Project Goal

The goal of the Kingston Old Burying Ground Preservation Master Plan, as defined by the Kingston Historical Commission, was to compile an inventory of the property's natural and built features including walls, the gate, tombs, gravestones and gravestone carvers, monuments and specimen trees, assess their condition, and make specific recommendation for preserving and managing these features over the long term.

Program of Improvements

At the outset of the project, the Kingston Historical Commission defined the following program of enhancements and improvements to include in the Preservation Master Plan:

- Determine a spot or spots that can be designated for parking for visitors to the burying ground;
- Create an entrance on Main Street (east gate is only accessible through private property);
- Establish accessible walkways that allow visitors to comfortably navigate the landscape;
- Identify the declining or dead trees that need to be removed and identify native species to be added in the future;
- Devise methods of re-fashioning remaining trees so that they complement, rather than overwhelm the landscape;
- Establish the best means for interpreting the landscape through signage;
- Create a map that can be connected to a future graves database.



Four private tombs support the burying ground's north slope.

In addition to these, the Commission asked that the plan include the following:

- An assessment of condition of gravestones, monuments, markers, and tombs;
- An identification of gravestone carvers with work represented in the burying ground; and
- Recommendations for conserving gravestones, monuments, markers and tombs.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE OLD BURYING GROUND

Beginnings: Before 1717

Origins of the Kingston's Old Burying Ground date to the early 18th century and the early settlement of the town. Before 1717, Kingston was part of the Town of Plymouth. Settled in 1620, Plymouth contained largely rocky soils unsuitable for farming. Several settlers migrated northward, finding fertile, tillable land in the meadows along the Jones River, and by 1640, a dozen or so families were living in the northern part of the town. Saw and fulling mill operations soon emerged along the river, spurring growth of an economy independent from that of the remainder of the town. By 1716, the North Precinct held 48 families, a total of 550 residents.¹ Much of the precinct's land was owned by Major John Bradford (1652-1736), grandson of the governor, including nearly all of the area of what would become Kingston's village.²

No formal place of interment is known to have existed in the North Precinct before 1717. Because the area officially remained part of the Plymouth, burial likely took place in one of the Plymouth's two burial grounds, Coles Hill Burial Ground (established in 1620 on Carver and Water Streets) and Old Burial Hill (established in 1622 on Allerton Street). Some early interments may have been made near the current library on Green Street or on the property of landowners.

Establishment: 1717-1830

In 1717, the North Precinct residents successfully petitioned the General Court of Massachusetts to set off the north part of Plymouth, along with small portions of Plympton (established in 1707) and Pembroke (established in 1712) to form the separate township. Although the General Court denied township status, they granted precinct status, providing the petitioners the ability to erect a meeting house, hire an orthodox minister and build a school.³ In December of 1717, a committee was chosen to locate and build a meeting house in what would become the civic center of the settlement. In January of 1720, Bradford gifted two acres to the town for the meeting house, training field and burying ground.⁴ Upon giving the land, Bradford wrote,

“for and in consideration of the love and good will I bear to the North Precinct of Plymouth, Plimpton, Pembroke, etc., and to promote religion in said precinct and other good causes and considerations me thereto moving have given to said precinct my three tracts of land etc. [one of these three tracts being the] two acres more or less whereon the meeting house now standeth to be for the use of said precinct for a Burying Place, training field and to maintain a Meeting House and any other use the said precinct of their successors shall see cause to put it to forever.”⁵

Bradford's statement suggests that construction of the first meeting house at the corner of what are now Main and Green Streets took place between 1718 and 1719, before he deeded his land to the town. It is likely that a road or “highway,” used as a short cut, ran behind the meeting house separating the building from the burying ground until the construction of Green Street in 1759.⁶ Historical documentation also

¹ Massachusetts Historical Commission Reconnaissance Survey Town Report: Kingston, 2-3

² Melville, Doris Johnson, Major Bradford's Town, A History of Kingston, 1726-1976, 18

³ Township status was not finally granted by the General Court of Massachusetts until 1726

⁴ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 15, Page 100, January 5, 1720

⁵ Kingston Public Library file

⁶ Drew, Thomas Bradford, Historical Sketch of Kingston, 1897

A Plan of the Town of Kingston.

Taken from an actual Survey made agreeable to
the Orders of the General Assembly of the Common-
wealth of Massachusetts of June the 15th. 1794 —

For John Gray Surveyor

From the magnetic Needle Variation about 6 W
Note. All the old lines in this Plan, & all the
principal BOUNDIES taken since the first day of October
1794. except the line from Birds Neck To the town of
Conover taken January the 2^d 1791 —
Kingston May the 6th 1795

Dutchess County N.Y.
Ulster County N.Y.
Schoharie County N.Y.
Hudson River
Catskill Kill
Schoharie River
Kingston
Poughkeepsie
Rhinecliff
Roseton
Birds Neck
Lugong
Little Wolf
Berkley
Dutchess
Ulster
Schoharie
About 30 small ponds which are not delineated, containing estimation 268 acres
From the sea three miles at the Light House on the ground between N. 79° 45' E distance about 4 1/2 statute miles
From the town of Kingston is bounded by
Plymouth from S. in the Bay to C. B. and L. where it meets the town of Conover from C. to B. where it meets Plymouth
Plymouth from B. to E. F. G. H. and J. in Jones River Schd
Jones River Schd from J. in the end to K
Dutchess from K at Jones Brook to Schoharie Brook thence by Bird's Brook and Schoharie River and Schoharie Channel to Plymouth

suggests that as early as 1788, the stone wall lining the south and west sides of the burying ground was built⁷ and in 1806, a powder house was constructed on the north side.⁸ Between 1717 and 1718, the first known interment took place in the burying ground, that of Charles Little, aged four months. It is likely that Little's interment spot was chosen because of its proximity to the meeting house.⁹

⁹ The property may also contain unmarked graves. Kingston's vital records list the deaths of thirteen African Americans between 1795 and 1830, with unknown grave locations. Because the burying ground was the only official place of interment in Kingston at this time, it is possible these individuals were buried anonymously, or on land adjacent to, but outside, the Old Burying Ground.

shaped property stood in the shadow of the meeting house, with few, if any embellishments such as trees or shrubs. Individual graves were established in irregular rows, with single tablets marking each burial. Made of native stone, the tablets held elaborate carvings created by local artisans depicting images of winged skulls.¹⁰ The property did not contain roads or paths, giving it the appearance of a burial “yard” or “field.”

Enlargement and

Embellishment: 1830-1930

The burying ground remained its original size into the early 1800s, serving as the only non-denominational place of interment in Kingston.¹¹ By the 1830s, the town began to pursue expansion by setting up a committee to explore the issue. In 1839, the town meeting voted to direct this committee, to “[contract] with Daniel Adams for a piece of land to enlarge the burying ground and to layout the same into suitable burying lots...to erect monuments and draw lines agreeable to a plan presented by them.”¹² The deed transfer took place in August, one acre, 45 rods,¹³ added to the existing property’s north side. The five private tombs built into the burying ground’s north slope appear to have been constructed following this purchase of additional land, along with the layout of several family plots.



The Second Meetinghouse was constructed in 1798 and stood until 1851. During this time, the burying ground (in the background) contained few trees. The stone wall lining the west and south sides predates the construction of this building. A wooden picket-style fence abutted the south side of the building. (Collection of the Kingston Public Library)

Concern about the overall condition of the burying ground appeared in the town annual reports beginning as early as 1829. A warrant article from that year read, “to see if the town will employ some person to clear the burying ground of bushes, which are growing among the graves.”¹⁴ By 1845, a committee had been appointed to “take charge of the whole subject of the burying ground,” and this committee functioned for several years, making suggestions about tree removal and new ornamentation. This interest aligned with the construction of the town house in the burying ground’s northeast corner in 1841; the removal of the Second Meetinghouse in 1851 and construction of the third (and current) structure in the same location in 1852; and with the 1854 establishment of Evergreen Cemetery, a larger property designed in the popular

¹⁰ Blachowicz, James, *From Slate to Marble*, 225-261

¹¹ Hurd, 285

¹² Kingston Annual Town Report, 1939, 8

¹³ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 198, Page 161. Documentation differs regarding the cost of this land; the deed states \$130.00 and the 1840 Town Annual Report lists \$600.00. The latter figure may reflect an additional appropriation to pay for incidental expenses associated with the purchase.

¹⁴ Kingston Annual Town Report, 1829, 265

Rural Cemetery style on adjacent land to the north. It is likely that the cast iron fencing was added to the west side, and a formal cast iron entry gate was made near the northeast corner, marked by granite posts.¹⁵ It is possible that an unpaved carriage road was laid out, leading from the gate into the burying ground's newest section. At the 1852 Town Meeting, residents voted, "in fact to authorize [a] committee to do what they may think proper for the ornamenting and preservation of the burying ground and training green..."¹⁶ As of 1859, no improvements had been made and the selectmen made a plea to voters at town meeting,



The Third Meetinghouse, as it appeared in ca. 1917, was designed by the prominent Boston architect Charles Edward Parker and constructed in 1852. (First Parish Church of Kingston collection)

"[w]e would also call your attention to our burying ground, one of the oldest in the country. While the inhabitants of other towns are expending large sums to adorn their old burying ground, and larger sums upon more modern ground, our old yard is fast becoming a forest of briars and wild cherry trees, and the stones which mark the last resting places of our ancestors, are dilapidated and defaced, and the inscriptions upon them becoming erased by the hand of time."¹⁷

Following this plea, the town began yearly to appropriate funds to care for the property, and by 1910, had handed its care to the town tree warden.

Perhaps the most significant contribution to the long-term care of the burying ground came in 1920 with the establishment of the Lucy Prince Ames Trust Fund. Williams Ames, son of Lucy, gifted \$7,500.00 to the town to be invested by the selectmen and the income thereof expended in the care and preservation of the property and its monuments. In the 1920 Annual Town Report, the selectmen reflected on the gift:

"Few can fully appreciate until their attention is called to the condition of the old monuments erected therein to the memory of their ancestors. Of the nearly one thousand graves marked by stones of various kinds, fifty or more are broken and neglect for a few more years would remove all legible records. By terms of the gift, the expenditure of the income was placed in the hands of the selectmen. There is much to be done and much to be repeated from year to year. Now permanent repairs are called for. A beginning has

¹⁵ This fence was repaired and painted and the gate made workable in 1928 (ATR, 928, 24)

¹⁶ Ibid, 1852, 148

¹⁷ Melville, 118

been made and it is presumed that any Board of Selectmen will gladly receive advice from anyone conversant with the history of this old ground and of those that lie therein.”¹⁸

With support from the Ames fund, the town was able to further upgrade the property. Four years after the fund’s establishment, Thomas Prince bequeathed an additional \$5,000 as a supplement, “to be used in keeping in repair the Old Burying Ground, and especially the lot of his father, Noah Prince and family.”¹⁹ In 1921, Sarah Bailey noted in her history of the Old Burying Ground that the landscape was “a place of beauty,” with a “simple and suitable planting of hedge and evergreen trees,” and maintained with “the care which has kept it free from bushes and briars, so often seen in such places...” She elaborated:

“[m]ore careful investigation shows the stones well preserved and symmetrically arranged, in some cases this symmetry of arrangement hasn’t even gone so far as to place a foot stone belonging to a certain grave in the same neat row of stones with the head stone! (This arrangement was due to the work of Mr. Edward Chandler and the men who worked with and for him.

When Mr. Chandler was put in charge of the old and new burying places, he found the old ground in rather neglected condition. The ground was very uneven, the stones were at all angles, many broken and half buried, while others were being carried away to cover drains. It was difficult to tell where the stones should be placed and, with a view to these of caring for the ground in the future, the men made the neat rows which we today so much appreciate. Mr. Chandler was the one who began the beautifying of the graveyards, grading and planting to supplement what nature had done for our attractive burial grounds.”²⁰



The Old Burying Ground as seen in 1925. Evergreen trees stood near the church, but much of the landscape remained open. (Emily Drew Collection, Kingston Public Library)

In 1926, a third and final addition of land was made to the burying ground’s northwest side, a 1/4-acre parcel deeded by Lois Chandler.²¹ This brought the total property size up to approximately 3.5 acres.²² Three years later, the town appropriated \$100 to layout a paupers’ lot on this additional parcel.²³

¹⁸ Kingston Annual Town Report, 1920, 50

¹⁹ Ibid, 1924, 5

²⁰ Bailey, 1921

²¹ Plymouth County Registry of Deeds, Book 1515, Page 592

²² In the early 2000s, this size would be reduced to 2.93 after separate parcels were defined for the church (0.27 acres) and town house (0.35 acres).

²³ Kingston Town Annual Report, 1929, 8

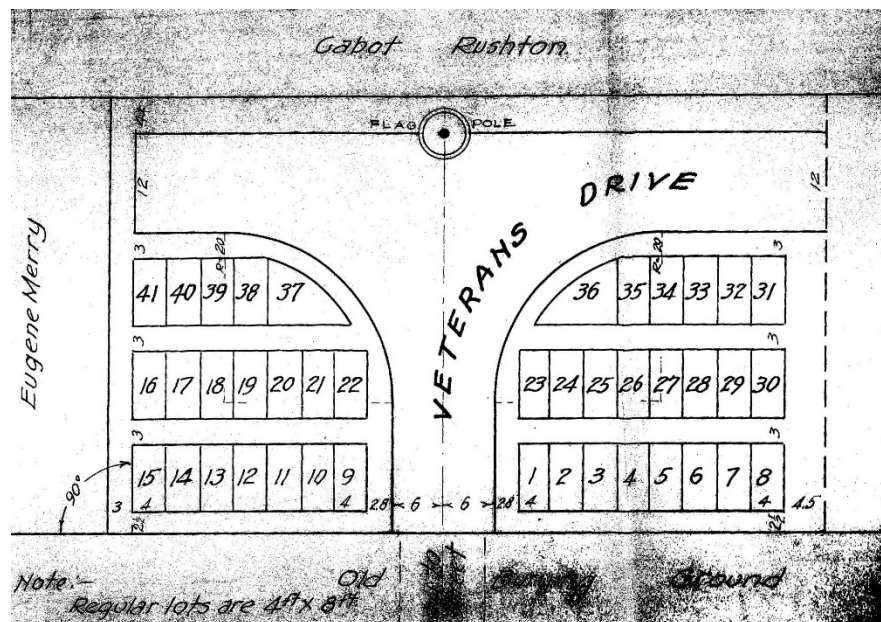
Modernization and Renewal: 1930-Present

Care of the burying ground continued with the support of the Ames fund through a good portion of the 20th century. This work was carried out through the direction of the Kingston Board of Selectmen, by individual laborers. In 1931, the Selectmen reported that the property,

“is kept in wonderful condition by money received from the income of invested funds, known as the Lucy Prince Ames Fund. Under the direction of the Selectmen, Mr. M. H. McGrath and Mr. Frank Porter have kept this sacred spot in such fine condition that a great many favorable comments have been received from far and near. We hope that its condition gives considerable satisfaction to the donor of the fund, Mr. William L. Ames, the fund being named for his mother, Mrs. Lucy Prince Ames, a much respected Kingstoni[a]n for many years. There has been spent this year for the care of this plot, \$979.89 which includes labor, supplies, tools, and the painting of the tool house.”²⁴

By 1944, the Selectmen had established an official title for the caretaker, “Superintendent of the Old Burying Ground,” a position that endured until 1972. The following year, care was assumed by the Kingston Evergreen Cemetery Association, Inc. and carried out into the 1980s.

In addition to establishing the paupers’ lot, the town developed the ¼-acre Chandler property into an area reserved for veterans. In 1958, registered land surveyor Clinton T. Keith prepared a plan to develop this northwest corner, including 41 4’ x 8’ lots to be accessed via the existing carriage road. The plan included a t-shaped extension of the carriage road, with a flagpole placed at the far western edge, in line with the center of the road. Asphalt was likely introduced to surface the t-shaped extension and may also have been applied to the surface of the carriage road at the same time. This contemporary material conflicted with the historic character of the burying ground.

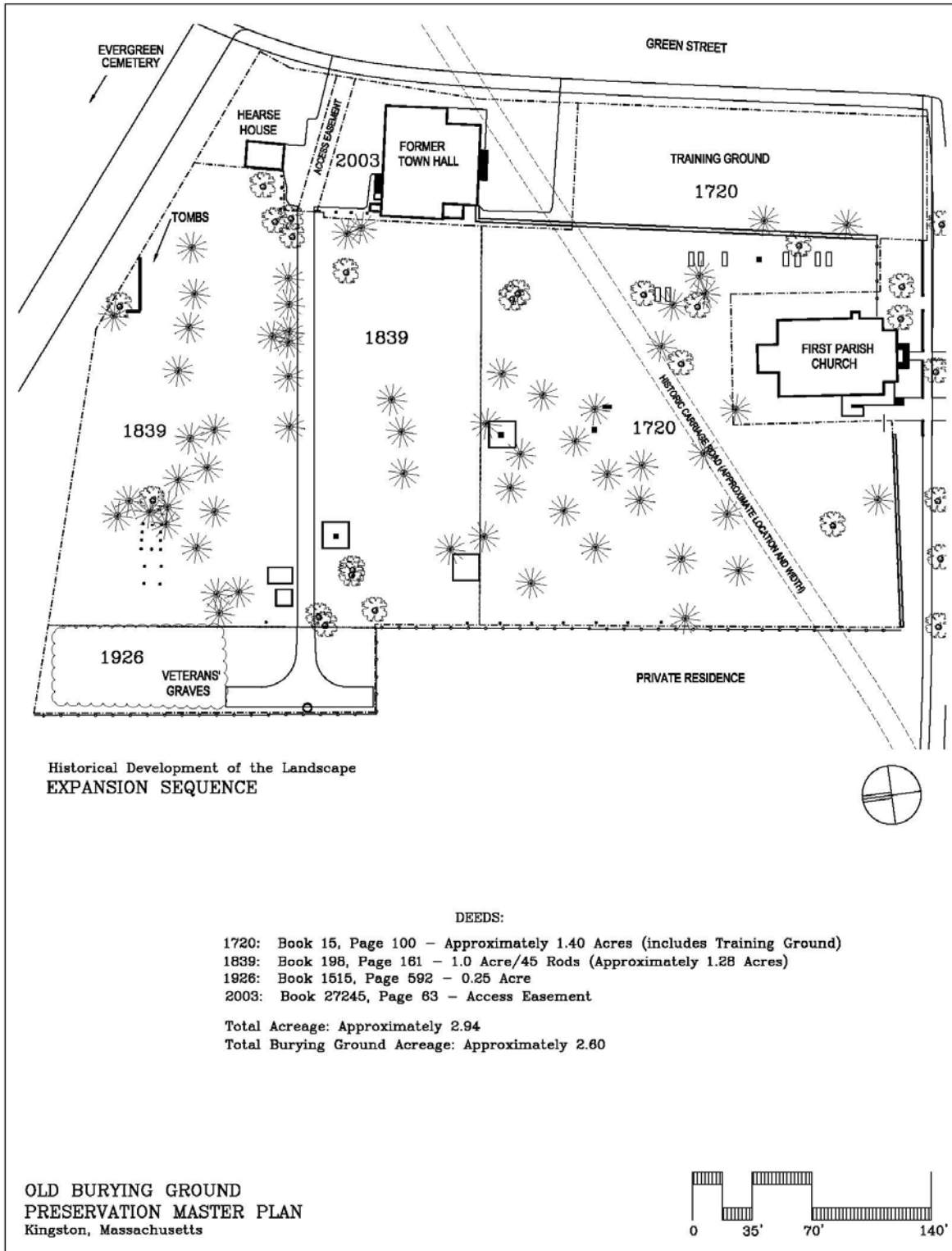


Clinton Keith's plan for the veterans' burial area introduced asphalt pavement into the burying ground, placing a contemporary feature amidst the Colonial style landscape. (Kingston Public Library Collection)

In the early 2000s, questions arose around the legal ownership of the burying ground. As stated earlier in this section, the original parcel was part of land given by Major Bradford for the meeting house, training field, and burying ground, and no evidence was known to exist documenting legal ownership by the town. To resolve this dispute, the First Parish Church and Town of Kingston developed a memorandum of

²⁴ Ibid, 1931, 21-22

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understanding in 2003 that defined the church (0.27 acres) and burying ground (2.93 acres) lots.²⁵ A boundary survey was completed to support this memorandum, and the Town of Kingston became the legal owner of the Old Burying Ground.

Concurrent with the process to establish ownership was an effort by the town to recognize the historical significance of the burying ground. In 2002, the property was listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Kingston Center Historic District. In 2017, acting through the Kingston Historical Commission, the town secured Community Preservation Act funding to develop a long-term plan to preserve the nearly 300-year-old landscape. The result is the foregoing *Kingston Old Burying Ground Preservation Master Plan*.

Period of Significance: 1717-1958

The Period of Significance for the Old Burying Ground spans the years 1717 to 1958. During this time, the first interment took place (1717) and Major Bradford gifted several acres of land to be used for burial purposes (1720). The property remained the same size until 1839, when more than one acre was appended to the north side. Many of the landscape's most prominent features are associated with the time of enlargement, including the five tombs at the north slope, the stone wall lining the south and west sides, the cast iron fencing and entry gate, and several family plots rimmed with granite curbing. A third addition, made in 1926, allowed for development of a lot for paupers' graves, located along the northern boundary. In 1958, the town added the Veterans' burial area, introducing a modern feature that conflicted with the burying ground's historic character and ending its period of significance. Efforts by the town to preserve the burying ground should honor this period of significance, stabilizing historic features and removing others that do not fall within this period.

²⁵ The historic town hall was separated onto a third parcel, 0.35 acres in size.

LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

The following section of the Preservation Master Plan assesses the existing natural, built, and functional features of the Old Burying Ground landscape. Its purpose is to document the features; to analyze their condition; and to outline preliminary recommendations for preservation treatment.²⁶ Together with the information compiled in the historical development section, the assessment provides a foundation for the overall plan.

Setting & Context

Kingston's Old Burying Ground lies at the northwest intersection of Main and Green Streets, near the geographic center of the town. To the east, across Green Street, are private residences, and across Main Street to the south is the Greek Revival style Unitarian Parsonage. A private residence stands along the burying ground's west side and to the north is the 17.87-acre Evergreen Cemetery, a private facility established in 1853/54 and laid out in the Rural Cemetery style. Nestled in the burying ground's southeast corner is the First Parish Church (Unitarian Universalist), a mid-19th century structure with a tall steeple that towers over the burying ground below. The sides and rear of the building are unadorned, but the front has been embellished with granite copings, lawn, and cast iron fencing radiating from the east and west sides. The historic Kingston Training Ground, with its summerhouse, Civil War monument, pathways and trees, extends from burying ground's the southeast corner along much of the east side. At the north end of the training ground is the 1841 Kingston town hall building, a small gravel parking lot, and a historic hearse house. The church, training ground, and town hall all support the Old Burying Ground's character by providing an intimate setting dominated by historic structures and landscapes.



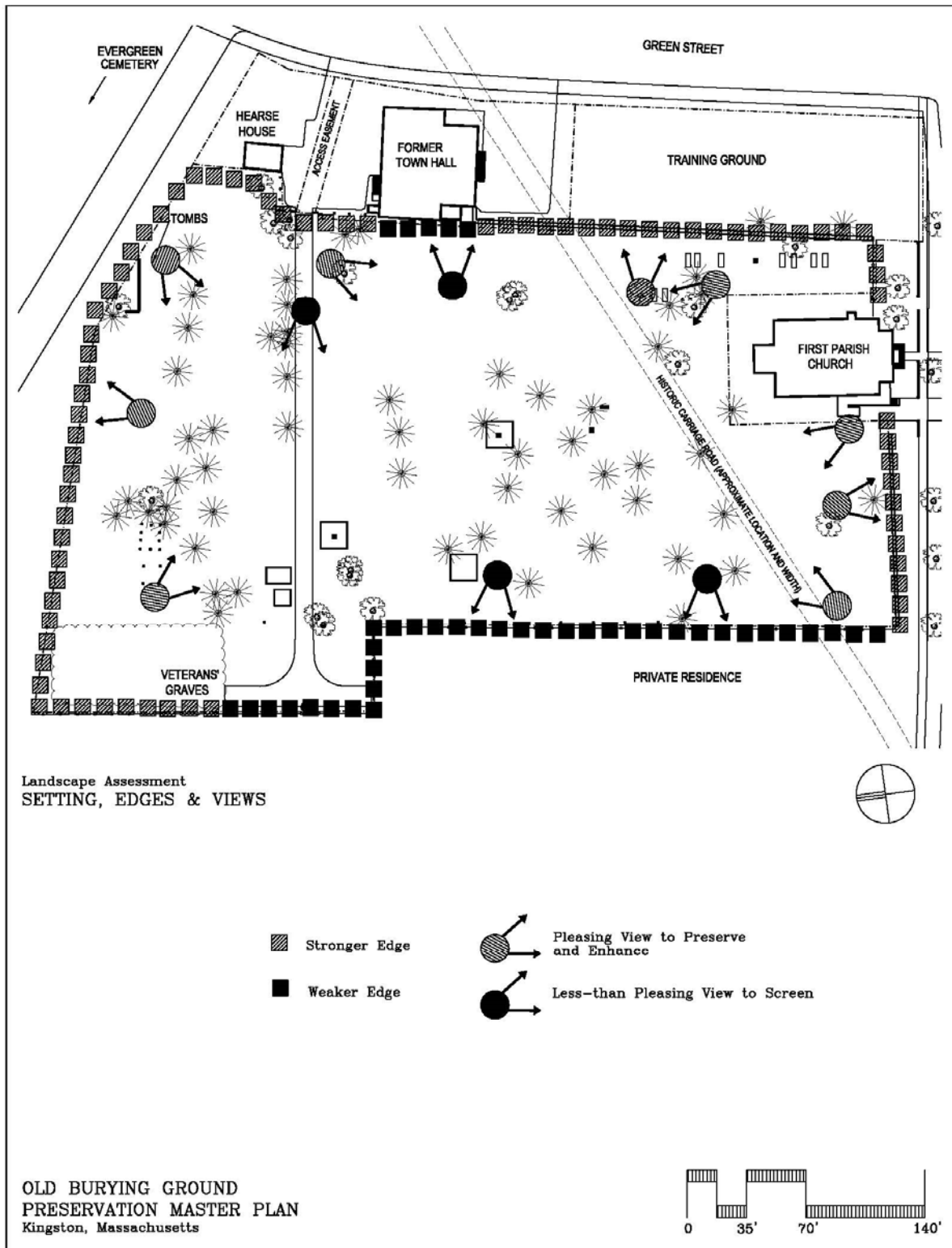
The Kingston Old Burying Ground lies near the corner of Main and Green Streets behind the First Parish Church and near the geographic center of the town.

Edges & Views

Nearly all of the burying ground's edges contribute to its historic character. On the **north**, a steep slope descends from the burying ground to a lower plateau containing the entry drive to Evergreen Cemetery. A set of private tombs, built into the slope, supports the easternmost portion of this north edge. On the **east**, structures, including a wall, a building and a gated fence, line the entire edge. The wall, made of

²⁶ Preservation, as defined by the National Park Service, includes four treatment options: stabilization, restoration, rehabilitation and reconstruction, as discussed at the end of this section of the plan.

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parged granite block, separates the burying ground from the training ground. The cast iron fence and single-leaf gate (“east gate”) are supported by rough-hewn granite posts and separate the gravel parking area from the burying ground interior. The west façade of the historic town hall lacks fenestration and is unadorned. A chain link fence standing four feet high extends along the *west* edge from south to north, jogging at the veterans’ burial area, and connecting to wire mesh fence from the veterans’ area northward. Much of the mesh is obscured by a grove of pines and maples mixed with dense deciduous understory plantings, located at the burying ground’s northwest corner. A 4’ height mortared and parged granite block wall defines a portion of the *south* edge, beginning at the southwest corner and running eastward for approximately 132 feet. The wall acts as a retaining structure for the burying ground’s southwest corner. As noted above, the remainder of the south edge is defined by the First Parish Church structure and adjacent cast iron fences.



A parged granite block wall separates the burying ground from Main Street on the west side of the Church.

The quality of views both from outside the burying ground and from within, correspond to the character of the edges. Pleasing long views are possible from all edges of the burying ground looking across the interior, however low-branching trees obstruct many of the views. Similarly, low-branching trees block pleasing long views from the edges looking out to the south, east and north. Less pleasing views take in the chain link fencing and private back yard of the abutter to the west, the blank west wall of the historic town hall, as well as the long view from inside the east gate looking down the straight asphalt-covered roadway.

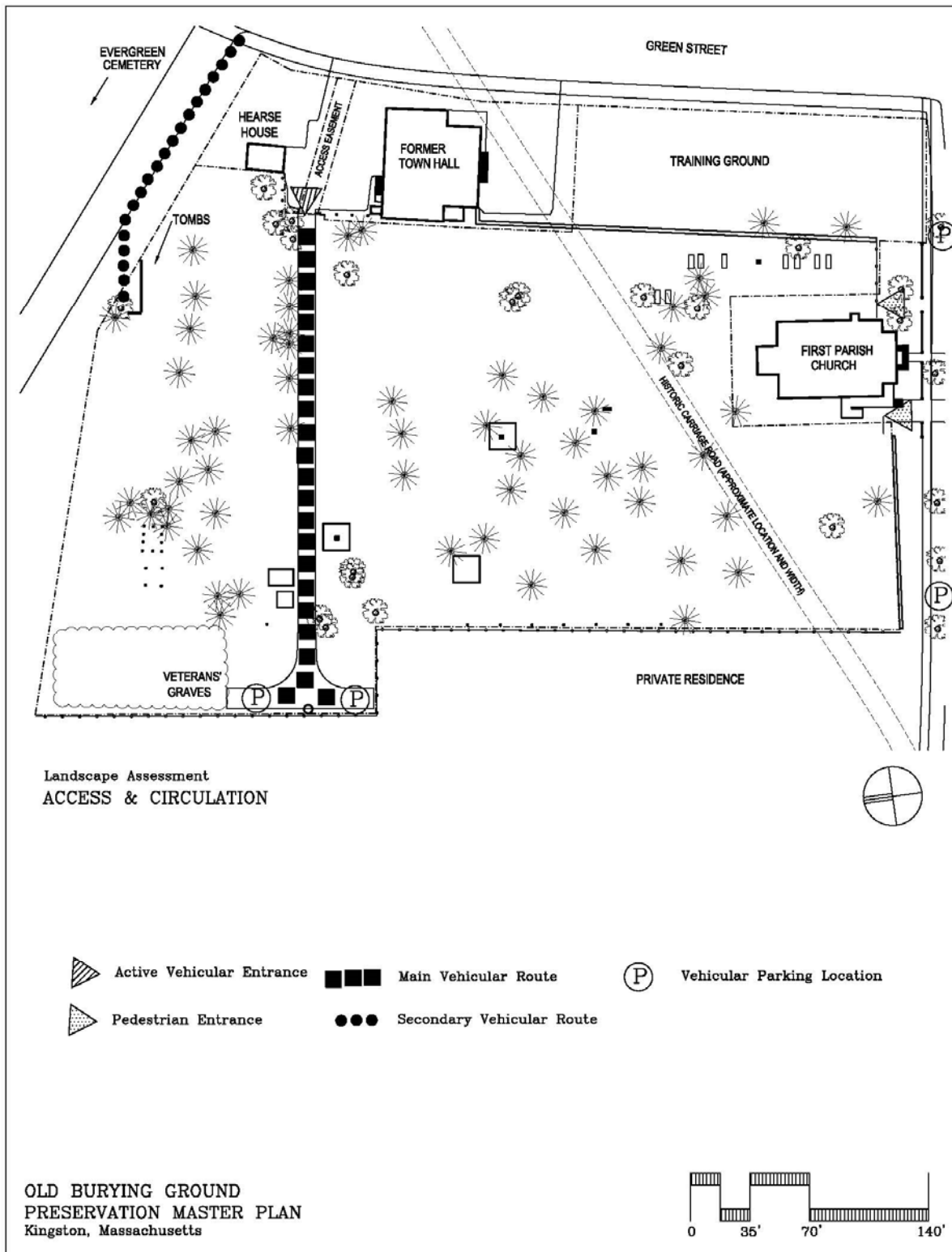
Entrances & Circulation

Visitors to the Old Burying Ground by vehicle must park in a remote location and walk to one of the entrances, as parking is not allowed in the town hall’s gravel lot (the property is privately-owned), or along Main Street in front of the First Parish Church. Nearby parking lots include Beal House (across Main Street), and the Kingston Public Library (to the north on Green Street). Pedestrians may enter the burying ground via the east gate, or through one of the two gates in the cast iron fencing along the south edge. The east gate connects visitors to the asphalt driveway leading to the veterans’ area, and drivers can park in the asphalt turnaround in this area.



A cast iron fence bearing “OLD BURYING GROUND” along the top rail marks the “East Entrance.”

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To reach this driveway, visitors must cross over the former town hall property (now privately owned) via an access easement. The south gates allow visitors onto the grounds, but do not lead to established walking paths. Visitors to the private tombs at the burying ground's north edge may access them via the entry drive to Evergreen Cemetery (from Green Street) and park alongside the drive.

While terrain across most of the burying ground landscape is nearly level, navigation for pedestrians is somewhat difficult. Gravestones stand in dense, irregular arrangements and visitors must weave through them over turf. Bulky roots from many of the mature trees protrude above the grade, creating tripping hazards. The lack of a clear walking route limits access to many of the gravesites.

Trees & Plants

A total of 74 deciduous and evergreen trees grow throughout the burying ground's 2.94 acres (approximately 25 trees/acre), including 19 deciduous trees and shrubs (27%) and 55 evergreen trees (73%). Of this total, 30 are cedars (*Thuja*, 40%), 24 are spruce (*Picea*, 32%), and the remainder (28%) is a mix of deciduous and evergreen genii, including maple (*Acer*), oak (*Quercus*), pine (*Pinus*), birch (*Betula*), beech (*Fagus*), linden (*Tilia*), and lilac (*Syringa*). Five trees are deceased or unidentified. A majority of the deciduous and evergreen trees have reached full maturity, with several specimens measuring 30" to 48" in caliper. Ten of these are in very good condition and are not endangering other features within the burying ground. These should be carefully monitored and maintained. The dominance of two tree genii – *Thuja* and *Picea* – leaves the burying ground vulnerable to significant tree loss at one time. The mature age of these trees exacerbates that threat. Fortunately, the burying ground does not contain any invasive species as classified by the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries, Wildlife and Habitat.²⁷



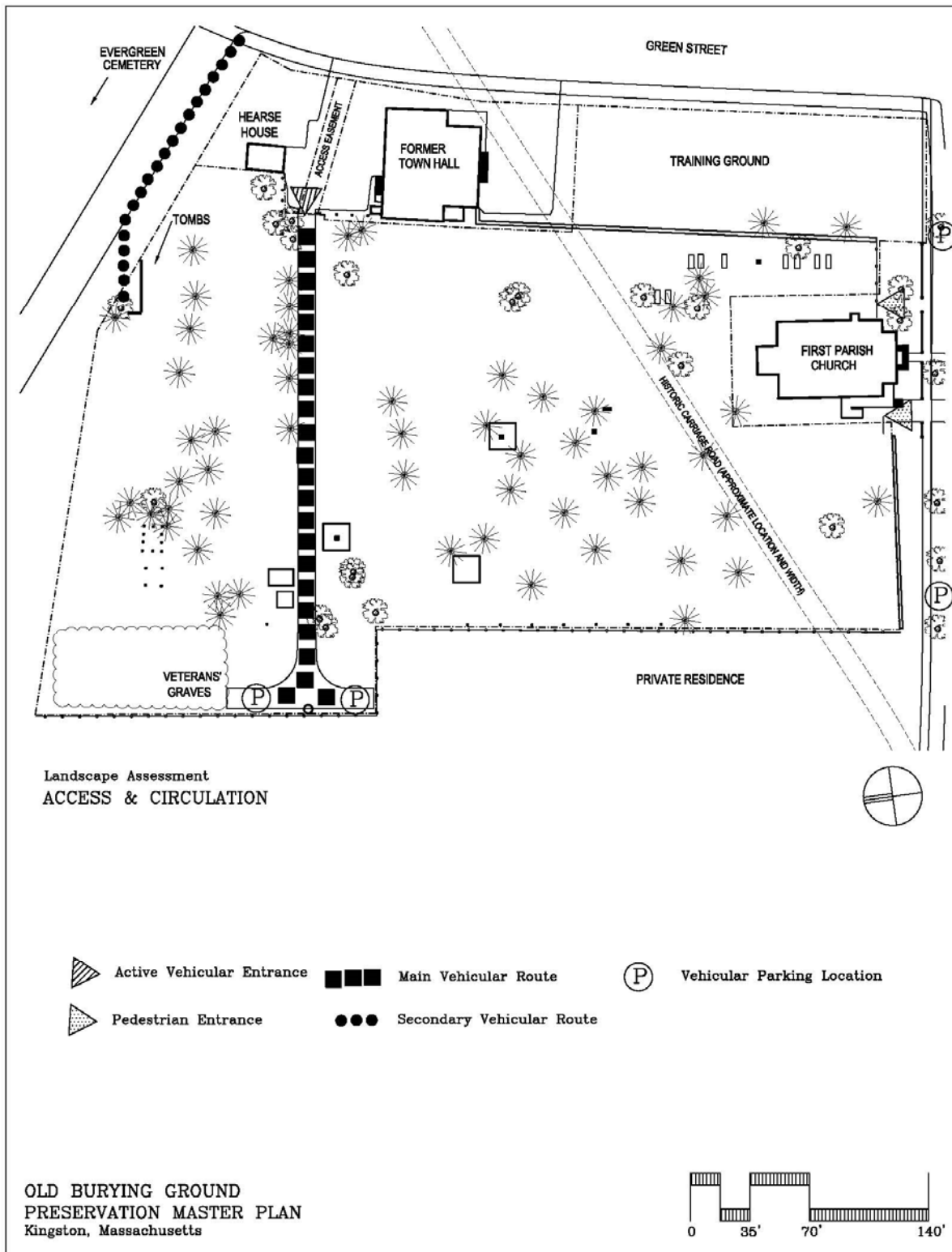
The burying ground contains 24 spruce trees, many of which are in decline. An animal (or bird) appears to have made a home in the cavity of this tree.

The overall tree condition ranges from very good to poor/dead. In addition to the ten high-quality specimen trees, 32 other trees appear to be in good condition. All of these trees should be cared for on a regular basis through pruning, feeding and where required, cabling. Thirteen trees are in fair condition, showing signs of decay. These should be monitored and removed as decay advances. Nineteen trees are either dead or in very poor condition, and these should be removed to avoid spread of disease and/or delimbing or altogether falling onto gravestones and monuments. The low-branching limbs (under 15' high) on trees that remain should be removed to allow light into the burying ground and open visibility across the landscape.

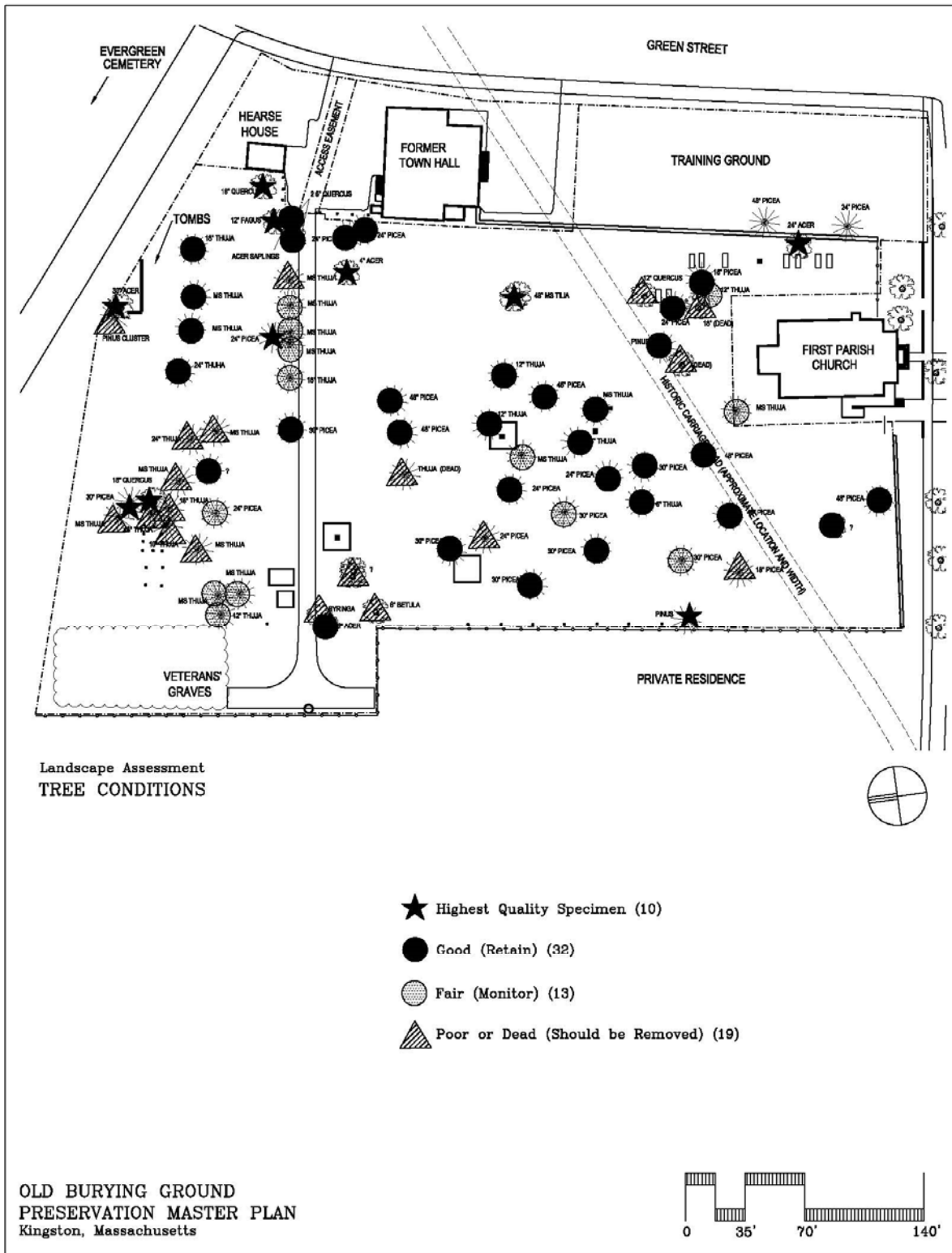
In addition to the large tree population, the burying ground contains two types of perennial plantings, groundcovers and gravesite plantings. Groundcovers include sedum, moss, lichen, stachys, as well as several species of mushrooms, and unlike grass, they add color and texture to the landscape, and do not

²⁷ Refer to <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2016/08/tm/invasive-plant-list.pdf> for a complete listing of invasive plant species in Massachusetts.

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require regular mowing. Gravesite plantings, including hosta and yucca, ornament a few of the graves. While attractive, if not regularly maintained they can grow over the gravesites and undermine the stability of the markers.

Historic Structures

The burying ground contains several masonry structures rimming gravesites (family plot enclosures), holding interments (private tombs), defining the edges (granite block walls and cast iron fencing), and the condition of these varies, as follows,

- **Family Plot Enclosures.** Granite curb or coping and granite posts have been used to outline the edges of seven family plots (5 curbs and 2 sets of posts) located in the northern half of the burying ground. While these are intact, some of the curbing sections have begun to overturn and several of the posts are leaning. The likely causes of both conditions are inadequate foundations and/or build-up of water in the soil underneath and/or behind the stones.



Granite curbs outline the edges of seven family plots within the burying ground, and several have begun to overturn. Build up of water in the soil and inadequate foundations are two likely causes.

- **Cast Iron Fencing and Granite Posts.** As note above in the discussion about “Edges,” cast iron fencing encloses portions of the east and south sides of the burying ground. At the east gate, granite posts support the fence panels and steel posts support the gates. On the south side, the entire fence structure, including fence panels, posts, and gates, are made of cast iron. While both sets of fences are complete (no missing members), they both show signs of wear, including loss of paint and rusting.



A set of concrete markers, numbered 1 – 18, lies approximately 15 feet apart along a portion of the west property line, presumably added to define a plot layout following acquisition of this land in 1838.

- **Concrete Plot Markers.** A set of circular concrete markers, each containing a numerical inscription, lie flush with the grade along the west property line, spaced approximately 15 feet apart. Several markers in the series of eighteen are missing or buried under the turf. It is likely these were set to define plot layout following the acquisition of 1.28 acres in 1838.

- **Granite Block Walls.** Granite block walls edge the south and east burying ground property lines in lengths of approximately 113' and 236', respectively. At the northern end of the east wall, a short, 10' section returns into the corner of the old town house building.²⁸ Both walls stand approximately 36" to 48" high and are topped by a segmented 6" high rock-face granite cap (segments measure 5' to 6'). Quarry marks remain on the edges of the capstones, and iron rings, possibly serving historically for hitching horses, protrude from the top of the capstones on both walls. Concrete-filled joints appear between capstones, and the lower portions of both walls have been parged with concrete.²⁹ The parging has deteriorated in spots (cracked and worn away), and plants have taken root in some locations where parging is missing. Plants have also grown up along the base of the east wall. Portions of both walls act as retaining structures and both appear plumb with no signs of overturn, bulging or sliding. Deterioration appears largely cosmetic.



Granite block walls line both the east and south cemetery edges and portions of the walls act as retaining structures. Despite the age of the walls, they appear plumb, with only cosmetic deterioration.

- **Private Tombs.** A set of five private tombs were constructed into the burying ground's north slope in the early to mid 19th century. Visible dates of death on the tombs range from 1819 to 1868. The interiors were constructed with mortar-parged fieldstone, and each is faced with a brick front wall, granite door jamb, and granite sill and rests on a stone rubble foundation. Inspection of tomb interiors revealed that the side and back walls are in materially good condition, with some settlement cracks, spalls in the parging, and eroded joints. The earth-covered roofs consist of granite slabs headed by cut stone lintels and while some are intact, others have separated, allowing water to infiltrate. A cast iron door, hung from forged iron pintles, secures the entrance to each tomb,



The five private tombs are built into the burying ground's north slope. While the interiors are materially sound, portions of the stone and brick work have deteriorated or failed.

²⁸ Approximately 50' of this wall, as well as the short 5', are on private property.

²⁹ Based on historic photographs, this parging appears to have been added after 1851.

and the pins have corroded. Recommendations for treating the tombs include re-pointing mortar joints; injecting grout into cracks; applying waterproofing to the roofs; replacing iron hardware with stainless steel. The front walls and rubble foundations of some will require dismantling and rebuilding. For a detailed assessment of the five tombs, refer to the *Old Burying Ground Mound Tomb Assessment*, found in *Appendix B* of this plan.

Gravestones and Monuments

The assessment of gravestones and monuments at the Old Burying Ground accomplished two tasks, (1) identifying the artisans who carved many of the stones, and (2) assessing the condition and recommending treatment for those stones requiring conservation.

The work of as many as fourteen local and regional stone carvers appears in the Old Burying Ground. These men resided in Eastern Massachusetts, largely on the South Shore, and several, including Bartlett Adams, Harris Thompson, James Thompson and Hiram Tribble operated out of Kingston. Bildad Washburn worked in Kingston for over 50 years, and is known as the town's first stone carver, operating from 1782 to 1830. Examples of stones carved by each of these men are in the *Gravestone and Monument Assessment* spreadsheet (see *Appendix C*).

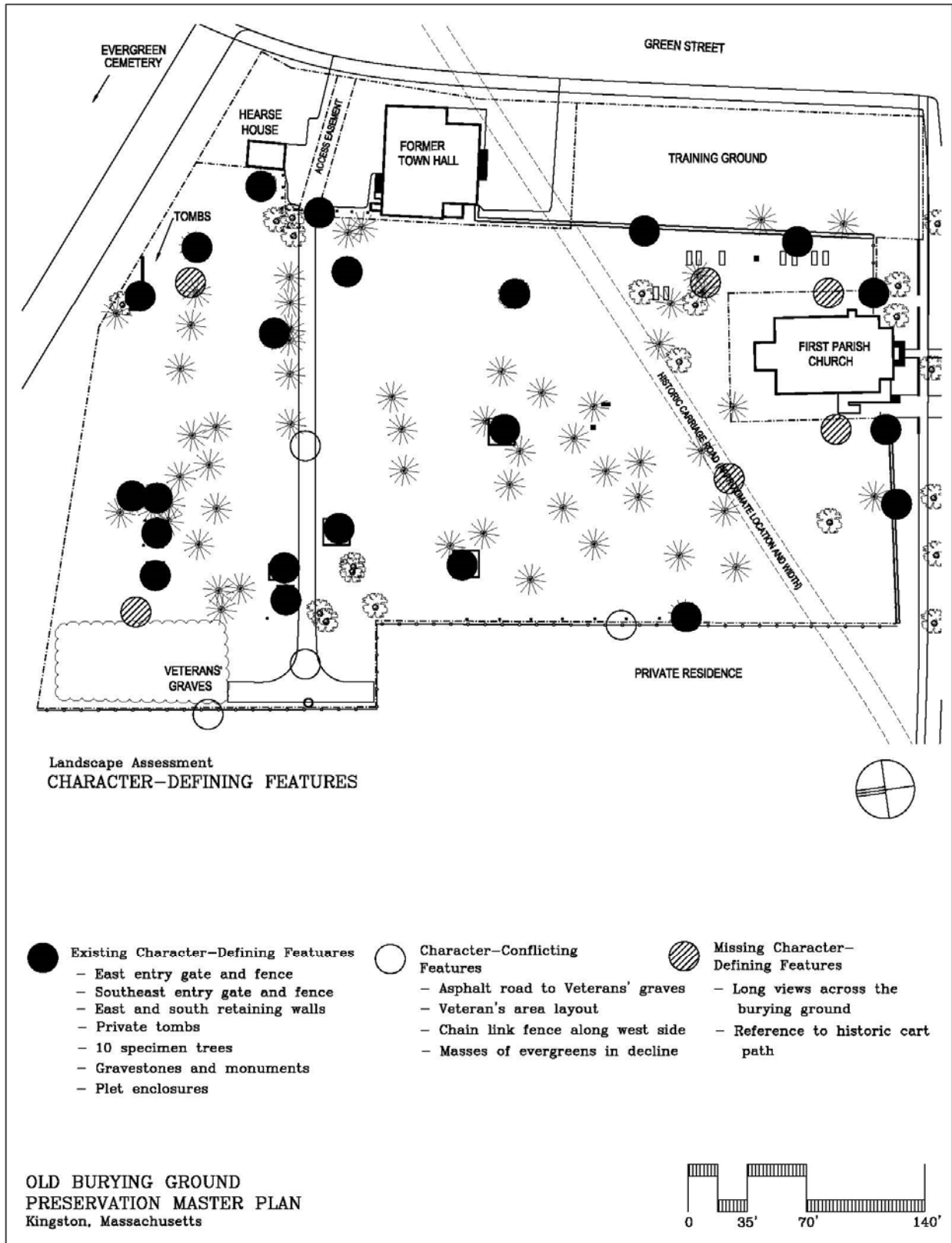


The Old Burying Ground is dominated by slate markers, many of them carved by local artisans. Many show signs of deterioration, including delamination, tilting, and breaking into fragments.

The assessment identified a total of approximately 660 +/- stones and six box tomb markers requiring conservation treatment. The urgency for treatment is high (priority 1) across all 660 +/- stones. Conservation problems include delamination (of slate), stones that have loosed on their pins, broken stones, tilted stones, and stones that have completely fallen. Significant biological growth covers many, and some stones have been repaired in the past with concrete. Causes of these deteriorated conditions at the Old Burying Ground are detailed in the *Gravestone and Monument Assessment (Appendix C)*; a summary is as follows:

- *Freezing and thawing cycles.* Fluctuating temperatures cause earth around the stones to expand and contract, and with this movement, shifting the stones, resulting in tilting and eventually falling or breaking off.
- *Acid.* Acid in the environment attacks calcareous stone (limestone and marble), loosening the surface, weakening the stone, and eroding the inscription.
- *Erosion and compaction.* As the burying ground has aged, soils around the stones have eroded and became compacted, leading to stone destabilization.

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- *Tree roots and branches.* The dense growth of mature trees in the burying ground poses a threat to stones, as limbs fall and root systems expand.
- *Biological growth.* Lichens cover many of the stones at the Old Burying Ground. These produce acid, and can lead to stone deterioration, particularly of marble and sandstone.
- *Previous repairs.* Several stones in the burying ground were re-set at one time by standing them in beds of concrete. The stones and concrete expand at different rates, and as a result, the stones can deteriorate and/or fail. Copper caps were placed on the top surfaces of many delaminating slate stones.

The assessment recommends treatment approaches to each of the 660 +/- stones and six box tomb markers. Conservation measures include resetting, repairing with adhesive, mortaring into bases, tacking, capping/infilling, and stabilizing delaminations. In some cases, old repairs need to be removed, stones need to be re-pinned, and/or new bases/foundations are required. For a detailed description of all treatment recommendations, refer to *Appendix C*.

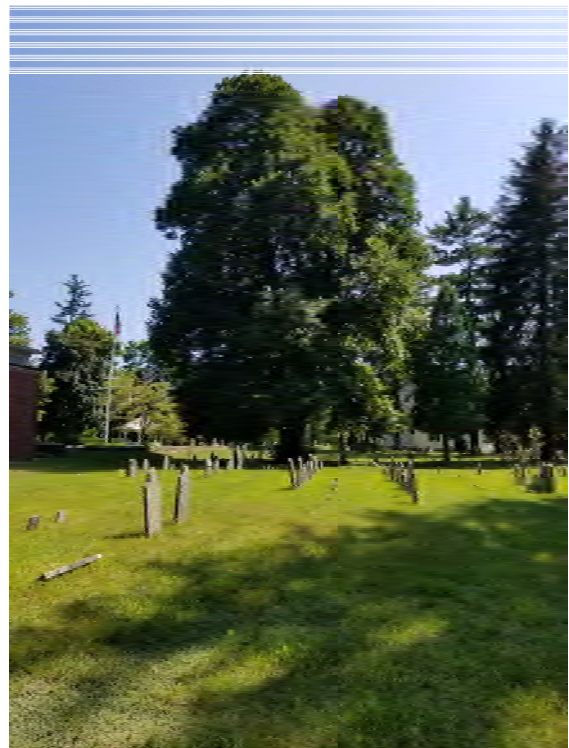
Character-Defining Features

The Old Burying Ground landscape contains many details that both add to and detract from its historic character, most of which have been discussed above. In summary, features that help to *define the historic character* include:

- Perimeter granite block walls
- Cast iron fencing and gates on the east and southeast sides
- Private tombs retaining the north slope
- Mature specimen trees in very good condition
- Gravestones and monuments
- Plot enclosures

Contemporary features that *detract from the historic character* include:

- The asphalt road leading to the veterans' burial area (both width and alignment)
- Chain link and wire mesh fencing along the west side
- Masses of mature evergreen trees (Thuja and Picea) in decline



The burying ground's many mature specimen trees contribute to the historic character.

Historic features that once stood within the burying ground but *have been removed* include:

- Long views across the burying ground landscape
- Reference to historic cart path

Preliminary Recommendations

Future preservation efforts at the Old Burying Ground will involve each of the four treatment methods outlined by the United States Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes* (1996). They include:

- *Preservation*, where existing form, integrity and materials of the landscape will be sustained;
- *Rehabilitation*, where features in the landscape will be repaired or altered to make their use compatible with the landscape's historical value;
- *Restoration*, where landscape features will be returned to their original form; and
- *Reconstruction*, where landscape features no longer extant will be restored.

Based on the preceding assessment, the following preliminary recommendations should be considered for the Preservation Master Plan. Note that the recommendations do not appear in order of importance or priority.

- Upgrade the east entrance by restoring the cast iron gate and fence panels and re-installing these on cleaned and straightened granite posts
- Upgrade the cast iron fencing and gates along the south edge by removing rust, straightening, and re-painting
- Remove the chain link and wire mesh fencing along the west edge and replace it with black vinyl-coated chain link; introduce plantings inside the burying ground along the fence to provide a privacy screen for the adjacent neighbor
- Better define the entrances along the south edge so that the burying ground may be accessed from Main Street
- Consider establishing a new entrance along the burying ground's north slope, to be accessed via the Evergreen Cemetery drive
- Narrow the existing asphalt road to a comfortable pedestrian width (5 - 6 feet), and remove turn around pavement from the Veterans' area; consider adding cremation burial sites along the edges of the pedestrian path
- Consider establishing an informal walking path through the property, connecting from the Main Street entrances and looping throughout
- Upgrade the veterans' area by providing additional burial spaces, as well as a central monument honoring Kingston servicemen and women
- Remove the 19 trees that are dead or in advanced decline
- Monitor the 13 trees in fair condition, gradually removing those that begin to decline
- Continue to care for the highest quality specimens and trees in good condition (a total of 42)
- Prune the lower limbs of trees to remain to open views across the burying ground interior

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- Remove plant growth at the bases and within the joints of the perimeter stone walls, and clean the walls
- Stabilize the private tombs per the recommendations of the structural assessment
- Conserve the 660 +/- monuments and gravestones identified in the assessment as requiring treatment
- Re-set granite copings and posts surrounding family plots
- Unearth and re-set the concrete plot markers along the west boundary line
- Develop and install a sign program that identifies the burying ground and provides interpretive information for visitors (including reference to historic cart path)

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following section of the Preservation Master Plan organizes the preliminary recommendations of the Assessment section into a series of nine “preservation projects,” or tasks to be completed in phases. The project’s overall goal, stated in the introduction to this plan and repeated in the green box (at right), provided a foundation for the recommendations, and the burying ground’s history and period of historical significance helped to further refine them. Preliminary budget projections, intended as a guideline for the Town of Kingston to use in setting fundraising goals, appear at the end of this section. All budget figures are based on 2020 construction industry and conservation trade rates and should be refined and updated as projects advance beyond planning phases. The work involved in some of the projects may be completed by town crews, depending on staff capabilities.

Note that the projects, while numbered, do not appear in order of priority.

**Kingston Old Burying Ground
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GOAL**

*(as identified by the Kingston Historical
Commission at the start of the planning
project)*

“to compile an inventory of the property’s natural and built features including walls, the gate, tombs, gravestones and gravestone carvers, monuments and specimen trees, assess their condition, and make specific recommendation for preserving and managing these features over the long term.”

Preservation Projects

Project #1: Tree Assessment, Pruning and Removal

The landscape assessment included an inventory of all cemetery trees and preliminary identification of dead species and species in decline, and noted that many trees contained low branching. Project #1 consists of three tasks:

- Confirmation of the identification and condition of all trees by a Massachusetts-Certified Arborist, with recommendations for removals and treatment of individual trees to remain.
- Removal of dead trees or trees in an advanced state of decline. Removal of these trees will (1) reduce the spread of any diseases they may carry; (2) help bring more light into the burying ground to reduce the amount of biological growth on gravestones; (3) reduce the chance of tree limbs falling on and harming monuments and markers; and (4) help return the burying ground to its 18th century appearance. Extreme care must be taken in the removal of trees, especially those of significant size. The town should limit the size and weight of tree-removal equipment allowed into the burying ground (use of a bucket extended from outside the burying ground will likely be necessary), and tree removal should only be undertaken by a certified arborist. Stumps should be ground with a mini stump grinder only where gravestones will not be impacted, and exposed roots should be allowed to decompose.
- Pruning of the lower limbs (under 15’ height) of remaining trees. This will allow even more light to enter the burying ground, will help improve the health of the trees, and will also open long views across the landscape, making the interior more visible and accessible to visitors.

Project #2: East Entrance

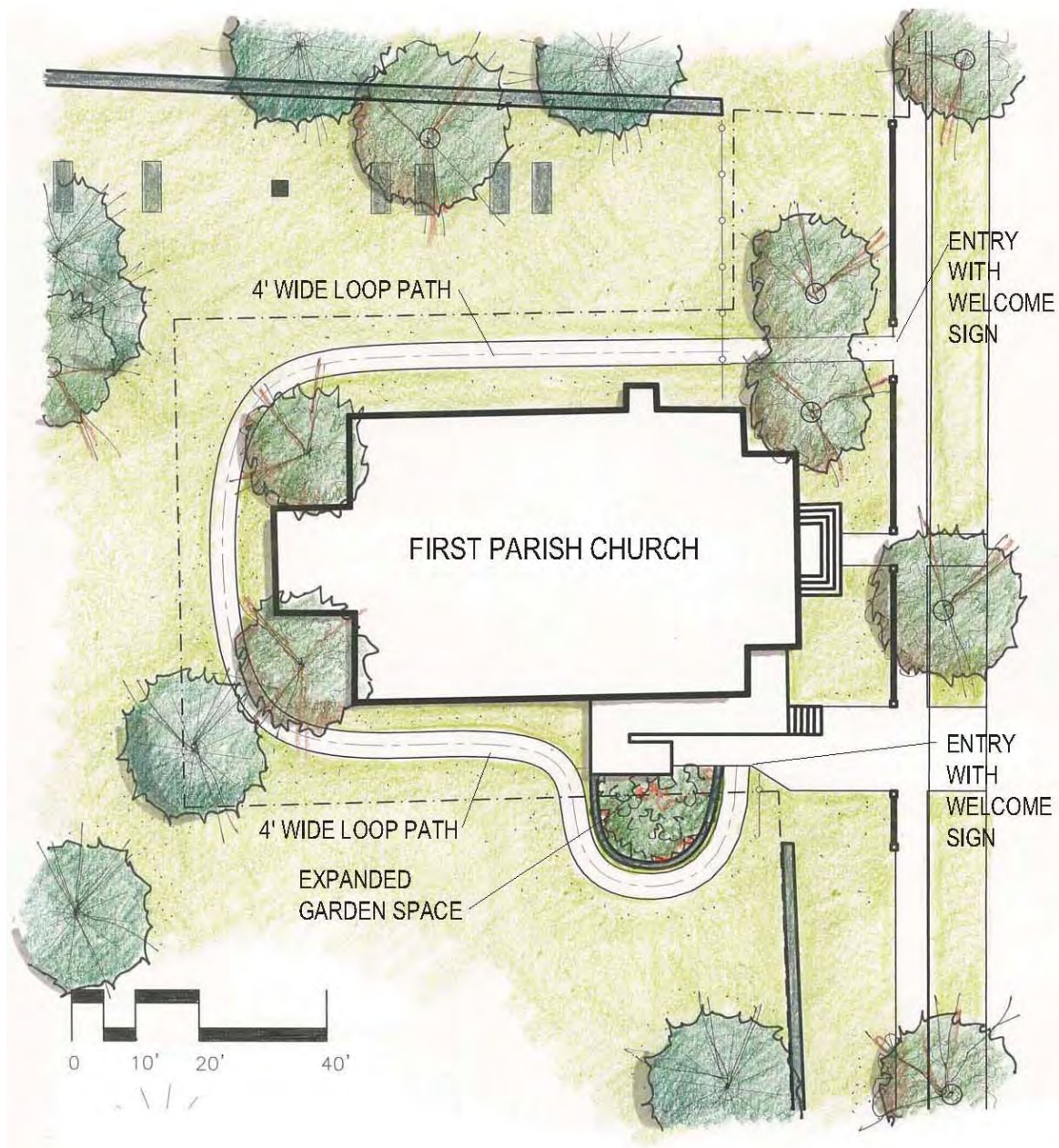
Project #2 involves making upgrades to the east entrance to the burying ground, located to the north of the old town house building (now private property). The boundary survey documenting the extent of limits of this property show that historic cast iron gate, granite posts, and decorative railing/fence panels stand on private property, however the town holds an 11’ wide access easement to the burying ground through this

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property. To preserve the historic fence and gate feature, Project #2 will entail removing the structures, restoring the metalwork (fence panels and gate) and resetting them, along with the granite posts, on town (burying ground) property.

Project #3: South Entrances and Burying Ground Path

Land ownership issues associated with the east gate argue for establishing a formal burying ground entrance and short looping pathway at the south edge, utilizing two existing points of entry. On-street parking along Main Street further supports this concept. An existing opening in the stone wall provides a natural point of entry, adjacent to the ramp leading to the church's west entrance. A cast iron gate in the fence abutting the east side of the church provides a second point of egress. Each point would be developed, and then connected by a small looping pathway, bringing visitors into the southeast corner of the burying ground:



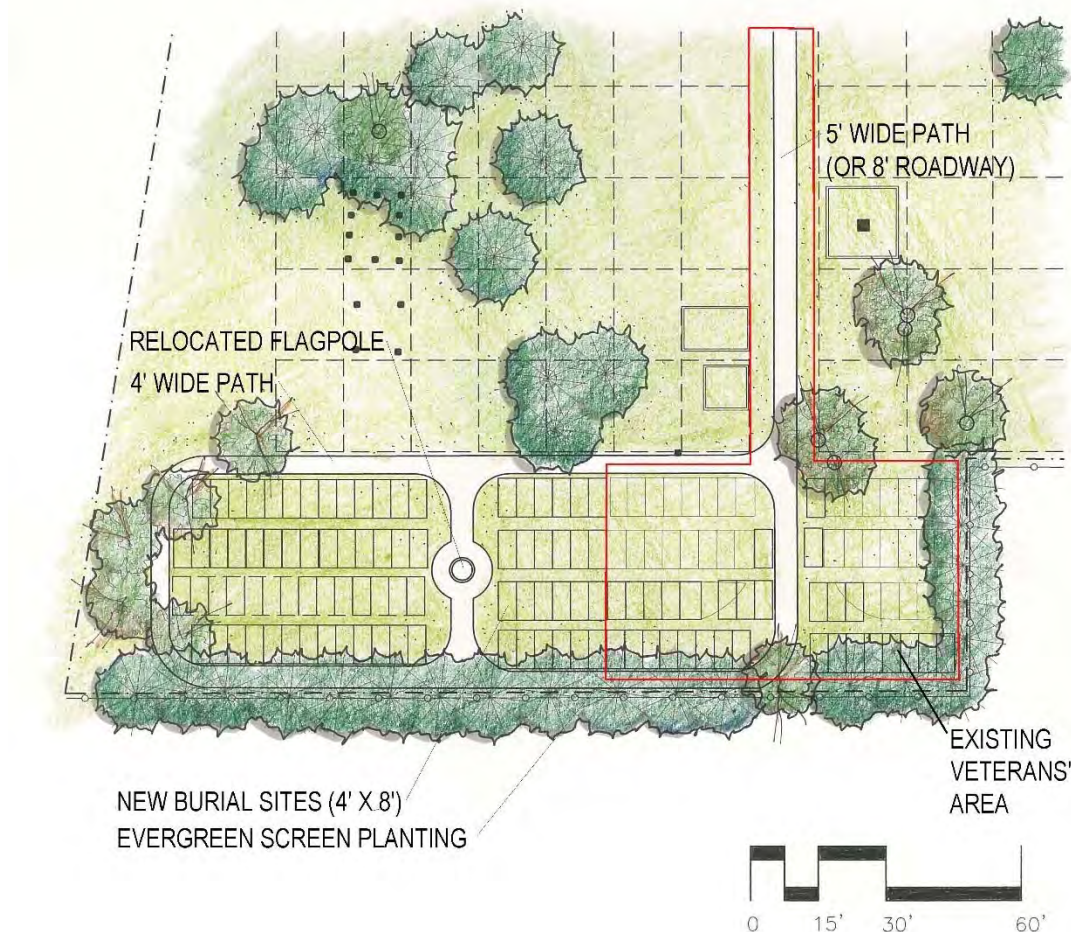
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- The south west entrance would be established near the small flower garden (maintained by the church), and this would be expanded, with paving and more planting, to mark a gateway into the burying ground.
- The south east entrance would be accessed by a walkway connecting to the Main Street sidewalk, and through the existing cast iron gate.
- A 4' width path would connect the two entrances by looping around the north side of the church. Interpretive signs would be placed along the path to provide information about the burying ground.
- Cleaning and re-pointing of the stone walls, as well as restoration of the existing cast iron fencing, would happen in conjunction with the creation of these entrances.

Note that the town will need to collaborate with First Parish Church on this effort, as much of the land for the pathway and entrances is church property.

Project #4: Veterans' Area

This small area located at the northwest corner of the burying ground currently contains 41 burial sites, laid out in a grid around a flagpole. Access is via a 10' wide asphalt paved roadway leading from the east gate.



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The northernmost portion of this area, approximately 4,800 SF, has not been developed. Project #4 involves an expansion of this area to include more as many as 100 additional burial sites, as well as an upgrade to the west cemetery edge through the removal and replacement of the chain link fence. The small round concrete plot markers along this edge will also be unearthed and reset. Narrowing of the existing asphalt roadway to path width (5' – 6') will take place as part of this project. (Alternatively, the roadway could remain, but should be narrowed to 8'). The area remaining could be used by the town for in-ground cremation burials along one or both sides of the former roadway. *Note that unmarked graves may exist in this area. To make this determination, the town should undertake subsurface testing, prior to implementing the project. A columbarium structure may also be considered for this area however, the project, as defined, has not included this.*

Project #5: Tomb Stabilization

As discussed under the structural assessment, the condition of the five tombs supporting the north slope of the burying ground varies. Stabilization work will involve crack filling and joint repointing, waterproofing, and restoring one door. Because these structures abut one another, work on them will be most cost-effective if undertaken as one project, rather than five separate efforts.

Project #6: Gravestone Conservation

As detailed in the *Gravestone and Monument Condition Assessment*, approximately 660 +/- stones (foot and head) and six tomb markers in the Old Burying Ground will require conservation, and each of these objects is listed as a high priority for treatment (conservation is an urgent need). The total cost of treatment is estimated in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. The most logical approach to undertaking this effort in a minimum of ten phases, working geographically within the burying ground, as follows:

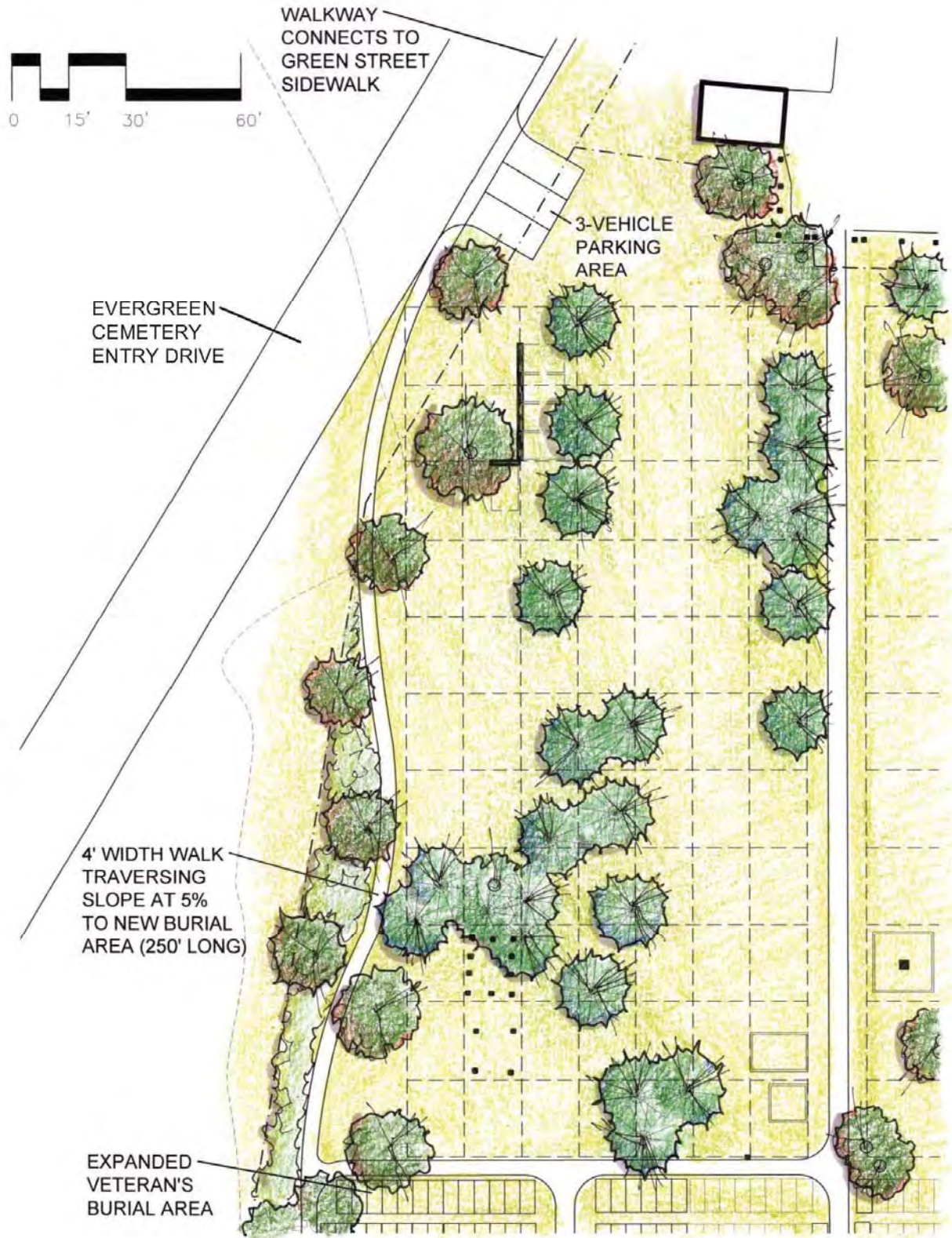
- Southeast (A-17 through E-24): 42 stones/6 box tomb markers
- Midwest #1 (F-17 through G-24): 68 stones
- Midwest #2 (H-17 through I-24): 48 stones
- Southwest (J-17 through K-24): 58 stones
- Center east (A-8 through C-16): 73 stones
- Center middle #1 (D-8 through E-16): 70 stones
- Center middle #2 (F-8 through H-17): 74 stones
- Center west (I-8 through K-16): 72 stones
- Northeast (A-1 through E-7): 52 stones
- Northwest (F-1 through K-7): 89 stones

Note that the *Gravestone and Monument Condition Assessment* will need updating after approximately five years, or if significant damage occurs in the burying ground beforehand.

Project #7: North Entrance

The town does not maintain a parking for visitors to the burying ground separate from on-street parking along Green and Main Streets. To remedy this lack of parking, the town would create a new entrance and parking area along the burying ground's north slope, to be accessed via the Evergreen Cemetery entry drive (see graphic on next page). The parking area would contain up to three spaces, and from these a gently-graded, 4' wide walkway would traverse the north slope. Because of the steep grade in this area, the walk would need to extend approximately 250' in order to adhere to ADA regulations. The walk would connect to the new pathway created in the Veterans' Area (see Project #4). Shade trees and slope-stabilizing woody plants would edge the new walk.

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Project #7 involves creating a new entrance to the Burying Ground utilizing the north slope. Access would be via the Evergreen Cemetery entry drive, and entry into the burying ground would be via a gently curving and loping walk leading from a parking area to the expanded veterans' burial area.

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Project #8: Family Plots

Granite copings rim the edges of five family plots, and granite posts mark the outlines of two others. Project #8 involves restoring the plot edges and straightening the granite posts. Restoration will include removing the stones, lifting lichens from the surfaces of the stones, cleaning the granite, and reinstalling the stones on 12" of compacted gravel bases. Pinning at the corners (with stainless steel) is optional, and mortar should not be applied unless historical evidence of a joint adhesive is present. Granite posts will be removed, cleaned of lichens and dirt, and reset on 12" of compacted gravel base.

Project #9: Sign Program

Currently, the only sign identifying the Old Burying Ground is the name molded into the east gate frame, and residents and visitors have difficulty locating the property because of this. Project #9 involves hiring an environmental graphics designer to develop a program for signs associated with the cemetery and its history. This program should include:

- A *welcome sign*, located at the entrance(s) to the burying ground, identifying the site by name, stating its historical importance to the town, and listing rules and regulations for visitation.
- *Interpretive sign(s)*, located along the loop path, highlighting some of the prominent individuals interred within the Old Burying Ground

Preservation Budgets

Project #1: Tree Assessment, Pruning and Removal:
\$38,000 - \$45,000

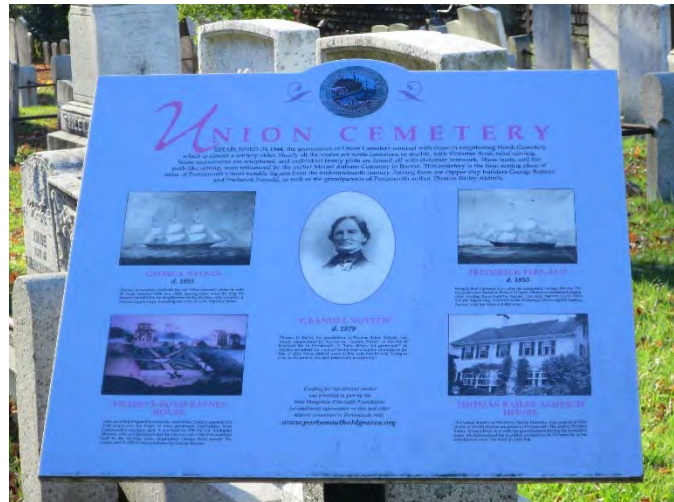
The budget for Project #1 includes the cost to hire a Massachusetts-Certified Arborist to assess and make specific recommendations for each tree, removal of up to 19 trees identified in the plan as dead or in an advanced state of decline, and the pruning of lower limbs (under 15' high) on trees to remain.

Project #2: East Entrance: \$15,000 - \$20,000

The budget for Project #2 includes the cost of removing the existing gate and fence panels and restoring them at a foundry. Restoration will include stripping the members of rust and corrosive material and resurfacing with a zinc rich primer and paint. After being returned to the site the fence and gate will be reinstalled on cleaned and re-set granite posts.

Project #3: South Entrances and Burying Ground Path: \$80,000 – \$120,000

The budget for Project #3 includes restoration of the stone walls and cast iron fencing, design and construction of two entrances (including paving and planting) and construction of a 225' (+/-), 4' width foot path looping around the north side of the church. Archaeological investigation may be required in order for path construction to be approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission. This project may be approached in three phases, (1) wall restoration, (2) fence and gate restoration, (4) entryway and pathway design and construction.



Welcome signs can identify the burying ground, but also provide interpretive information (such as the sign at Union Cemetery in Portsmouth, New Hampshire). Kingston may want to consider two signs for the burying ground, one to welcome and a second to inform.

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Project #4: Veterans' Area: \$22,000 - \$25,000

The budget for Project #4 includes tree and understory clearing (approximately 4,800 SF), removal of the asphalt roadway, removal of the chain link fence, removal and resetting of the flagpole, layout of new gravesites, resetting of concrete markers, and screen plantings along the west property line.

Project #5: Tombs: \$50,000 - \$75,000 per structure

The budget for Project #5 includes the cost of hiring a structural engineer to provide restoration details and written specifications for stabilizing the five tombs, and implementation of the specifications.

Project #6: Gravestone Conservation: \$450,000 - \$500,000

Costs associated with treatment of the gravestones and box tomb markers include hiring an experienced stone conservator to restore the stones per the recommendations of the *Gravestone and Monument Condition Assessment Report* (Appendix C). This includes photographing each stone prior to and after treatment and making a detailed written record of the treatment method performed, as well as physical treatment of each stone. This project should be undertaken in a minimum of ten phases, as follow (phases are suggested):

- Southeast (A-17 through E-24): 42 stones/6 box tomb markers: \$58,350.00
- Midwest #1 (F-17 through G-24): 68 stones: \$45,900.00
- Midwest #2 (H-17 through I-24): 48 stones: \$32,400.00
- Southwest (J-17 through K-24): 58 stones: \$39,150.00
- Center east (A-8 through C-16): 73 stones: \$49,275.00
- Center middle #1 (D-8 through E-16): 70 stones: \$47,250.00
- Center middle #2 (F-8 through H-17): 74 stones: \$49,950.00
- Center west (I-8 through K-16): 72 stones: \$48,600.00
- Northeast (A-1 through E-7): 52 stones: \$35,100.00
- Northwest (F-1 through K-7): 89 stones: \$60,075.00

Note that conservation work, if professionally handled, is time-consuming and can only be undertaken in warm, dry weather. Projects involving more than one phase may need to extend over two seasons.

Project 7: North Entrance: \$55,000- \$60,000

The budget for Project #7 includes legal fees, survey, and design fees, as well as labor and materials to construct a three-space parking area, 4' width concrete walk, and plantings along the burying ground's north slope, to create an alternative entrance. This work will be contingent upon the approval of the Evergreen Cemetery for use of Evergreen's entry drive and a small piece of land between the drive and burying ground boundary.

Project #8: Family Plots: \$10,000 - \$15,000

The budget for Project #8 includes labor and materials required to remove, clean and reset granite copings of five family plots and the granite posts surrounding two family plots on 12" compacted gravel bases.

Project #9: Sign Program: \$5,000 - \$7,500

The budget for Project #9 includes the cost of hiring an environmental graphics designer to develop a program for placing signs within the Old Burying Ground, including sizes, materials, content, and locations, as well as fabrication and installation specifications.

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MANAGEMENT

The final section of the Preservation Master Plan will help the Town of Kingston and Kingston Historical Commission care for the Old Burying Ground landscape. It includes strategies for care of the plants (trees and ground cover) and structures and provides a maintenance schedule. It also suggests options for a longer-term management structure. By following this guide, the town, town crews, and historical commission will help ensure the burying ground's health and make the resource more accessible and understandable to Kingston residents and visitors.

Management Structure

Management of the Old Burying Ground is currently responsibility of the Kingston Department of Public Works (mowing) with stewardship provided by the Kingston Historical Commission. Neither entity has the capacity to take on the tasks associated with implementing this Preservation Management Plan, raise money for implementation or oversee ongoing care. Establishment of a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization such as a *Friends of the Kingston Old Burying Ground* or *Kingston Old Burying Ground Preservation Trust* would shift these responsibilities away from town entities and onto an organization devoted solely to the burying ground. In addition to fundraising, such an organization could oversee interpretive efforts, host programming, and engage in record-keeping. Such organizations have been formed at Mount Auburn Cemetery (Cambridge) and Vine Lake Cemetery (Medfield), and each could provide Kingston with a model to follow.

Management Log

Before the town begins caring for the landscape, the cemetery department should set up a "management log," or ongoing written record of inspections, repairs, and introductions of new features, listed by date. The log should include methods and materials employed, as well as names and contact information for any specialists employed in the burying ground's care. The log should be stored, in both electronic and manual format, in a secure location within the Town of Kingston's Department of Public Works office.

Plants

Existing Plants: Trees

The *Recommendations* section of this plan specifies that the commission hire an arborist to perform a detailed assessment of the trees at the Old Burying Ground. In the meantime, however, the town can adhere to the following measures to stabilize them.

- Test the burying ground's soil for quality in relationship to the mature tree population. The test will detect any soil deficiencies, and determine a remedy for correcting them.
- Provide and install cables as required. These will help stabilize any weakly-joined tree limbs.
- Treat trees with a systemic insecticide to minimize stress caused by leaf-feeding pests.
- Prune trees, removing all dead wood greater than 1/2" in diameter.
- Create rings of mulch around the base of each tree, as wide as possible and up to the diameter of the tree crown, taking care not to obscure gravestones.

- Where soil has built up at the base of trees, remove enough to expose the root collar.
- Continue to remove any dead trees or tree limbs.

Existing Plants: Shrub and Perennial Gravesite Plantings

Shrubs and perennials in the burying ground largely lie alongside individual gravesites, providing families an opportunity for individual expression and personal commemoration. Unfortunately, gravesite plantings, introduced into cemetery landscapes in the 20th century, are inconsistent with the burying ground's predominantly 18th and 19th century design. Furthermore, they present long-term maintenance problems. They quickly become overgrown, obscuring grave markers and complicating lawn mowing. For the most part, families do not maintain shrub plantings, leaving the arduous pruning, shaping, and feeding tasks to town maintenance crews.

Existing Plants: Ground Covers

The burying ground contains several perennial ground covers, mixed in with turf, and these spread an array textures and hues throughout the landscape. The town should make an effort to retain and encourage the growth of these, as they minimize the need for mowing, cutting down on maintenance tasks. Each should be allowed to bloom, wither, and cast their seeds before they are mown, allowing them to multiply. Weed killers and other such herbicides should not be used where these plants are growing (some species may be classified as "weeds").

Existing Plants: Turf

The following fertilizing and mowing guidelines will help maintain the turf areas, promoting a lush, green appearance and healthier, longer living plants.

1. Fertilize sparingly, as too much fertilizer can cause grass to grow too rapidly, requiring more mowing and making the plants more susceptible to disease. Not enough fertilizer can result in weaker plants that are more susceptible to disease or stress brought on by drought.
2. Apply fertilizer three times per year – around Memorial Day and Labor Day, and finally, around Halloween.
3. Do NOT fertilize in mid-summer. At this time of year, roots have become dormant. Fertilizer will cause the leaves to grow, making the plants less tolerant of drought, heat and disease.
4. Follow these fertilizing instructions:
 - *Memorial Day* – apply 1 pound of Nitrogen per 1,000 sf (with 50% of Nitrogen slow-release). Use an N:P:K Ratio of 14-14-14.
 - *Labor Day* - apply 2 pounds of Nitrogen per 1,000 sf (with 50% of Nitrogen slow-release). Use an N:P:K Ratio of 14-14-14.
 - *Halloween* - apply 1 pound of Nitrogen per 1,000 sf (with 75% of Nitrogen slow-release). Use an N:P:K Ratio of 28-3-9.
5. When mowing, remove no more than one-third of the height of the turf at one time, always leaving twice as much leaf height as is cut.
6. The best level for mown grass is 2 ½ inches, with 2 to 3 ½ inches the range.

7. It is best to mow lawns on an as-needed basis, not on a regular schedule, such as once per week.
8. When mowing around monuments and markers, crews should avoid contact between the equipment and stones, and keep mowers 12" away from the stones. Slashes near the base of stones are one of the most common causes of breakage. Weed-whackers should be used sparingly, and preferably not at all.

New Plants: Trees

As noted in the *Landscape Assessment* section of this plan, the burying ground contains a large percentage of two genii of trees, *Picea* and *Thuja* (spruce and cedar). When introducing new plants to the landscape, the commission should select species from a palette of plants that (1) are well-suited to Kingston's climate, and (2) reflect the 18th century character of the burying ground. Whenever possible, the town should choose plants native to New England. A list of such plants and recommended planting methods follow (*indicates species native to New England).

Evergreen Trees

<i>Pinus banksiana</i> *	Jack Pine
<i>Pinus rigida</i> *	Pitch Pine

Shade Trees

<i>Acer rubrum</i> *	Red Maple
<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i> *	Serviceberry
<i>Fagus americana</i> *	American Beech
<i>Koelreuteria paniculate</i> *	Golden Rain Tree
<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> *	Sweetgum
<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i> *	Tulip Tree
<i>Quercus alba</i> *	White Oak
<i>Quercus robur</i>	English Oak
<i>Quercus velutina</i>	Black Oak
<i>Sophora japonica</i>	Scholar Tree

New Plants: Ground Covers

As previously mentioned, ground covers add beauty to the burying ground landscape and minimize the need for mowing. In shady areas, the town should select shade-tolerant species, indicated by asterisks, below.

<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Bear Berry
<i>Asarum canadense</i> *	Wild Ginger
<i>Cornus canadensis</i> *	Bunchberry
<i>Erythronium albidum</i> *	White Trout Lily
<i>Gallium odoratum</i>	Sweet Woodruff
<i>Housatonia caerulea</i>	Bluets
<i>Phlox stolonifera</i> *	Creeping Phlox
<i>Phlox subulata</i>	Moss Pink
<i>Potentilla tabernaemontani</i>	Spring Cinquefoil
<i>Sedum</i>	Stonecrops
<i>sp. reflexum, sp. cauticola,</i>	
<i>sp. anglicum, sp. brevifolium</i>	
<i>Thymus serpyllum</i>	Creeping Thyme

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Viola Canadensis *
Waldsteinia ternata

Canadian Violet
Barren Strawberry

*Native ground covers.

New Plants: Turf

In areas where ground covers are inappropriate or not preferable, the town should apply seed and cultivate turf. Where necessary and appropriate, aerate and top-dress any compacted areas, prior to applying seed. The following measures will help insure long-lived, healthy turf areas:

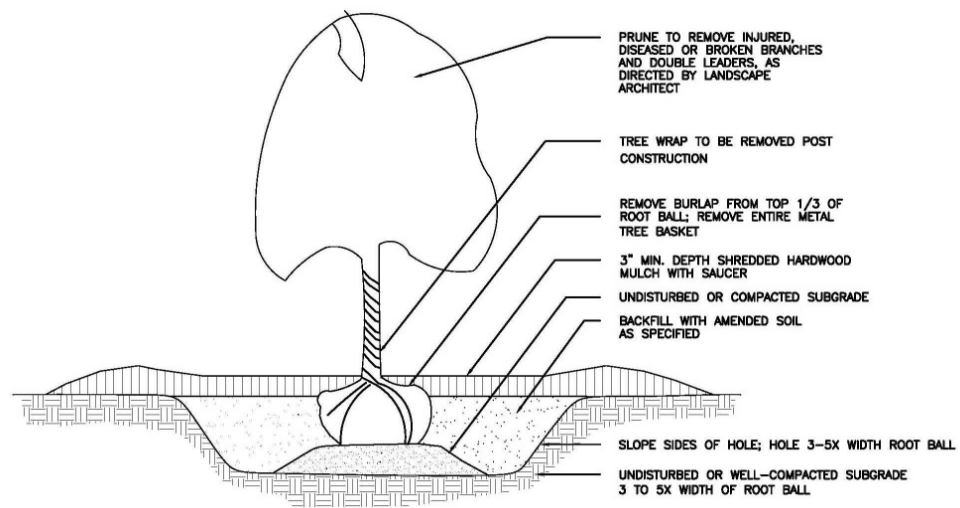
1. A seed mixture, consisting of Kentucky bluegrasses, fine fescues and perennial ryegrass is best, as it minimizes the amount of mowing (each grows at a different rate) and provides a consistent green appearance. "No-mow" mixes are also now available, which require as few as two mowings per year. Using a mix will avoid the problems arising from mono-cultural plantings. A local seed market will offer mixes appropriate for the southeastern Massachusetts area.
2. Once applied, seed should be covered with straw mulch. Hay should be avoided as it encourages weed growth.
3. The seeded area should be watered as frequently as possible to encourage germination (approximately one inch of rainwater per week).
4. Do not use herbicides to control weeds when the turf is becoming established.
5. Once the turf is established, remove the straw mulch and follow the instructions listed above for ongoing management.

Planting Methods

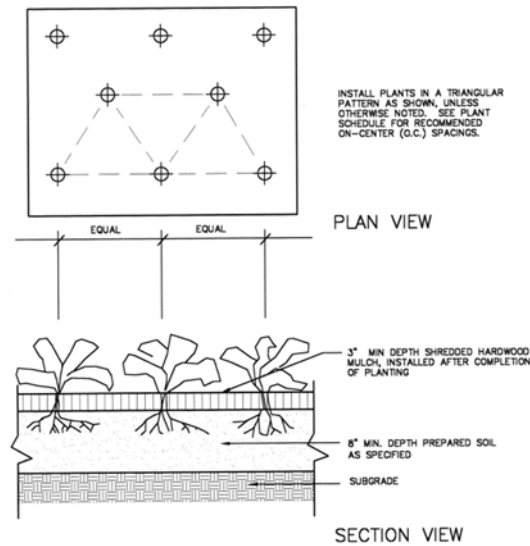
When introducing new plants to the burying ground, the town should adhere to industry standards for planting of trees, herbaceous perennials and ground covers. At a minimum, the town should adhere to the recommendations included in the following planting details.

Tree planting detail.

Note that the same general planting guidelines may be used for evergreen trees. New trees with a caliper greater than 3" to 3.5" are not recommended, as they require many years to acclimate to new settings, and often do not survive. Source: Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC.



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Ground cover planting detail. These low-growing species are recommended for each of the cemeteries, to be used in lieu of turf, for ease in maintenance and for the color and texture they provide in the landscape. Source: Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC.

Structures

As discussed in the *Landscape Assessment* section of this plan, the burying ground contains tombs, parged stone walls, and multiple stone enclosures around family plots. The *Recommendations* section suggests approaches for restoring these structures. Regardless of the structures' age, however, the town should implement the following management methods for delaying and/or inhibiting deterioration:

- Clear volunteer tree, shrub, and vine growth away from structures, and remove buildup of dead leaves. Allowing these to grow in and around structures not only contributes to their decay, it creates an overall unkempt appearance, making the structures appear neglected and/or abandoned.
- Inspect structures yearly for deterioration, such as leaning, splintering and/or cracking. If deterioration is detected, make repairs as soon as possible, as deferred maintenance will add significantly to the long-term cost of upkeep.

Gravestones

The *Recommendations* section of this plan includes conservation of gravestones and monuments in need of repair. This work must be carried out by trained professionals only. Under no circumstances should untrained individuals attempt to repair stones, as improper treatment of stones can lead to further deterioration. Conservation professionals will employ treatments that help stabilize the stones for many, years, however, because the stones lie exposed to weather and are vulnerable to vandalism, further deterioration is always possible. Should further damage occur, the commission should consult a stone conservation specialist, before undertaking any type of repair.

Vandalism & Security

Most of the damage to features within the burying ground has been caused by aging and limited maintenance. By implementing the Preservation Master Plan, in part or full, the town will help safeguard the property's condition over the long term. Many of the recommendations will result in greater access to and use of the burying ground by more visitors. A greater number of "eyes" on the burying ground will result in fewer security problems. Measures to limit vandalism and increase security that have been included in this plan are as follows:

- Removing dead or diseased trees, gradually thinning and reducing the tree population, and limbing up trees identified to remain;
- Conserving damaged, cracked, broken and severely leaning gravestones;
- Creating formal entrances and entry paths at the south and/or north edges;
- Place interpretive signs; and
- Opening up the remaining unused land for additional burials (veterans' area).

Management Resources

Culina, William, Native Trees, Shrubs & Vines. Framingham, MA: The New England Wildflower Society, 2002.

Dirr, Michael A., Dirr's Hardy Trees and Shrubs, An Illustrated Encyclopedia. Portland, OR: Timber Press, 1997.

Favretti, Rudy J. and Joy Putman Favretti, Landscapes and Gardens for Historic Buildings, Second Edition. Nashville: The American Association for State and Local History, 1991.

Mack, Robert C., AIA and Anne E. Grimmer, Historic Preservation Brief Number 1, Assessing Cleaning and Water Repellant Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings, US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 2000.

Mack, Robert C., AIA and John P. Speweik, Historic Preservation Brief Number 2, Repointing of Mortar Joints in Historic Masonry Buildings, US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1998.

Strangstad, Lynette, A Gravestone Preservation Primer. Nashville, TN: The American Association for State and Local History, 1988.

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Management Schedule

January - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If removing snow eliminate the use of salt.
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspect the gravestones and monuments for damage that may have occurred over the winter. Consult a specialist about repairing any major damage. ▪ Remove leaves from inside burying ground walls and fences ▪ Inspect paths for damage that may have occurred over the winter. Patch accordingly.
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Inspect trees for damage that may have occurred over the winter and note any needs for pruning and removals. ▪ Begin mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. ▪ Around Memorial Day, fertilize turf areas (14-14-14). ▪ Plant new trees and groundcovers, and seed grassy areas, as required.
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct pruning and removals of trees. ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. ▪ Continue to plant new trees and groundcovers, and grassy areas, as required.
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. Suspend mowing during hot, dry periods.
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. Suspend mowing during hot, dry periods. ▪ Around Labor Day, fertilize turf areas (14-14-14).
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue mowing turf on an as-needed basis to a height no less than 2-1/2 inches. ▪ Resume planting of new trees and groundcovers, and lawns, as required ▪ Inspect gravestones and monuments for damage that may have occurred over the summer. Consult a specialist about repairing any major damage.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Around Halloween, fertilize turf areas (28-3-9).
November - December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If removing snow eliminate the use of salt.

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