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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture, LLC, Monument Conservation Collaborative, LLC, and CME Associates, Inc. wish to thank the following individuals for their generous assistance in the preparation of this plan.

Gregory Howe  
Richard Olson  
Jay Hall  
Lynne Martin  
Polly Burnell  
Michelle Jarusiewicz  
Sharon Lynn  
Tony Lemme  
Brian Carlson  
Cheryl Napsha  
JoAnn DiOrio

## INTRODUCTION

The Winthrop Street Cemetery, established in the early 1700s, is the oldest extant place of interment in Provincetown. Its first known burial occurred in 1723, just one year before the establishment of the township of Provincetown. For over 75 years, the 2.75 acre parcel, located on a triangle at the intersection of Winthrop and Court Streets, served as the only burial place in Provincetown. Despite the addition of a second cemetery in 1800, Cemetery Number 2, burial continued at Winthrop Street, with the bulk of interments taking place in the early-mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. By the late 1800s however, burials slowed, with just eleven interments after 1900. The last recorded burial took place in 1968.



*A view across the Cemetery landscape, taken from the northwestern end shows both the open, grassy character of the landscape, as well as the forested one.*

The Town of Provincetown has always assumed responsibility for the Cemetery's care, and over its near 300 year life, crews have made slight adjustments in the landscape. Historic photographs suggest that throughout most of its history, the landscape remained fairly open, with some pitch pine canopy, but with many long views. However by the mid 1900s, the Town had begun to neglect the site, and reforestation commenced. In the early 1980s, efforts to restore the landscape lead to the Town erecting a tall chain link around the entire property, and securing it with a locked gate. Within twenty years the Cemetery had become severely overgrown, with much of the landscape impassable, and many of the historic gravestones obscured.

The Town initiated a major effort to revive the Winthrop Street Cemetery in early 2000, with the completion of a master plan. The plan called for the construction of two new entrances (along the Winthrop Street side, and at the northwestern end or "apex"); a new granite post and steel rail perimeter fence; and a program for clearing overgrown vegetation throughout. What the plan lacked, however, was a detailed gravestone and monument inventory and assessment, and a more intense study of dune stabilization and vegetation management. In 2011, the Provincetown Cemetery Commission applied to the Provincetown Community Preservation Act Fund for support to complete a *Master Conservation Plan*. The result is the foregoing document.

### **Project Goal**

The goal of the *Winthrop Street Cemetery Master Conservation Plan*, as defined by the Town-appointed committee to oversee the project, was to compile a complete inventory and assessment of the Cemetery's natural and built features (including the dune and gravestones), and make specific recommendations for preserving and managing these features over the long term.



Many of the Cemetery's 537 head and footstones lie under trees and shrubs, making them difficult to locate, even more difficult to read.

### Program of Improvements

The committee identified the following program of improvements to be included in the Master Conservation Plan:

- *Documentation and treatment of gravestones.* The committee wanted to see all gravestones (both head and foot stones) identified, documented, photographed and mapped, and their condition assessed.
- *Stabilization of the dunes.* The committee, along with the Provincetown Conservation Commission, was particularly concerned about the long-term health of the dunes, and wanted specific recommendations about achieving this.
- *Accessibility.* The committee wanted to see at least part of the Cemetery become navigable for persons with disabilities, by possibly providing more interpretive information at the existing entrances, which were established as accessible means of egress in 2001-2002.

## HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT of the WINTHROP STREET CEMETERY

### Beginnings – Before 1723

The first known Europeans to land in Provincetown arrived in 1620. The passengers aboard the Mayflower remained moored in Provincetown Harbor for 67 days, and during that time, several men set out to explore the land. Finding it unsuitable for farming, the entire group set out for Plymouth. However, during their stay in the harbor, four of the passengers died. Their place of interment is unknown.

Records of birth show that the Town was likely inhabited before 1700, although no known documentation of the settlement exists. Jennings, in Provincetown, or Odds and Ends from the Tip End stated that “it is the general opinion that the first permanent settlement was made on, or about the year 1680, but the name of the party that settled is lost in tradition, or at least has been so conflicting that it is impossible to determine the true one.”<sup>1</sup> Historical records established that the precinct of Cape Cod was established in 1714, and that the first meeting house in Provincetown was likely constructed in 1717-1718, at the northwest corner of what became the Winthrop Street Cemetery.<sup>2</sup>

### Establishment – 1720s to 1800

Provincetown’s first established cemetery likely appeared in the 1720s, or possibly with the construction of the first meeting house and the organization of the township.<sup>3</sup> Deyo, in History of Barnstable County, stated that “the proximity of the old burying ground on the northeast side of the plain, corresponding with the prevailing practice of early days of locating the burial place near the church, goes to confirm the tradition.”<sup>4</sup> The first permanently marked burial in the Cemetery, the grave of Desire (Desier) Cowing, bears the death date of 1723.<sup>5</sup> In 1724, the first records of proceedings in

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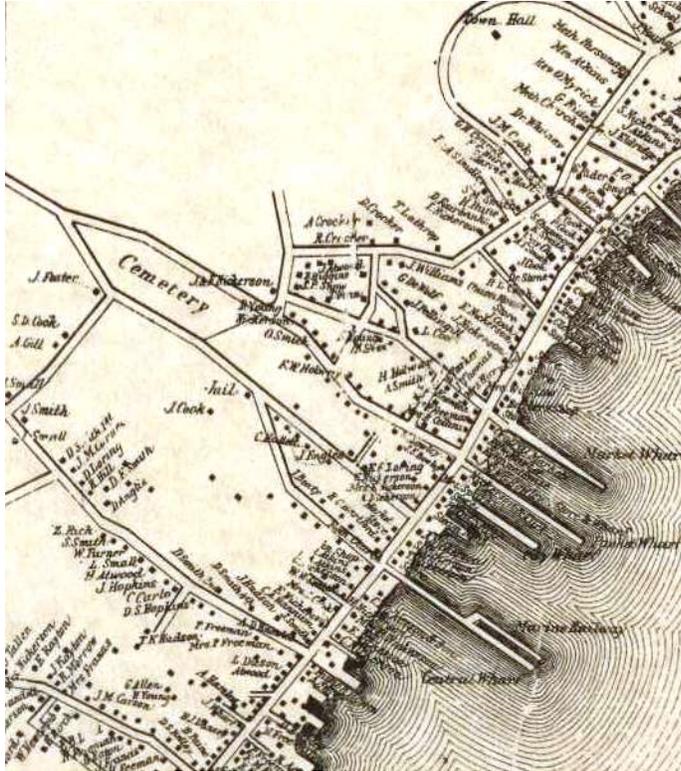
<sup>1</sup> Jennings, Herman A., Provincetown, or Odds and Ends from the Tip End, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> According to Jennings (p. 21), the first place of worship for the inhabitants of Provincetown was built by the government, “situated on ‘Meeting House’ plain, so called, the location not very definitely pointed out, but on or near the extreme north-west end of what is now the “Old Cemetery.” Simeon Deyo, in History of Barnstable County, Massachusetts, 1890, stated that in 1773, the original 1717-1718 meeting house was rebuilt in the same location, presenting a conflict in historical data. It is safe to assume that at least two meeting houses stood at Meeting House Plain, beginning in the early-mid 1700s and until 1773, when the building was demolished and re-built on a higher location to the north and east of the plain and Cemetery.

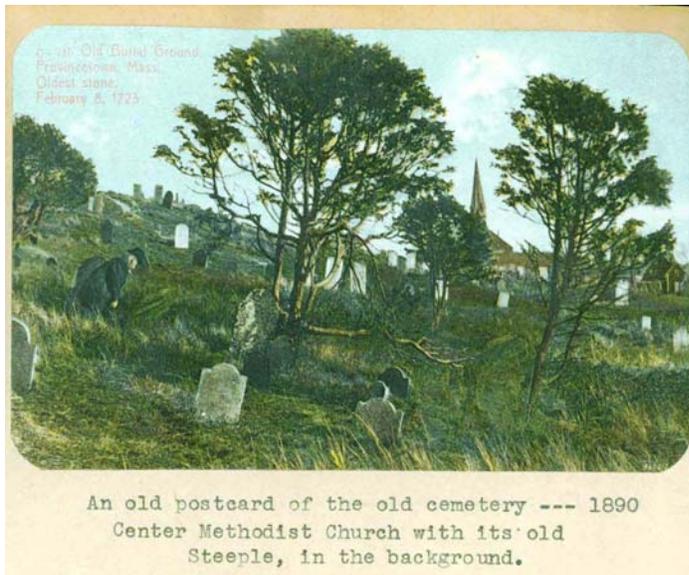
<sup>3</sup> Several authors have published claims that a small cemetery existed in Provincetown prior to 1723. Nancy W. Paine Smith, in The Provincetown Book, stated that, “an older cemetery, with a few stones, and evidently unmarked graves, existed on Franklin Street until 50 years ago (until 1872).” A May 1944 newspaper article (publication unknown) stated “[t]he cemetery in which these Mayflower passengers were buried was destroyed in 1873 in the laying out of Bradford Street. It was situated at the head of Franklin Street, the oldest street in town and names in honor of Benjamin Franklin. Not far from the foot of this street was the pond in which the Pilgrim mothers did their first washing in the New World. At one time the house abutting this early historic site bore a marker attesting this fact, and the house was named “Pilgrim Mothers.”” Despite multiple claims, no known primary source documentation of an earlier cemetery exists.

<sup>4</sup> Deyo, History of Barnstable County, p. 986.

<sup>5</sup> A newspaper article dating to October 15, 1964 (publication unknown) was included in Althea Boxell’s scrapbook. It claimed that while cemetery crews were performing clean up operations, they came upon a grave with a date of 1701. However, the gravestone inventory completed for this project did not locate a grave with this date.



The first known mapping of the Winthrop Street Cemetery appeared on the 1858 Walling map of Provincetown. At the time, Bradford Street had not been created.



The first known illustration of the Winthrop Street Cemetery was a hand-colored postcard dating to 1890.

Provincetown were made, and three years later, the township was established. Official incorporation of the Town took place in 1748. During this near-eighty year period, the Winthrop Street Cemetery, also referred to as the “old yard,” and “Cemetery Number 1,” was the only place of interment, with at least 57 known graves. Most of the early graves lie near the geographic center of the Cemetery, inside the contemporary Winthrop Street entrance.

### Expansion – 1800 - 1890

By 1800, Provincetown had expanded enough to require a larger burial area, and the Town established Cemetery Number 2, to the north of Cemetery Number 1. The effort to create the new, larger cemetery corresponded with the Town’s making several other modern improvements. In 1835, Commercial Street (the first street) was laid out, and Bradford Street followed in 1868. In the 1880s, Provincetown received street lights. The Town continued to care for the old cemetery, maintaining a wood fence with turned posts. During this period, approximately eighty percent of the known burials took place.

### Embellishment – 1890 - 1960

The seventy years between 1890 and 1960 marked a period of great pride, on the part of the Town, in caring for the Cemetery. Efforts undertaken during this time included righting tilted stones; asking that persons allowing cattle or fowl to wander into the Cemetery be reported; making provisions for shipwrecked sailors or strangers by placing small tablets at their graves; asking that people marring stones be reported. In 1912, the commissioners adopted a set of formal cemetery regulations. Between 1911 and 1915, the Ladies’ Research Club became involved, planting trees and, in 1919-

1920 erected a tablet in memory of the passengers that came over on the Mayflower and died in Provincetown Harbor. In 1925, the cemetery commissioners reported accepting a gift of a suitable fence to enclose the Cemetery.<sup>6</sup>

### **Modernization & Decline – 1960 - 2000**

The last four decades of the 1900s represented a period of modernization and decline in the Winthrop Street Cemetery. In the early 1960s, the cemetery commissioners reported that the bank on the south side was continually eroding, and that vandalism in the Cemetery went on year after year. By the mid 1960s, the Town had committed to beautifying the Cemetery, hiring men to cut down brush and unpleasant tree growth, building new gates and an entrance, and replacing some of the fencing, and in 1966, crews poured the concrete wall at the southern edge.



*In 2000, the Cemetery landscape had become so overgrown that many of the graves in the forested sections were obscured and completely inaccessible.*

Despite these efforts, the Cemetery soon became neglected again, with stones vandalized, and vegetation allowed to grow out of control. A remedy came in 1983 when William Whitney, landscape architect, prepared a master plan for the Cemetery. Included in the plan were 200 trees and shrubs; railroad ties to support walkways, and a high chain link fence. While the cemetery commissioners noted, in 1984, that the Cemetery “resemble[d] a park,” the act of fencing and locking the gate lead to further deterioration.<sup>7</sup> By the end of the 1990s, the landscape was largely overgrown, with dense vegetation obscuring many graves.



*The “Meeting House” entrance to the Winthrop Street Cemetery converted a gravel parking area into a pocket park, complete with seating and a monument commemorating the location of Provincetown’s first house of worship.*

### **Rebirth – 2000 to the Present**

Recognizing the historical importance of the Cemetery, the Town applied for and received a Historic Landscape Preservation Grant from the Department of Environmental Management (Department of Conservation and Recreation) for

<sup>6</sup> Provincetown Annual Town Reports, 1911, 1912, 1915, 1919, 1920, 1925.

<sup>7</sup> Provincetown Annual Town Reports, 1983, 1984.

improvements at the Cemetery. In 2001, a preservation plan for the Winthrop Street Cemetery was completed and in the following year, two new entrances and a perimeter fence was erected. Signs were placed at both entrances, providing regulatory information to visitors. In the ten years since the preservation was completed, AmeriCorps crews have, on several occasions, cleared brush and debris from the Cemetery, helping to keep invasive growth away from a majority of gravestones and monuments.

For more historical images of the Winthrop Street Cemetery, refer to the *Historical Chronology*, found in *Appendix A* of this plan.

## LANDSCAPE ASSESSMENT

The following is an assessment of the landscape conditions at the Winthrop Street Cemetery. Its purpose is to document the Cemetery's existing natural, built, and functional features; to analyze their condition; and to outline preliminary recommendations for preservation treatment. Together with the information compiled about the historical development of the Cemetery, the assessment provides a foundation for the *Master Conservation Plan*.

### Context

The Winthrop Street Cemetery lies on a triangular-shaped 2.75-acre parcel of land located in the west end of Provincetown. Court Street rims the northern side, and Winthrop Street extends along the south side. A private residence stands at the eastern edge, and at the western end – the apex of the triangle, is a small, triangular-shaped park. In addition to private residences, commercial and civic buildings lie along Court and Winthrop Streets, including the Provincetown Fire Department (Winthrop Street) and a marine services business (Court Street). Neither Winthrop nor Court Street contain sidewalks, and pedestrians often walk in the roadways, crossing from the large commercial area on Shankpainter Road (to the west) and the downtown area of Provincetown (to the east). Because these streets are narrow, and Winthrop Street is one-way, vehicular traffic circulating around the Cemetery is generally light.

### Edges & Views

In 2002, a granite post and steel rail fence was erected around the entire Cemetery, replacing a 6' high chain link fence and providing a consistency to the property edge. After ten years, the fence remains in very good condition, with just a few chipped spots on the rails in areas where visitors appear to be jumping the fence. Just one granite post located at the northwest corner (Winthrop Street) has begun to lean. This may be the result of (1) a vehicle colliding with the post, or (2) subsurface water collecting around the base of the post.<sup>1</sup> Along the Court Street side, the steep slope appears to have sloughed towards the fence, partially burying the bottom rail. Overhead utility lines extend along the Cemetery edge on Winthrop Street, adding



*The Winthrop Street edge of the Cemetery. One fence post has been dislodged, and the overhead utility lines clutter the Cemetery's southern boundary.*

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<sup>1</sup> During construction of the fence, the landscape architect and contractor observed an unusually high water table in this area of the project site, which may result in subsurface water collecting around the post, freezing and thawing, and causing the post to lean.

visual clutter to the property. Similarly, overgrown suckering trees (Oaks, Birch, Cherry) and invasive vines (Bittersweet and Greenbriar) have infiltrated the Court Street edge, creating a messy, unkempt appearance.

The Town of Provincetown has done a competent job of controlling growth within the Cemetery in the ten years since the fence was erected, and as a result, views into the property from most sides lie unobstructed. The best views are possible from the northwest end/entrance looking southeast across the Cemetery landscape, and from the southeast end looking northwest. Additional pleasing views into the Cemetery can be enjoyed by passersby on Winthrop Street (along the entire edge). Narrower views are possible from the Cemetery's highest points at the southeastern end, including views of the Pilgrim Monument, Provincetown Harbor, Town Hall, and the Unitarian Church (looking east), and views down into and across the Cemetery (looking west).

Less pleasing views correspond with the character of the more poorly-tended edges. As described above, most of the Court Street edge contains unmanaged non-native growth, and the denseness of this growth has obscured gravesites and trapped litter. Views into the Cemetery along much of Court Street are compromised by volunteer vegetation and garbage.



*The “meeting house” entrance to the Cemetery commemorates the location of Provincetown’s first house of worship. It was allegedly located nearby on what was once known as “Meeting House Plain.”*

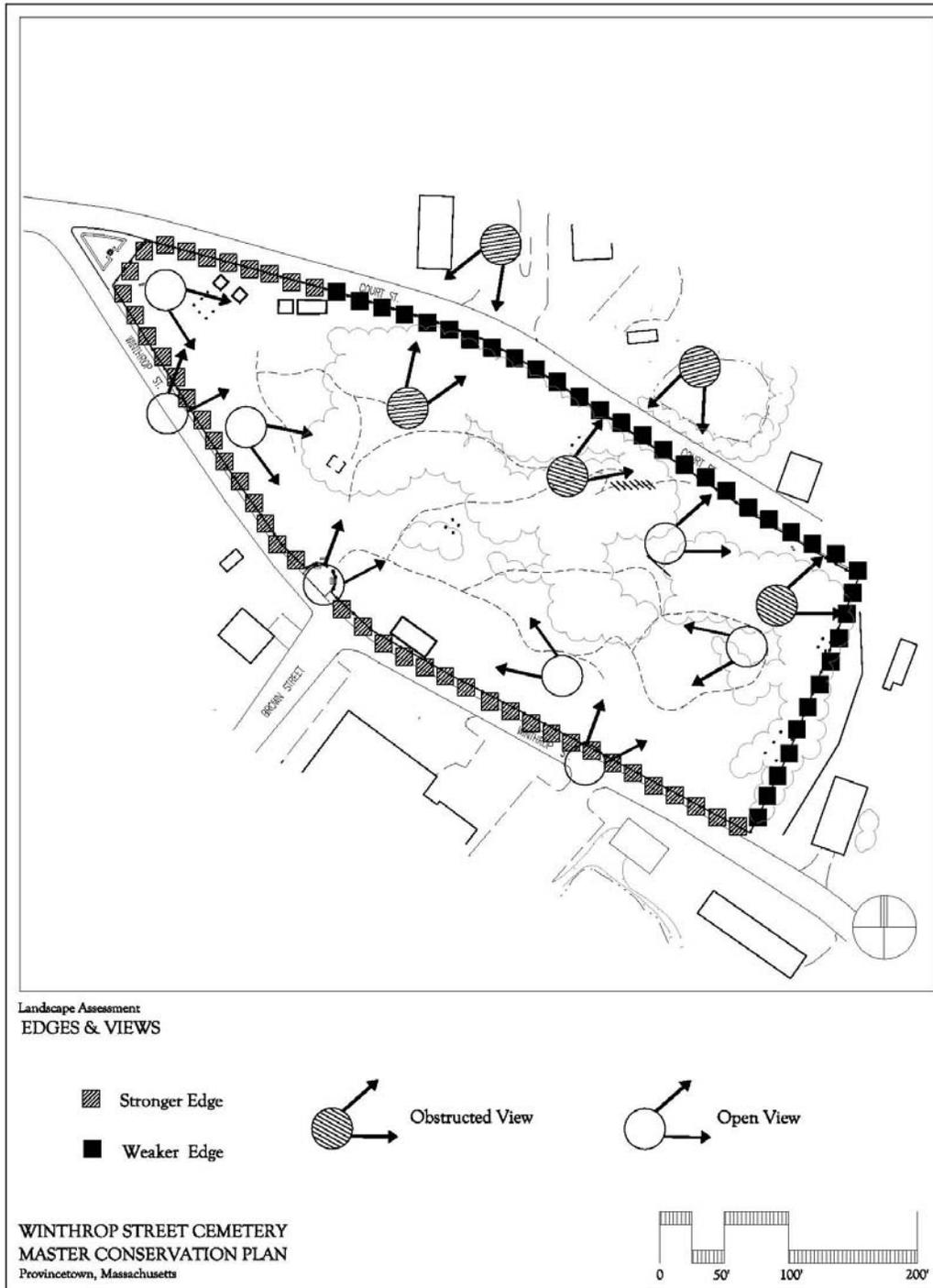
located across from the intersection of Brown Street, contains a paved semi-circular entry “plaza” with a pair of granite benches. The “meeting house” entrance lies at the northwest end where Winthrop and Court Streets merge. A triangular-shaped pocket park, complete with granite benches and a boulder/plaque commemorating the first meeting house, provides visitors a place to pause and rest. Access onto the Cemetery grounds through both entrances is via breaks in the Cemetery fence. The entrances have been well-maintained and continue to provide pronounced and fitting gateways into the historic burial area.

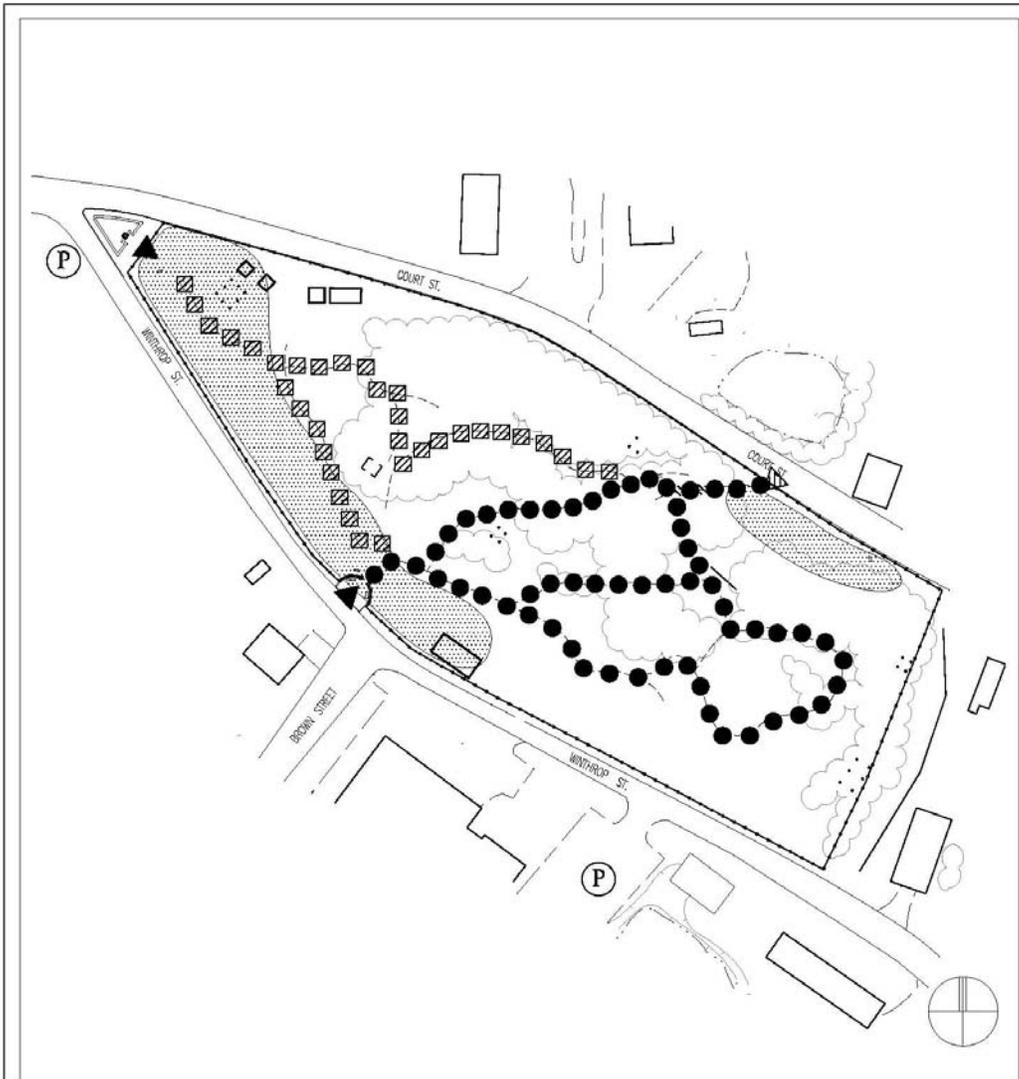
Users of the Cemetery have also created “makeshift” entrances along the Court Street side. These appear near the bottom of the wood timber steps that lead up the north face of the dune, and are

### **Entrances & Circulation**

The number of visitors to the Cemetery at one time by vehicle is limited by the slim number of legal public parking spaces nearby. Most visitors park near the northwest end in an unpaved pull-off area across Winthrop Street from the Cemetery. This area does not contain marked spaces, and lies only partially within the public right-of-way. While parking is prohibited along both Winthrop and Court Streets, a lot located off Winthrop Street to the east of the fire station contains several public parking spaces.

Visitors by foot may enter the Cemetery at one of two entrances, both created in 2002. The Winthrop Street entrance,

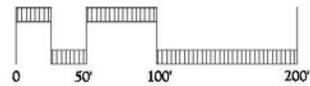




Landscape Assessment  
ENTRANCES & CIRCULATION

- ▶ Established Cemetery Entrance
- ▨ Makeshift Cemetery Entrance
- Major Pedestrian Path
- ▨ Minor Pedestrian Path
- Ⓟ Vehicular Parking Area
- ▨ Accessible Slope (< 5%)

WINTHROP STREET CEMETERY  
MASTER CONSERVATION PLAN  
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distinguished by worn areas on the steel rail fence. This area contains no breaks in the perimeter fence, so entry in this location requires users to straddle the fence.

Once inside the Cemetery, visitors must walk across herbaceous ground cover or sand-covered paths. The landscape has no permanently-constructed pathways. Herbaceous ground cover dominates the southwestern end of the Cemetery, while sand paths lead into the Pitch Pine-covered forested areas. Nearly all of the terrain contains slopes in excess of 5%, making them inaccessible to persons with disabilities. The exception are two areas at the Cemetery periphery, one along Winthrop Street (located between the two entrances), and the other at the base of the dune slope on Court Street.

### Plant Communities

As discussed in detail in *Appendix B, Environmental Assessment*, the Winthrop Street Cemetery contains three principal plant communities. Approximately one-quarter of the acreage is covered with herbaceous (non-woody) plants dominating the gently sloping area between the two entrances. Plants include little bluestem (grass), Pennsylvania sedge and American beach grass, as well as lichens and mosses, and these species cover the area completely (little sand/soil is left exposed). The herbaceous plant community appeared in photographs of the Cemetery from the late 1800s.



*The pitch pine plant community, covering approximately three-eighths of the Cemetery, consists of a pine canopy shading a ground cover of grasses and wildflowers.*

Another three-eighths of the landscape contains shrub cover, located near the southeastern end of the Cemetery. The shrub plant community is characterized by dense thickets of tall and low shrubs mixed with a low woody plant ground cover. Tall shrub species include huckleberry, scrub oak, beach plum, hawthorn, sumac, and winged euonymus. Low shrubs include low bush blueberry, bearberry, and bayberry. Many of the taller species appear to have been cut to stump level and allowed to re-grow in a suckering pattern, resulting in impenetrable masses. By contrast, the lower species, all natives, provide a neat and colorful ground cover that offers excellent habitat for birds and small animals.

Pitch pines dominate the third plant community, covering the final three-eighths of the Cemetery landscape. Throughout much of this community, the pines form a continuous canopy and their needles cover the ground. Other ground covers include little bluestem and wildflowers. Similar to the herbaceous plant community, the pine community appeared in photographs of the Cemetery dating to the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, suggesting that such vegetation has flourished in this location for a significant amount of time.

### Character-Defining Features

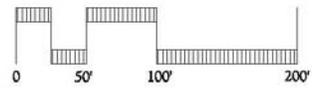
The simplicity of the Winthrop Street Cemetery landscape has been retained throughout its near-300-year history, and several extant features contribute to this character. They include the perimeter granite post and steel rail fencing; two entrances; family plot details (curbing and posts); herbaceous and pitch

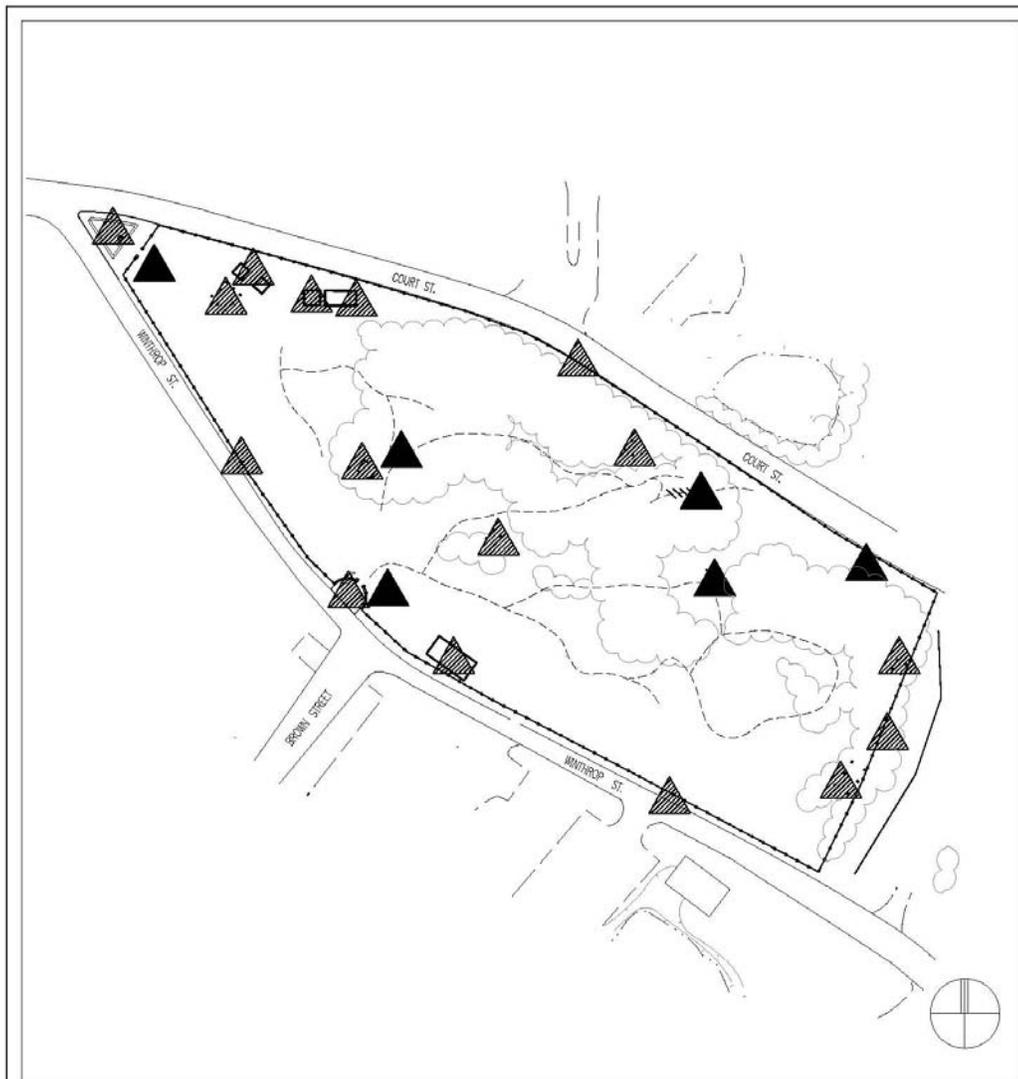


Landscape Assessment  
**PLANT COMMUNITIES**

- |   |                  |   |                  |  |             |
|---|------------------|---|------------------|--|-------------|
|  | Herbaceous Cover |  | Pitch Pine Cover |  | Shrub Cover |
|---|------------------|---|------------------|--|-------------|

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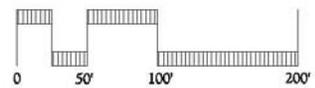


Landscape Assessment  
**CHARACTER-DEFINING FEATURES**

 Supportive Features

 Unsupportive Features

**WINTHROP STREET CEMETERY  
 MASTER CONSERVATION PLAN**  
 Provincetown, Massachusetts



pine plant communities, as well as the over 500 gravestones and monuments commemorating early citizens of Provincetown. Less supportive of the Cemetery's historic character are the wood timber steps and retaining curb (north side of the dune); shrub plant community; makeshift entrances and pathways; and contemporary signs. The wooden fence surrounding the Mayflower memorial, while erected nearly 50 years ago (1963), introduces a folksy, domestically-scaled feature that conflicts with the otherwise rustic and serene landscape.

### Preliminary Recommendations

The following preliminary recommendations for preserving the Cemetery emerge from the above landscape assessment:



*The folksy, domestically-scaled white picket fence surrounding the Mayflower memorial introduces a modern and informal element into the sacred historic landscape.*

- Maintain the existing fencing and make repairs where needed. Noted repairs include re-setting one post (located near the northwest corner) and touching up the steel rails with paint.
- Improve views to and from the Cemetery's highest point by removing and managing growth of tall shrubs and removing the lower limbs (5' and under) of the remaining pitch pines.
- Identify a network of pathways and maintain the routes, keeping them clear of vegetation, and surfacing them with pitch pine straw (needles).

Include in this network, a section or sections of pathway that provide access to persons with disabilities. In areas where pathways are not desirable, implement a landscape restoration program, using temporary fencing to control foot traffic through the restoration areas.

- Place interpretive signs near the entrances that provide information about the Cemetery's history and some of the individuals and families interred within.
- Work to control expansion of the shrub plant community. To accomplish this, remove the tall shrubs and invasive, non-native vines, controlling re-growth with targeted applications of herbicide. Encourage growth of native shrubs and ground covers, including blueberry, bearberry, and bayberry.
- Continue to conserve the Cemetery's gravestones and monuments, identified in the gravestone assessment as requiring treatment. Stabilize the family plot details.
- Remove the Mayflower memorial fencing, once it has deteriorated to a point where it cannot be repaired. Do not replicate the existing fence (leave the monument un-fenced).
- Remove the wood timber steps and curb, and introduce a dune stabilization program in this area.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Preservation Priorities

The following list organizes the preliminary recommendations of the *Landscape Assessment* section of the plan into a series of projects, and places them in priority order. The highest priority projects include urgently-needed treatments, while the lower priority projects include aesthetic enhancements. Medium priority projects fall somewhere in between.

#### Project 1: Master Conservation Plan & Treatment of Priority 1 Gravestones<sup>1</sup>

Project 1 includes the *Winthrop Street Cemetery Master Conservation Plan*, as well as the conservation treatment of sixteen markers identified in the *Gravestone Assessment* as “hazardous” in condition, or priority one. Markers in this category are tilting fifteen degrees or more, with taller and more substantially-sized marker at greater risk. Refer to *Appendix C: Gravestone Assessment* of this plan for a list of the sixteen individual stones.

#### Project 2: Treatment of Priority 2 & 3 Gravestones

Project 2 includes conservation treatment of 93 markers identified in the *Gravestone Assessment* as in unstable condition, or suffering from ongoing deterioration. Stones in unstable condition, classified as priority two, are tilted (less than fifteen degrees), fractured, delaminating, fallen, overgrown, and/or needing new bases. Stones suffering from ongoing deterioration are sunken, soiled, slightly tilted, and/or fragmented. Refer to *Appendix C: Gravestone Assessment* of this plan for a list of the 93 individual stones.

#### Project 3: Dune Restoration

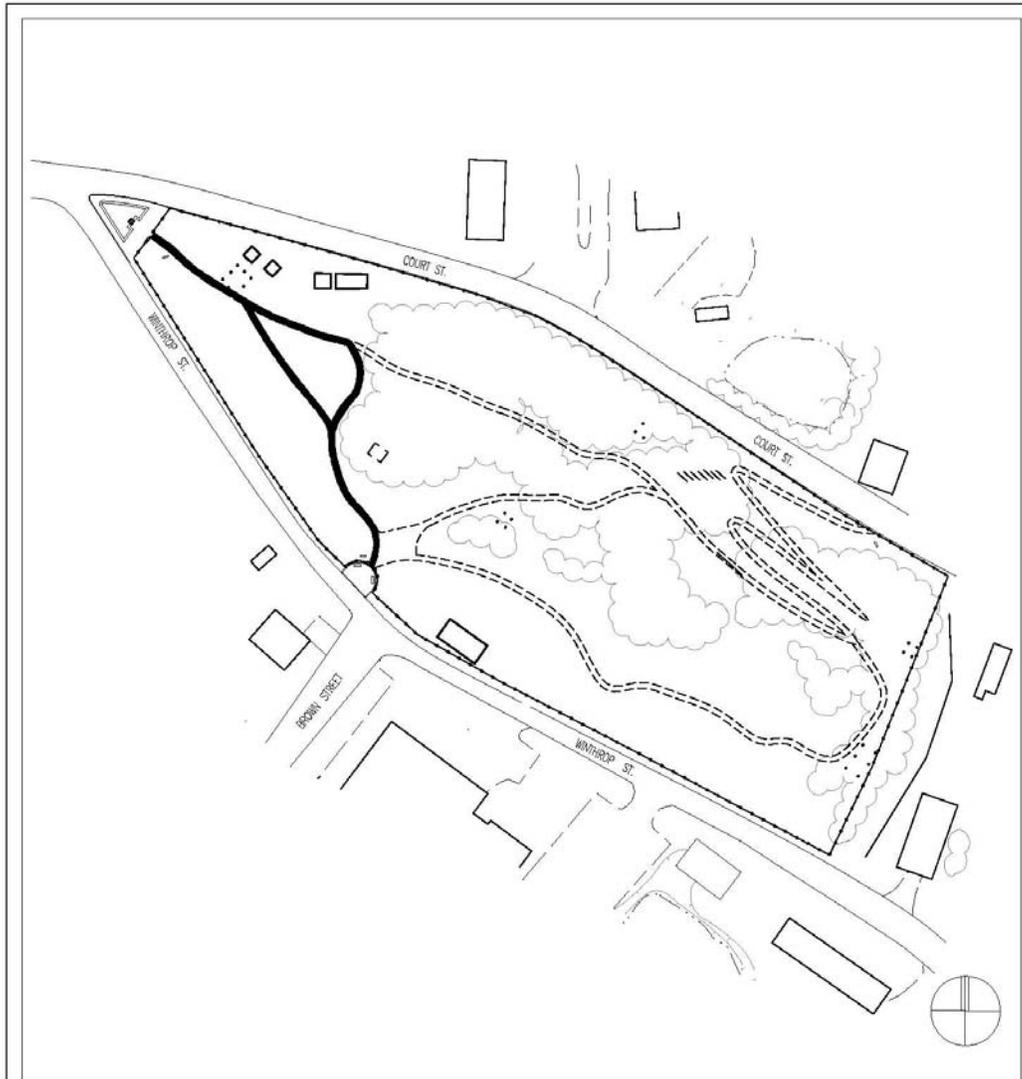
Project 3 involves stabilization of the dune located atop the Cemetery’s highest point. As detailed in *Appendix B: Environmental Assessment*, weak soils dominate the dune, and their stability has been hampered by uncontrolled foot traffic. Restoration will include the following:

- Placing a temporary barrier, such as a snow fence, to prohibit foot traffic;
- Removing the existing wood timber retaining wall and steps;
- Backfilling areas where depressions have formed and re-grading the areas to match adjacent elevations;
- Applying erosion control material, such as wattles and jute matting, to the eroded area; and
- Planting seed to re-establish vegetation. (Refer to the *Management* section of the plan and *Appendix B: Environmental Assessment*, for recommended plant species.)

Once the vegetation has been established, the snow fencing can be removed, while the jute matting will eventually disintegrate and compost into the soil.

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<sup>1</sup> With the compilation of this *Master Conservation Plan* and conservation treatment of 16 hazardous gravestones, Project 1 has been completed.

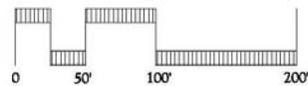


**Recommendations**

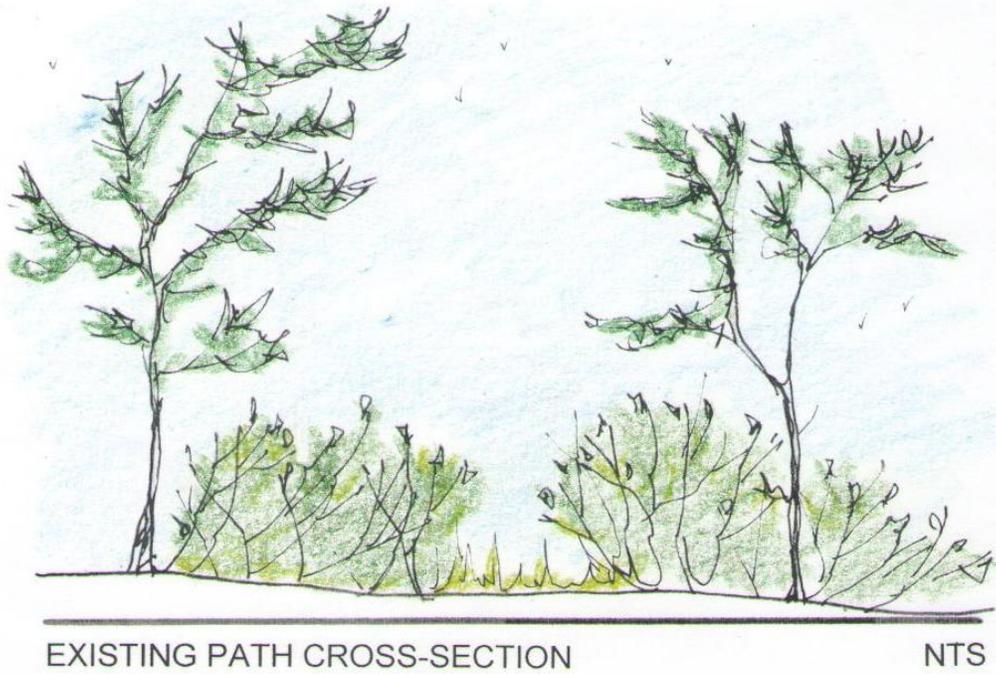
**PROJECT 4: PINE STRAW PATHS**



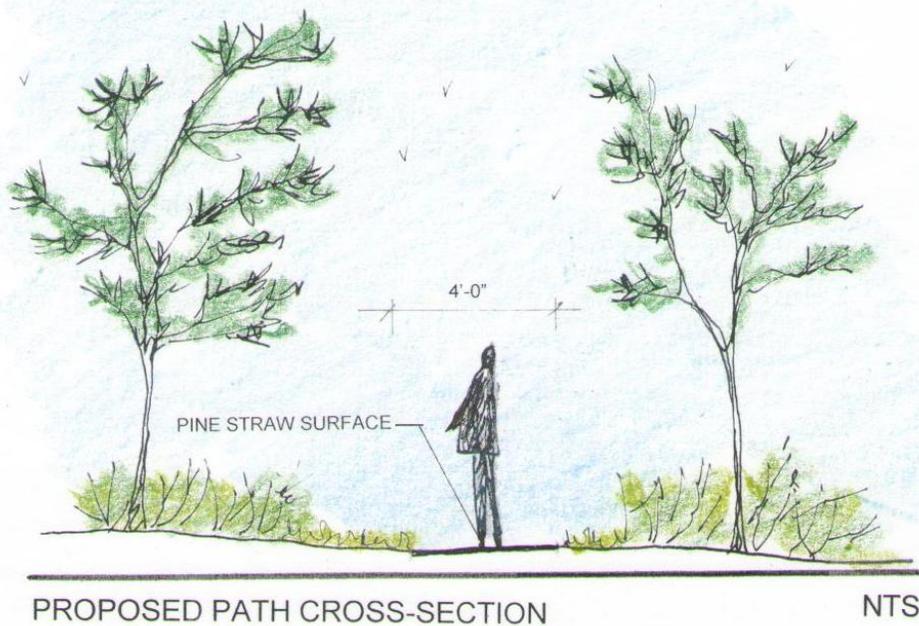
**WINTHROP STREET CEMETERY  
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The pine straw-surfaced pathway system will provide a series of loops leading through a significant portion of the Cemetery. A switch-back-style path leading from Court Street to the top of the dune will allow access to the Cemetery's highest point from this new entrance. An ADA-compliant section will connect the two existing entrances across the flatter section of the Cemetery.



The existing path system consists of informal makeshift openings in the vegetation, and in many places, low shrub growth obstructs the pathway route.



By removing the low shrub growth and clearing a 4'-0" section along the entire length of the pathway, the Town will make a larger part of the Cemetery accessible to visitors. The pathway surface can be covered with minimum 3" depth dressing of pine straw.

#### **Project 4: Cemetery Entrance & Paths**

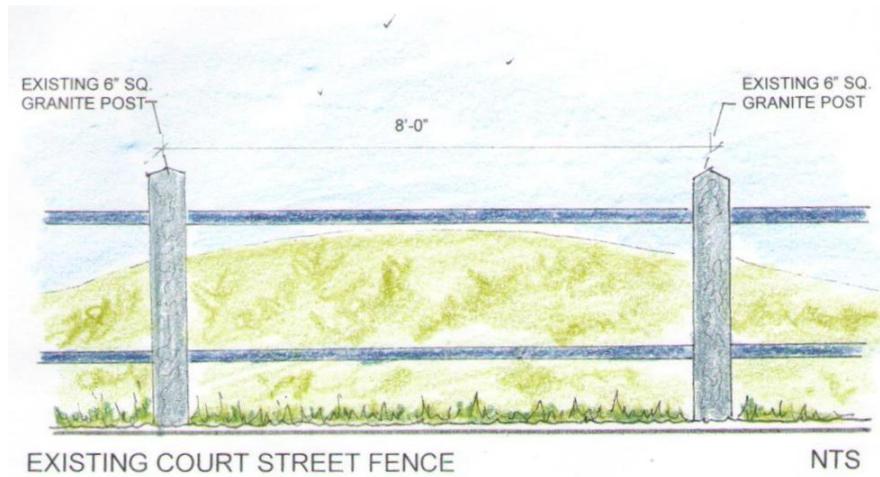
Project 4 establishes an informal system of footpaths;; creates a new entrance to the Cemetery at Court Street; and provides a special ADA-compliant section of path for persons with disabilities. Historic photographs indicate that the Cemetery likely never contained a constructed network of paths, and that visitors navigated across the existing ground covers. In the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century, foot traffic through the Cemetery increased, resulting in a series of makeshift paths leading up and over the dune. The purpose of Project 4 is to formalize some of the existing makeshift footpaths while, at the same time, removing others. The formalized paths will be created by (1) clearing away any low brush that obstructs the paths, and (2) placing a minimum 3” depth layer of pine straw – preferably pitch pine – to create a soft but navigable surface. Cemetery volunteers and/or Town crews will need to periodically replace the pine straw, and regularly maintain a 4’ cleared width for the paths. A proposed route for this system of paths is illustrated elsewhere in this section.



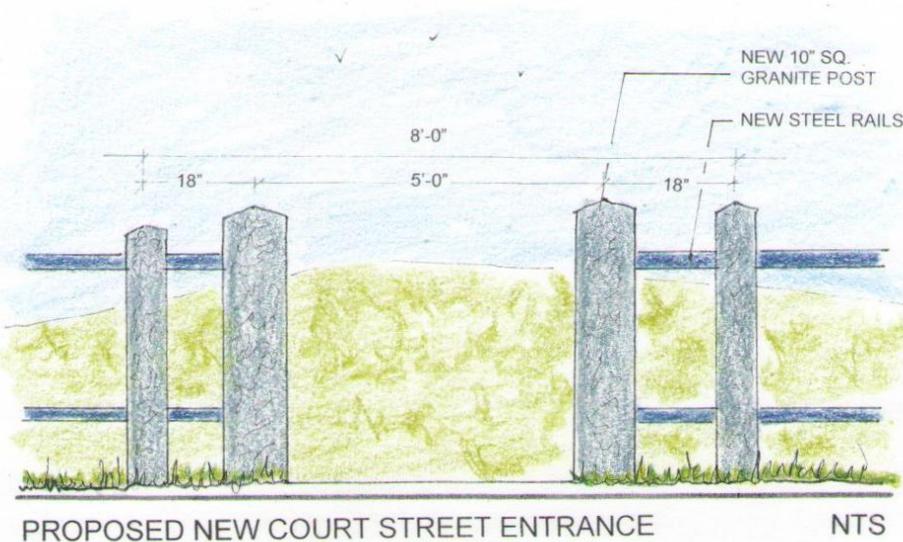
*The Cemetery contains an abundance of straw from the existing pitch pine forest. This material can be collected and re-used as a soft surface for the Cemetery paths.*

Two additional parts of Project 4 are as follow:

- *New Entrance at Court Street.* To create a third entrance at Court Street, one section of the existing granite post and steel rail fence will need to be removed, and 10” square granite posts installed inside the 6” square fence posts. The larger posts should be set approximately 18” inside the smaller posts, creating a 5’ wide entrance. With this option, a footpath will be necessary leading from the entrance into the Cemetery. To navigate the steep slope, the route of this path should lead from the entrance westward and the follow a series of switchbacks (at least two) up the north slope of the dune. This route is illustrated on the footpath plan shown elsewhere in this section.
- *Special Route for Persons with Disabilities.* Because much of the dune-covered area of the Cemetery contains steep, difficult-to-navigate slopes, a separately-designated ADA-compliant route may be established. This will connect the two existing entrances (one at Winthrop Street and the other at the far western end) via a single coarse-sand/gravel route (pine straw surfacing is not recommended for this route, due to the material’s lack of stability). A maximum of two granite benches will be stationed along the route, providing spots for users to pause and rest. Sensitively-designed signs will be placed at the intersections of this path with those leading up the steeper slopes, alerting users to the inaccessible terrain.



The existing Cemetery fence consists of 6" square granite posts set 8'-0" apart (on center) supporting a two-rail system. Round steel tubing, painted matte black, is used for the rails.



A new entrance at Court Street will allow visitors a third access point into the Cemetery. By removing the existing rails from a single fence section, and adding a pair of 10" square granite posts inside the existing 6" posts, the Town can make a simple adjustment to the existing fence system.

### Project 5: Sign Program

The final project, Project 5, involves the development of a series of signs to (1) welcome visitors to the Cemetery; (2) direct them through the Cemetery; and (3) provide interpretive information about the Cemetery's history; the families interred within; and the importance of the Cemetery to the development of Provincetown. The existing signs, installed as part of the 2002 Winthrop Street Cemetery improvements project, would be retained, and new directional and interpretive signs, designed to complement the existing signs' materials, would be placed in carefully-selected locations. Development of the interpretive signs would be a collaborative effort of the Cemetery Commissioners, and Provincetown Historical Commission/Historic District Commission.

### Additional Preservation Efforts

In addition to the five preservation projects outlined above, the Town of Provincetown can implement one or both of the following measures that will help sustain public interest in the Cemetery, and assist with the management of its historic landscape.

- *Friends of the Winthrop Street Cemetery.* By establishing a not-for-profit (501(c)(3)) “friends” organization, the Cemetery will have a private means of raising funds and attracting volunteers. Friends groups are membership-based organizations, and typically organize interpretive programs, sponsor volunteer clean-up days, hold fundraisers, and publish literature about the Cemetery.
- *Adopt-A-Plot or Adopt-A-Grave.* One of the primary activities of the friends group could be the establishment of an “adopt-a-plot” or “adopt a grave” program. Through such an effort, community members can select a specific plot or grave for which they provide ongoing surveillance and care.

### Preservation Costs

The following list assigns a preliminary cost to each of the preservation projects listed above. Note that the cost figures are merely projections, intended as guidelines for the Town of Provincetown in setting fundraising goals. All figures are based on 2012 construction industry and conservation trade rates, and most do not include fees for surveying, design, engineering, bidding, overhead, profit and bonding.

*Project 1:*           \$ 44,500

Costs for Project 1 included preparing the *Winthrop Street Cemetery Master Conservation Plan* (this document), as well as documenting the existing condition of each hazardous stone (photographing, documenting material, size, location, inscription and condition); providing the appropriate conservation treatment; photographing the stone after treatment is complete; and compiling a treatment report. With the publication of this plan, Project 1 has been completed.

*Project 2:*           \$52,800

Costs for Project 2 include treatment of 93 stones. Fees will include documenting the existing condition of each unstable and deteriorating stone (photographing, documenting material, size, location, inscription and condition); providing the appropriate conservation treatment; photographing the stone after treatment is complete; and compiling a treatment report. This work may be completed as one project, or may be split into two. As of the writing of this plan, the Town of Provincetown Community Preservation Fund has awarded \$40,000 to be put toward Project 2.

*Project 3:*           \$25,000-\$30,000

Costs for Project 3 include site preparation (fencing and erosion control); earthwork (filling and grading; applying jute matting; and re-planting an approximately 5,700 SF area of dune surface.

*Project 4:*           \$15,000-\$20,000

Costs for Project 4 include marking the approximately 1,700 LF trail route; clearing a consistent 4'-wide trail route; and spreading pitch pine straw at a depth of approximately 2"; creating an ADA-compliant harder-surfaced trail segment with benches; and creating a new entrance to the Cemetery at Court Street. Note that the cost for the straw can be significantly reduced if existing material from the Cemetery is collected and re-distributed. The cost of clearing the route will vary,

depending of the amount of vegetation. The new entrance will include two 10” square granite posts, and four new short (10”) steel rails.<sup>2</sup>

Project 5: \$10,000-\$15,000

Costs for Project 5 include design, fabrication, and installation fees.

### **Preservation Resources**

The following organizations can supply advice, guidance and technical assistance for preservation efforts in historic cemeteries. Those marked with an asterisk (\*) provide financial assistance for preservation activities. Note that funding priorities, award levels and application requirements for the various funding organizations can frequently shift. The Provincetown Cemetery Commission should contact each source for up-to-date information, prior to making an application.

The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation. The Alliance is an organization of professionals dedicated to the preservation and conservation of historic landscapes in all their variety from formal gardens to public parks to rural and natural expanses. The organization provides a forum for communication and exchange among its members.

The Alliance for Historic Landscape Preservation  
[www.alhp.org](http://www.alhp.org)

American Association for State and Local History. This national organization provides leadership, service and support for preservation and interpretation of state and local history, making the past more meaningful in American society. The organization’s bookstore offers dozens of titles pertaining to historic preservation.

American Society for State and Local History  
1717 Church Street  
Nashville, TN 37203-2991  
[www.aaslh.org](http://www.aaslh.org)

The Association for Gravestone Studies. AGS is a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and preservation of cemeteries and gravestones. Services include publications, a monthly newsletter, quarterly journal and annual conference.

The Association for Gravestone Studies  
Greenfield Corporate Center  
101 Munson Street, Suite 108  
Greenfield, MA 01301  
[www.gravestonestudies.org](http://www.gravestonestudies.org)

Association for Preservation Technology International. The Association for Preservation Technology International (APT) is a cross-disciplinary, membership organization dedicated to promoting the best technology for conserving historic structures and their settings.

Association for Preservation Technology International  
3085 Stevenson Drive, Suite 200  
Springfield, IL 62703  
[www.apti.org](http://www.apti.org)

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<sup>2</sup> The Provincetown Cemetery Commissioners support the addition of the new entrance, however permission for this entrance, if required, has not been sought from or granted by the Town.

Northeast Chapter:

P. O. Box 20165  
Greeley Square Station  
New York, NY 10001-0002  
[www.aptnet.org](http://www.aptnet.org)

Cultural Landscape Foundation. The Cultural Landscape Foundation seeks donations and gifts from corporations, individuals, private foundations and government grants to increase awareness and public benefit for cultural landscapes listed on, or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. Project support emphasizes interpretation, education, outreach, and public awareness.

Cultural Landscape Foundation  
1909 Que Street, NW, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20009  
[www.tclf.org](http://www.tclf.org)

Heritage Preservation.\* This organization works to ensure the preservation of American's cultural heritage, offering programs and publications relating to care of books, documents, architecture, sculpture and other artifacts. Its *Save Outdoor Sculpture!* program is a grass-roots effort to help local organizations preserve sculpture and monuments.

Heritage Preservation  
1012 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 1200  
Washington, DC 20005  
[www.heritagepreservation.org](http://www.heritagepreservation.org)

Massachusetts Cultural Council.\* As the state arts agency of Massachusetts, MCC provides grants to organizations in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences.

Massachusetts Cultural Council  
10 St. James Avenue, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02116  
[www.massculturalcouncil.org](http://www.massculturalcouncil.org)

Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities.\* This state program of the National Endowment for the Humanities supports discussion groups, workshops, conferences, lecture series, radio programs, films, and video projects in the humanities.

Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities  
66 Bridge Street  
Northampton, MA 01060  
[www.mfh.org](http://www.mfh.org)

Massachusetts Historical Commission.\* MHC is Massachusetts's state historic preservation office, maintaining the State Register of Historic Places, overseeing all nominations made to the National Register of Historic Places, and providing funding for preservation activities of many types.

Massachusetts Historical Commission  
220 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125  
[www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/mhc/)

National Center for Preservation Technology & Training.\* A program of the United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, the NCPTT awards grants for information management, training and research on technical issues in preservation, with an emphasis on archaeology, historic architecture, historic landscapes, objects and materials conservation and interpretation.

National Center for Preservation Technology & Training  
645 University Parkway  
Natchitoches, LA 71457  
[www.ncptt.nps.gov](http://www.ncptt.nps.gov)

National Trust for Historic Preservation.\* The trust is the leading national advocacy organization for historic preservation, providing funding for preservation-related activities through several programs.

National Trust for Historic Preservation  
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20036  
[www.nthp.org](http://www.nthp.org)

PreservatiON Mass. This state-wide non-profit organization is dedicated to preserving the state's cultural and historic resources through advocacy, education and community revitalization. In partnership with the Massachusetts Historical Commission, PreservatiON Mass sponsors an annual meeting – a day-long gathering with symposia and workshops, and an announcement of the Commonwealth's most endangered resources.

PreservatiON Mass  
45 School Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
[www.preservationmass.org](http://www.preservationmass.org)

Provincetown Community Preservation Act Funds.\* Provincetown Community Preservation Act (CPA) Funds come from a 3% property tax surcharge that is matched with state funds from a real estate transaction stamp tax. The Act requires funds be used on Historic Preservation, along with Affordable Housing, and Open Space preservation initiatives in Massachusetts communities with a minimum of at least 10% of funds going to each of these three categories. *Note: Funding for the Master Conservation Plan was awarded by the Provincetown CPA in 2011.*

Town of Provincetown  
260 Commercial Street  
Provincetown, MA 02657  
[www.provincetown-ma.gov](http://www.provincetown-ma.gov)

National Preservation Institute. This nonprofit organization provides preservation information, knowledge, and skills to train and guide the stewards of historic and cultural places through seminars in historic preservation and cultural resource management.

National Preservation Institute  
P. O. Box 1702  
Alexandria, VA 22313  
[www.npi.org](http://www.npi.org)

Society of Architectural Historians, Landscape History Chapter. This membership-based professional organization encourages research in landscape, gardening, and horticultural history, and promotes the dissemination of such research through publications, meetings and lectures. It also provides a forum for

the exchange of ideas related to these disciplines through events and programs, and promotes conservation, preservation, and recording of significant landscapes.

Society of Architectural Historians

Landscape History Chapter

1365 North Astor Street

Chicago, IL 60610-2144

[www.sahlandscape.org](http://www.sahlandscape.org)

## MANAGEMENT

This section of the Master Conservation Plan will help the Town of Provincetown care for the Winthrop Street Cemetery landscape. It includes strategies for care of the plants, paths, fence, and gravestones. By following this guide, the Provincetown Cemetery Commission and Department of Public Works (DPW) crews will help ensure the long term health of this important historic resource.

The most challenging management task facing the Town is the control of aggressive shrub growth, particularly in the shadier areas (north side) of the Cemetery. These plants obscure the gravesites, making them inaccessible and weakening their overall structural integrity. In the past, large clearing efforts have taken place, which have substantially improved the appearance. However, lack of ongoing, year-to-year management of re-growth has minimized the impact of these large clearing efforts. To keep shrub growth under control, the Town must institute a policy of regular clearing of suckering trees and shrubs, and removal of undesirable and/or invasive vines (bittersweet, poison ivy, catbrier).

### Management Log

Before the Town begins caring for the landscape, the Commission and/or DPW 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 Cemetery’s care. The log should be store, in both electronic and manual formats, in a secure location within the Town.

### Plants

As discussed in the *Environmental Assessment (Appendix B)*, the Cemetery falls within the Cultural Grassland, Maritime Shrub, and Pitch Pine-Scrub Oak Natural Community, as defined by the Natural Heritage & Endangered Species Program, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. These communities are dominated by a collection of trees, shrubs and ground covers (grasses) attractive to a diversity of bird and animal species. Because of this, the Town should make every effort to preserve and enhance these natural communities, by maintaining member plants, and removing others that do not belong. Images of the Cemetery’s existing trees, shrubs and ground covers appear in a catalog, beginning on page 46.

#### *Existing Plants: Trees*

Trees of the Pitch Pine-Scrub Oak Natural Community include pitch pines (*Pinus rigida*) and scrub oaks (*Quercus ilicifolia*), and these species dominate the canopied areas of the Cemetery landscape. The Town should maintain these, keeping their limbs pruned to above head height (5-6’) to allow for open views through the Cemetery.

#### *Existing Plants: Shrubs*

The Maritime Shrub and Pitch Pine-Scrub Oak Natural Communities contain many species of shrubs, several of which have infiltrated the Cemetery landscape. Desirable among these are bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*), low bush blueberry (*Vaccinium angustifolium*), beach plum (*Prunus maritima*), and bearberry (*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*). These species should be encouraged to flourish, except in places where they

obstruct graves or block pathways. The Town should engage in an ongoing program of trimming desirable species of shrubs on a regular (minimum of twice per season) basis. Less desirable, because of their larger size, greater density, and/or toxicity, are dwarf chinquapin oak (*Quercus prinoides*) red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*); catbrier (*Smilax rotundifolia*); poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*). The less desirable species should be removed from the Cemetery altogether. To undertake this removal, crews should first cut the plants to ground level, and then treat the stumps with an herbicide such as glyphosate (Round-Up) to control re-growth. This effort should be repeated on a regular (minimum twice per season) basis.

#### *Existing Plants: Ground Covers & Grasses*

Ground covers and grasses of the Cultural Grassland, Maritime Shrub, and Pitch Pine-Scrub Oak Natural Communities include little blue stem grass (*Schizachyrium scoparium*), Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pennsylvanica*), poverty grass (*Danthonia spicata*), beach heather (*Hudsonia tomentosa*); cow wheat (*Melampyrum lineare*), and trailing arbutus (*Epigaea repens*), along with mosses, ferns and lichens. The Town should make every effort to retain these species, as they support the topsoil; provide an array of colors and textures; provide habitat and food sources for birds and animals; and minimize the need for mowing the Cemetery with mechanized equipment.

#### *Existing Plants: General Management Guidelines*

The following guidelines, developed for use by Americorp Volunteers working in the Cemetery, apply to all future management (pruning, removal, protection) of existing trees, shrubs and ground covers:

- All pitch pines (*Pinus rigida*) over 4" caliper should be retained.
- The lower limbs (under 5-6') of the remaining pitch pines should be removed.
- The black cherry, grey birch, scrub oak and beach plum should be removed, with the liters cut to grade.
- Catbrier and bittersweet should, at a minimum, be cut to grade. If possible, roots of these plants should be removed.
- The blueberry should be retained, but trimmed to a height of 12" to 18".
- The grasses, lichens and ferns should be retained.
- Crews should use extreme caution around the two gravestones located on the lower portions of the slope.
- The exposed stumps should be treated with a glyphosate herbicide to ensure that re-growth does not occur.

#### *New Plants: Dune Stabilization Ground Cover & Grasses*

As recommended in the *Environmental Assessment (Appendix B)*, native ground cover and grasses should be introduced as a means of stabilizing the dune. Species should include the following:

American beach grass (*Ammophila breviligulata*)  
 Beach heather (*Hudsonia tomentosa*)  
 Bearberry (*Atctostaphylos uva-ursi*)  
 Little blue stem (*Schizachyrium scoparium*)  
 Trailing abutus (*Epigaea repens*)  
 Pennsylvania sedge (*Carex pensylvanica*)



*Bearberry is a native ground cover already growing on the south side of the Cemetery. The Town should encourage its growth throughout the landscape.*

### **Pathways**

The *Recommendation* section of the *Master Conservation Plan* calls for creating a system of footpaths within the Cemetery that provide access to gravesites and, at the same, has a minimal impact on the dune landscape. The paths should consist of a 4'-wide route, surfaced with minimum 3" depth pitch pine straw. Because this is not a permanent material, the Town will need to maintain the paths on a regular (at least twice per season) basis, neatening and replenishing the pine straw, and removing low shrubs growing across the paths.

### **Fence**

As noted in the *Landscape Assessment* section of the *Master Conservation Plan*, the perimeter granite post and steel rail fence, constructed in 2002, remains in very good condition, with only a small amount of wearing of paint, and tilting of one post. To maintain this structure, the Town should re-set the post according to the specifications created ten years ago, and touch-up the rails with the specified paint. After these small upgrades have been completed, Town crews should regularly examine the fence, and make needed repairs on an ongoing basis.

### **Gravestones**

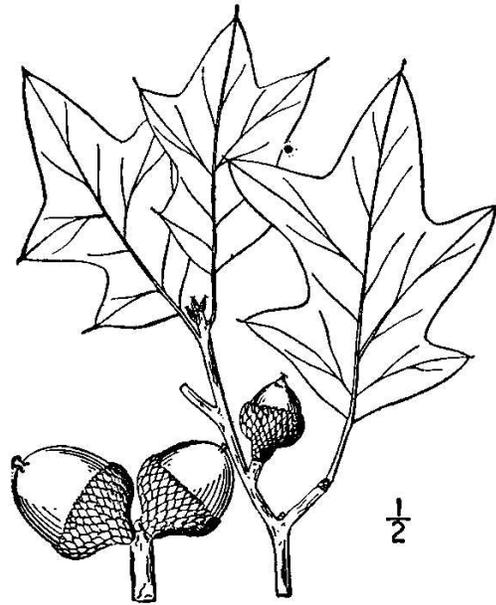
A complete assessment of the Cemetery's 537 grave markers (including head and footstones) was completed as part of this *Master Conservation Plan*, a copy of which appears in *Appendix C* of this document. As the assessment illustrates, treatment of gravestones and monuments must be approached carefully, and 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, 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 Town should consult a stone conservation specialist, before undertaking any type of repair.

## Winthrop Street Cemetery Plant Catalog

### Existing Plants: Desirable Trees



*Pinus rigida* (pitch pine)



*Quercus ilicifolia* (scrub oak)

### Existing Plants: Desirable Shrubs



*Arctostaphylos uva-ursi* (bearberry)



*Myrica pensylvanica* (bayberry)



*Vaccinium angustifolium* (low bush blueberry)



*Prunus maritima* (beach plum)

Existing Plants: Undesirable Shrubs



*Quercus prinoides* (dwarf chinquapin oak)



*Smilax rotundifolia* (catbrier)



*Juniperus virginiana* (red cedar)

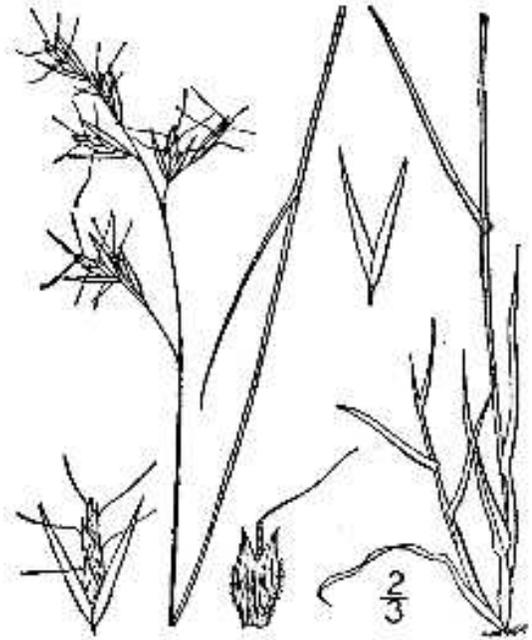


*Toxicodendron radicans* (poison ivy)

Existing Plants: Desirable Ground Covers & Grasses



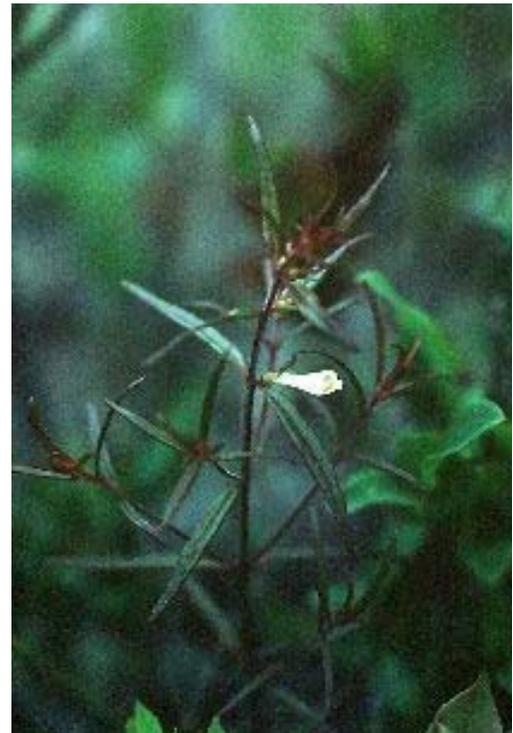
*Hudsonia tomentosa* (beach heather)



*Danthonia spicata* (poverty grass)



*Epigaea repens* (trailing arbutus)



*Melampyrum lineare* (cow wheat)

### 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.

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

Massachusetts Office of Coastal Zone Management:

251 Causeway Street, Suite 800

Boston, MA 02114

617-626-1200

[www.mass.gov/czm](http://www.mass.gov/czm)

[czm@state.ma.us](mailto:czm@state.ma.us)

United States Department of Agriculture  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Barnstable Service Center  
270 Communication Way, Unit 1G  
Hyannis, MA 02601-1883  
(508) 771-6476

## Management Schedule

January - March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If removing snow on the existing entrance surfaces (paved areas only), minimize (or eliminate altogether) the use of salt.</li> </ul>
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inspect the gravestones and monuments for damage that may have occurred over the winter. Consult a specialist about repairing any major damage.</li> <li>▪ Inspect fence for any damage that may have occurred over the winter. Straighten posts and patch paint on rails, as needed.</li> <li>▪ Remove leaves from along the fence line and against gravestones.</li> <li>▪ Inspect pine straw footpaths for erosion that may have occurred over the winter. Neaten and replenish pine straw accordingly.</li> </ul>
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Inspect trees for damage that may have occurred over the winter and note any needs for pruning and removals.</li> <li>▪ Inspect shrubby areas and prune any new growth obscuring paths and/or gravesites.</li> </ul>
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conduct pruning of lower limbs and removals of trees.</li> <li>▪ Mow turf and naturally-growing herbaceous material to a height of no less than 2-1/2 inches. Do not mow during dry spells, and mow ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.</li> </ul>
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue mowing turf and naturally-growing herbaceous material to a height of no less than 2-1/2 inches. Do not mow during dry spells, and mow ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.</li> </ul>
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue mowing turf and naturally-growing herbaceous material to a height of no less than 2-1/2 inches. Do not mow during dry spells, and mow ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.</li> </ul>
September - October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue mowing turf and naturally-growing herbaceous material to a height of no less than 2-1/2 inches. Do not mow during dry spells, and mow ONLY WHEN NECESSARY.</li> <li>▪ Inspect gravestones and monuments for damage that may have occurred over the summer. Consult a specialist about repairing any major damage.</li> <li>▪ Inspect fence for any damage that may have occurred over the summer. Straighten posts and patch paint on rails, as needed.</li> <li>▪ Inspect pine straw footpaths for erosion that may have occurred over the summer. Neaten and replenish pine straw accordingly.</li> </ul>
November - December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If removing snow on paved areas at the entrances, minimize (or eliminate altogether) the use of salt.</li> </ul>

## **Management Dos**

*DO* inspect gravestones and monuments twice per year (in early spring and late fall) for damage and consult a qualified conservator for further evaluation.

*DO* inspect the perimeter fence twice per year (in early spring and late fall) for damage; straighten posts and paint rails, as needed.

*DO* remove leaves from the fence line and around gravestones and monuments.

*DO* regularly inspect trees for dead or decaying limbs; engage a Massachusetts-certified arborist to undertake removals, needed.

*DO* remove growth of undesirable shrubs and sapling trees from around gravestones and within the pathways.

*DO* maintain a minimum 3" bed of pine straw on the path surfaces.

## **Management Don'ts**

*DON'T* use salt on the surfaces of the paved entrances to remove snow.

*DON'T* mow turf to a height less than 2 ½ inches.

*DON'T* mow turf during dry spells.

*DON'T* undertake repair of gravestones and monuments without first consulting a qualified stone conservator. Most repairs must be handled by conservation professionals.

*DON'T* neglect regular, ongoing maintenance of trees and shrubs. The Cemetery's natural ecosystem encourages aggressive re-growth of shrubs and suckering trees, and lack of regular control of this re-growth will complicate long-term maintenance.