

NANTUCKET CEMETERY COMMISSION
Posted Meeting of November 8, 2023, at 3:00 pm
DPW Conference Room, 188 Madaket Road, with Zoom Connectivity

DRAFT MINUTES FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Attendance: Commissioners: Frances Karttunen, Allen Reinhard (Chair), Lee Saperstein, and Barbara White (Zoom); Charlie Polachi, DPW.

Absent: Scott McIver.

Note on Zoom connection: The correct link for the Cemetery Commission is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85669907430?pwd=UCtfdFIPSE9VTitrU05CVTJyOWkydz09>

1. Call to Order.

Allen Reinhard called the meeting to order at 3:00 pm. He reminded participants that the session was being recorded:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vG8raaGBTWo&list=PL49sKqpy7VAhlyX1ozdd1bZ3zV8kXFp8M&index=41>.

A roll-call of attendees showed that a quorum existed.

2. Public and Commissioner Comments.

Michael R. Harrison, Chief Curator and Obed Macy Research Chair, Nantucket Historical Association, NHA, attended the meeting and expressed an interest in becoming a member of the Cemetery Commission. Allen Reinhard welcomed him by saying that the Commission wanted very much a link to the Nantucket Historical Association, NHA, and hoped that he would continue to attend. Michael Harrison said that he would certainly attend and that if there was chance to become a member, he would welcome that. Allen Reinhard responded by saying that he would be welcome and that the Commission would do whatever is necessary to expand its membership so that he could apply. Barbara White added that she did not intend to renew her membership upon expiration of her term (2025), which would create a vacancy in the summer of 2025. Michael Harrison said, also, that Amelia Holmes, NHA Director of Collections and Research Services, apologizes because she also would like to attend Cemetery Commission meetings as a member. Allen Reinhard said that she would be most welcome.

He then reviewed the Commission's mission and accomplishments for Michael Harrison's benefit, some of which will be reviewed in this meeting's agenda. He said that the Commission's latest move is to improve its record keeping, particularly to add information on Polpis inurnments, which are now in paper files, to the digital file. Lee Saperstein noted that, when Niles Parker, NHA Gosnell Executive Director, attended an earlier meeting of the Commission, it was suggested strongly that each organization's web site could have a link to the other's information on Nantucket cemeteries. He explained to Charlie Polachi that the NHA web site has a clearly identified web page on Cemeteries: <https://cemeteries.nha.org/>, as well as complete copies of the Lewis Funeral Home Records. As an aside, the Lewis records can be

found on the NHA (nha.org) web page by going to the box marked “Collections,” then to “Search Collections” and then type in “Lewis Funeral Home Records.” Much of the Lewis information is found inscribed onto the maps of the cemeteries found on the “Cemeteries” web page. [Action: Charlie Polachi to work with Hayley Cooke to add links to the NHA Cemeteries page on the Commission’s home page.]

Next, Frances Karttunen and Allen Reinhard spoke of the gift by Tanya and Jeremy Eldridge of a two and one-half year old, “Emperor One” dwarf Japanese maple that was planted at Polpis Cemetery on October 20, 2023, by the Eldridges, Frances Karttunen, and Allen Reinhard. Photographs of the planting are attached to these minutes.

At this point, Allen Reinhard added a comment from the Chair about mapping of and filing inurnment information for corner markers in Polpis. At the last meeting, he mentioned that Ray Sylvia, DPW Working Foreman, who also maintains all street signs, had told him of a computer program that he uses to identify and locate all public signs on Nantucket. Allen said then that he would look into the program. He reported at this meeting that the program would over-crowd the corner markers on an index map for Polpis. He and Charlie Polachi, both of whom like the overall mapping and filing idea, will look for a simpler program. [Action: Look for a mapping and indexing program for Polpis corner markers.]

3. Approval of Minutes from October 11, 2023.

Frances Karttunen moved approval of the minutes of the October 11, 2023, meeting, Barbara White seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous roll-call vote of those present.

4. Approval of Lot Sales Since the Last Meeting.

Allen Reinhard presented proposed lot sales in Polpis Cemetery to four families for approval by the Commission; in all, the sales involve seven lots: Eldridge, Jeremy and Tanya, 16 West Sankaty Road, Lot E-2; King, Robert W. and Candida, 16 Wood Hollow Road, lots G-3 and G-4; Todd, Lisa M., 11 Wauwinet Road, lots D-5 and E-5; and Winship, Todd, 16 Monohansett Road, Lots C-23 and C-24. Lee Saperstein suggested that, if there were no questions or a need for discussion, the commission approve these sales in one motion. With no objection, he moved the approval of seven lot sales to four families, Barbara White seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

5. Monument Restoration Project Update.

Allen Reinhard asked Charlie Polachi for an update on the two impending contracts for monument restoration work at the Historic Coloured Cemetery and Quaker Cemetery. The response was that contracts have been awarded and signed and work will begin shortly after the Thanksgiving holiday. Lee Saperstein asked about the one or two monuments in Old North Cemetery that we felt could be re-repaired. Charlie Polachi said that the crews will look into those when they are here on Island.

For the benefit of the visitor, Michael Harrison, there was a short description of the Richard Grubb survey of monuments in the Town's cemeteries. The survey is available as a very large digital file and there are five printed copies of it. If one has not already been given to the NHA, Charlie Polachi will organize a donation.

6. Newtown Cemetery: Update on Plan for Lot Consolidation.

Allen Reinhard reported, and Charlie Polachi confirmed, that there has been no activity from the Town on confirming the status of Newtown as a legal cemetery. To repeat the comment from the last meeting of the Cemetery Commission, "We desperately need action from the Town and its Counsel on consolidation of the four lots (40, 42, 44, and 46 Sparks Avenue) that comprise Newtown Cemetery and a declaration that this land is an historic cemetery." Charlie Polachi added, however, that he has asked the new head of the DPW, Andrew ("Drew") Patnode, to bring this need to the attention of the Town Manager.

Without this declaration of the legal extent of Newtown Cemetery, we cannot

- Clear vegetation;
- Do a GPR on the unsurveyed portions of the Cemetery;
- Obtain a recordable survey of the Cemetery;
- Begin a monument restoration project;
- Layout parking and walking paths;
- Plan for new graves;
- Complete needed maintenance in lots 40, 42, and 44.

The need has a heightened urgency,

Charlie Polachi reported that a location for the new flagpole has been found by the fence on the southwestern boundary at the end of the entry road and slightly to the southeast of its intersection with the boundary and the fence. It is hoped to have it erected in time for Veterans' Day but staff shortages may cause the DPW to miss that date.

7. Old, New, Other Business and Final Comments.

In response to a request for other business issues, Barbara White asked if there has been any activity on the Polpis Cemetery land swap to which the answer was "no." Lee Saperstein suggested to Charlie Polachi that it may be time to file a formal encroachment letter to the neighboring property whose out building intrudes into Polpis Cemetery.

Allen Reinhard went down the projects list appended to the end of the agenda and these minutes and said that most of the items on it had been attended to. Lee Saperstein mentioned that brush cutting along Franklin Street beside New North Cemetery was beneficial to its neighbors.

8. Adjournment.

Adjournment came at 3:56 pm by acclamation.

Next regular meeting: Wednesday, December 13, 2023, at 3:00 pm, in the DPW conference room at 188 Madaket Road. For those who wish to attend virtually, a Zoom link will also be sent to Commissioners.

Respectfully submitted: _____; Date: 11/10/2023
Lee W. Saperstein, Secretary

Nantucket Cemetery Projects List:

- Cemetery monument restoration project: Ongoing, D-2 treatment monuments.
- Fencing at the Historic Coloured Cemetery.
- Fencing, and brush removal at New and Old North Cemeteries.
- Consolidation of lots at Newtown Cemetery with recordable ground survey: Awaiting action from Town Counsel.
- New map needed for Polpis addition of new lots.

DRAFT



Allen Reinhard, Jeremy Eldridge, and Tanya Eldridge planting the dwarf red maple at Polpis Cemetery.



