

MINUTES  
PROVINCETOWN CEMETERY COMMISSION  
JUNE 4, 2015

Present: Richard Olson, Chairman, Greg Howe, Susan Avellar  
and Jack Kiefer.

Absent: Jim Cox.

Also Present: Doug Johnstone, Town Clerk.

The Meeting convened at 2:00pm.

1. Minutes: The minutes for the May 7, 2015 meeting were approved.
2. Cemetery Plot Sales: Doug Johnstone presented one sale of a single lot, which was approved.

Doug Johnstone reported that the irregularity of a lot sale between individuals without going through the Commission has been resolved, and it has been confirmed that the remains there have been transferred elsewhere. Therefore it was voted to approve an amended deed dated May 7 2015 for the lot in question.

It was further voted to approve a buy-back of Lot B-42 (a double) from Paul De Ruyter, after July 1 when funds appropriated at Spring Annual Town Meeting will be available.

3. Winthrop Street Cemetery Restoration Project: The Chairman reported on the Public Forum held June 2, 2015 in conjunction with members of the Winthrop Street Cemetery Master Plan Impementation Advisory Group, regarding Projects 3, 4 and 5 as described in The Martha Lyons Master Plan. Among those present at the Public Forum had been Doug Johnstone, Lynn Martin, (Conservation Commission), Stephen Borkowsky,

(Historic Commission). Rick Waldo (DPW Director), Ruth Dutra and Ruth Cowing (both abutters on the Winthrop Street side) and Erik Salzberg.

To recapitulate, Project 3 is dune protection on the Court Street side, Project 4 is pathways with maximum accessibility for the disabled and Project 5 is provision of historic informational signage'

Highlights to that June 2 Forum include: Ruth Cowing's concern for wildlife that has prospered in that cemetery and her hope not to encourage more human activity there, including bike and skateboard racing, picnicking and careless trash disposal and, in general congregating. Any addition of benches is an issue for Ms. Cowing.

Tentative conclusions of the Forum seemed to be: asphalt on any pathway is out – the alternative, stone-dust material on pathways, may need maintenance but our DPW can handle that; any boardwalk on top on the Court Street side is out, but modest vertical trail-markers are endorsed; the fence on Court Street should be opened to regularize climbers using the existing step-way to the top of the dune; any bike racks are out; trash receptacles should be added, outside the fence, since people will inevitably picnic; the Court Street side dune does not need any great bucking-up, only planting and some fencing where needed.

Here endeth the report on the June 2 Forum and re-commenceth the proceedings of the Commission meeting on June 4.

Ruth Cowing presented to the Commission a letter detailing her concerns on the proposed Winthrop Street project, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

A special concern expressed is for various species of turtles (and our old friends, the toads), who have all taken advantage of the habitat to make it their own.

The subject of motorized, rider driven lawn mowers came up, and they are out. Letter to be sent to Rick Waldo saying weed whackers only, while still hoping for regular clearing and maintenance by our newly hired private contractor.

Agreed that we certainly need trash barrels outside the fence (and the fence mended by DPW) and discouragement of bikers and shenanigans – but these things will happen.

Ms. Cowing also doesn't want to see snow-fences (for dune preservation planting under Project 3) because they interfere with free movement of wildlife. Agreed that there are kinds of fencing that would discourage human traffic over seeded areas whilst allowing critters close to the ground to move freely. Audubon Society suggestions to be solicited? RDLA to consult with State Environmental Authorities?

Returning to pathways, there was support for using “moby” (mobility mats) that may be available to us.

On perimeter fence damage this winter, it appears that granite posts were knocked down by snow scoopers around the conjunction of Brown and Winthrop Streets and other damage was done by Town bulldozers pushing snow on to Cemetery property. Needed to be done but should come out of DPW budget.

Greg Howe concluded that he would like to see just one bench at the end of the ADA accessible pathway on RDLA's Plan B, which plan seems generally favored over plan A.

4. Gifford and Hamilton Cemeteries: We await a report from our Town's Grant Administrator on status of putting out a bid a contract on this preservation project.
5. Alden Street Cemetery Old Section: The Commission agrees that the number of leaning or at-risk stones makes it imperative to move forward with obtaining a professional needs assessment, to be the

basis of putting out to bid (after application for and grant of a CPC grant) a contract for preservation. We have discretionary funds of some \$27,000 in the Expendable Portion of the Perpetual Care Trust Fund, and a Fall Special Town Meeting coming up. Greg Howe moved and Susan Avellar seconded, that we appropriate \$12,500 (based on an MCC estimate) from the Expendable Portion for a needs Assessment, and so voted. Mr. Olson will check with Michelle on award of this contract. At Fall Town Meeting we may ask for appropriation of Town funds, given the public safety risks posed by some of the at-risk stones. Discussion ensued concerning a leaning stone at Gifford Cemetery – held up by a board. Mr. Olson will ask Tony Lemme to lay it flat pending proper preservation.

6. Alden Street New Sections: Nothing to report.
7. Cremated Remains Area: Doug Johnstone reported that he will press the nursery to get the agreed-upon arbor barrier in place before the season expires.
8. Cemetery Finances: To be discussed at next meeting.
9. Membership: Reported that we may have a surfeit of applicants for our one vacancy.
10. Brochure: Reported that the drafting is in the able hands of Amy Whorf McGuigan, descendant of generations of Provincetown artists and author of My Provincetown.
11. Other Business: None.
12. Next regular Meeting: Set for Thursday, July 2, 2015 at 5pm. (please note change of time, until October.)

The meeting adjourned at 3:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard B. Olson

Chairman and Secretary pro tem.