

LANCASTER HISTORICAL COMMISSION
701 MAIN ST. SUITE 8 LANCASTER, MA 01523

E-MAIL HISTORICAL@LANCASTERMA.NET

PHONE: (978) 365-3326 Ext. 1057

January 16, 2023

Dear Community Preservation Committee (CPC) Chairperson and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Lancaster Historical Commission, I would like to express our excitement and enthusiasm for the opportunity to submit the included application and appended items for your consideration for this first round of CPA funds to be awarded in Lancaster. As you will see, the overall project we have in mind will necessarily have to take place in phases over the next few years. To begin, we are seeking funds for a "Pre-Restoration Assessment" of the Middle Cemetery (MC) which has been the focus of our efforts to upgrade Lancaster's historical assets over the last few years.

We are very hopeful that after you study the application, appended documents and proposal submitted, we will receive an award in the amount that has been requested. The conservators who drew up the included proposal are experienced and very highly regarded for their work in the state of Massachusetts and beyond.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Heather Lennon, Chairperson
Lancaster Historical Commission

Enclosures List – see next page

Enclosures List: Appended at End of Application

Middle Cemetery (MC) SUMMARY/DESCRIPTION PARAGRAPH from
National Register of Historic Places (NHRP) documentation of 2019 – ***1 page***

PROJECT NARRATIVE & GOALS -- 2 pages

SELECTION CRITERIA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS – 2 pages

Lancaster Master Plan 2007 Information pertaining to Historic & Cultural
Resources – ***58 pages***

MC Plot Plan created in 2007 by David E. Ross Associates, Inc., - ***1 page***
(magnify for best view)

MC sample photos of gravestone marker damage (by Heather Lennon) – ***1 page***

MC Proposal from Fannin-Lehner Preservation Consultants – 13 pages

TOWN of LANCASTER
COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT COMMITTEE
PROJECT APPLICATION FORM -- Fiscal Year 2023
Submission Due Date: December 15, 2022

Please Note: Prior to submission of a proposal, it is strongly recommended that you contact the Community Preservation Act Committee to discuss eligibility of the project and to ask or answer any questions. CPC Chair, Linnea Lakin Servey can be reached at CPC@lanasterma.net

Applicant's Information:

Name: Lancaster Historical Commission	Submission Date: January 13, 2023
Address: 701 Main Street, Suite 8 Lancaster, MA 01523	Purpose: (Please select all that apply)
	<input type="radio"/> Open Space
	<input type="radio"/> Affordable Housing
Phone: (978) 365-3326 Ext. 1057	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Historic Preservation
E-mail: historical@lanasterma.gov	<input type="radio"/> Outdoor Recreation

Town Committee (if applicable): Lancaster Historical Commission

CPA Project Name: Middle Cemetery Pre-restoration Assessment Plan

CPA Project Address: Main Street (Route 70, East Side) South Lancaster, MA 01561

Amount of CPA Funding Requested: \$13,500.00

Project Summary: In the space below, please provide a brief description of the project. Attach any supporting materials such as drawings, photos, maps, etc. Attach additional pages if needed.

See attached pages.

Estimated Date for the Start of the Project: April 15, 2023

Estimated Date for Completion of the Project: May 14, 2023

Budget Summary: In the table below, please provide a summary of the budget for the project. Include funding sources, total cost estimates and other information that will assist the CPA Committee in its deliberations. Attach additional pages if needed.

Fiscal Year	CPA Funds Request	Other Fund Sources	Total Estimated Cost
2023	\$13,500.00		\$13,500.00
2024			
2025			
2026			
2027			
Total:	\$13,500.00		\$13,500.00

Selection Criteria: The Lancaster Community Preservation Plan has established criteria for selecting appropriate and worthwhile CPA Projects for recommendation to Town Meeting. Those objectives for each type of project are listed in the CPA Plan and are available at:

<https://www.ci.lancaster.ma.us/community-preservation-act-committee>

Please answer as many of the following questions, which are based upon the selection criteria, as possible. Attach additional pages if needed.

1. How does this project benefit or add value to Lancaster?

SEE ATTACHED PAGES.

2. How will this project preserve or enhance Town assets or resources? Is this request to acquire a threatened or endangered asset or resource?

See attached pages

3. How is this project consistent with Lancaster's long-range plans?

See attached pages.

4. Will this project serve multiple needs and populations within Lancaster? Will this project assist a currently under-served population?

See attached pages.

5. How does this project benefit, protect, or preserve the environment?

See attached pages.

6. Is it feasible to complete this project in the year for which funding has been requested? If not, please explain.

SEE ATTACHED PAGES.

7. Is there urgency to the completion of this project? What are the ramifications if the project is delayed and/or not completed?

SEE ATTACHED PAGES .

Signature of Applicant: Heather L. Lennon, LHC Chair

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

Submission Due Date: December 15, 2022

Submit the completed application to the Lancaster CPA Committee as follows:

- **Application Form:** Complete the two-page project application to the fullest extent possible and sign at the bottom of the second page.
- **Project Summary:** Provide a brief summary of the proposed project that describes its goals and scope as requested in the application. It should be no more than one page in length and provide information suitable for distribution to other Boards, Committees, and Commissions.
- **Budget Summary:** Complete the project budget summary table as requested in the application. Identify funding sources, amounts requested, and total cost estimates for the next five years.
- **Selection Criteria:** Answer all relevant selection criteria questions listed on page 2 of the application as directly and concisely and as possible.
- Send one copy of the complete application in PDF format to: CPC@lanasterma.net.

Attach the following with all applications:

- **Project Narrative:** Expand upon the Project Summary to provide a complete and detailed description of the project and, where applicable, of the property involved as well as its proposed use relative to Community Preservation. Describe how the project will benefit the Town and the citizens of Lancaster. Explain how the project is consistent with the CPA Plan's "Guidelines for Submission" and "Project Selection Criteria." Include an implementation plan discussing the anticipated steps or phases for completion of the project along with the timing and estimated cost of each phase. Attach an additional page if needed.
- **Project Budget:** If needed, provide a more complete and detailed accounting of the project's funding sources and estimated costs for each year that expenditures would occur. Describe how the CPA funds would be spent and which of the four CPA categories would benefit. Explain how administrative costs would be provided for. Attach an additional page if needed.
- **Site Control:** A copy of the deed, purchase and sale agreement, option agreement, or other document to prove that the applicant has site control; or the property owner's written consent to the application and to the proposed project. If site control is not established, please explain in detail.
- **Cost Estimate:** Professionally prepared appraisal, or professionally prepared quotes or cost estimate (or detailed cost estimate with full explanation by line item with back-up material).
- **Feasibility:** List and explain all further action or steps that will be required for completion of the project, such as environmental assessments, zoning or other permits and approvals, agreement on terms of any required conservation, affordability, or historic preservation restrictions, subordination agreements, and any known or potential barriers or impediments to project implementation.
- **Sustainability:** For any project that incorporates sustainable design features, explain how they will reduce environmental impacts by decreasing energy consumption, improving energy or water conservation, preserving vegetation and habitat, or utilizing recycled or recyclable materials.
- **Neighborhood Outreach:** For new development projects, such as new community housing or new recreation facilities, provide evidence that neighbors have been contacted and had an opportunity to comment on the proposed project. Provide documentation describing how the project application is responsive to the neighbors' comments and concerns.
- **Letters of Support:** Applicants are encouraged to seek and attach letters of support from relevant or appropriate individuals and organizations.

- **Maps:** Identify the location of the project using a Town Assessors GIS map. Include any additional maps that may be helpful to describe the proposed site and its immediate surroundings such as a USGS topographical, Mass GIS, or other ariel maps. Nearby features such as roads, rivers, railroads, wetlands, forests or other vegetation, and residential, commercial, or other structures should be shown. Zoning districts for the site and adjacent properties should also be identified and labeled.
- **Photographs:** Provide photographs of the site, building, structure, or other subject for which the application is made.
- **Historic Properties:** For projects involving the Rehabilitation of Historic Properties, please include in the project budget a line item for the confirmation by a qualified professional that the completed work meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, 36 C.F.R. Part 68 (also see CPA Plan's Guidelines for Submission and Appendix).

Include the following information, if applicable:

- Record plans of the land.
- Natural resource limitations (wetlands, flood plain, etc.).
- Zoning regulations that apply to the property in question (ie: district, dimensional, and use regulations).
- Inspection reports.
- 21E reports and other environmental assessment reports.
- Cost estimate for the preparation of baseline documentation and conservation and/or historic preservation restriction.
- Cost estimate for ongoing site monitoring under and potential enforcement of a restriction.
- Architectural plans and specifications for new construction and rehabilitation.
- Site plans and specifications.
- Historic Properties Inventory Form.
- Existing conditions report.
- Names and addresses of project architects, contractors, and consultants.
- Other information deemed useful by the Committee consideration of the project.

Notes:

- Following the initial review of all applications, the Community Preservation Committee may request additional or more detailed information from applicants, and further clarifications to the submitted proposals.
- The Committee may request a legal opinion from the applicant to help assess CPA project eligibility and to provide answers to any other questions that the Committee may have before finalizing its recommendation to Town Meeting.
- Once the Committee has made a preliminary selection of projects for funding, the Committee will work with the applicants for those projects to advance them for funding by Town Meeting.
- The Committee reserves the right to attach conditions, and to require deed restrictions and additional agreements, before its favorable funding recommendation to Town Meeting or as a condition in the award letter.
- Please refer to Lancaster's CPA Plan sections on "Guidelines for Submission" and "Project Selection Criteria." for additional information regarding the CPA Project Application process.

Summary Paragraph

The Middle Cemetery was established in 1798 as the third cemetery in the town of Lancaster, Massachusetts. It is at the southeast end of town on the east side of Main Street, with wooded land to the north and east, open fields to the west, and a senior housing development to the south. The roughly rectangular, 1.53-acre cemetery contains 1,014 stones and 1,183 burials, according to Lancaster Historical Commission records. A low stone retaining wall with granite gate posts runs along the west (Main Street) boundary, and a wood-post and wire-netting fence marks the east boundary. Mature trees line the north, south, and east boundaries. The cemetery is maintained by the Town of Lancaster but is no longer in active use. The earliest marked burials were in 1798, and the last interment was in 1989. The stones in the cemetery reflect the continuum of headstone iconography popular in the late-18th and 19th centuries, including soul effigies and urn and willow images. Later stones, installed in the early-to-mid-20th century, are marble and granite and have little embellishment beyond names and birth and death dates. The south end of the cemetery contains at least 35 family plots, many with a central family marker and low granite curbing with sawn tops and rough-dressed sides. Some of the family plots are bounded by metal bars or chains connected to granite corner posts, and one has a decorative, wrought-iron fence. The Middle Cemetery is the burial place of descendants of the Sawyer, Houghton, Rugg, Joslyn, and Fairbank families, who were among Lancaster's first settlers. At least 37 Revolutionary War, one War of 1812, and 14 Civil War soldiers' graves have been identified.

Middle Cemetery Pre-Restoration Assessment Application

PROJECT NARRATIVE: In the space below, please provide a brief description of the project. Attach any supporting materials such as drawings, photos, maps, etc.

This project (in 2023) will provide the town of Lancaster with an overall assessment of the Middle Cemetery (est. 1798) which is the third oldest of the town's seven historic burial grounds.

Though its condition has long been a matter of serious concern to members of the Lancaster Historical Commission (LHC), it was not given National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) status until 2019, and, there is still much work to be done.

Presently, the cemetery is in *dire need* of restoration due to deferred maintenance over the past several decades. Currently, conservative estimates indicate that at least 500, or about one half, of the grave markers are in need of repair. Some have been dislodged and have fallen over due to the spreading root systems of massively overgrown trees. The trees, with their spreading branches also obscured sunlight enabling lichen and moss to grow on the markers causing severe discoloration. . Others are broken and lie in shards and splinters all over the ground. Some are leaning precariously on their bases presenting safety hazards and ready to fall over easily. All of the markers are in need of cleaning due to exposure to acid rain and air pollution through the years.

Once an overall assessment is made, it is anticipated that the work can be scheduled to be done in distinct phases over the next four years. This initiative is in anticipation of a nation-wide celebration in 2026 of the 250th reading of the Declaration of Independence. At that time, the Middle Cemetery will be the site of a special event honoring all those who served in the American Revolution. There are no less than 37 Revolutionary War veterans interred in the Middle Cemetery.

The cemetery also contains many other significant burials. While the original settlers of Lancaster were interred at the Old Settlers Burial Field, many of their descendants were laid to rest at Middle Cemetery, including those of Thomas Sawyer, Ralph Houghton, John Rugg, Thomas Joslyn, and Jonas Fairbanks. When the siege of Boston occurred during the Revolutionary War, a young Josiah Flagg fled to Lancaster and made it his home for the rest of his life. This grand-nephew

of Benjamin Franklin served as Lancaster's town clerk for 32 years and was a leading town citizen. While much of Lancaster was farmed in the 19th century, several manufacturing operations also came into existence including that of David Poignand (1759-1830) who started a factory in what was then the southern part of Lancaster. He and his wife are buried in the MC. The cemetery's only private tomb is the resting place of influential Reverend Dr. Nathaniel Thayer (1769-1840), Lancaster's sixth minister, and his wife Sarah Toppan Thayer. Another notable burial is that of the educator Professor William Russell (1798-1873) whose specialty was elocution. In 1853 he established the New England Normal School in Lancaster. A family plot in the southwestern corner contains Lancaster's pre-eminent historian Henry Stedman Nourse (1831-1903). Nourse was Civil War veteran – one of the fourteen others buried here.

Because it is situated in a very visible location along the town's main highway, it is **critical** that it be well maintained. Keeping public cemeteries is a municipal responsibility. As this project moves forward, the MC will increasingly become a source of local community pride for residents. It will also make a more favorable impression on tourists who frequently visit Lancaster specifically to visit the final resting places of their ancestors.

As has been said:

"Show me the manner in which a nation cares for its dead, and I will measure with mathematical exactness the tender mercies of its people, their respect for the laws of the land and their loyalty to high deeds." - William Gladstone

"Show me your cemeteries and I will tell you what kind of people you have." - Benjamin Franklin

SELECTION CRITERIA QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

from the Lancaster Historical Commission

1. *How does this project benefit or add value to Lancaster?*

This project is a critical step toward correcting a long-standing issue regarding the establishment of adequate funding for effective and responsible Middle Cemetery maintenance moving into the future.

2. *How will this project preserve or enhance Town assets or resources? Is this request to acquire a threatened or endangered asset or resource?*

All of Lancaster's seven historic cemeteries have been specifically identified in the town's *Master Plan of 2007* as highly valued cultural assets or resources. Though the Middle Cemetery is already under town ownership, there is no question that it is currently under threat and endangerment due to deferred maintenance.

3. *How is this project consistent with Lancaster's long-range plans?*

This project is completely consistent with Lancaster's long-range plans. See the appended page VI-4 of the *Master Plan of 2007* "Goals and Objectives" and "Implementing Actions"

4. *Will this project serve multiple needs and populations within Lancaster? Will this project assist a currently underserved population?*

This project will serve multiple needs insofar as pride in community is something that should be nurtured crossing over all chronological ages, races, ethnic groups, creeds or religions.

5. *How does this project benefit, protect, or preserve the environment?*

An initiative to remove hazardous trees from the Middle Cemetery was

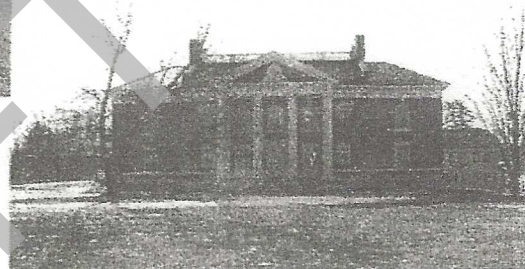
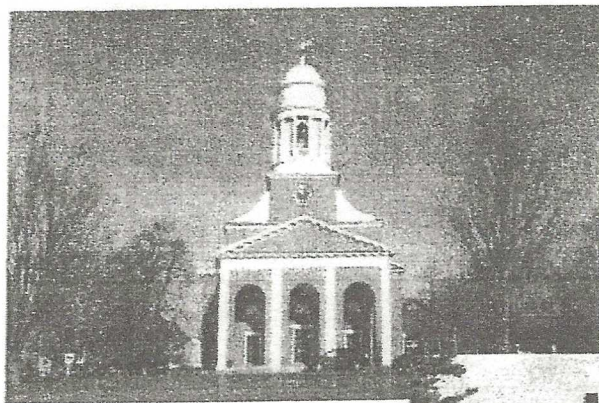
begun in 2017 and is ongoing. The environment has been improved in that the trees with their extensive and shallow root systems had been dislodging and destroying the grave markers. The tree branches removed were obscuring sunlight which had been contributing to the unchecked growth of algae, lichen and moss eating into and attaching to markers. The tree trunks, leaning precariously and rotten from within, were falling haphazardly during severe windstorms and other weather events causing damage to the markers beneath.

6. *Is it feasible to complete this project in the year for which funding has been requested? If not, please explain.*

It is not reasonable that this project can be entirely completed within a year. With the amount of remediation to be accomplished, this overall project is anticipated to continue for at least four years and perhaps longer. With that in mind, the more quickly the overall evaluation is conducted, (beginning in April, 2023), the sooner the phasing of the subsequent work can begin. Further, it is anticipated that public support will increase once there is visible evidence that the money has been well spent for the enrichment and enhancement of the entire community.

7. *Is there urgency to the completion of this project? What are the ramifications if the project is delayed and/or not completed?*

Yes! If this project is not completed as soon as possible, the cemetery will continue to deteriorate and increasingly become a public eyesore and embarrassment. The care of public cemeteries is an important civic responsibility of the citizens who reside where they are located.



Lancaster Master Plan

Volume I

February, 2007

Lancaster Planning Board

**Submitted by
Herr & James Associates
175 Richdale Avenue #115
Cambridge, MA 02140**

VI. HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

BACKGROUND

Lancaster's historic and cultural tradition is at the centerpiece of its community. Lancaster is the oldest town in Worcester County, and was the original "mother" town for much of central Massachusetts, including what are now Leominster, Sterling, Harvard, Bolton, Clinton, Berlin, Boylston, and West Boylston. The first early settlers came to what is now Lancaster in 1642, and the Town was officially incorporated in 1653 with nine families.

Lancaster was founded by John Prescott, who gave the Town its name based upon his home town in England. Lancaster was home to Mary Rowlandson, who was captured by the Native American's in the attack on the Rowlandson Garrison during King Philip's War. She survived and went on to write a book about her captivity – a book which is considered to be one of the greatest captivity narratives ever written. Lancaster's elementary school is named after Mary Rowlandson. Lancaster was also home to Luther Burbank (1849-1926), the American horticulturalist who developed the Idaho potato credited with helping Ireland recover from its great famine, and the Shasta daisy. Lancaster's middle school is named after Luther Burbank.

John Chapman, who came to be known as Johnny Appleseed, was born in the section of Lancaster that was incorporated as Leominster in 1740. John Chapman was a nurseryman, who came to own many tracts of land throughout Ohio and Indiana. He used this land to plant apple seeds, transplant seedlings and set out orchards. He sold and gave trees to pioneer settlers.

Beginning its town life in the 17th century as a pioneer and farming community, Lancaster became a summer residence for prominent citizens of Boston during the early 19th century. The location of the Carter and Andrews Publishing Company and the Ponakin Mills in Lancaster contributed to the next wave of town growth. Beautiful, tree-shaded roads and large New England style homes came to characterize Lancaster during this phase of its history. In 2006, a Special Town Meeting voted the American Elm as the Town tree, continuing the

recognition of the importance of trees to Lancaster's town character today.

Lancaster's rivers, its riverfront land, its traditional settlement pattern, and its extensive natural resources also are at the centerpiece of its historic heritage. Early settlers built homes and hamlets at the confluence of the rivers. Access in and out of town depended upon the bridges over these rivers. The largest oak tree in Massachusetts, the Beaman Oak, was in Lancaster on Route 117 east of Main Street. This oak, whose circumference was 17 feet, was located on what was the land of one of Lancaster's earliest settlers, from around 1659 - Gamaliel Beaman. The tree had come to be known as the Beaman Oak. The tree severely damaged during a storm in 1989 and had to be removed.

One particular family was critical in shaping Lancaster's history and in creating many of the beautiful historic homes that grace Lancaster's Main Street and South Village. Four brothers of the Thayer family, who made their fortunes in banking and railroads, during the 19th century, built beautifully designed summer mansions, many of which remain to this day. Their grandfather, Rev. Nathaniel Thayer, was ordained in Lancaster in 1793 and served as the pastor of First Church until his death in 1840. He lived in the parsonage, known as "The Homestead", which is now the site of the Thayer Performing Arts Center. Rev. Nathaniel Thayer was pastor when architect Charles Bulfinch designed the Fifth Meeting House for Lancaster. It was completed in 1816. Rev. Nathaniel Thayer had seven children, Sarah Toppan, Martha, Mary Ann, Nathaniel Jr., John, and Christopher Toppan. The four sons of Nathaniel Jr., Eugene V.S. Thayer, Nathaniel III, Bayard, and John E. and grandson, Eugene V.S. Thayer, Jr. built mansions that still exist today in Lancaster. Fairlawn, now the "White House" at Atlantic Union College, was built by Eugene V. S. Thayer, Sr. John E. Thayer built a Tudor-style mansion part of which still exists on George Hill Road. Bayard Thayer built a mansion called Hawthorne Hill, now the site of the Maharishi Veda Health Center. Crownledge, a mansion built by Eugene Thayer, Jr. in 1908-09, is now the home of the Trivium School. Only one of these many historic mansions built by Nathaniel Thayer III – the "Homestead" – is presently listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is now known as Thayer Performing Arts Center, Atlantic Union College. The Lancaster Historical Commission is working to inventory the other mansions and list

these on the state register of historic places.

Lancaster also has developed as an educational center. The Town is now home to several private schools and a college. Atlantic Union College, founded by the Seventh Day Adventists in 1882 as a secondary school, is now one of the most highly thought-of liberal arts colleges in the Northeast. Many of its campus buildings, especially Founder's Hall are of historic importance and interest. The Herbert Parker mansion on Sterling Road is currently privately owned. The Dr. Franklin Perkins School, founded in 1896, is located on 120 acres of land along Main Street that is the former estate of the industrialist Iver Johnson's widow, Mary Speirs Johnson, who built the mansion. The Perkins School is a nationally recognized leader in providing education and services to troubled children, adolescents and adults. Other private schools in Lancaster include the Robert F. Kennedy School, New River Academy, Living Stones Christian School, South Lancaster Academy, Browning School, and the Trivium School.

Lancaster's National Register Districts

Lancaster's rich historical heritage is reflected in the more than sixty historic sites and places of cultural interest, noted on the Historic & Cultural Resource Map. It is home to two national historic districts – Center Village, and North Village, whose boundaries are shown on the accompanying Historic District Map. Center Village and North Village were placed upon the National Register of Historic Places on June 8, 1976.

The Lancaster Historical Commission describes these two districts as follows:

“The Center Village District includes 110 early buildings and homes dating from 1727 to 1961, which include architectural styles of Cape style, Colonial, Classical revival, Colonial revival, federal, Greek revival, Italianate, Queen Anne, Victorian Eclectic, and Ranch. The Center Village is a quiet residential area of this earliest town in Worcester County. The district extends eight-tenths of a mile along Main Street from the Sprague-Vose Bridge over the Nashua River to the northern end of Main Street joining Route 117 near the North Village. Center Village District includes the beautiful center green, which is an unusual quadrangle upon which one side is Main Street, and on the opposite side stands the Thayer Memorial

Library, the Prescott Building (Center School), and on the south side stands the Georgian Colonial Town Hall and on the north side stands the neoclassical First Church of Christ, designed by Charles Bulfinch as the Fifth Meeting House, listed on the National Register of Historic Landmarks.

The North Village District, once known as Union Village, is a fine example of a rural nineteenth century community, and forms a significant architectural unit. North Village has a small green at the eastern end of the district. The historic district is roughly defined geographically by the Nashua River on the west, the Ponakin Brook on the north, a small brook on the south, and a series of hills on the east. The oldest house is c.1717. The architecture in the district incorporates various Federal and Greek Revival details. The houses vary in size and design, but are unified by their common building materials and setting. In the North Village, 22 buildings and homes received National Register Status. In 2006, the number went to 21 because one of Lancaster's only remaining inns (Fisher's Inn c. 1810) was sold, dismantled and is to be moved to Ohio where it will be rebuilt. The buildings and homes in this district date from 1717 - 1929.” (*Lancaster Historical Commission*)

A complete list of all properties within both National Register Districts is included in the Appendix.

In the 1980s, a local initiative developed in Lancaster to create a local historic district for Center Village. This would provide local review authority and greater protection for these important historic buildings and sites that National Register listing does not. This initiative was voted down at the 1987 Town Meeting. In 2002, the Lancaster Board of Selectmen appointed a Historic District Study Committee to reexamine the establishment of a local historic district and to determine what properties in addition to Center Village might also be included. The Historic District Study Committee continues to examine this alternative.

Historic Bridges

Lancaster's geographic location at the confluence of two rivers has made bridges an integral part of the Town's history and character. The Lancaster Historical Commission has found many references to

bridges in historical records as early as 1658. At the beginning of the Town's recorded history, the citizens who lived near the bridges were responsible for their cost and maintenance. The floods of 1936 wiped out many of Lancaster's bridges.

Today, two historic bridges remain in Lancaster. The Atherton and the Ponakin Bridges, built in 1870-71, were constructed using a design patented by Simon Post, a famous engineer, called a "Post-Truss" design. While this design was used for many 19th century bridges throughout America, few remain today. Both the Atherton and Ponakin Bridges are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Historic Cemeteries

There are seven town historic cemeteries in Lancaster, each with important contributions to Lancaster's history and early days. The Old Settlers Burial Ground, located on Main Street behind the Middle Cemetery became a public cemetery around 1643 and contains graves of the earliest pioneers. Old Common Cemetery on Old Common Road opened around 1700. North Cemetery on Old Turnpike Road opened around 1790; Middle Cemetery beside Bigelow Gardens on Main Street opened around 1800, while North Village Cemetery opened around 1854. Eastwood Cemetery on Old Common Road at the Bolton town line opened in 1876, and is the only Town cemetery with available new grave sites. There is a state graveyard on the site of the former Industrial School for Girls located off Old Common Road. Finally, the private Thayer Family Cemetery is located off Bull Hill Road. (See Historic & Cultural Resources Map for locations).

Many of the monuments in these cemeteries are fragile and deteriorating. A high priority of the Lancaster Historical Commission is to preserve and protect the monuments and landscapes of these cemeteries that hold important keys to Lancaster's past.

Endangered Properties

There are many historic buildings and sites in Lancaster that are in danger of being lost to physical deterioration, inadequate maintenance, inappropriate renovations, or outright demolition. Fragile historic monuments in the early cemeteries are crumbling; historic homes and buildings in private ownership are in need of restoration. New development along the river is affecting both the traditional riverfront

character, an important contributor to Lancaster's historic town character, and affecting the remains of historic river use such as historic water level markers.

The Lancaster Historical Commission has identified the historic features of the following public and private properties and sites to be so 'endangered':

Public Sites:

Town Hall
Prescott Building (Center School)
Memorial School
Tercentenary Building
South Lancaster Engine House (Hose House)
Atherton and Ponakin Bridges
All cemeteries: Old Settlers Burial Yard, Old Common Cemetery, Middle Cemetery, North Cemetery, North Village Cemetery, Eastwood Cemetery, Thayer Private Cemetery
All open land, including Pine Hill
Meeting of North and South branches of the Nashua River

Privately owned:

Deershorn Road schoolhouse
Thayer Mansions: Nathaniel (presently Thayer Performing Art Center), Eugene (presently Atlantic Union College's White House), John Thayer Tutor Mansion, Eugene Thayer, Jr. Crownledge (presently Trivium School), Bayard Thayer (presently Maharishi Veda Health Center)
George Hill Orchards (formerly owned by the Thayer brothers)
Rowlandson Garrison site
Herbert Parker house on Sterling Road

A priority of the Lancaster Historical Commission is to raise awareness about the importance and fragility of these historic resources and to develop strategies and measures to better assist and protect them.

Cultural Traditions

Until 2000, Lancaster was home to the Thayer Symphony Orchestra. Founded in 1974 by Dr. Jon Robertson as the Thayer Conservatory Orchestra, the Symphony moved to Fitchburg at the end of the 2000 season. Its home auditorium is now at Montachusett Technical High School.

One Saturday each fall during fall foliage and apple-picking season, the annual Horseshed Crafts Fair opens on the grounds of the First Church of Christ (the Bulfinch Church) on Lancaster's Town Green. The Fair is housed in 15 connected wood-framed

horseheds, part of the original sheds built in 1816. Scores of craftspeople sell crafts ranging from silk and dried flower art, Victorian dolls and jewelry. Several thousand people attend the Fair each year on the grounds of this National Historic Landmark.

Lancaster has a Cultural Council that supports the arts and cultural events and administers state-funded grants for local events. The Cultural Council has supported events such as the Three Apples Storytelling Festival, annual concerts and fireworks, musical performances at Thayer Public Library, and the Lancaster Coffeehouse.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

At the May and October, 2005 master plan community workshops, Lancaster citizens made clear that one of their highest priorities was the preservation of Lancaster's rural and traditional character. Preservation of Lancaster's historic heritage, historic buildings and sites, and landscapes are a critical part of preserving this Town character. Accordingly, Lancaster's objectives for historic preservation and preservation of its traditional Town character are to:

- Preserve and protect the important and valuable historic properties and sites in Lancaster that contribute so much to its character and that are part of its heritage.
- Raise the awareness within Lancaster and beyond about Lancaster's rich historic heritage and the scores of important historic sites throughout town.

IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The following actions are identified to implement Lancaster's goals for historic and cultural preservation:

- Inventory, restore and protect Lancaster's early cemeteries, giving priority to Old Settlers, Middle, and Old Common Cemeteries. Seek grants and funding to help restore these important historic resources. Work to list these cemeteries on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Conduct public education in Lancaster and beyond to make townspeople aware of the

importance and value of Lancaster's historic heritage, buildings, and sites.

- Continue to explore the possibility of creating a local historic district for the Center Village historic area to better protect this "crown jewel" of Lancaster's historic heritage.
- Preserve the integrity of the Town Green and its tradition as an open gathering place.
- Preserve and protect Lancaster's historic bridges, in particular the Atherton Bridge and the Ponakin Bridge, and the river edges, major contributors to Lancaster's historic town character. Explore how to better feature these historic bridges as tourist attractions.
- Develop strategies to protect and preserve the historic properties and sites in Lancaster that are endangered by deterioration, inadequate maintenance, demolition, and floodplain development.
- Explore the creation of a museum to safeguard and display Lancaster's historic assets and records.
- Develop and adopt a demolition delay bylaw as also noted in the Housing Chapter to allow time for finding alternatives for historic structures threatened by demolition – for example, their relocation and reuse as an affordable housing resource.
- Reconsider participation in the Community Preservation program as one means to generate local funding for, among other things, historic preservation.

Identify and investigate a diversity of approaches to preserving the character and architectural features of historic homes while allowing for appropriate re-use if desired. One such approach might be an estate preservation bylaw that guides appropriate redevelopment of historic mansions and estates, such as that of the Town of Lenox, MA.

MAIN STREET (ROUTE 70)

BOSTON AND MAINE R.R.

LEGEND:
UNDEVELOPED LAND
CITY OF LANCASTER
7-10-1961

"MIDDLE CEMETERY"

LANCASTER, MASS.

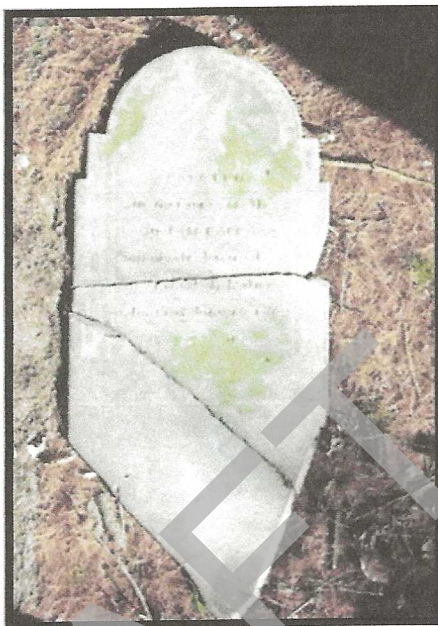
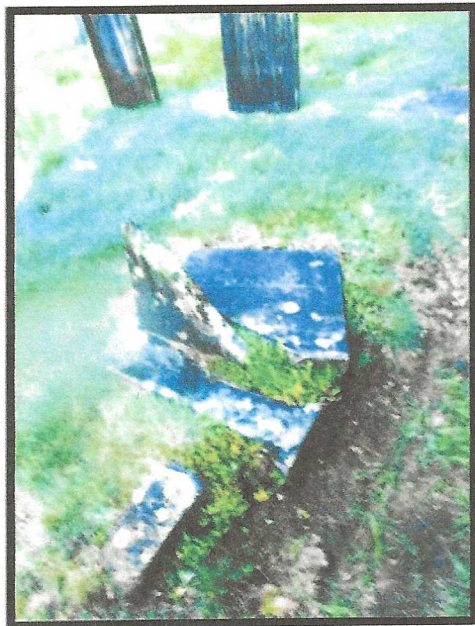
TOWN OF LANCASTER

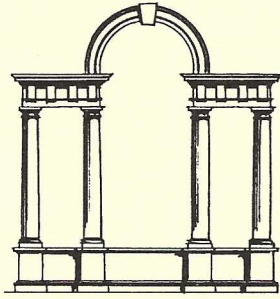
David E. Hess Associates, Inc.

201 CHURCH STREET, 4TH FLOOR
PO BOX 2000, LANCASTER, MA 01458
TEL. NO. 798-1100 FAX. NO. 798-1101

MAP NO. 10000 SHEET 1 OF 2

Middle Cemetery Damaged Stones





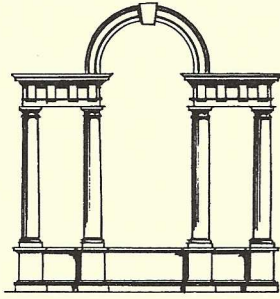
FANNIN • LEHNER

PRESERVATION CONSULTANTS

MIDDLE CEMETERY
LANCASTER, MASSACHUSETTS
GRAVESTONE/MONUMENT
CONDITION ASSESSMENT
PROPOSAL

JANUARY 2023

PREPARED FOR
LANCASTER HISTORICAL
COMMISSION



FANNIN • LEHNER

PRESERVATION CONSULTANTS

MIDDLE CEMETERY

LANCASTER, MASSACHUSETTS

PROPOSAL TO PROVIDE A GRAVESTONE/MONUMENT CONDITION ASSESSMENT

JANUARY 2023

INTRODUCTION

Description of Consultant

Fannin • Lehner is a firm with extensive experience in the field of Historic Preservation consulting. Established in 1984, Fannin • Lehner has served a variety of public and private clients in a wide range of services including National Register of Historic Places individual listings and districts, National Historic Landmark nominations, local historic districts, inventories/surveys of town or city historical and architectural cultural resources, environmental impact reports and a number of other historic preservation services.

Thirty years ago, the firm developed a unique subspecialty in the field of Historic Burial Ground Conservation. Since that time Fannin • Lehner has served public and private cemeteries in the Southern, Midwestern and Eastern United States. In burial ground planning, the firm provides gravestone and monument condition assessment services as well as burial ground preservation and master plans. In burial ground gravestone and monument conservation, the firm performs all types of conservation procedures including cleaning, resetting, adhesive repair, drilling

and pinning and many other stone repair techniques. The firm also specializes in tomb and mausoleum rebuilding and restoration.

In May 2018, Fannin Lehner Preservation Consultants received a Lifetime Achievement Preservation Award from the Massachusetts Historical Commission for outstanding commitment to the conservation of the historic cemeteries of the Commonwealth.

Personnel

Working from the Concord, Massachusetts office, Fannin • Lehner Preservation Consultants is under the direction of Minxie Jensvold Fannin, Managing Principal. James C. Fannin, Jr., Senior Associate, heads up the section focusing on burial ground conservation.

Minxie Jensvold Fannin, Managing Principal, will oversee the Middle Cemetery Gravestone/Monument Assessment and participate directly in the completion of the work. With an MA in American Studies, Ms. Fannin has broad experience in burial ground documentation, carver research, stone cleaning and preservation planning for historic burial grounds.

James C. Fannin, Jr. has received extensive training in stone conservation and has thirty years of experience in the field. His understanding of the nature and properties of 17th, 18th and 19th century stones and construction techniques for markers and monuments is important in the development of conservation plans and actual treatment of gravestones. He is an associate member of the American Institute for Conservation (AIC) and performs all documentation and conservation in accordance with the AIC Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

A word about Gravestone/Monument Condition Assessments

- Most cemeteries only have a condition assessment every 15 to 20 years. Therefore, in our view, an assessment is a serious tool for Cemetery and/or Historical Commissions in developing long range plans for the conservation of their gravestones and monuments. This assessment should address not only the most threatened stones but also stones at risk in the future. In an assessment, each stone requiring conservation is given a priority of treatment. Using the detailed assessment plan, conservation projects can be carefully targeted at specific groups of stones.

- In developing recommendations for stones to be conserved, our firm looks at every stone in a cemetery or section of a cemetery to determine its condition. While time consuming, this exhaustive and hands-on approach is vital to arriving at an accurate condition assessment, suitable to be used in bid documents for conservation, etc. Some gravestones and monuments put on the conservation list may look, to the casual eye, to be perfectly fine. But by examining each monument individually, one discovers many of these monuments are actually loose on their pins/bases, posing a risk to the public, to whom they appear visually secure. Tilted gravestones, more than 1" out of plumb, are included as they will accelerate in their tilt over the coming years.

- To be clear, a Condition Assessment is NOT an inventory. Although all the stones in a burying ground are reviewed, only those stones needing conservation are noted.

Examples of Similar Projects to that proposed at Middle Cemetery:

Fannin • Lehner has performed gravestone/monument condition assessment planning for numerous burial grounds/cemeteries. The projects listed below are those in which the firm performed gravestone assessments similar to that proposed for the Middle Cemetery. The condition assessment sets the stage and provides for a carefully planned program of gravestone/monument conservation.

- IPSWICH MA: Condition Assessment of the historic section of the Old North Burying Ground as part of a comprehensive Preservation Plan – Total stones requiring conservation – 709 – 2015.

- CAMBRIDGE MA: Condition assessment of the oldest cemetery in Cambridge, the Old Burying Ground, on Harvard Square, for the Cambridge Historical Commission (2002). Ongoing conservation of the gravestones and monuments continued until 2022. Now (2023), because the original assessment was done so long ago, our firm is beginning a re-assessment.

- HINGHAM MA: Gravestone/Monument Condition Assessment of Liberty Plain Cemetery (Hingham) completed in 2011. Fourth phase of conservation ongoing in 2023.

MIDDLE CEMETERY
GRAVESTONE/MONUMENT CONDITION ASSESSMENT PROJECT

General Observations:

On January 1, 2023 Fannin • Lehner Preservation Consultants spent over four hours reviewing the Middle Cemetery to determine the extent of the gravestones and monuments requiring conservation.

The Middle Cemetery occupies a sloping hill stretching from Main Street (Route 70) to the Boston & Maine Railroad tracks. It is well-maintained and has had an impressive amount of work done on its trees, especially with the removal of several old Pine trees. A significant problem from the trees remains – an extensive root system that has disrupted a great many gravestones and monuments.

During the on-site review of the Middle Cemetery, gravestones and monuments were found to be broken, tilted, fallen, delaminating (slate stones), loose on pins and without pins (marble monuments). The tree root problem, which will complicate the gravestone repair, has been mentioned above. Some slate stones are delaminating, and the marble stones have deteriorated markedly due to breakage and sugar decay. The sloping terrain also impacts the stability of the gravestones.

The work of several gravestone carvers has already been identified in Middle Cemetery. It is hoped this assessment will be able to identify more carvers with direct links to specific Middle Cemetery stones.

In total, approximately 540 markers were identified in Middle Cemetery which require conservation in order to extend their life span.

Fannin • Lehner Preservation consultants has performed over two dozen condition assessments, ranging from New Hampshire to the Kentucky border. The firm is particularly skilled in working with large numbers of stones requiring conservation.

Fannin • Lehner will carry out the program to develop the Gravestone/Monument Condition Assessment in the following manner:

1. Review of historical documents.
2. Take representative photographs illustrating conservation problems present in the Middle Cemetery.
3. Take representative photographs of stones of aesthetic significance as well as stones executed by known gravestone carvers.
4. Fannin • Lehner Preservation Consultants will use the David E. Ross Associates Site Plan of Middle Cemetery, Lancaster MA (July 2007) to circle all the gravestones and monuments in need of treatment.
5. Prepare a list of all markers requiring conservation in the Middle Cemetery. The information for each marker will include:
 - I. The Ross July 2007 Site Plan number
 - II. Full name on gravestone
 - III. Date of death
 - IV. Material (marble, slate, etc.)
 - V. Type of stone (headstone, footstone, monument, etc.)
 - VI. Stone Condition
 - VII. Gravestone carver (if identified)
 - VIII. Recommended treatment
 - IX. Priority of repair

Work Product

The work product from this project will be a report covering the findings consisting of the following:

- Table of Contents
- Guide to Gravestone/Monument Assessment/Treatment Lists
- List, ordered by Ross Site Plan number (July 2007), of all Gravestones/Monuments requiring conservation in the Middle Cemetery
- Location on Ross Site Plan (July 2007) of gravestones and Monuments requiring treatment
- List of gravestone carvers, with examples of their work in Middle Cemetery.
- Representative photographs of both conservation problems and gravestone carver identified stones.
- Estimate of Cost of Gravestone/Monument Conservation for the approximately 540 gravestones and monuments, and suggestions for phased conservation.

- Causes of Stone Deterioration
- Gravestone Conservator: Technical Recommendations for Project Completion
- Middle Cemetery Bibliography
- Selected Glossary

Fee

Professional Fee and all expenses for the above-described work: \$13,500.00

Respectfully submitted,



Minxie Jensvold Fannin
Managing Principal













Gravestone 1 (top left):
In Memory of
Mrs. Anna M. [illegible]
Born [illegible] 1810
Died [illegible] 1870
Aged 60 Years

Gravestone 2 (middle left):
In Memory of
Mrs. APRIL
[illegible]
Born Feb. 3, 1812
Died Feb. 3, 1882
Aged 70 Years

Gravestone 3 (bottom left):
In Memory of
MRS. HENRY [illegible]
Born [illegible] 1840
Died [illegible] 1880
Aged 40 Years

Gravestone 4 (bottom right):
In Memory of
Sarah E. [illegible]
Born [illegible] 1844
Died [illegible] 1884
Aged 40 Years