



HOPE CEMETERY COMMISSION MEETING

Monday May 6, 2024 – 4:00 P.M.

Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office
Meeting Room A
50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

If you choose to use the Microsoft Teams platform:

- 1) Go to www.teams.com
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 218 159 983 044
- 3) Enter password: 9j9AmT

If you choose to attend via phone:

- 1) Call 1-469-998-7682
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 289 309 876#

If technological problems interrupt the virtual meeting component, the meeting will continue in-person.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the December 4, 2023 & April 8, 2024 (Roll Call)
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Hope Cemetery by email at Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.

5. Public Participation – Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in person and remote participation at the Hope Cemetery Commission meetings. To partake in the “Public Participation” section of this meeting, you may join us directly within the 50 Officer Manny Familia Way Meeting Room A, follow the information above to join via the Microsoft Teams application or dial the direct line as indicated. If you would like to raise your hand when in the meeting as a call-in user, you may dial *5.
 6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)
 7. Old Business
 - a. 5 Year Capital Plan Discussion
 8. New Business:

Agenda items must be submitted three (3) business days before each Commission Meeting with the subject line “Agenda Item” to Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov.

 - a. Budget Discussion
 - b. Discussion on Barn Project
 - c. Explanation of Perpetual Care & Endowed Lots?
 - d. How are fallen gravestones addressed?
 - e. Status of digitizing of Cemetery records?
 9. Date of Next Meeting:
 - June 10, 2024
 - September 9, 2024
 - October 7, 2024
 - November 4, 2024
 - December 2, 2024
 - January 13, 2025
 - February 3, 2025
 - March 3, 2025
 - March 24, 2025
 - May 5, 2025
 - June 9, 2025
 8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call)
-



HOPE CEMETERY COMMISSION **MINUTES**

Monday December 4, 2023 – 4:00 P.M.
Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office
Meeting Room A
50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

If you choose to use the Microsoft Teams platform:

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- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 292 684 571 975
- 3) Enter password: bzumdT

If you choose to attend via phone:

- 1) Call 1-469-998-7682
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AGENDA

1. Call to Order at 4:08PM
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
Matthew Curewitz -Present
Christopher Faucher – Present
John Deedy – Present
Andrew Lizotte – Present
Fatima Idris - Present
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the May 8, 2023, June 5, 2023 & November 6, 2023 (Table)
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Hope Cemetery by email at Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.
5. Public Participation – Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021 and in order to ensure active, public engagement, the City of Worcester currently allows for both in person and remote participation at the Hope Cemetery Commission meetings. To partake in the “Public Participation” section of

this meeting, you may join us directly within the 50 Officer Manny Familia Way Meeting Room A, follow the information above to join via the Microsoft Teams application or dial the direct line as indicated. If you would like to raise your hand when in the meeting as a call-in user, you may dial *5.

6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)
7. Old Business
 - a. Overview of the Hope Cemetery Master Plan -nothing new currently
 - b. 5 Year Capital Plan Discussion (new business)
8. New Business
 - a. Request of Yanyiah Pearson to speak to the Commission on Bethany Veney.
Representative /Speaker is Benetta Kuffor for Yanyiah Pearson in regards to Bethany Veney
Bethany Veney was an enslaved woman from Virginia, who later came to Rhode Island and Massachusetts as a free woman. She was a very independent, brave, resilient, had a strong faith and raised her family on her own and a home. She was also known as Aunt Betty; she held many meetings with soldiers regarding freedom and supporting others that had been in her situation. Aunt Betty lived to be 104 there are stories, songs, and letters about her journey. She did receive the key to the city in her honor. So, her descendants would like for her to be recognized as having a monument placed at her gravesite. For support regarding this we have letters from the Historical Society – Bill Wallace as well as the FHC.
 - b. Request of Commissioner Curewitz to discuss the following: as part of a 5-year Capital Plan
 - i. Barn & Maintenance area
 - ii. Fence replacement-possibly when the development of the berm is developed
 - iii. Would like an update by June 2025 regarding the Capital Budget
 - iv. Requesting emails be sent to the Assistant Commissioner Antonelli Jr priorities in regarding future projects
 - c. Request of Commissioner Faucher to discuss a subcommittee to address the following
 - i. Barn replacement / renovation – funding is an issue to restore the barn as well as safety issues. The barn is on the Historical registrar which does include Preservation Worcester. Many organizations to follow up with in reference to restore, remove with a new facility and funding. All things would also need to be reviewed by the City Manager and Commission of DPW-Parks.
 - ii. Investigate funding sources
 - iii. Identify storage needs
 - iv. Identify steps & timeframes
 - v. Develop/ identify interim storage of cemetery equipment

- vi. Investigate the cost and potential location of a smaller columbarium & cremation garden prior to development of future sections, could there be one built on Stoddard Drive near the back entrance?
- vii. Hope Ave fence repair / replacement
- viii. Investigate ideas to beautify the Hope Ave side of the Cemetery
- ix. Clean up along the fence line (when removed send to scrap yard) and remove fallen trees- Regional Environmental Council, handles Earth Day Cleanups
- x. Investigate use of volunteer labor – Maybe with coordination with FHC

9. Date of Next Meeting:

- January 8, 2024
- February 5, 2024
- March 4, 2024
- April 8, 2024
- May 13, 2024
- June 3, 2024

8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call) at 4:52PM

Christopher Faucher
Fatima Idris

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER’S REPORT:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Friends Of Hope Cemetery - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Signage b. Cemetery Plantings c. Events d. Sound System e. Mausoleum 2. Genealogical - 3. Compost Site - 4. Water System - 5. Hope Cemetery Records - | <p>Update the FHC have donated for any repairs to the water system, after Memorial Day 2024. We thank them for this contribution.</p> <p>NA</p> <p>NA</p> <p>NA</p> <p>NA</p> |
|---|---|

- | | | |
|-----|--|---|
| 6. | Perpetual Care Fund – City Treasurer - | NA |
| 7. | Rules and Regulation Changes - | NA |
| 8. | Lot Sale Fee Changes - | NA |
| 9. | Interment & Associated Fees - | NA |
| 10. | Fiscal Year Budget - | NA |
| 11. | Fiscal Year Capital Budget - | NA |
| 12. | Donations | NA |
| 13. | Monuments and Mausoleums - | NA |
| | a. Discussion on new cremation burial options | Commissioner Curewitz asking about a Rural cremation garden possibility? |
| 14. | Section Development - | |
| | a. Section 39 Possible Columbarium | NA |
| | • Location – See Master Plan on the City Web Site | |
| | • RFP | |
| | • Design | |
| | • Timeline | |
| 15. | Building Rehab - | NA |
| | a. Barn | |
| | • Reports – Submitted by the Friends of Hope Cemetery (2-10, 2007) | |
| | • Grants | |
| | • Historical Commission | |
| | • Plans of storage | |
| | b. Admin | |
| 16. | Condition of Hope – | Update – the storage bays are prepared For the winter season with sand and salt |
| | a. Sheriff’s Community Outreach Program | |
| 17. | Hope Cemetery Master Plan | Approved by City Council 10-10-17 |
| | a. City Parks City of Worcester, MA (worcesterma.gov) | |
| 18. | Misc. - | |
| | a. Productivity Reports | |
| | b. Staff | |
| | c. City Council Orders | |
| | • NA | |
| | d. Articles | |
| | e. Other | |



HOPE CEMETERY COMMISSION **MINUTES**

Monday April 8, 2024 – 4:00 P.M.
Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Administrative Office
Meeting Room A
50 Officer Manny Familia Way Worcester, MA 01605

Or

If you choose to use the Microsoft Teams platform:

- 1) Go to www.teams.com
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- 3) Enter password: ZEpBTG

If you choose to attend via phone:

- 1) Call 1-469-998-7682
- 2) Enter Meeting ID#: 255 501 396#

If technological problems interrupt the virtual meeting component, the meeting will continue in-person.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order: 4:10PM
2. Attendance (Roll Call)
Andrew Lizotte - Present
John Deedy – Present
Christopher Faucher – Present
Fatima Idris – Present
Matthew Curewitz - Absent
3. Acceptance of Minutes for the December 4, 2023 (Table) & February 12, 2024 (Roll Call)
Acceptance of February 12, 2024 minutes / Commissioner Faucher made motion to accept the minutes, second by Commissioner Deedy, all were in favor Motion was approved 4-0
4. To request a reasonable accommodation or interpretation or submit written comments or questions in advance of the meeting, please contact the Hope Cemetery by email at Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Please note that interpretation requests must be received no later than 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Para solicitar una interpretacion razonable, o enviar comentarios o preguntas por escrito por favor comuniquese con la oficina de la Division de Parques, Recreo & Cementerio por correo electronico a Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov. Por favor note que las solicitudes de interpretacion deberan ser enviadas 48 horas antes de la reunion.

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6. Assistant Commissioners Report (See Report Topics Below)
7. Old Business
 - a. 5 Year Capital Plan Discussion
8. New Business:
 - a. Hope Cemetery – Cleanup-completed
 - b. Winter burials – now tamping, loaming, and seeding
 - c. Seasonal Staff-in the process of hiring
 - d. Staffing – Laborers all positions filled / office full time open
 - e. Veteran Flags – are replaced by Veterans for Memorial Day usually the week of 13th, does change sometimes due to weather conditions and number of volunteers
 - f. Commissioner Faucher – cyclone fence damage Hope Ave to Webster Street? Assistant Commissioner Mr. Antonelli Jr stated it was a car accident – stolen vehicle, still waiting for information from the police Department.

Agenda items must be submitted three (3) business days before each Commission Meeting with the subject line “Agenda Item” to Hopecemetery@worcesterma.gov.

g. NA

9. Date of Next Meeting:
 - May 6, 2024
 - June 10, 2024 (New Date)

8. Meeting Adjourned (Roll Call)

John Deedy

Christopher Faucher at 4:26PM

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

1. Friends Of Hope Cemetery - there are no updates currently
 - a. Signage
 - b. Cemetery Plantings
 - c. Events
 - d. Sound System
 - e. Mausoleum
2. Genealogical - NA
3. Compost Site - NA
4. Water System - NA
5. Hope Cemetery Records - NA
6. Perpetual Care Fund – City Treasurer - NA
7. Rules and Regulation Changes - NA
8. Lot Sale Fee Changes - NA
9. Interment & Associated Fees - NA
10. Fiscal Year Budget - NA will know more at the end of the month in regards to finances / money
11. Fiscal Year Capital Budget - NA
12. Donations - NA
13. Monuments and Mausoleums - NA
 - a. Discussion on new cremation burial options
14. Section Development -
 - a. Section 39 Possible Columbarium NA
 - Location – See Master Plan on the City Web Site
 - RFP
 - Design
 - Timeline
15. Building Rehab - NA
 - a. Barn
 - Reports – Submitted by the Friends of Hope Cemetery (2-10-2007)
 - Grants
 - Historical Commission
 - Plans of storage
 - b. Admin
16. Condition of Hope – Back rear entrance gates have some electrical issues will be scheduling the contractor for repairs. Hiring security guards in reference to locking the front gates upon their patrols.
17. Hope Cemetery Master Plan Approved by City Council 10-10-17
 - a. [City Parks | City of Worcester, MA \(worcesterna.gov\)](http://www.worcesterma.gov)
18. Misc. -
 - a. Productivity Reports
 - b. Staff
 - c. City Council Orders
 - NA
 - d. Articles
 - e. Other



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Commissioners ask to (possibly) raze Hope Cemetery barn

January 9, 2024 | Government & Politics, Housing & Real Estate

Minimal repairs have kept the historic structure standing for many years, but it's in a "terrible state of disrepair"

By Kim Ring

The Worcester Guardian 

Let me know if you have any questions!

I have a question

No, thanks





The barn at Hope Cemetery, as seen in photographs taken in December, has fallen into disrepair and Cemetery Commissioners are seeking funding to either raze and replace or restore it (photo submitted)

WORCESTER—Despite having been listed as an endangered historic building four times, Hope Cemetery Commissioners are asking the Commissioner of Public Works and Parks to prioritize funding for the barn at Hope Cemetery with the possibility of razing the 142-year-old structure.

In a letter to DPW Commissioner Jay Fink, Hope Cemetery Commission Chairman Matthew Curewitz wrote that the barn was built in 1882 and contains a top-floor hay loft because, at that time, horses were used to pull mowers in the burial ground.

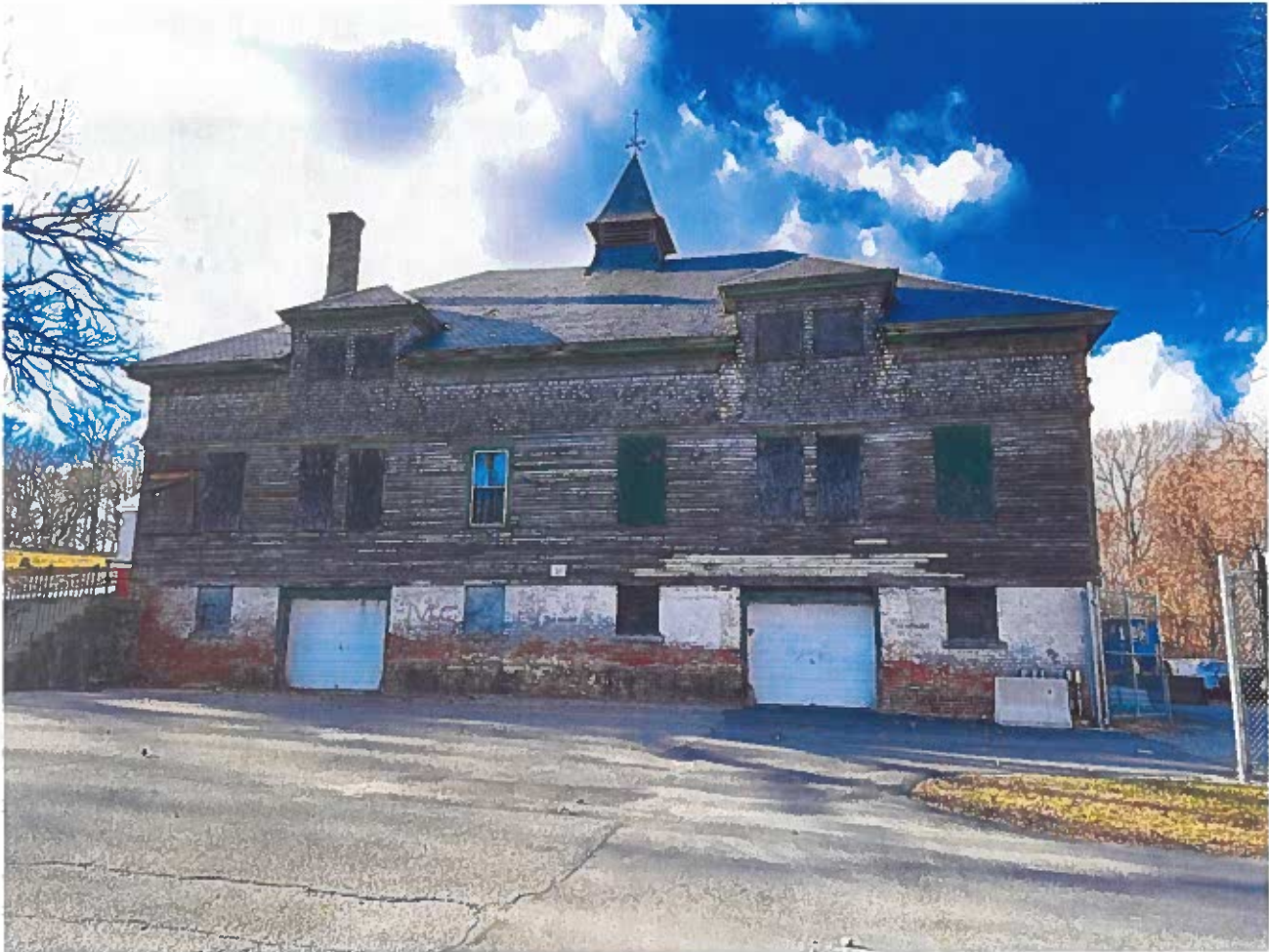
“As I’m sure you are aware, the barn is in a terrible state of disrepair,” Curewitz wrote, noting that it’s been a topic of discussion for more than two decades but the only repairs done have been “stop-gap measures to put off the inevitable replacement.”

The barn, at New York Street and Stoddard Drive inside the cemetery, is “a fine stick-style structure, characterized by its verticality, angularity, steeply pitched roof and cupola, and overhanging eaves which are pierced with dormers, according to Preservation Worcester, which has named it as endangered as recently as 2023.

The group pointed out that “Preservation Mass., the statewide architectural preservation group, placed barns on their Ten Most Endangered Historic Resources List several years ago and has since formed a Barn Preservation Task Force to promote restoration and maintenance of old barns.”

But Hope Cemetery Commissioners said that a 2007 “treatments and conditions” report indicated that renovation of the barn wouldn’t be cost-effective nor would the renovated building serve the needs of the cemetery in the future.

The Hope Cemetery 2018 Master Plan recommends the building be leveled, as well.



The Hope Cemetery barn was built in 1882 and has a hayloft (photo submitted)

While tearing the building down might seem the easiest and most cost-effective option, Preservation Worcester mentions on their website that Hope Cemetery is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and has been since 1997.

Cemetery commissioners said it may be the oldest municipal-owned barn in the area.

That could make it more difficult to demolish it, cemetery commissions have said, but they don’t think that makes the potential razing an insurmountable task.

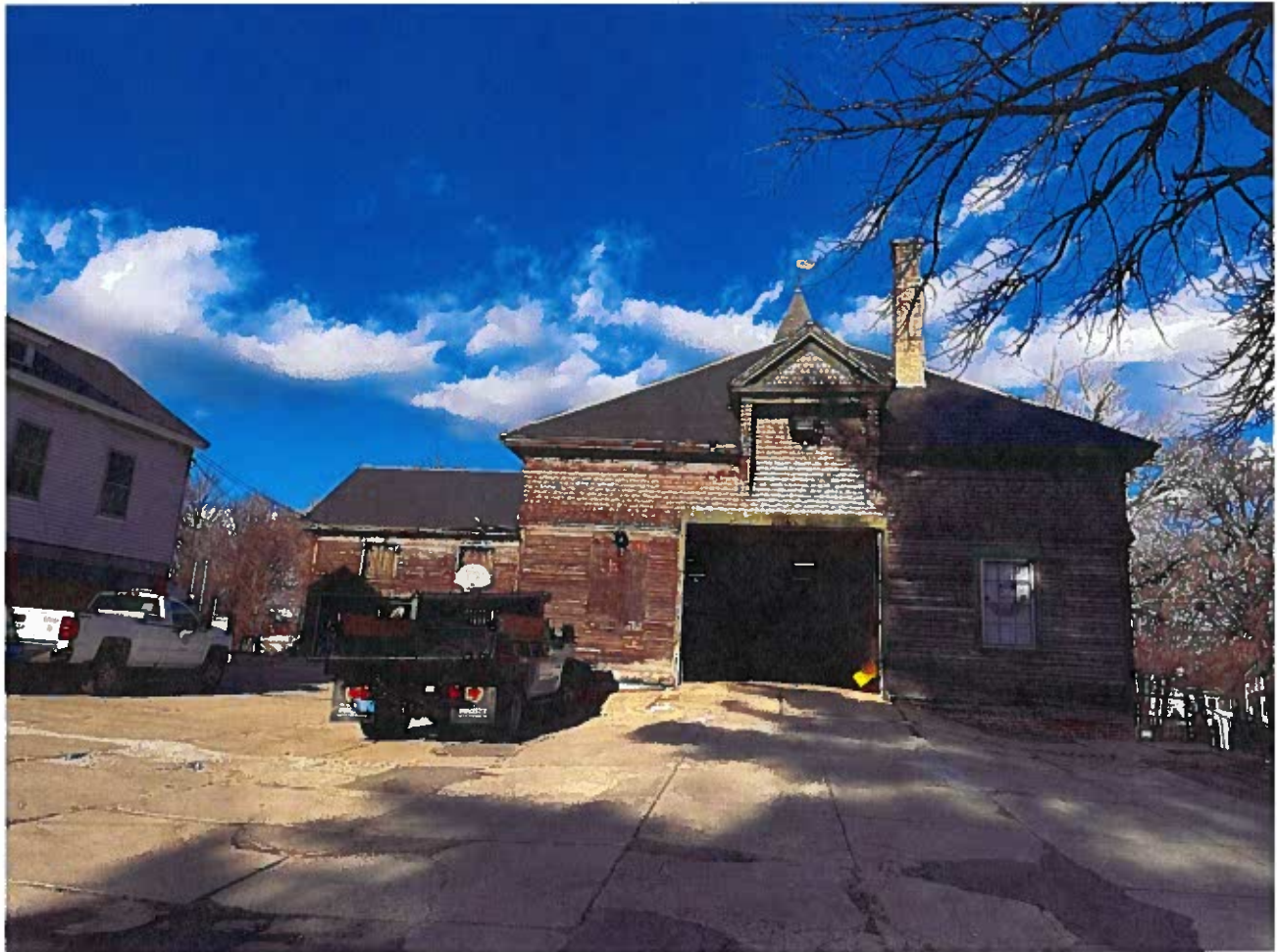
In a description on the National Register’s website, the barn is described as having, “Elements of Queen Anne style” which “are seen in the shaped shingles on the second

floor that wrap around the structure.”

Preservation Worcester has listed it as endangered in 2005, 2007, 2022, and again last year, citing “neglect and deferred maintenance.”

Commissioners have talked about the potential for grant funding to rehabilitate the building, but even with that done, it wouldn’t be useful, and a newer building would likely still be needed.

Following years of neglect, the barn is now weathered, stripped of any paint, its windows covered in aging plywood, exterior wood is falling off and the brick foundation is four different colors. Officials said it’s no longer suitable for storing equipment.



The barn is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and has been since 1997 (photo submitted)

Commissioner Christopher Faucher said the building lacks adequate square footage and a “renovation is not what the cemetery needs.”

He said the issue has been “kicked down the road” since 2007, and he doesn’t want it to fall by the wayside.

At their December meeting, commissioners said they could use money to fund design plans for a new building and they agreed to send a letter to Fink asking him to “prioritize funding of the preliminary steps leading to the replacement or renovation of the maintenance facility for Hope Cemetery.”

Commissioners hope funds will be included in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget for the project.

Kim Ring fell into journalism in the 1980s as a correspondent at the Telegram & Gazette and eventually left her initial career to pursue reporting full-time. In her years of writing, she has penned articles for several Massachusetts-based publications, taking a brief hiatus to work as chief of staff for a state representative. She can be reached at

Kimringwrites@gmail.com

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ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

1. Friends Of Hope Cemetery - Update
 - a. Signage
 - b. Cemetery Plantings
 - c. Events
 - d. Sound System
 - e. Mausoleum
2. Genealogical - NA
3. Compost Site - NA
4. Water System - NA
5. Hope Cemetery Records - NA
6. Perpetual Care Fund – City Treasurer - NA
7. Rules and Regulation Changes - NA
8. Lot Sale Fee Changes - NA
9. Interment & Associated Fees - NA
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 - a. [City Parks | City of Worcester, MA \(worcesterma.gov\)](http://www.worcesterma.gov)
18. Misc. -
 - a. Productivity Reports
 - b. Staff
 - c. City Council Orders
 - NA
 - d. Articles
 - e. Other

HOPE REPORT

SPRING 2024



ANNUAL HOSPITALITY DAY

**SATURDAY, MAY 18, 2024
10 AM - 2 PM**

Come have a free cup of coffee and a treat while you tend to a loved ones grave.

We will have 2 mausoleums open for you to explore.

WORCESTER COMMON BURIALS

When the Common became Worcester's active burying ground in 1728, it replaced an earlier smaller cemetery at the corner of Thomas and Summer Streets (the site today of VNA Care). Burials continued on the Common until the very early 19th century.

By the 1850s, the Common cemetery had fallen into disrepair, a victim of neglect. The city council ordered that, after recording the inscriptions and creating a map of the surviving gravestones, the stones be laid flat and covered with earth.

A century later construction began on Worcester Center and the re-design of the Common. The release of state funding for these projects required that the long-forgotten burials be removed. Dan Farber, noted historian and photographer, used the 19th century map to assist in identifying the location of gravestones and related burials. As markers were uncovered, he photo-documented the process. Gravestones and surviving remains were removed to a group lot next to the current administration building at Hope Cemetery and collectively reburied.

The Board of the Friends has hired Ta Mara Conde of Historic Gravestone Services, a highly recommended restorer, to remove the stones and plan a new burial ground with the intent of installing the stones upright. It is estimated there are 38 stones, but we will not know for sure until the work gets underway.

Ta Mara plans to begin in late April, weather permitting. We encourage all of you to stop by and see the progress of this long-anticipated project.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Janet M. Parent, *President*
 Archie Torosian, *First Vice President*
 Anne C. Nelson, *Second Vice President*
 Kenneth T. Lundquist, *Treasurer*
 Sally K. Talbot, *Secretary*
 Michael C. Moschos, *Assistant Secretary*

John B. Anderson
 Caroline R. Bigelow
 Deborah Sharpe Callahan
 Matthew W. Panagiotu
 Sheila L. Tetler
 William D. Wallace

NOMINEE FOR JUNE ANNUAL MEETING

Dale Magee

If you would like to nominate someone, please contact Jan Parent, jan@prudentialparent.com

Dear Friends,

In 1991, a group of concerned citizens gathered to form the Friends of Hope Cemetery. In the last 33 years the Friends have spent approximately a half a million dollars on our mission of the preservation, restoration, and beautification of our historic garden cemetery. We have worked on big projects such as installing new water lines and spigots and replacing all the street signs. We've worked on small projects like spraying all the dogwoods each year to ensure their continued flowering beauty. We repaired mausoleums that were vandalized and created the Children's Garden for those that have lost their precious child.

None of what we do would be possible without your support. Thank you for your interest and thank you for being a Friend of Hope Cemetery.

Sincerely,
 Jan Parent, President
 Friends of Hope Cemetery

TWO HEROES AT HOPE



Thomas Plunkett

Among the many veterans buried at Hope Cemetery are two men who won the Medal of Honor for their service in the Civil War.

Thomas Plunkett was born in County Mayo, Ireland. He enlisted in the 21st Massachusetts Infantry. In 1862, already a sergeant, he and his regiment were part of the Union force at the Battle of Fredericksburg. Seeing the regiment's color bearer shot down by rebel forces,

Plunkett rushed forward to rescue the colors and continue the advance toward Confederate lines. He was hit by a cannonball that shattered both his arms. He clutched the flag with what remained of his arms as his troop advanced. He was later evacuated from the battlefield and his arms were amputated. Plunkett

was among the wounded nursed by Clara Barton, the "angel of the battlefield."

Plunkett returned to Worcester and lived on Aetna Street until his death in 1885. After a civic funeral he was buried at Hope Cemetery.

The flag—the colors—for which Plunkett risked his life had both a symbolic and a practical role in war. Often presented with elaborate ceremony by the community, flags were not only a source of pride but also, in an era of limited battlefield communication, a source of information about troop location and movement.

Charles Pinkham, a twenty-one-year-old sergeant like Plunkett, was at the Battle of Fort Stedman in the waning days of the war. The Confederates of the 57th North Carolina Infantry had captured the Union forces' colors, a humiliation. Like Plunkett, Pinkham risked his life, raided the enemy camp, rescued his regiment's colors, and seized those of the North Carolinians.

Charles Pinkham died in 1895, aged 51.



01505-282450

Robert C. Antonelli, Jr.
Comm. Parks Dept.
50 Skyline Drive
Worcester, MA 01605



BOSTON MA 020
8 APR 2024 PM 7 L

The Friends of
Hope Cemetery
119 Webster Street, Worcester, MA 01603