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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to inform you that the Department of Planning and Community Development and Department of Public Services are working together to conserve Charter Street Burial Ground in accordance with recommendations from the City of Salem Burial Ground Report 2002 and Secretary of Interior Standards.

Charter Street Burial Ground, the City's oldest burial ground, is a 1.47-acre green space located within the boundaries of Charter Street, Central Street, Derby Street and Liberty Street. Established in 1637, Charter Street Burial Ground is a highly visible location, a historical asset that is well documented and visited by thousands of people every year.

The purpose of this restoration project is to retain the burying grounds' historic integrity while maintaining visitor access to this National Historic Site. Freeze/thaw damage, deterioration of marble and limestones due to acid rain, compaction of pathways and new cut-through pathways created by visitors have all contributed to the deterioration of the burial ground and headstones. In addition, vandalism is a significant threat as visitors have been known to take headstones or pieces of headstones that are already fractured or in disrepair. As described in the "Salem Burying Grounds Planning Project Report" of 2002, one of the most effective ways to deter vandalism is to maintain and enhance conditions of the burial ground.

The City has retained a landscape architect, Martha Lyon, of Martha Lyon Landscape Architecture LLC, to work with the City and the Cemetery Commission to provide conservation treatment recommendations for this historically significant landscape. Ms. Lyon is working with the City to provide landscape plans to improve pathway circulation, signage, lighting, landscaping, and increased security. The landscape architect will be presenting these plans through a public process at forthcoming meetings of the Cemetery Commission, Design Review Board, and Salem Redevelopment Authority. The Charter Street Cemetery is within the boundaries of Salem's Urban Renewal District. Projects that have a visual impact in this district must be reviewed be approved by the Salem Redevelopment Authority (SRA), after an initial review and recommendation by and from the Design Review Board (DRB). This project will also be reviewed through a public meeting held by the Cemetery Commission.

The City has also retained a team of stone conservators, Irving Slavid and Martin Johnson, of Monument Conservation Collaborative. This team has completed the evaluation of the headstones and tombs at Charter Street Cemetery and has compiled information in a Condition Assessment and Treatment Report with recommendations for headstone and tomb conservation. **The conservators will be on site beginning in May working to restore headstones and tombs.** The Conservators found a total of 90 markers (including tombs) in need of conservation treatment. At this time, the City has funding that will address stones in critical need of conservation first and will include the conservation of eight (8) tombs and fifteen (15) markers throughout the cemetery. **Between May and September 2016, you will see conservator teams working in the cemetery on these markers. Please do not disturb the conservators or the work sites. In order to be able to keep public access to the cemetery during the conservation work, it is critical that visitors not enter into the work sites.**

Tombs to be conserved in this phase include: Turner, Fisk, Derby, Wainwright, Simon Bradstreet, Gedney, Bartlett, and Lynde. Conservation of the tombs may include repointing, restoration of deteriorating stucco, a restoration treatment of tops called consolidation, and securing loose tops of the table tombs so that people cannot continue to lift them and cause further damage. As for the conservation of headstones, the conservators may carefully excavate markers, attach fragments if found, fill delaminated stone with historically appropriate materials, recast concrete bases, reset stones and treat surfaces with a D/2 biological solution to clean the stones. For more information regarding conservation measures please visit: <http://www.salem.com/planning-and-community-development/pages/studies-and-reports>. All work will be done during the day, during normal City business hours. **If you see work being undertaken in the cemetery and are not sure if it is related to this project, please call the Department of Planning and Community Development at 978-619-5685. If it is outside of regular business hours or appears to be suspicious activity, please contact the Salem Police Department at 978-744-1212.**

This project is made possible by Community Preservation funds. In the near future, the City will return to the Community Preservation Committee for additional funding to carry out recommended landscape plans to improve pathway circulation, signage, lighting, landscaping, and security. At this time, the City has received \$90,000 of an estimated \$150,000 (+) restoration project and continues to seek additional funding sources. We hope that through education about this restoration project, you can help the City be stewards of this historically significant site.

If there are any questions regarding this restoration project, please contact Erin Schaeffer, Staff Planner with the Department of Planning and Community Development by e-mail at eschaeffer@salem.com.

Sincerely,

Erin Schaeffer
Staff Planner
Department of Planning and Community Development