

Community Preservation Committee

Oak Hill Cemetery

Heritage Tree Preservation



Proprietors of Oak Hill Cemetery

February 4, 2020

TO: Community Preservation Committee
Mike Dissette, Chairman
Jane Healey, Don Little, Paul Healy, Daniel Koen, Mark Rosen, Don
Walters, Karen Popken, and Ronald Ziemba

FROM: Ghlee E. Woodworth, Project Manager
Oak Hill Cemetery

DATE: February 4, 2020

RE: Community Preservation Act Application

Please accept this application for Community Preservation Funds on behalf of the Proprietors of Oak Hill Cemetery (501c) for consideration of the following:

Heritage Tree Preservation

\$10,000

The Heritage Trees of Oak Hill Cemetery are some of the largest and oldest in Newburyport. The rural garden cemetery was designed by local citizens who secured funds and planted over 260 species of shrubs, trees, and flowers during the 1860's. Today there are over 100 trees that are at least 125 years old and the mixture of species is one of the most impressive in northern New England according to the late arborist Jeff Ott of Northeast Shade Tree.

Thank you for your consideration to assist with the maintenance and preservation of our heritage trees. I am available for individual and/or group tours of Oak Hill Cemetery at your convenience.



COMMUNITY PRESERVATION APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

City of Newburyport
Community Preservation Committee

PROJECT NAME: Heritage Tree Preservation

PROJECT ADDRESS: 4 Brown Street
Newburyport, MA 01950
[Click here to enter text.](#)

MAP/LOT: 34-8

APPLICANT NAME: Proprietors of Oak Hill Cemetery, 501 c 13 (special designation for cemeteries) (Group or Committee Affiliation)

CONTACT PERSON: Ghlee E. Woodworth

TELEPHONE/FAX NO.: 978 462-2010

ADDRESS: 51 Prospect Street
Newburyport, MA
[Click here to enter text.](#)

EMAIL: pcbahati@yahoo.com

AMOUNT OF COMMUNITY PRESERVATION FUNDING REQUESTED: \$10,000

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION CATEGORY: *(Please check all that apply)*

Open Space Historic Resource † Affordable Housing * Recreation

PROJECT SUMMARY: Provide a description of the Project, including the property involved and its proposed use.

Objective: To preserve and prevent further deterioration of many of Newburyport's oldest and largest heritage trees

Request: \$10,000

Oak Hill Cemetery was consecrated in 1842 and is managed by a Board of Trustees. The burying ground is one of the first rural garden cemeteries in the country. The 30 acre cemetery comprises of over 8,000 burials and is still an active burying ground. Historic cemetery tours have been conducted since 1988, and the beautiful landscape is home to many species of birds and is a popular destination for walkers, joggers, and people conducting genealogy research.

During the past eight years, over 550 gravestones and 40 granite curbing have been restored with the assistance of Community Preservation funds.

Notable burials include photographers, artists, 29 Newburyport mayors, over 170 sea captains, authors, merchants and businessmen, and abolitionists who have made a significant contribution in shaping historic Newburyport. Published in 2009, *Tiptoe Through the Tombstones, Oak Hill Cemetery, Volume I* won five New England and New York Book Festivals awards.

The Heritage Trees of Oak Hill Cemetery are some of the largest and oldest in Newburyport. The rural garden cemetery was designed by interested citizens including Edward Strong Moseley, who guided staff in planting over 260 species of shrubs, trees, and flowers during the 1860's. Today, most of these plantings are gone but some trees remain from the late 1800's and are in need of immediate critical care. There are over 100 trees that are at least 125 years old and the mixture of species is one of the most impressive in northern New England according to the late arborist Jeff Ott of Northeast Shade Tree.

Ghlee Woodworth has raised over \$100,000 during the past 12 years to fund: Brown Chapel restoration, heritage tree preservation (CPC \$35,000), gravestone restoration, and tree planting.

The CPC grants of 2009 and 2010 preserved over 60 heritage trees. In the following years this preservation work prevented massive tree destruction and gravestone damage during wind storms.

During the past 5 years, \$6,000 has been dedicated to tree removal. Due to budget constraints the board has been unable to dedicate more than \$2,000/year.

Since 2015, donations and fundraisers secured \$4,400. Mayor Gayden W. Morrill Charitable Foundation contributed \$2,500 in 2019. Monies purchased and delivered 21 oak, maple and elm (2.5 caliper - 10 foot saplings). Ghlee Woodworth performed all labor of digging holes, planting, watering, etc.

PUBLIC BENEFIT*: Describe in detail the benefits Newburyport will receive from the Project and how the Project fulfills the Community Preservation Committee's Project Evaluation Criteria.

(No deed restrictions)

The Oak Hill Cemetery project meets three Community Preservation Act purposes: historic preservation, open space, and recreation. Newburyport citizens recognize the importance of preserving local historic and natural resources and maintaining the character of the city. The cemetery is a significant part of Newburyport history.

The Heritage Trees date back to the late 1800's and shape the landscape, visual beauty, natural habitats, and scenic views where once tall ships could be seen entering Newburyport harbor. Today, walkers, joggers, birdwatchers, and researchers visit the cemetery for its natural beauty, historic and educational significance. Sue McGrath, Newburyport Birders, tours Oak Hill as it is one of the best local destinations, aside from Parker River Wildlife Refuge, to view bird species. Since the Clipper City Rail Trail opened along the old City Railroad adjacent to March's Hill an increase number of walkers, joggers, and bicyclists each day wander through Oak Hill Cemetery on their way to and from the rail trail.

During the next 10 years, over 50 trees could be lost due to disease and deterioration seriously affecting natural scenic views and wildlife habitats. The Proprietors of Oak Hill Cemetery will continue to preserve one of the most impressive tree stands in the community and northern New England. Additional funding will assist this goal.

CONTROL OF SITE: Indicate whether the applicant owns or has a purchase agreement for the Project site. If the property is under agreement, include a description of the agreement and the timing and conditions. If the applicant does not have site control, explain.

The property is owned by the Proprietors of Oak Hill Cemetery.

FEASIBILITY: List all steps that may be required for completion of the Project, such as environmental assessment, zoning or other approvals, agreement on terms of any required conservation, affordability or historic preservation restrictions, and any other known issues. For projects that may impact abutters or the neighborhood, describe support or objections from those affected.

There are no known issues at this time.

PROJECT TIMELINE: Describe the anticipated steps or phases for completion of the Project. Demonstrate whether the Project will be ready to proceed in the coming fiscal year.

Depending on recommendations of the arborist's timeline and weather the work will be completed by spring 2021.

FUNDING:

- A. **Project cost estimates:** Provide recent cost estimates for the proposed project, dated within the past six (6) months, detailing the scope of work and associated costs for each task.

Attached is a \$2,000 Iron Tree service paid invoice of \$2,000 dated May of 2019. Generally, it costs approximately \$2,400 to \$2,500 to remove two trees. However Iron Tree staff were generous with their time and assistance. Due to cemetery budget constraints the board is only able to commit \$2,000/year.

Arborists' decisions in January 2020 will most likely change in 10 months. Announcement of awards are approximately September 2020. Our plan is for arborists to walk through the cemetery in October 2020 to make recommendations for tree and/or branch removal based on 1. Safety and 2. Tree health.

The project is managed by Ghlee Woodworth and the work will be completed by spring 2021.

B. Amount of Newburyport Community Preservation Funding Requested:

\$10,000

C. Other Sources of Funding Available: If funding from other sources may be available for the Project, please complete the following table:

No other funding sources at this time

ATTACHMENTS:

Include the following with ALL copies of the application:

- Assessor's map showing location of the Project
- Photographs
- Recent written estimates of cost with detailed scope of work
- Proposed oversight and management plan for the Project
- If the project involves public property, provide verification that the applicable public agency or department supports the project as presented and will oversee the project if funded.
- Historic resources include buildings, structures, vessel real properties, documents or artifacts that are listed or eligible for listing on the state register of historic place or determined to be significant in the history, archeology, architecture or culture of the city by the local historic preservation commission. If the project involves a historic resource, please provide evidence (date of listing on the state register or a letter from the Newburyport Historical Commission confirming its determination of significance) with the application that it meets these criteria

Include the following, if applicable and available:

- Architectural plans and specifications, for new construction or rehabilitation
- Maps, renderings, site plans
- Historic structures report, existing conditions report
- Names and addresses of project architects, contractors and consultants
- Budgets
- Letters of Support

Attach additional sheets as necessary to answer all questions.

YOU MAY BE REQUESTED TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

For questions contact: Office of Planning and Development
Newburyport City Hall
cpc@cityofnewburyport.com
(978) 465-4400

Newburyport MIMAP

Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (2020)

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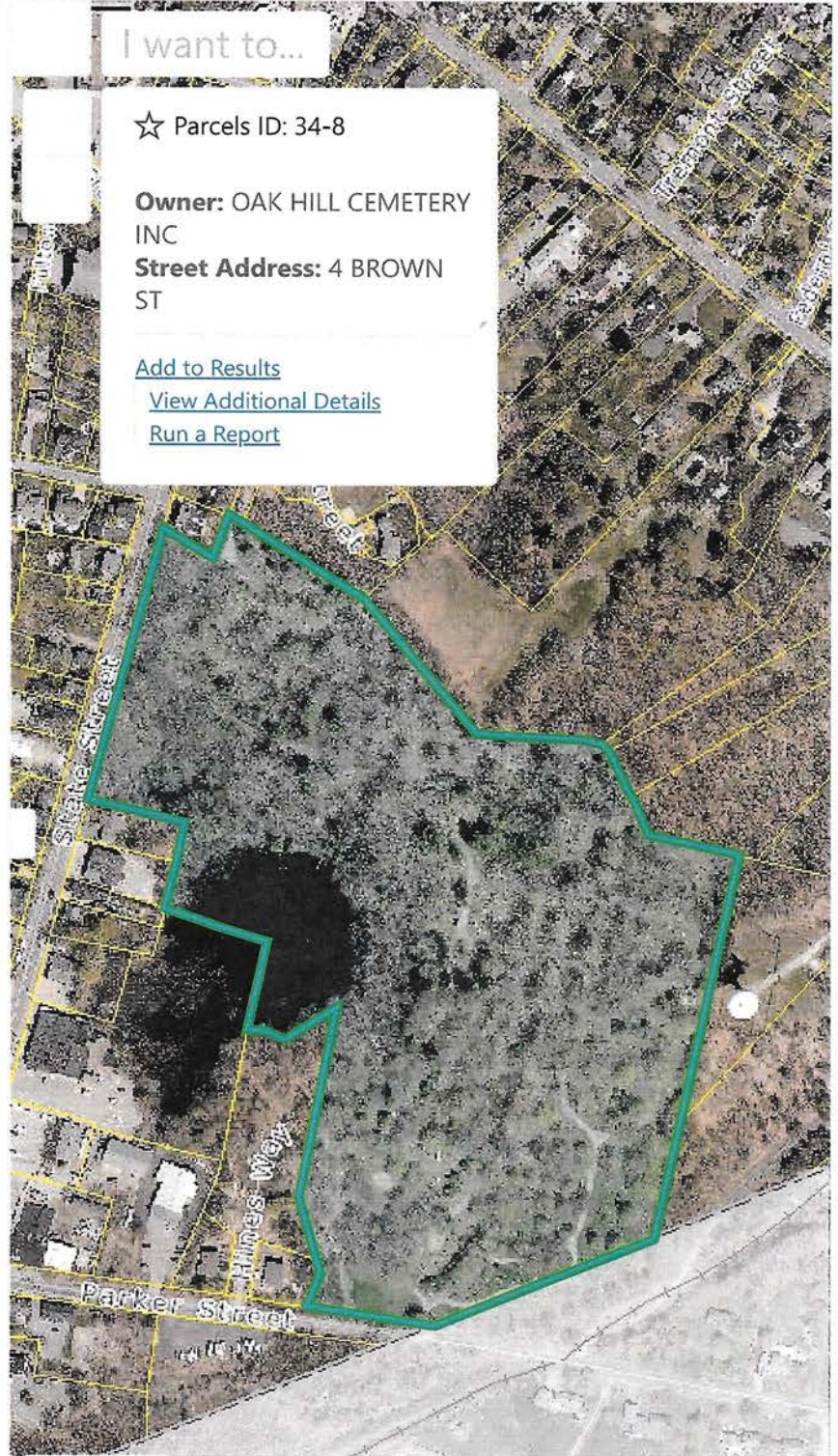


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I want to...

☆ Parcels ID: 34-8

Owner: OAK HILL CEMETERY INC

Street Address: 4 BROWN ST

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Loading GIS Layers map data...

INVOICE



PO Box 12
Wenham, MA 01984
(978) 468-6688

DATE	INVOICE NO.
5/2/2019	11806

BILL TO:
Oak Hill Cemetery
PO Box 576
Newburyport, MA 01950

REP	TERMS
DS	Due on receipt

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	RATE	AMOUNT
Take down 2 dead Sugar Maple trees		2,000.00	2,000.00

*PAID
1330
5/20/19*



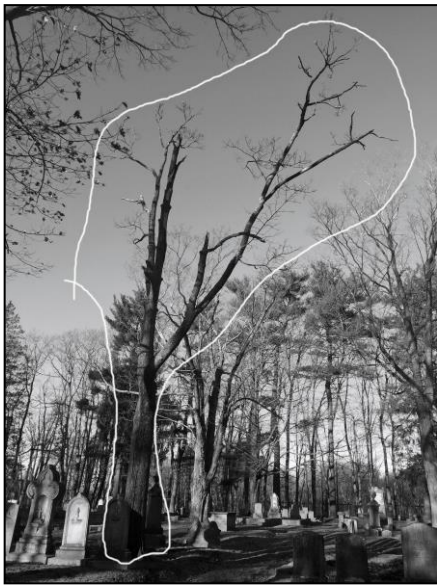
If you are not 100% satisfied with Iron Tree Service, please contact us immediately so that we can make it right!

Thank you very much for your business!

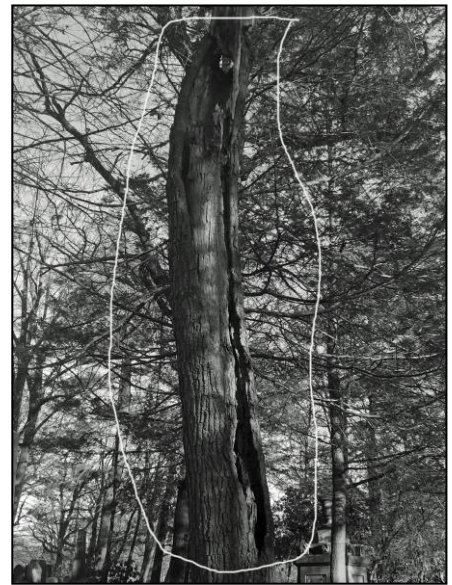
Your satisfaction is important to us!

Please take a moment to complete our online survey at IronTreeService.com/customer-satisfaction/

Total	\$2,000.00
Payments/Credits	\$0.00
Balance Due	\$2,000.00



Oak Hill Cemetery
Dead trees January 2020



Below - strong winds topple tree – January 2020



Below - Iron Tree Service removes 2 dangerous trees in front of Brown Chapel

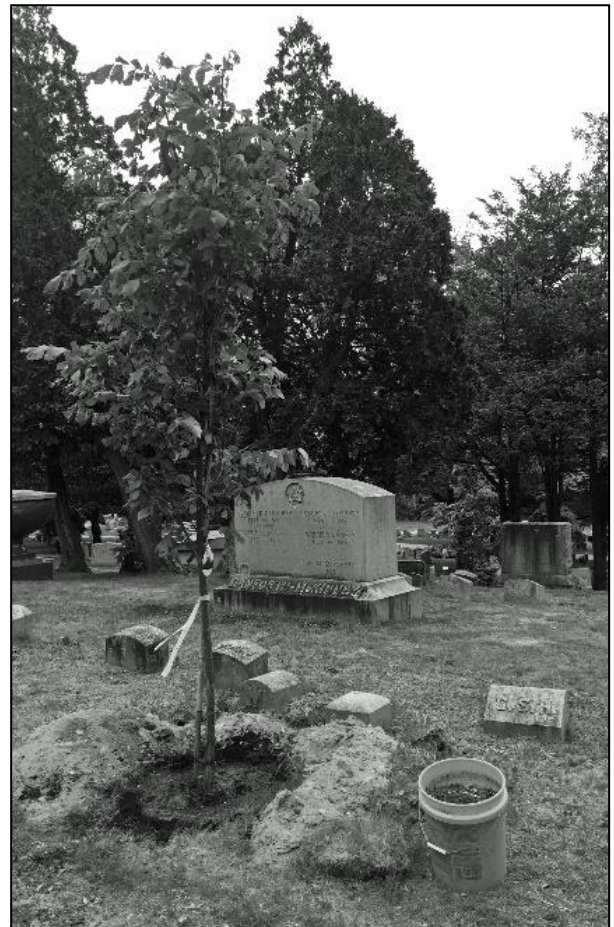
May 2019





Oak Hill Cemetery Tree Planting Project

21 Maples, Oaks and Elms planted since 2016



Oak Hill Cemetery, Newburyport

Private Donations and Grant History

Nonprofit 501 c (13) special designation for a cemetery

All projects managed by Ghlee E. Woodworth; tree planting and gravestone restoration work by Ghlee

Private donations

*\$15,000; 2014 for Brown Chapel electrical, fire alarm, building code upgrade (as a result – Chapel open for events)

*Labor donation – painting of interior walls.

*\$1,000; 2014 and 2015 – for memorial gardens

*\$1,800; 2016 - 6 Tree saplings

*\$2,600 – private donations and fundraisers – for 15 saplings – maple, elm and oak

Grant history from 2007 to 2018 – a total of \$96,000

Arakelian Foundation

*\$20,000 for Gravestone Restoration, September 2007; completed May 2008 by contractors; 51 gravestones repaired and reset.

Arakelian Foundaton

*\$8,150 received for main gate restoration; completed by Keith McCleod spring 2017; Oak Hill secured an additional \$1,500

Five Cents Savings Bank Foundation

*\$5,000 to chapel pew restoration September 2007; completed March 2008.

*\$5,000 to brick front entrance July 2008; completed August 2009.

Newburyport Community Preservation Fund

*\$25,000, August 2008, awarded for heritage tree restoration. Completed March 2009. Maintenance on 55 trees. Treatment on three dozen hemlock trees being destroyed by the woolly adelgid insect.

Oak Hill Cemetery Grant Work continued

*\$10,000, June 2009, awarded to the heritage tree restoration project; Project began October 2009 and completed in autumn of 2010.

*\$2,000, October 2011, awarded for gravestone restoration; Ghlee Woodworth trained in gravestone restoration. 550 gravestones repaired since 2012 and 40 granite curbing since 201; ongoing project.

Essex National Heritage Commission

*\$1,500, July 2009, received a matching grant for the restoration of interior doors and floors; completed June 2009.

Newburyport Civic League

*\$1,000, November 2008, awarded to chapel brick front entrance; completed August 2009.

*\$1,000, November 2009, awarded to assisting with chapel interior restoration, completed 2009

*\$750, Spring 2014, awarded, interior chapel chandeliers, completed Spring 2014. (Chapel now open for events)

Mayor Gayden W. Morrill Charitable Foundation

*\$5,000, January 2009, awarded to assist with the Brown Chapel brick front handicap accessible entranceway, completed August 8, 2009.

*\$9,500, January 2010, awarded for rear entrance restoration, completed September 2010

*\$2,000, January 2011, awarded for cemetery chapel garden; completed Fall 2011 and front entrance garden – completed Spring 2012.

*\$2,500, August 2018, awarded for tree planting; completed June of 2019.

DATE: January 29, 2020

TO: Community Preservation Committee
Planning Office
Newburyport City Hall

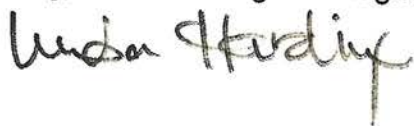
RE: CPC Application Oak Hill Cemetery

Writing to support Oak Hill Cemetery's application for \$10,000.....

I am writing in support of the request for \$10,000 for the care of the existing trees in Oak Hill and planting of new ones. I hope you will give this ask serious consideration for the following reasons:

1. We are so lucky to have this "rural garden cemetery" in the middle of Newburyport. It is an incredible memorial to those who had the foresight to understand that cemetery land can also provide the benefit of open space to the community. To this day, it is one of the most peaceful, quiet, naturally beautiful places to walk in the City. That being said, the trees planted back in the 1800's and early 1900's are tired and ragged. They are dependent on their caretakers to keep them pruned - for their health and for the safety of visitors. See photo - rural garden
2. Along with the trees in this cemetery are all the stones and monuments dedicated to those that came long before us, as well as those more recently deceased. The stories of these people's lives hold the City's history through time. In its own way, Oak Hill is an archive, a place of public record, and thus fully deserving of support from Preservation monies. And if the trees are not kept healthy and well, the stones memorializing these folks are at risk of damage by falling limbs or toppling trunks. See photo two -history
3. And then there is the fact that we have someone in the City who is willing, able and inherently generous enough to keep a watchful eye over this remarkably beautiful Cemetery; to take notice of damage of tree and stone, to plan for future plantings and to make requests for the resources needed to appropriately care for "these hallowed grounds." To make money available to Oak Hill Cemetery when we know from past experience that it will be used mindfully and for the purpose stated in the application is a wise and just thing to do. See photo three - remarkably beautiful

Respectfully, Linda Harding and Hugh Martinez



January 30, 2020

Michael Dissette, Chair
Community Preservation Committee
Newburyport City Hall

Dear Mr. Dissette and Committee members,



We are writing to ask that you support the Oak Hill Cemetery's Heritage Tree project application for \$10,000.

Oak Hill Cemetery is a place local Newburyporters and countless others in New England and abroad enjoy for its serene beauty and historical relevance. Over the past 10 years our community has witnessed and appreciated the amazing comprehensive restoration of Oak Hill Cemetery including planting of trees, repair of gravestones, granite curbing and the revival of the stone chapel. Community interest in these efforts have increased exponentially. Presentations about Oak Hill by local historian, gravestone restoration expert and Oak Hill Cemetery steward, Ghlee Woodworth, are very attended.

The trees in Oak Hill are spectacular. They represent some of the largest and oldest in Newburyport. Arborist report over a hundred trees reside in the 30 acre cemetery that exceed one hundred years old. Birdwatchers appreciate the vast species of feathered creatures who make these trees their homes. Walkers enjoy meandering around the trees, enjoying the transformation of colors and foliage throughout the seasons. The trees are the backbone of this amazing landscape and special attention must be given to maintain and replenish them. Over the past 5 years, in addition to a grant of \$2,500, \$4400 was raised. These funds were used to purchase 21 oak, maple and elm saplings.

In closing, the cemetery budget is small, \$2000/year. Much as been accomplished with the sweat equity of a few volunteers but the needs far exceed the budget. Your support of the Oak Hill Cemetery's Tree Project would help ensure visitors will be able to enjoy this beautiful space for years to come. Please fund this worthy project.

Sincerely,



Susan Crawford and Marie Roy

52 Temple Street, Newburyport, MA 01950