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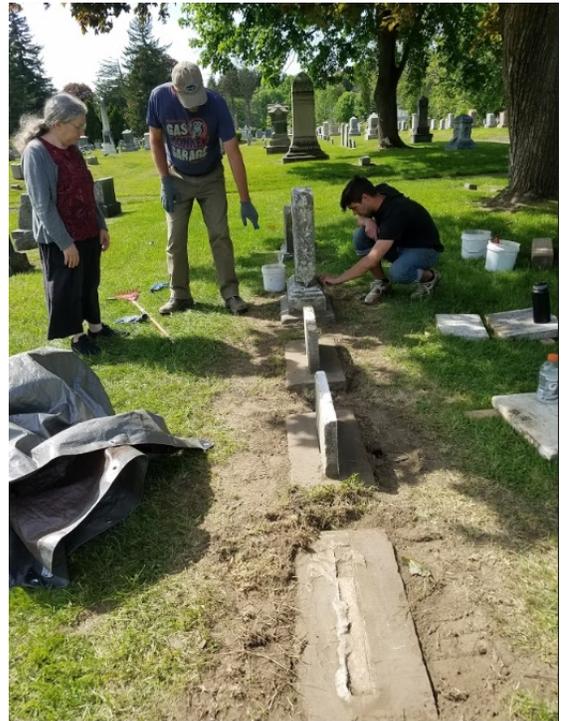
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For Immediate Release – June 3, 2019

Historic Cemetery Stone Conservation Work Begins at Bridge Street Cemetery

The Northampton Historical Commission (Commission) and Department of Public Works (DPW) are working together on preservation efforts at the City's three historic cemeteries - Bridge Street, Park Street, and West Farms. Preservation Master Plans were completed in 2015, included recommendations and priorities for treatment of these important historic resources, and serve as a guide for future restoration and management efforts. The recommendations included some items, such as roadway and path work, shed maintenance, and signage, that can be accomplished using existing DPW resources, and work has already begun to address these. Others are more extensive, and will require outside technical expertise. The Commission and

DPW agreed that conservation of the Priority #1 gravestones at all three cemeteries – identified in the Plans as requiring 'immediate conservation treatment' should be the first historic project implemented. Using local Community Preservation Act funding, and a Preservation Projects Fund grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission, the City hired Monument Conservation Collaborative to conduct restoration work on the highest priority stones at all three cemeteries. Work to 169 stones began at the Bridge Street Cemetery this spring, and will continue throughout the summer. The Bridge Street Cemetery is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as part of the Pomeroy Terrace National Historic District, just designated in 2018. The cemeteries contain graves of some of the earliest settlers of Northampton, as well as notable members of the community and the abolitionist movement. Restoring damaged gravestones will prevent these resources from being lost forever, and will invite more residents and visitors to explore the rich history of the cemeteries and the City.



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