WINTHROP STREET CEMETERY

Preservation Plan

Provincetown, Massachusetts

Project Data

Date: Aug. 2003

Size: 4± acres

Context: Situated on a sand dune

Project Program:

- Goals, objectives & requirements
- Historical background
- Site assessment
- Schematic design alternatives
- Final design with interp. signage
- Budget projections
- Construction documents
- Vegetation management plan

Winthrop Street Entrance with sign, June 2008

Meeting House Park with plaque, June 2008

Meeting House Park with sign, June 2008

Project Description:

Winthrop Street Cemetery is located on the west side of town between Winthrop and Court Streets. Also known as "Cemetery No. 1," it is Provincetown's oldest burying ground. The first known burial was in 1723. The cemetery's context has changed since its rural inception and presently is surrounded by single family homes, commercial establishments, a new fire house and public parking area. The entire site was enclosed with a 6' high chain link fence with two locked gates, preventing visitors from entering at will. Diverse topography divides this historic landscape into a rolling and open section that gives way to the steep and wooded area. Overgrown vegetation restricts pedestrian movement and shrouds most of the grave stones in the wooded section.

Elmore Design Collaborative, Inc. (EDC) and Paysage prepared a Preservation Plan that provided appropriate fencing, managed excess vegetation, established clear pedestrian circulation and improved erosion by planting the exposed sand dune, while maintaining and improving the cemetery's historic integrity.

We worked closely with the client throughout the project to improve the historic burying ground. Each phase was reviewed by the committee, resulting in a successful project that received construction money from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Management's Historic Landscape Preservation Grant Program. The final Preservation Plan incorporated all of the completed work including the construction drawings and technical specifications, budget projections and a vegetation management plan with an invasive plant management, tree limb removal, and dune restoration. Improvements to the cemetery included two new entrances with ornamental paving, native plantings, benches, interpretive signs and a historically appropriate granite post and steel rail fence around the perimeter.

Preservation Plan – Illustrative Rendering