

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form



548

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name BENNINGTON STREET BURYING GROUND

other names/site number Bennington Street Cemetery

2. Location

street & number Bennington Street, between Swift and Harmony Streets not for publication

city or town Boston (East Boston) vicinity

state Massachusetts code MA county Suffolk code 025 zip code 02128

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Brona Simon DSHPO

April 8, 2002

Signature of certifying official/Title Brona Simon, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional Comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
☒ entered in the National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined eligible for the
National Register
☐ See continuation sheet.
☐ determined not eligible for the
National Register
☐ removed from the
National Register
☐ other (explain):

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

Edson H. Beall

5/22/02

Bennington St. Burying Ground
Name of Property

Suffolk, MA
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

☐ private
☒ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

(Check only one box)

☐ building(s)
☐ district
☒ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing

Noncontributing

_____ building

_____ 1 _____ sites

_____ 3 _____ structures

_____ _____ objects

_____ 4 _____ Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

_____ 0 _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY: cemetery

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

FUNERARY: cemetery

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

n/a

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation _____

walls _____

roof _____

other _____

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

7. NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

Bennington Street Burying Ground is the largest and most recent of 16 burying grounds established in Boston between 1630 and 1841. Collectively, these historic burying grounds located throughout the city have been recognized as unique and valuable community resources and as indices of the community's socio-economic and cultural growth and development. Since the 1980s they have also been the focus of an ambitious preservation effort known as the Historic Burying Grounds Initiative. The Bennington Street Burying Ground, a surviving remnant of the early history of East Boston, is a good example of a mid-19th century municipal burial ground with strong associations to the early years of the community. It is a cohesive unit that is treated as a single site for purposes of this nomination. Recorded burials, dating from 1839 to 1948, are represented by 12 tombs, approximately 300 headstones, and seven footstones.

The Bennington Street Burying Ground lies in the neighborhood known as East Boston, which is located across the Inner Harbor from downtown Boston largely on land created in the 1830s. Geographically isolated from the rest of Boston, the neighborhood has a strong transportation background, from clipper ships constructed in local shipyards to the bustling Logan Airport. The 3.6-acre burying ground lies on the south side of one of East Boston's major thoroughfares. It is bounded by Bennington Street on the north, Swift Street on the west, and Harmony Street on the east. The MBTA Blue Line (rapid transit) lies to the south. Bennington Street is an active mixed-use area comprised of commercial, industrial, and residential buildings. Adjacent side streets are primarily occupied by two- and three-story frame residences. A Little League field is located southeast of the burying ground off of Harmony Street.

Perimeter walls and fences enclose the burying ground on all sides, with a single point of entry on Bennington Street. The gate is kept locked except for requested openings. Along most of the Bennington Street frontage there is a low stone wall with concrete coping surmounted by a tall iron picket fence with periodic brick piers. The wall and piers probably date to the early 20th century while the iron fence is a more recent replacement. At the northwest corner of the burying ground is an 80' length of brick wall, which forms the back of a series of tombs.

The eastern (Harmony Street) side of the burying ground is enclosed by a low cobblestone wall that also extends partially around the southern side of the burying ground. It is reportedly built of former paving stones from a nearby street. The northern section of the Harmony Street wall is surmounted by a continuation of

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

Bennington Street's iron fence, while the section near the Little League field is surmounted by tall chain link fencing which continues along the southern edge of the burying ground. The western, or Swift Street, side of the burying ground is enclosed by a tall aluminum picket fence built post-dating 1985.

Bennington Street Burying Ground was laid out in 1838 at a critical transition point in the design of New England's burying places. Its functional rectilinear arrangement is a marked departure from Boston's crowded older burial grounds, but does not reflect the romantic landscape style of the emerging rural cemetery movement that began with the creation of Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1831. The cruciform path system established the basic organization of the space, creating four quadrants. A secondary path running around the perimeter of the burying ground has largely disappeared. The rectilinear spatial organization is reinforced by the linear arrangement of the burial lots, which are generally oriented north/south in irregular rows.

The large rectangular space slopes gently towards the south. It is generally evenly graded except for a slight rise in grade in the two northern quadrants. The site is turf-covered with approximately 50 scattered trees, most of them mature deciduous specimens planted in a linear pattern that reinforces the circulation system. There are some scattered shrubs, particularly near the entrance where there is a privet hedge along Bennington Street.

A gravestone inventory undertaken in 1987 identified 302 headstones of three different materials: 251 marble, 49 granite (of which six are pink), and two sandstone. There were also seven footstones (all marble), two monuments (one obelisk and one Celtic cross), 12 tombs, one free-standing veterans' marker, and a large number of stone fragments (see attached inventory list). While most of the stones are relatively simple in design and cannot be attributed to a specific carver, "A.R.Stones" and "A.Cary" signed their names on stones B/D #58 and B/C #23 respectively. *(Note: stone numbers refer to a 1987 inventory conducted as part of the Historic Burying Ground Initiative.)*

A row of nine brick tombs is located at the corner of Bennington and Swift Streets. Another row of three brick tombs is situated adjacent to the Harmony Street fence. The original concept may have been to ring the perimeter of the burying ground with tombs, but this was never fully carried out. All of the tombs are unmarked except for that of William Burnett (B/D #8) at the northwest corner of the cemetery. One or more of them may initially have served as receiving tombs.

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

The two northern quadrants of the burying ground, closest to Bennington Street, contain the earliest burials. The marble stone of Mrs. Sarah Robbins (B/C #20) gives a death date of July 1, 1819 which pre-dates the establishment of the burying ground, indicating that she may have been reentered at a later date. Others from the same section cluster from 1833 onward.

Numerous veterans' graves are found throughout the burying ground. Local participation in the Civil War is depicted by the 37 marble markers representing the Massachusetts Infantry, Navy, Cavalry, and Artillery. These headstones are uniform in size, though sinking accounts for some variation in height. They each display raised relief lettering within a recessed outline of a military shield. No birth or death dates are provided. One freestanding marker represents G.A.R. Post 23, and two marble headstones belong to World War I veterans.

Another unusual feature of the burying ground is the presence of 11 headstones engraved in German. The marker of Conrad Baas (d. 1851, B/D #24) is one of the earliest, and as on many of the German stones, the name of the deceased is carved in highly detailed Gothic style, possibly indicating the work of a single carver. The most recent stone in German is that of Brita Nilson (d. 1890, B/B #45.)

Other stones also reveal the immigrant status of the deceased. The pink granite stone of Thorvald Anton Cellmuyden (d. 1900, B/A #7) indicates that he was born in Norway. A large sandstone marker commemorates George Alexander (d. 1901, B/A #46) from Birkenhead, England. Francis Reddick (d. 1886, B/B #11), a native of County Monaghan, Ireland, was in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War. The other sandstone marker belongs to Duncan McLean (d. 1850, B/C #9), a native of Pictou, Nova Scotia. Others from Canada include Malcolm Taylor (d. 1855, B/D #22), a native of Prince Edward Island, and Henry Buswell (d. 1881, B/D #94), who was born in Sussex, New Brunswick.

Epitaphs also reinforce the importance of the local shipbuilding and railroad industries. The headstone for George Smith (d. 1887, B/B #7) was "erected by his shipmates." George Moses Dixon (1865, B/C #72) was "lost at sea." The marker for William Evans (d. 1878 at age 86, B/D #71) has a nautical motif with anchor and line. John Torry (d. 1859 at age 28, B/C #47), from Stonehaven, Scotland, was "lost from the Eastern Railroad Wharf." A large marble stone, whose broken top half has been lost, was "erected by the employees of the E.R.R. Co." (B/C #101) James T. Hodges (d. 1881, B/D #61) was killed on the Eastern Railroad, Somerville [MA].

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 4

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

Stone include one willow-and-urn motif (B/C #37), only one wheat stalk design (B/C #58), two hand with extended index fingers, and six relief images of doves or lambs (predominately on children's stones). The most frequent image is a floral/vine design across the top of the stone, several granite stones display a similar pattern repeated down both lateral sides. Two stones show heart-shaped outlines (B/A #65, B/B #26). The most elaborate imagery is found on a stone (B/C #33), which has sunken so deeply as to bury the identity of its owner. It portrays a celestial scene with three angle-like figures within a swirl of clouds. There are seven marble footstones, one tall marble obelisk, the Damon family monument (1845+, B/C #28) and one large upright Celtic cross belonging to Harold Geldard (d. 1896, B/B #94). Otherwise, the headstones are surprisingly similar in design and materials.

The 1987 report indicates that over 100 stones were toppled or broken, and describes the burying ground as overgrown and a hangout for neighborhood youth. In the intervening years, substantial improvements have been made in maintenance and fencing to that the burying ground is now generally well-maintained and neat. While some stone conservation has been undertaken, there are still more stones in need of repair. Marbles, which are typically white and sugary, are particularly vulnerable to the effects of erosion. Granite and sandstone markers are in better condition. A 1998 Master Plan stressed the poor condition of the tombs and the need for ongoing gravestone repair as the highest priorities.

(end)

Bennington St. Burying Ground

Name of Property

Suffolk, MA

County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- ☒ **A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ **B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ **C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ **D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ **A** owned by religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ **B** removed from its original location.
- ☐ **C** a birthplace or grave.
- ☒ **D** a cemetery.
- ☐ **E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ **F** a commemorative property.
- ☐ **G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Art

Community Planning and Development

Social History

Period of Significance

1837-1952

Significant Dates

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☒ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Boston Parks Department

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 1

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

8. Significance

The Bennington Street Burying Ground is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria A and C, with significance at the local level. The site may also have archaeological significance associated with unmarked graves and buried headstones. The period of significance extends from 1837 to 1952. Despite some loss of burial markers over the years, the site possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

The burying ground qualifies for listing under Criterion A due to its strong association with the early history of East Boston. It is one of five original open spaces, and the only cemetery laid out in East Boston in 1837, when subdivision of the area was planned. The epitaphs and iconography of the gravestones reflect the importance of the railroad and the sea to the largely working class and immigrant population. Headstones also reflect the many nations from which residents emigrated, including Canada, England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, and Norway. There are 37 Civil War veterans buried here, and two World War I veterans.

The burying ground also meets Criterion C as a well-preserved, 19th century municipal graveyard that illustrates evolving New England evolving funerary styles. Its spacious layout and functional design are a direct relation to Boston's crowded, haphazard older burying grounds. The simple rectangular burying ground contains over 300 burial markers laid out in rough lines and later beautified by rows of trees. Burial markers are predominately marble (251) with fewer in granite (49) and sandstone (2). Most represent typical 19th century motifs such as floral imagery, doves, lambs, wheat stalks, willows, urns and hands with extended index finger pointing to Heaven. As the largest and newest of Boston's 16 historic burying grounds, Bennington Street represents an important transition from the city's older burying grounds such as Copps Hill and Granary, to the later rural cemeteries such as Mount Hope in West Roxbury.

The burying ground meets Criteria Consideration D because it served as the primary ground in East Boston from 1838 through the early 20th century. It includes the graves of over 300 residents of East Boston and contains information that is not readily available elsewhere. The 1837 beginning of the period of significance corresponds with the laying out of the burying ground. The 1952 termination date reflects National Register policy that properties with ongoing significance use a 50-year cut off date.

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 2

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

Historical Background

Noddles Island in Boston Harbor, named for an early colonial inhabitant, was used for farming, grazing, and timber during the 17th and 18th centuries. In 1833 the island was virtually uninhabited; a decade later the land had been totally reshaped into a bustling community. By the 1830s, Boston was becoming overcrowded with no room to expand. The East Boston Company, created by a group of astute Boston investors, purchased the island as part of a bold plan to establish a new residential and industrial section of the city in Boston's Inner Harbor. Creating East Boston involved massive leveling of hills and filling of marshland to shape an area large enough to create the substantial community, which was laid out in a grid pattern that was a deliberate contrast to central Boston's crooked, disorganized streets. As part of the 1833 Act of Incorporation, the East Boston Company was required to set aside the land for "engine-house, school-houses, burial grounds, and for other public purposes." The location of the burying ground, formerly a plot from "Section Four known as Middle Farm," was selected by committee in February 1837.

By this time East Boston was already under development. Initially immigrants came to help build the new community, which necessitated a large labor force to level the hills and fill in the marshlands. Once the community was established, prospects of steady employment continued to draw immigrants to the area. The East Boston shipbuilding industry, which began in 1839 and prospered until the 1870s, was a major source of employment, attracting workers from many European countries. Railroad-related labor provided employment for many East Boston residents during the 19th century. Many of the community's early settlers were Irish, but they were soon joined by immigrants from other European nations.

By 1844 representatives from the Jewish community in East Boston applied to the Boston City Council for permission to purchase a corner plot within the Bennington Street Burying Ground for their exclusive use and to enclose it with a separate fence. This petition was denied but the City Council approved another lot following the group's purchase of 10,000 square feet at the corner of Byron and Homer Streets, two blocks east of the Bennington Street Cemetery. This cemetery is the only other extant East Boston cemetery.

While initial concerns in the establishment of the burying ground focused on health and sanitation, later efforts also included beautification. By the 1850s, Boston was growing rapidly and burying grounds provided green space for walks and outdoor activity, as the city did not yet have an extensive park system. The East Boston Tree Association reportedly planted 200 trees at Bennington Street in 1852.

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 3

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

Records pertaining to Bennington Street are relatively scarce until the 1890s when the city's cemetery trustees began to publish annual reports. The reports indicate that by 1898 there had been 2,970 interments, with as many as 130 burials a year until 1910, when the number began to diminish. The 1900 report indicates that the Bennington Street Burying Ground had two receiving tombs and "is under a working custodian who has charge of the grounds, and does the necessary work in the making of interments." The schedule of property for 1900 included a tool shed, gardening tools, and a stove. In 1901: "Two hundred and sixty-three palings were removed from graves; graves in the new section were numbered, and that part of the grounds consisting of about two acres, in which interments were made, was regarded, mounds leveled and the ground seeded. The fence fronting on Bennington Street was painted." This work may have been associated with the development of the southern section of the burying ground or it may have been a major cleanup of the older section to create a neater, more uniform appearance. There is no account of any gravestone disturbance by this effort.

In 1903, new picket fencing replaced 700 feet of decayed board fence and additional fencing was repaired and repainted. Fifty-one trees were removed in 1903 and 128 trees were trimmed, indicating that there were at least twice the number of trees at that time than exist today. The same year, the privet hedge, 1400 feet in length, which probably ran around the perimeter of the burying ground, was pruned to a uniform height of one foot from the ground. By 1910 there was a small office building near the main entrance and the number of burial for the year was down to 24. The stone wall and fencing received periodic attention, with major reconstruction of the front fence in 1914. With the exception of the removal of a tomb in 1914, there is no record of encroachment or enlargement. There does not appear to be any official closing of this burying ground. The last confirmed burial was in 1948, although there are unconfirmed reports of a burial as late as 1987.

Boston Burying Grounds

In the early 19th century, Boston continued its role as a major commercial center. Land was at a premium in the newly incorporated city, which had used up much of its original peninsula and was in the process of filling adjacent areas for expansion. Among the major priorities was construction of a safer, healthier city. One of the specific concerns was the condition of the city's burial grounds. This problem was three-fold. First, the older urban burial grounds were already seriously overcrowded. There was no longer any space available for burial within the city limits. The second problem was a public health issue. At the time, Boston residents were largely dependent upon private wells and the older burial grounds were believed to be contaminating the city's water supply.

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 4

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

There was also concern that gases emanating from graves threatened public health. The third factor was changing attitudes about death and burial. In the early 19th century, burial grounds were typically barren landscapes, poorly maintained and devoid of plantings. As New Englanders rejected earlier ideas about the horror of death and embraced melancholy and sentimentalism, they began to explore new approaches to the burial of the dead. Bennington Street was the first of Boston's burying grounds to be built in response to these concerns.

One of the earliest precedents was New Haven's New Burying Ground, laid out in 1796. In contrast to older New England burial grounds, it was removed from the center of the city, laid out in an organized rectilinear pattern, had straight, well-defined paths, was enclosed by fencing, and enhanced by plantings. Its grid-like arrangement reflected a clear sense of order and permanence. It was also intended for use by the living as well as the dead, a radical departure from earlier burial grounds, which were considered frightening places to be avoided except during funerals.

Although Bennington Street was built after Mount Auburn Cemetery (1831), America's first rural cemetery, its layout was not strongly influenced by the romantic landscape ideals reflected in that cemetery. The approach taken at Bennington Street was typical of municipal burying grounds developed during the 1830s and 40s, which tended to be more conservative than their private counterparts.

Other design precedents that may have influenced Bennington Street included the newly popular squares and small parks, which became more essential as New England towns grew in size. Most public spaces laid out during the 1830s and 40s were simple and functional. A few decades later Boston's public open spaces became more elaborate. The Public Garden was established in 1859 and the Boston Park system in the 1880s.

Throughout the 19th century, health hazards associated with Boston's older burying grounds remained a major cause for concern. The city's older burying grounds were gradually closed and most burials took place outside the city in newly established burial grounds and later, in the more elaborate burial places known as cemeteries. Bennington Street was one of the first of these new burying grounds. It was laid out to create a spacious orderly burial place that could also provide a space for neighborhood recreation. Later, Mount Hope Cemetery in West Roxbury, acquired by the city in 1857, became the primary municipal burying place, although Bennington Street was heavily used by residents of East Boston well into the 20th century. Mount Hope was the first municipal burial place to be called a "cemetery," expressing the mid-19th century ideas

(continued)

National Register of Historic Places

Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

of death and redemption, which were far more optimistic than those associated with earlier burying grounds. During the latter part of the 19th century there were also a number of cemeteries established by various religious groups, notably Catholics and Jews.

Creation of Boston's Historic Burying Ground Initiative in the 1970s brought new interest and resources to Boston's older burying grounds, including Bennington Street. A stone-by-stone inventory was undertaken in 1987, followed by the new fence along Swift Street and a renewed commitment to maintenance. Recent efforts have done much to stabilize the burying ground but there is still work to be done, particularly with regard to gravestone conservation and repair of deteriorating tombs.

(end)

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 1

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Boston Cemetery Department. *Annual Reports*, Boston: Municipal Printing Office, 1900-1913 (at Municipal Archives).

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O'Connor, Eileen A. *Historic Burying Ground Report: September 1987, Bennington Street Burying Ground, East Boston*, unpublished manuscript, Boston Parks and Recreation Department, 1987.

Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*, Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

Walker-Kluesing Design Group. *Historic Burying Grounds Master Plan*, Boston Parks and Recreation Department, August 1998.

(end)

BenningtonSt.BuryingGround
Name of Property

Suffolk, MA
County, State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 3.6 acres

UTM References See continuation sheet.

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1. 19 333540 4693800
Zone Easting Northing

2.
Zone Easting Northing

3.
Zone Easting Northing

4.
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Shary Page Berg, consultant, with Betsy Friedberg, NR Director, MHC

organization Massachusetts Historical Commission date March 2002

street & number 220 Morrissey Boulevard telephone 617-727-8470

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02125

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name City of Boston, Parks and Recreation Department

street & number 1010 Massachusetts Avenue telephone 617-635-4505

city or town Boston state MA zip code 02118

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

Bennington Street Burying Ground
Boston (East Boston) (Suffolk), MA

10. GEOGRAPHIC DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

Bennington Street Burying Ground occupies an entire city block along one of the major thoroughfares in East Boston. It is a rectilinear parcel bounded on the north by Bennington Street (Route 145); on the west by Swift Street; and on the east by Harmony Street. The southern boundary is formed by the MBTA (rapid transit) Blue Line right of way.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundary encompasses a single parcel that includes the entire 3.6-acre burial ground laid out in 1838.

(end)

PHOTOGRAPHS

Taken by Shary Berg, October 2000

1. Bennington Street, perimeter fence, looking SW
2. General cemetery view, looking NW
3. General cemetery view, looking E
4. View of damaged stones, looking SW

(end)

Bennington Street Burying Ground

East Boston (Suffolk County), Massachusetts
National Register District Data Sheet

October 26, 2001

1

MHC #	NR Photo#	NR Map#	Location	Historic Name	Date	Architectural Style	Status Type	C B
800		1	Bennington St.	Cemetery Grounds	1838		1 Contrib Site	
none		2	Bennington St.	Perimeter Wall and Fence	various		1 Contrib. Structure	
none		3	Harmony St.	Brick Tombs	19 th century		1 Contrib. Structure	
none		4	NW corner	Brick Tombs	19 th century		1 Contrib. Structure	
none		5		Circulation System	ca. 1838		Contrib.	
none		6		Ornamental Plantings	various		Contrib.	
none		7		Burial Markers	19 th -20 th century		Contrib.	

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Bennington Street Burying Ground
NAME:

MULTIPLE
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: MASSACHUSETTS, Suffolk

DATE RECEIVED: 4/09/02 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/24/02
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 5/10/02 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/24/02
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 02000548

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N
REQUEST: N SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

☒ ACCEPT ☐ RETURN ☐ REJECT 5/23/02 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

Entered in the
National Register

RECOM./CRITERIA _____

REVIEWER _____ DISCIPLINE _____

TELEPHONE _____ DATE _____

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N



Bennington St Burying Ground, Boston, Suffolk Co, MA S. Berg 10/2000 #1



Bennington St Burying Ground, Boston, Suffolk Co, MA S. Berg 10/2000 # 2



Bennington St. Burying Ground, Boston, Suffolk Co, MA. S. Berg 10/2000 #3



Bennington St Burying Ground, Boston, Suffolk Co, MA S. Berg 10/2000 #4

Produced by the United States Geological Survey
in cooperation with Massachusetts Department
of Public Works

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, and Commonwealth of
Massachusetts agencies

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
dated 1971. Field checked 1979. Map edited 1983.

Supersedes Boston North and Lexington 1:25,000-scale
maps dated 1971

Selected hydrographic data compiled from NOS chart 13272 (1982)

This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Projection and 1000-meter grid: Universal
Transverse Mercator, zone 19

1000-foot grid ticks based on Massachusetts coordinate
system, mainland zone 19, datum 1983 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983
move the projection lines 6 meters south and
6 meters east as shown on this map

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of
the National or State reservations shown on this map

CONTOUR INTERVAL 3 METERS
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
CONTROL ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.1 METER
OTHER ELEVATIONS SHOWN TO THE NEAREST 0.5 METER
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN METERS
DATUM IS MEAN LOW WATER
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO DATUMS IS VARIABLE
SHORELINE SHOWN REPRESENTS THE APPROXIMATE LINE
OF MEAN HIGH WATER
THE MEAN RANGE OF TIDE IS APPROXIMATELY 2.9 METERS

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS

FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR RESTON, VIRGINIA 20192

CONVERSION TABLE DECLINATION DIAGRAM ADJOINING

Meters	Feet
1	3.28087
2	6.56174
3	9.84261
4	13.1235
5	16.4042
6	19.6850
7	22.9659
8	26.2467
9	29.5276
10	32.8084

To convert meters to feet multiply by 3.2808

To convert feet to meters multiply by 0.3048

UTM grid convergence (GN) and 1985 magnetic declination (MD) at center of map
Diagram is approximate

1	2	3
1	Billeria	
2	Reading	
3	Salem	
4	Maynard	
5	Lynn	
6	Framingham	
7	Boston South	
8	Hull	

ISBN 0-607-23443-1

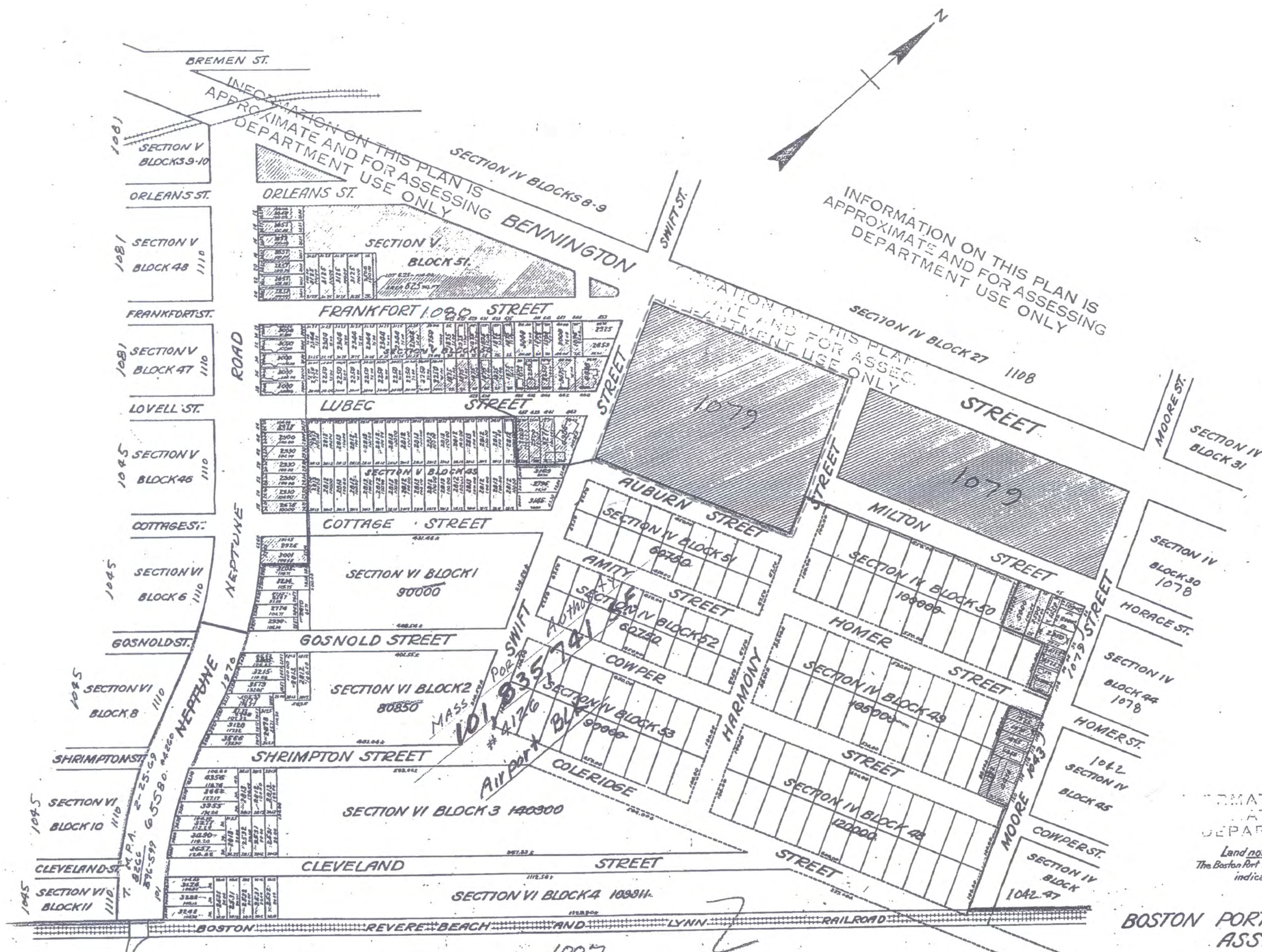
9 780607 234435

x51008

Topographic Map Symbols

Primary highway, hard surface
Secondary highway, hard surface
Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Unimproved road, road
Route marker: Interstate: U. S.; State
Railroad: standard gage; narrow gage
Bridge, drawbridge
Overpass, overpass
Build-up areas: only selected landmark buildings shown
House; barn; church; school; large structure
Boundary
National, with monument
State
County, parish
City, township, precinct, district
Incorporated city, village, town
National or State reservation; small park
Land grant with monument; found section corner
U. S. public lands survey: range, township; section
Range, township, section line: location unspecified
Fence or field line
Power transmission line, located tower
Dam; dam with lock
Canalway, gauge
Campground; picnic area; U. S. location monument
Windmill; water mill; spring
Mine shaft; prospect; pit or cave
Control: fortification; territorial station; spot elevation
Elevation: intermediate; supplementary; depression
Distorted surface: strip mine, levee, sand
Bathymetric surface: elevation, intermediate
Perennial lake or stream: intermittent lake and stream
Rapids, large and small; falls, large and small
Submerged marsh; marsh, swamp
Land subject to controlled inundation; woodflood
Scrib; mangrove
Orchard; vineyard

A pamphlet describing topographic maps is available on request



Bennington Street
Burying ground
National Register Nomination
East Boston, MA
Suffolk County
Map 1 of 1
11/2/01

INFORMATION ON THIS PLAN IS
APPROXIMATE AND FOR ASSESSING
DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

Land not owned by
The Boston Port Development Co.
indicated thus.

BOSTON PORT DEVELOPMENT CO.
ASSESSORS PLAN
WARD I
SECTION IV BLOCKS 48-49-50-51-52-53
SECTION V BLOCKS 49-50-51
SECTION VI BLOCKS 1-2-3-4

SCALE 1 IN. = 90 FT. MARCH 1934
T.B. KENNEY & CO.

1007
INFORMATION ON THIS PLAN IS
APPROXIMATE AND FOR ASSESSING
DEPARTMENT USE ONLY

BOSTON

Thomas M. Menino, Mayor

NR ple BS
BF

RECEIVED

January 15, 2002

JAN 28 2002

MASS. HIST. COMM

Ms. Brona Simon
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

Dear Ms. Simon:

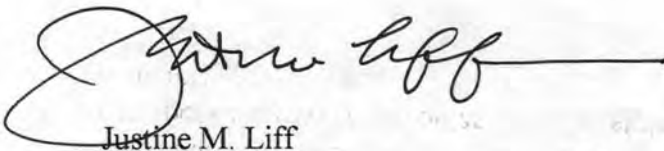
I am writing to you to express my support for the nomination of the Bennington Street Cemetery in East Boston to the National Register of Historic Places. This site is part of the Historic Burying Grounds Initiative of the Boston Parks and Recreation Department. The program's mission is the comprehensive restoration, on-going conservation, and heritage interpretation of the City's sixteen historic burying grounds.

The Bennington Street Cemetery occupies a unique place in the history of East Boston. It is one of five original open spaces, and the only cemetery, laid out in East Boston when the subdivision was planned. Established in 1837, its layout is representative of the brief time period between the older Colonial-style burying grounds and the emerging rural cemetery movement.

A listing on the National Register of Historic Places would benefit the Bennington Street Cemetery in several ways. It would create a sense of local pride for the residents of East Boston, many of whose family members are interred here. It would also allow the Boston Parks and Recreation Department to apply for preservation grants which require National Register listing as a prerequisite for application.

Thank you for considering the Bennington Street Cemetery for listing on the National Register. The Historic Burying Grounds Initiative welcomes the opportunity to work with the Massachusetts Historical Commission towards our joint goal of preservation of Boston's historic resources.

Sincerely,



Justine M. Liff
Commissioner



Boston Parks and Recreation Department • Justine M. Liff, Commissioner
1010 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA 02118 / Tel.: (617) 635-4505 / Fax: 635-3173



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

William Francis Galvin, Secretary of the Commonwealth
Massachusetts Historical Commission

April 8, 2002

Ms. Carol Shull
National Register of Historic Places
Department of the Interior
National Park Service
Mail Stop 2280, Suite 400
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Ms. Shull:

Enclosed please find the following nomination form:

Bennington Street Cemetery, Boston/East Boston (Suffolk), MA

The nomination has been voted eligible by the State Review Board and has been signed by the State Historic Preservation Officer. The owners of the property in the Certified Local Government community of Boston were notified of pending State Review Board consideration 60 to 90 days before the meeting and were afforded the opportunity to comment.

One letter of support has been received.

Sincerely,

Betsy Friedberg
National Register Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission

enclosure

cc: Shary Page Berg, consultant
David Payne, Boston CLG coordinator
Thomas Menino, Mayor, City of Boston
John Bowman, Boston Landmarks Commission
Justine Liff, Commissioner, Parks and Recreation Department