

# Newington Historic District Commission – Draft Minutes

July 1, 2020, 10:00 a.m. – 11:16 a.m.

Working Meeting beginning at the Meetinghouse Horsesheds

Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mike Marconi Member (2020)</li> <li>✓ Jo Haskell Alternate (2023)</li> <li>John Lamson Member (2021)</li> <li>✓ Peggy Lamson Member (2023)</li> <li>✓ Katie Moody Alternate (2023)</li> <li>✓ Lulu Pickering Member (2023)</li> <li>✓ Becky St. Germaine Alternate (2023)</li> <li>✓ Kristen Poulin Alternate (2023)</li> <li>✓ Alan Wilson Member (2022)</li> </ul>
Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New members should have signed their oath to be on the committee and sent a short bio to Lulu with information on why preserving Newington history is important.</li> <li>• Lulu Pickering elected Chairman (motion by Mike Marconi, second by Kristen Poulin, unanimous – Peggy and Katie not yet present)</li> </ul>

## Checklist for site walk

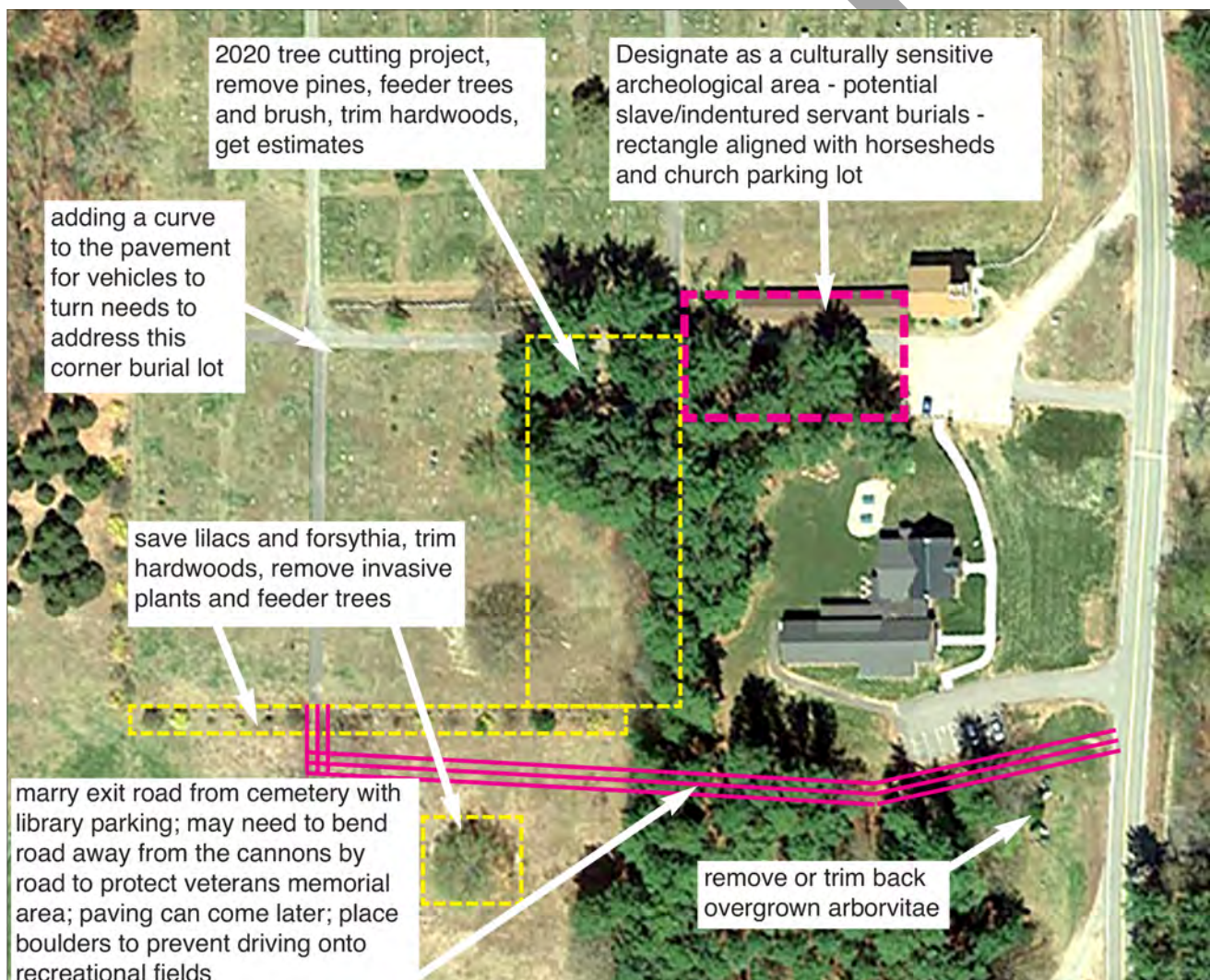
1. Slave/ indentured servant burial area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See <b>attached LIDAR map</b> and information from 2009 study</li> <li>• Identified boundaries of the culturally sensitive area (pink dotted box)</li> <li>• Request this location be preserved by selectmen for further study</li> <li>• Look into an archeological study of 2-3 of the anomalies (inside or beside the horsesheds)</li> <li>• Investigate potential CLG grant</li> </ul>
2. Outreach and educational activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See <b>attached draft Newington Slavery map</b> being researched by Lulu and published by the <i>Newington Neighbor</i></li> <li>• Request that the HDC have two bays in the horsesheds for large wall maps, walking tour brochures, and photos</li> <li>• Contact Portsmouth Black Heritage Trail for advice on phone app for the walking tour</li> <li>• Investigate types and cost of laminated plaques/wall hangings</li> <li>• Add lighting/spotlights for help when looking at the wall maps, bench for sitting and reading, table for stuff</li> <li>• Engage the school for local history education of students and the library for additional public access</li> <li>• Coordinate potential fall outreach program for slavery tour and public discussion</li> </ul>
3. Town Cemetery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See <b>attached draft family history chart</b> about slavery being researched by Lulu and published by the <i>Newington Neighbor</i></li> </ul>

History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Many of these folks are buried in the town cemetery, together with others who have connections to interesting Newington history (Cyrus Frink Piscataqua River Bridge, Rev. Adams, first pastor and slaveholder, etc.)</li> <li>Create self-guided walking tour of graves of historical/cultural interest in the town cemetery</li> <li>Photos needed for map and brochure</li> <li>Determine how to mark the cemetery lots of interest to coincide with numbers on the map</li> <li>Material to be available in the HDC horsesheds, <i>Newington Neighbor</i>, library, etc.</li> </ul>
4. Southern Cemetery Division	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HDC requested \$10,000 in the 2020 budget for tree cutting and planting</li> <li>When the selectmen requested that committees identify budget items that could be cut if necessary, Lulu asked that at least \$5,000 of this budget be used this year.</li> <li>Get estimates for tree cutting, tree trimming, stump grinding/removal to accomplish the items discussed on the map below. Alan and Peggy from the cemetery committee and Lulu from the HDC should coordinate and meet with the tree contractors interesting in making bids</li> <li>The purpose of today's HDC meeting was not to discuss the library parking and drainage proposals. The HDC instead discussed the layout of the cemetery exit road shown on the map and agreed that this location should be married with the library plans = a win-win situation for everyone concerned.</li> </ul>
5. Veterans Memorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exit road from cemetery may need to bend as it reaches Nimble Hill Road so as not to negatively impact the veterans' area.</li> <li>The arborvitae can either be trimmed or cut down so new lilacs and colorful shrubs can be planted.</li> </ul>
6. Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Plantings/flags/mulch by Veterans monuments and flagpole at no more than \$150</li> <li>Approve NH Preservation Alliance membership fee of \$100</li> </ul>
Approval	<p>The checklist (items 1-6) were discussed during the site walk.</p> <p>On a motion by Peggy Lamson, seconded by Alan Wilson, the whole checklist was approved; all in favor.</p>
Member interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Katie Moody volunteered to help trim and/or remove the overgrown arborvitae behind the veteran memorials</li> <li>Kristen Poulin and her sons are happy to help with picking up sticks at Peggy's Arboretum and on the old pathway up Sam Rowe's Hill to keep that trail accessible</li> <li>Becky St. Germaine and Lulu will next tackle the "garden" in front of the Old Town Hall to see how to improve it</li> <li>Alan Wilson is very interested in following through with the historical family information relative to Newington graves and cemeteries. He can locate the graves of interest on the cemetery lot map. When the <i>Newington Neighbor</i> is published (end of July?) all the maps and charts should be in final, not draft form</li> <li>Mike Marconi will share today's information with the other selectmen and provide feedback on next steps</li> <li>Jo Haskell has an interest in photography and could help with photos as needed for the walking tour brochures</li> </ul>

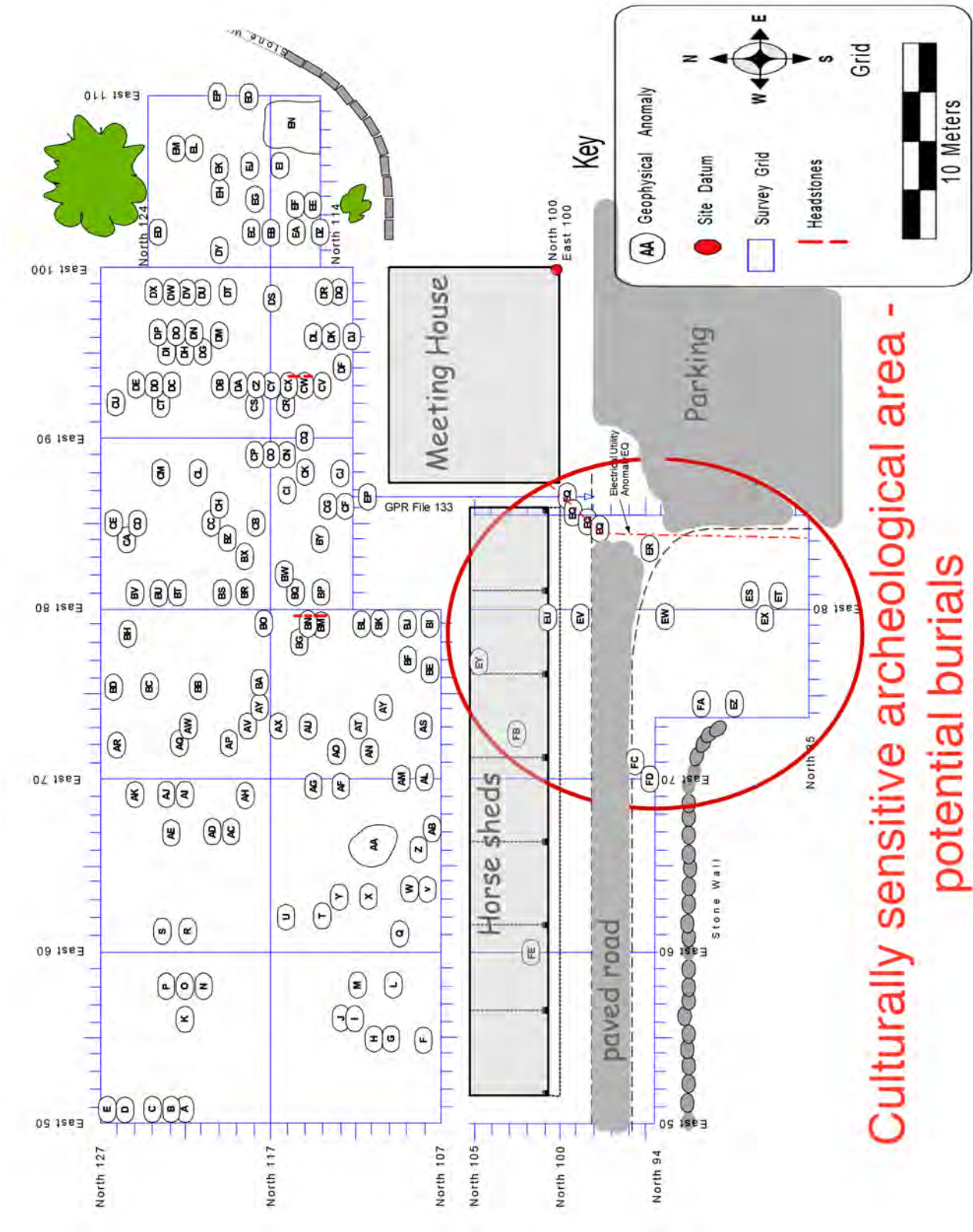
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peggy Lamson and Alan Wilson (cemetery trustees) will be involved with all things to be worked on inside the perimeter of the cemetery</li> </ul>
HDC meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lulu's strong preference is not to have meetings for the sake of having monthly meetings.</li> <li>A potential meeting may involve the selectmen, cemetery trustees, and HDC for discussing the library perimeter boundaries, parking/drainage plans, and cemetery exit road. But that meeting is up to the selectmen.</li> <li>Several work sessions among members will occur as work is done to follow through on today's approved checklist for 2020.</li> <li>The next official HDC meeting will be scheduled if there is a need to call one.</li> </ul>

Lulu Pickering  
HDC Member  
July 1, 2020

Map that accompanies the checklist and site walk discussions:

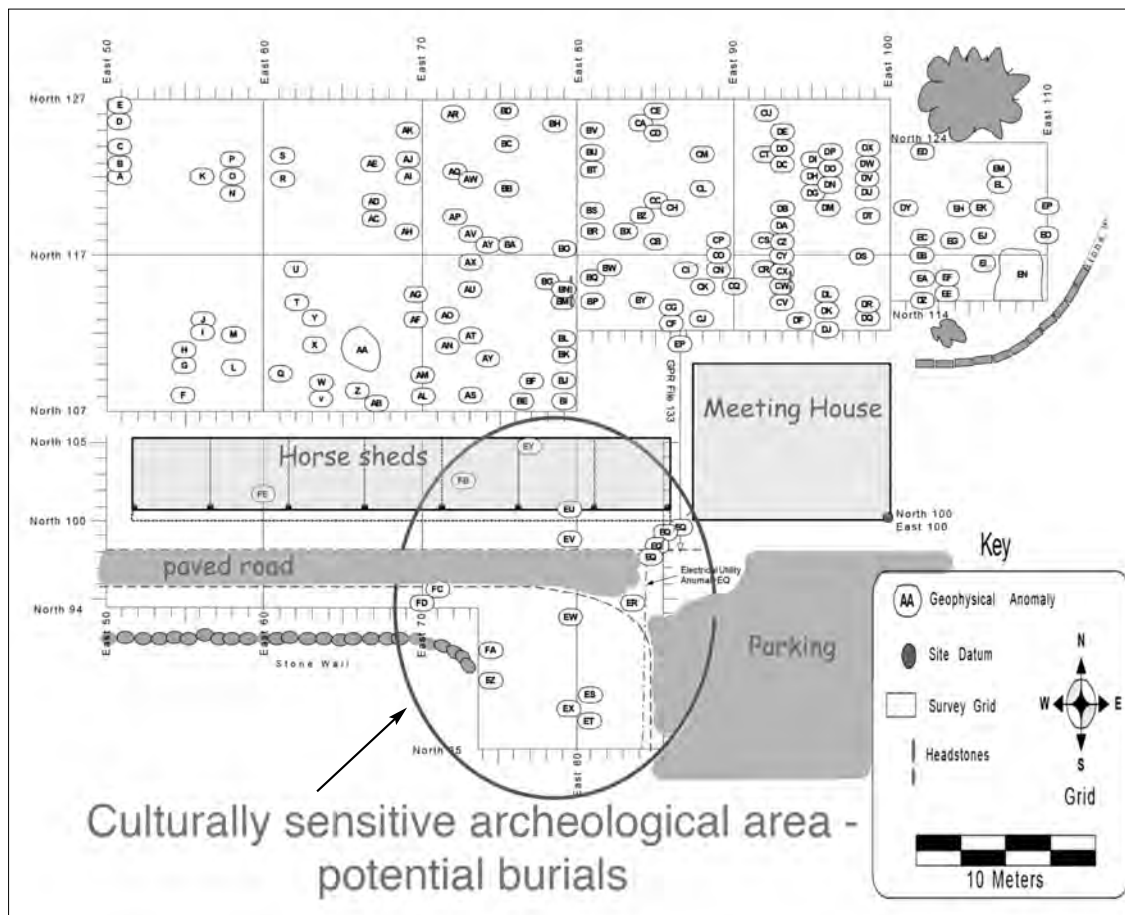


2009 study results for potential burials inside and outside the cemetery walls. The HDC designated a rectangular, not an oval shape, for the boundaries of the area to be protected.



Culturally sensitive archeological area -  
potential burials

## Potential Unmarked Graves Outside the Cemetery



A May 2009 ground penetrating radar study was done by Daniel Lynch of Soil Sight to “look” underground in areas inside and outside the cemetery wall at the Town Cemetery. The purpose was to determine whether any burials may have taken place in these locations.

Soil Sight laid out a grid inside and outside the cemetery, including the paved road, horse sheds, and grassy area by the parking area (as it existed in 2009). The south face of the Meeting House was used as the North 100 gridline, and the rest of the grid was established off this side of the building. Because the grid is tied to the building itself, anyone with two tape measures and basic knowledge of geometry can re-establish the grid.

A total of 161 geophysical anomalies were identified under ground in the cemetery, under the horse sheds and in several spots adjacent to the parking area. These anomalies are alphabetically labeled in the map above. Anomaly EY, located in the second bay of the horse

sheds, was deemed to be the best target for a possible unmarked burial outside of the cemetery.

Local lore says that at one point someone was using a backhoe inside the cemetery wall and dug up what they thought were white fragments of bone. They were working on a septic system, or something close to the Meeting House, and decided to stop digging. So, it seems likely that the flat area without stones that is north of the Meeting House and horse sheds is a burial area.

Very few headstones still exist in the parts of the cemetery closest to the Meeting House, none exist outside the cemetery wall. It seems likely that the earliest graves may have been designated using wooden markers or plantings that have long since disintegrated.

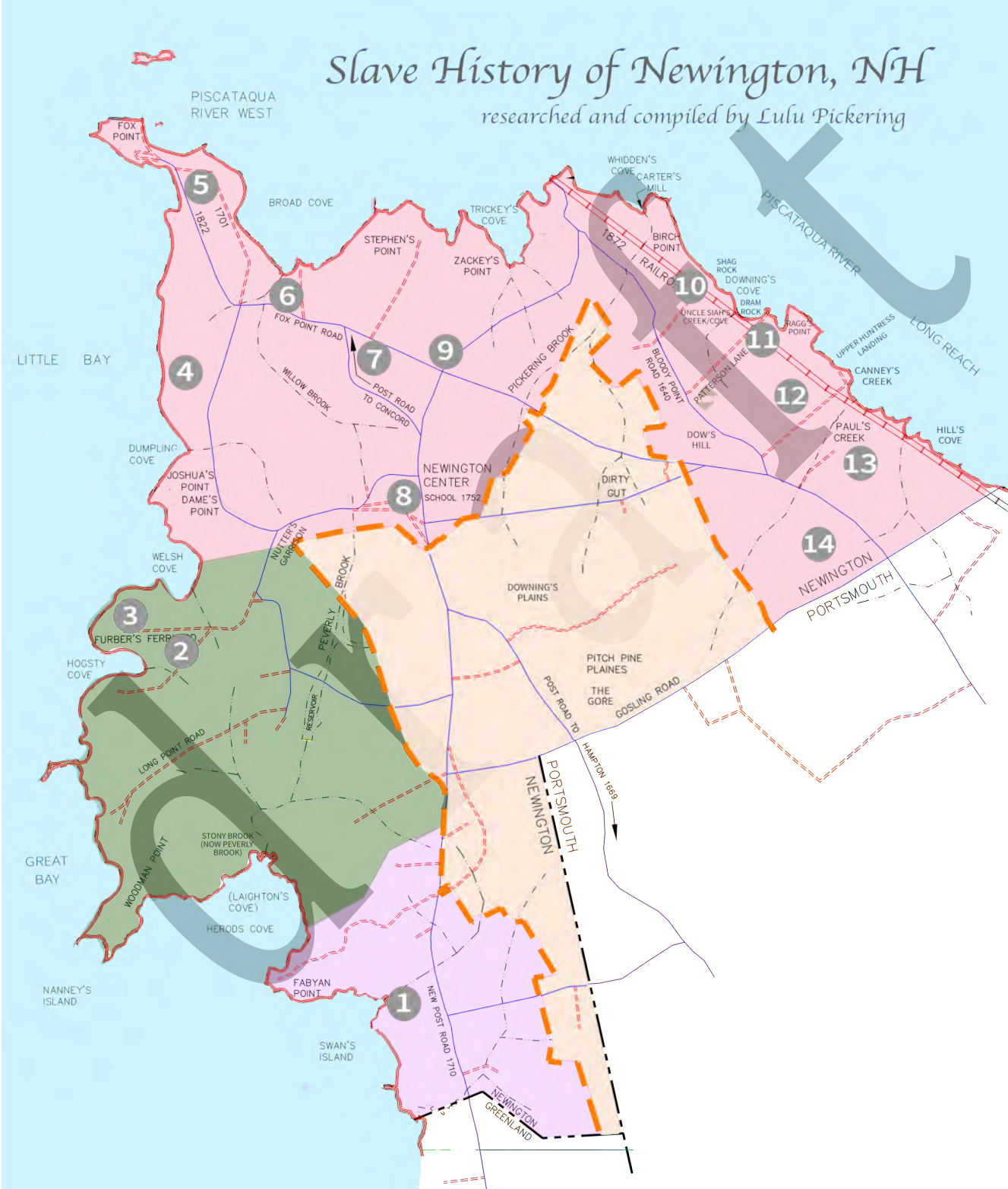
More work obviously needs to be done to validate the existence of underground burials outside the cemetery. In earlier days, it is possible that people of different

religions, slaves, indentured servants, paupers, unwed mothers, people of ill-repute, and those who had been cast out of the church could have been buried outside the church cemetery. Who knows? All we have is conjecture and anomalies to go on at the present time.

The situation is complicated a bit more by the fact that many of the early families had family cemeteries on their property so many people were not buried by the church. Also, the town water supply that went from Watering Springs on the Pickering Farm to the old pump house/storage tank adjacent to the library (now gone) involved underground digging along the way. The small building housing the old storage tank was removed when the library was recently renovated and a new addition added.

In sum, the area inside the red oval in the map above is a culturally sensitive archeological area that should be marked with signs and protected until more definitive studies are done.

DRAFT map being prepared for publication in the *Newington Neighbor*.  
Not final, for discussion purposes only.



DRAFT historic family chart being prepared for publication in the *Newington Neighbor*.  
Not final, for discussion purposes only.

## From South American Plantations (De Wit family) to Newington, NH Farms (de Rochemont family)

