



GRACE  
EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH  
NEWTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Community Preservation Committee  
c/o Lara Kritzer, Community Preservation Program Manager  
City of Newton Planning & Development Department  
1000 Commonwealth Ave.  
Newton, MA 02459

Friday, June 26, 2020

Dear Distinguished Members of the Community Preservation Committee:

To quote one of our Vestry members, Grace Episcopal Church (Grace) is on a “journey with its tower.” We are faced with the stark reality that one part of our infrastructure—the tower with belfry and spire built between 1872 and 1873—imperils the remainder of the Grace campus. We have sought advice from engineers, masons, architects, state and city agencies, elected officials, historic preservationists, fundraising consultants, and bishops. We now respectfully request the Community Preservation Committee to help fund the restoration of this defining architectural feature by way of community preservation funds.

In numerous documents, the City of Newton and various commissions and committees, including the Newton Historical Commission in its nomination of the Farlow and Kenrick Parks District to the National Register of Historic Places, have recognized Grace as an historic resource to the community. Grace’s tower is the defining feature of its campus, as well as definitive of the expertly planned open space of this Victorian neighborhood. We seek to restore the structure for the benefit of the community, maintaining the aesthetic integrity of the historic district and one of Newton’s finest architectural assets. In this matter, we are asking the CPC for what we cannot do ourselves.

Grace Episcopal Church is a significant historical resource, and in addition to serving its original function, serves the public good of the city as a *de facto* community center through a wide array of community programs that are non-religious. Grace has leased its rectory to Riverside Community Care since 1990, a low-SES behavioral health service agency. Many groups use our accessible parish house, including Pathway to Possible, which hosts events for individuals with cognitive and developmental disabilities, recovery groups such as Al-Anon, and various social groups. We are a polling place for the 1,959 registered voters of the first ward. Grace partners with B-Safe, a day camp for low-SES Boston children, has been a benefactor of the Newton Food Pantry for decades, and is one of five other interfaith groups to provide community-based resettlement support to asylum seekers. For almost 150 years, a majority of Newton residents who benefit from programs and events housed at Grace have not been members of the religious congregation.

Similarly, the restoration of Grace’s tower is of greatest import to the surrounding vicinity. Our congregation has recently undergone a listening period as part of a feasibility study. One result was the observation by a majority of parishioners that, while they are beloved features of our historic

property, the tower, belfry, and spire, are not seen as integral parts of our mission—of who we are as a religious community. Given this, and the overwhelming presence of the tower in the neighborhood, we believe this project would withstand the scrutiny of an anti-aid test. The restoration of Grace's tower is a matter of maintaining a dominant architectural feature within a prized historic district of the City of Newton.

Restoration of Grace's tower with care, expertise, and permanence of the techniques proposed by this project will relieve future generations of this burden. More than three dozen religious institution projects have been funded with CPA historic preservation funds across the Commonwealth, with projects ranging in size from small, discreet repairs to complete rehabilitations. We hope Newton and this esteemed committee will consider being the next CPA community to support such a request. We trust that this body will recognize that maintaining the tower, belfry, and spire of Grace Episcopal Church is of greatest value to the surrounding community, including maintaining the integrity of historic resource projects in which the CPC has already invested substantively.

We look forward to hearing the result of your initial consideration of this pre-proposal to the Newton Community Preservation Program, and to the discussion ahead.

Sincerely,

*Jean Papalia*

Jean Papalia  
Senior Warden

City of Newton



Ruthanne Fuller  
Mayor

# Newton, Massachusetts Community Preservation Program FUNDING REQUEST

**PRE-PROPOSAL**

**PROPOSAL**

(For staff use)  
date rec'd:

Last updated February 2020.

Please submit this completed file directly – do not convert to PDF or other formats.

For full instructions, see [www.newtonma.gov/cpa](http://www.newtonma.gov/cpa) or contact:

Lara Kritzer, Community Preservation Program Manager

City of Newton Planning & Development Department, 1000 Commonwealth Ave., Newton, MA 02459

[lkritzer@newtonma.gov](mailto:lkritzer@newtonma.gov) 617.796.1144

You may adjust the space for each question, but the combined answers to all questions on this page must fit on this page.

<b>Project TITLE</b>	<b>Grace Episcopal Church Tower, Belfry, and Spire (jointly “Tower”) Restoration</b>			
<b>Project LOCATION</b>	Full street address (with zip code), or other precise location. 70-76 Eldredge Street, Newton, MA 02458-2098			
<b>Project CONTACTS</b>	Name & title or organization	Email	Phone	Mailing address
<b>Project Manager</b>	Scott Aquilina, AIA	<a href="mailto:sbaquilina@gmail.com">sbaquilina@gmail.com</a>	617-943-4079	1253 Commonwealth Ave. Newton, MA 02465
<b>Other Contacts</b>	Jean Papalia, Senior Warden	<a href="mailto:jeanmpapalia@gmail.com">jeanmpapalia@gmail.com</a>	617-291-0303	66 South Gate Park West Newton, MA 02465
<b>Project FUNDING</b>	<b>A. CPA funds requested:</b>		<b>B. Other funds to be used:</b>	<b>C. Total project cost (A+B):</b>
	\$1,580,000 (\$704,500 in 2021; \$875,500 in 2022)		\$1,286,000	<b>\$2,866,000</b>
<b>Project SUMMARY</b>	Explain how the project will use the requested CPA funds. You may provide more detail in attachments, but your PROJECT SUMMARY MUST FIT IN THE SPACE BELOW. Use a cover letter for general information about the sponsoring organization’s accomplishments.			
<p>Grace Episcopal Church, Newton (MA Register of Historic Places-1999; hereafter “Grace”) has been the center of the Farlow and Kenrick Parks National Register Historic District since 1872. Alexander Rice Esty’s massive design is topped by a stone conical spire, and its tower rises to a belfry with carillon that has shaped the neighborhood’s land and soundscape for nearly 150 years. The tower, belfry, and spire (jointly hereafter “tower”) are now deteriorated to the extent that they present a public safety risk and imperil the campus. Grace is requesting CPA historic resource funding from the Newton Community Preservation Program for direct costs related to the stabilization and preservation of this endangered “local landmark” of “outstanding architectural quality” (Newton NRHP Nomination, see below). A majority of Grace members identified the tower as non-missional to the religious organization by way of an extensive internal review process. The incorporated Grace body finds the preservation of the tower to be a fundamentally secular endeavor unrelated to its mission, and in the public interest. As such, preservation of the tower utilizing CPA funds is sought to preserve the historic district, responding to Newton residents’ desire to preserve “places of worship [that] help to define Newton’s villages and neighborhoods” (inf.).</p> <p>The tower underwent repairs in 1985 and 1999, but the need for permanent restoration has reached eleventh-hour urgency. Preparing itself for major financial and ethical questions around a historic resource investment of this size, Grace appointed a Tower Study Group in 2018 and retained John Wathne, P.E. of Structures North (SN) to assess the tower’s deterioration and propose plans for restoration. In a September 2019 report, SN noted these exterior conditions: mortar joints eroded by varying degrees and voids permitting water into cavities within the back-up construction, repeated vertical splitting cracks in buttresses which are indicative of outward buckling, and spalled outer stones and shingle stones that could be removed easily by hand. The interior deterioration is almost as extensive, and access to the tower is forbidden.</p> <p>Stabilization and restoration are based on quotes from Allegrone Masonry, a leader in this field. Master masons will utilize stone anchors, tension frames, interior and exterior repointing, and use of pozzolanic lime grout via SN’s patented stabilization system, remedying the fatal flaws in the tower’s design once and for all. Preserving Grace’s tower with this level of care, expertise, and permanence will relieve future generations of this burden, and maintain the neighborhood’s special character and architectural variety, preserving the aesthetic and cultural benefit Grace’s tower bestows on Newton.</p>				



You may adjust the space for each question, but the combined answers to all questions on this page must fit on this page.  
**Full proposals must include separate, detailed budgets in addition to this page.**

Project TITLE	<b>Grace Episcopal Church Tower, Belfry, and Spire Restoration</b>	
<b>SUMMARY CAPITAL/DEVELOPMENT BUDGET</b>		
<b>Uses of Funds</b>		
Restoration Scope #1 (Calendar Year 2021), Allegrone Companies – Stabilization		\$881,000
Restoration Scope#1 (Calendar Year 2021), Allegrone Companies – Contingency		\$88,000
Restoration Scopes #2, 3, & 4 (Calendar Year 2022), Allegrone Companies – Restoration		\$1,331,000
Restoration Scopes #2, 3, & 4 (Calendar Year 2022), Allegrone Companies – Contingency and Escalation		\$192,000
Soft Costs (project management, campaign management, permits and bond fees, professional and design, 15%)		\$374,000
<b>D. TOTAL USES (should equal C. on page 1 and E. below)</b>		<b>\$2,866,000</b>
<b>Sources of Funds</b>	<b>Status</b> (requested, expected, confirmed)	
CPA funding	Inquiry	\$1,580,000
Grace Episcopal Church Member Contributions and Endowment	Inquiry	\$886,000
National Fund for Sacred Places	Requested	\$250,000
Massachusetts Historical Commission – Emergency and Massachusetts Preservation Projects Fund	Inquiry	\$150,000
<b>E. TOTAL SOURCES (should equal C. on page 1 and D. above)</b>		<b>\$2,866,000</b>
<b>SUMMARY ANNUAL OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE BUDGET (cannot use CPA funds)</b>		
<b>Uses of Funds</b>		
Maintenance of the Grace Tower		\$15,000
<b>F. TOTAL ANNUAL COST (should equal G. below)</b>		<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>Sources of Funds</b>		
Grace Episcopal Church Member Contributions		\$15,000
<b>G. TOTAL ANNUAL FUNDING (should equal F. above)</b>		<b>\$15,000</b>
<b>Project TIMELINE</b>	<b>Phase or Task</b>	<b>Season &amp; Year</b>
	Grace Episcopal Church Member Feasibility Study	Spring 2020 (complete)
	Capital Campaign Launches	Fall 2020
	Restoration Scope #1 – Stabilization	Spring 2021-Fall 2021 (6months)
	Review of Restoration Progress and Campaign Update	Fall 2021
	Restoration Scopes #2, 3, & 4 – Full Restoration and Completion of Project	Spring 2022-Fall 2022 (6months)
	Founder’s Day — 150 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Grace Episcopal Church’s Cornerstone	September 4, 2022
	Campaign Completion — Celebrating Grace Episcopal Church’s Second Sesquicentennial, 150 years after the first meeting took place at 76 Eldredge Street	December 3, 2023

<b>Project TITLE</b>		<b>Grace Episcopal Church Tower, Belfry, and Spire Restoration</b>	
↓ Check off submitted attachments here.			
<b>REQUIRED.</b>		<b>PHOTOS</b>	of existing site or resource conditions (2-3 photos may be enough)
		<b>MAP</b>	of site in relation to nearest major roads (omit if project has no site)
Pre-proposals: separate attachments not required, just use page 3 of form.  <b>Full proposals: separate, detailed budget attachments REQUIRED.</b>	<b>PROJECT FINANCES</b> printed and as computer spreadsheets, with both uses & sources of funds		
		<b>Development pro forma/capital budget:</b> include total cost, hard vs. soft costs and contingencies, and project management – amount and cost of time from contractors or staff (in-kind contributions by existing staff must also be costed)	
		<b>Maintenance budget, projected separately for each of the next 10 years</b> (CPA funds may not be used for operations or maintenance)	
		<b>Non-CPA funding:</b> commitment letters, letters of inquiry to other funders, fundraising plans, etc., including both cash and est. dollar value of in-kind contributions	
		<b>Purchasing of goods &amp; services:</b> briefly summarize sponsor’s understanding of applicable state statutes and City policies	
Pre-proposals: recommended. <b>Full proposals: REQUIRED.</b>	<b>HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE</b>	<b>ATTACHMENT 1:</b> Analysis of Historical Significance (narrative; maximum 1 page)	
		<b>ATTACHMENT 2:</b> Description of Historically Significant Features (maximum 1 page)	
		<b>ATTACHMENT 3.</b> Summary & Justification of Proposed Treatment (maximum 1 page)	
		<b>ATTACHMENT 4.</b> Newton Historical Commission Review (based on attachments 1-3 above)	
<b>REQUIRED for all full proposals.</b>	<b>SPONSOR FINANCES &amp; QUALIFICATIONS, INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT</b>		
		<b>For sponsoring organization, most recent annual operating budget</b> (revenue & expenses) <b>&amp; financial statement</b> (assets & liabilities); each must include both public (City) and private resources (“friends” organizations, fundraising, etc.)  <b>for project manager: relevant training &amp; track record</b> of managing similar projects	
<b>REQUIRED for all full proposals involving real estate acquisition, construction or other building/landscape improvements.</b>	<b>SITE CONTROL, VALUE &amp; DEED RESTRICTIONS</b>		
		<b>Owner’s agreement to a permanent deed restriction</b> for historic preservation	
	<b>DESIGN &amp; CONSTRUCTION</b>		
		<b>Professional design &amp; cost estimates:</b> include site plan, floor plans & elevations	
		<b>Materials &amp; finishes:</b> highlight “green” or sustainable features & materials  <b>Environmental mitigation plans (if applicable):</b> incl. lead paint, asbestos, etc. (including disposal of existing fence elements that cannot be repaired or restored)	
<b>OPTIONAL for all proposals.</b>		<b>LETTERS of SUPPORT</b>	from Newton residents, organizations, or businesses





Grace Episcopal Church, Newton from Eldredge Street. Spring 2019.



View of Grace Episcopal Church, Newton from Farlow Park. December 1888.  
*Newton Illustrated - . . . "The Garden City"—Lake and Bridge, Farlow Park.*



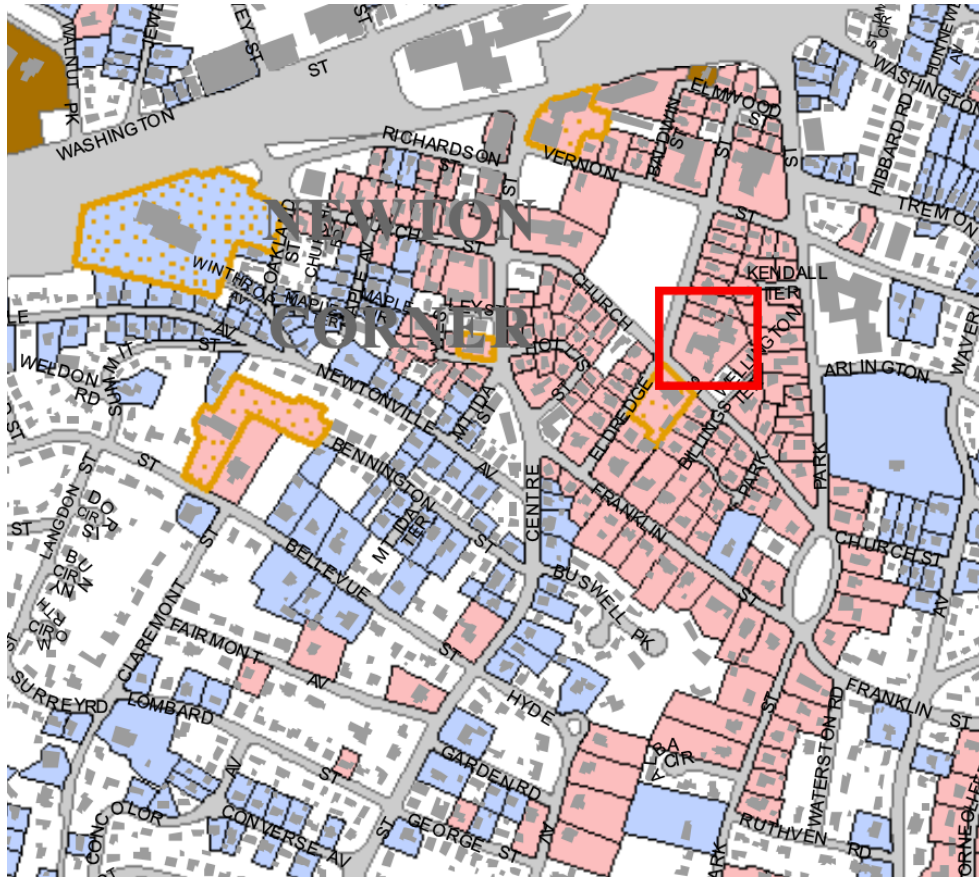


View of the Grace Episcopal Church, Newton–Tower from Farlow Park. Fall 2018.

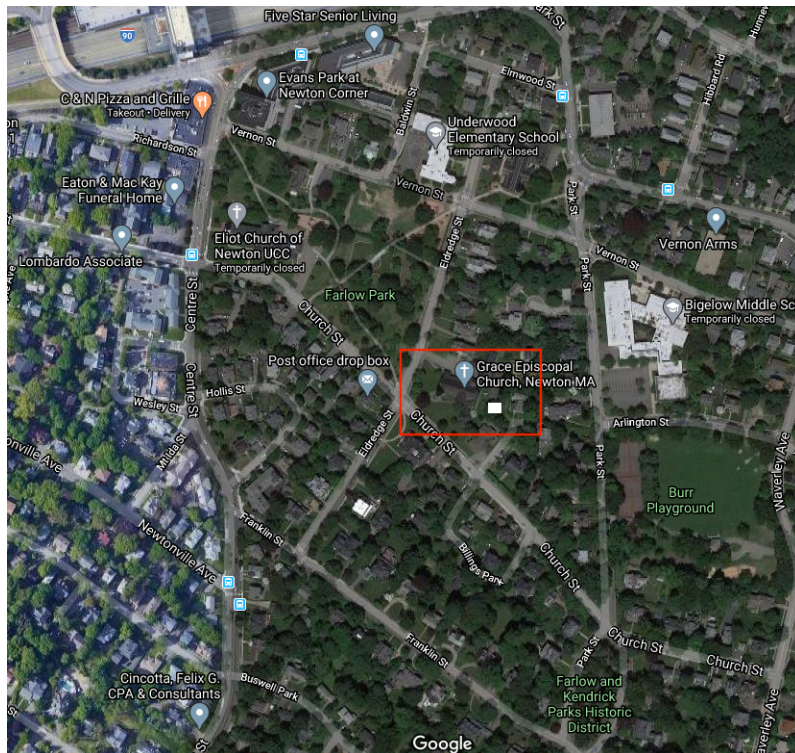


Examples of present Tower conditions. September 2019. Additional examples and full resource conditions report from Structures North available.





Grace Episcopal Church in the Farlow and Kenrick Parks District—National Register of Historic Places—marked by the red square. Source: Historic Properties, City of Newton, Massachusetts, 19 April 2019 (detail). <http://www.newtonma.gov/about/maps.asp>.



## **Analysis of Historical Significance**

Grace Episcopal Church (Grace) occupies a central position in the Farlow and Kenrick Parks Historic District of Newton Corner, a landscape commanded for nearly 150 years by Grace's looming stone tower. The parish of Grace was first organized in 1855, and John Singleton Copley Greene—son of Elizabeth Clarke Copley, the artist's daughter, and Gardiner Greene—served as the congregation's first rector. The congregation soon surpassed the capacity of its original wooden chapel at the corner of Washington and Hovey Streets, and by the early 1870s was in need of a larger building. A location for the new church was identified between Vernon and Church Streets, and the three-acre parcel was purchased on October 23, 1871, from Elizabeth T. Eldredge; shortly thereafter, Eldredge Street was cut through and named in her honor. The cornerstone, brought over from the old wooden chapel, was laid for the new church on September 4, 1872. Alexander Rice Esty's plans for the great stone church were realized "as rapidly as was consistent with the solidity and elaborateness of the structure." In the end, the building materials and land cost the parish about \$105,000, or a relative value of at least US\$(2019)2,270,000.<sup>1</sup> The first service was held in the great stone church on November 30, 1873, one month before Newton became a city.

At its founding, Grace parishioners were workers whose mills along the Charles River crafted famed New England textiles and the "merchants, clerks, and what not" who steamed eastward to Boston every morning on the "Meteor" and returned in the evening to "the tranquil joys of their suburban domiciles amid the trees and flowers."<sup>2</sup> Shortly after our founders laid the cornerstone of Grace, the Great Boston Fire wreaked massive destruction to the area's economy, including razing fifteen businesses owned by Grace parishioners. Even with scaled back plans, it took fifteen years to pay off the debt on the building; though Newton families worshiped in the stone church during that time, the Bishop refused to consecrate the building until the debt was settled. All the while, under the rectorship of Rev. George Wolfe Shinn—a founder of the Newton Cottage (Newton-Wellesley) Hospital, member of the Newton School Committee, and friend to many local organizations—a missional spirit to help the poor and respond to the needs of the community became Grace parishioners' hallmarks, just as the building itself became a landmark in the area.

Grace, with its high Gothic-style tower, belfry, and spire rising to 107 feet, is an integral part of the local neighborhood with its Victorian homes and adjacent Farlow Park, Newton's first municipal outdoor space, designed in 1883 by George Frederick Meacham. Today, as in the 1880s, the park is well-used by families that live in the neighborhood and "steeple predominate" the vista from the park.<sup>3</sup> The strong visual impact of Grace's silhouette, rising above the park's trees, is apparent in drawings and photographs made since the church was completed, including those featured on countless postcards sent across the country out of pride for the old stone church of Newton. In 2023, the stone church will celebrate 150 years, a milestone for us to observe by preserving the integrity of the property, and honoring the evolution of this country parish into a cosmopolitan architectural gem of the Garden City.

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<sup>1</sup> S.F. Smith, *History of Newton, Massachusetts: Town and City, from Its Earliest Settlement to the Present Time, 1630–1880* (Boston: The American Logotype Co., 1880), 694–699.

<sup>2</sup> M.F. Sweetser, *King's Handbook of Newton, Massachusetts* (Boston: Moses King Co., 1889), 39–40.

<sup>3</sup> Brown, Richardson & Rowe, Inc., "[Farlow-Chaffin Park: Historic Planning and Design](#)," (2006): 5–6.

## **Historically Significant Features**

Description of Grace Episcopal Church, Newton from the successful nomination of Farlow and Kenrick Parks Historic District to the National Register of Historic Places. Prepared by Candace Jenkins of the Newton Historical Commission, and approved by the Massachusetts Historical Commission on May 28, 1982.

"In addition to its many fine residential properties, the district contains several churches of outstanding architectural quality. . . . Grace Episcopal Church (#1575) was designed by Alexander R. Esty. Grace Episcopal ranks as one of the most important churches in Newton. . . . Grace Church (1872) appeared at the midpoint of Esty's architectural career and is considered one of his major works. Its design was based on the solemn, stone Gothic Revival espoused in England by A.W.N. Pugin and by Richard Upjohn, the leading exponent of Pugin's theories in this country. The building's angled siting and offset tower at the southwest corner give the impression of complexity to a simple cruciform plan. The steep gable end, with a gable-roofed side entrance extending beyond the main block and placed to balance the corner tower, faces Eldredge Street. The tower contains two entrances and rises to an open belfry trimmed with Gothic arches, tracery, and colonnettes. The transition between the rectangular base, and polygonal stone spire is accomplished by the use of broaches at this level. A minimum of exterior detail and continuous wall material serve to emphasize the tower's height. . . . The church was constructed of load-bearing conglomerate stone laid in a random pattern. Door and window openings were trimmed with red and yellow dressed sandstone in alternating blocks. This material was also used as coping for buttresses located at the entrances, tower, and transepts...

The Farlow and Kenrick Parks Historic District possesses integrity of location, design, setting, materials and workmanship as well as associations with Newton's nineteenth century development as a fashionable Boston suburb. Taking its name from the two small parks within its boundaries, the district exemplifies the city's period neighborhoods in several important ways: the high quality of its architecture, the emphasis on picturesque planning and attention to landscape detail, and the siting of imposing civic and institutional buildings within a primarily residential setting... The Farlow and Kenrick Parks Historic District remains as an excellent example of an upper-middle class, late-nineteenth century residential neighborhood. Preserving a number of outstanding structures, as well as two small parks, and the original curving streetplan, it has been identified as one of the best such examples in Newton and the Boston area."

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The Eldredge Chime of Grace Church was given by Elizabeth T. Eldredge. Housed in the tower's belfry 60 feet above the ground, the nine bells combined weigh 8,296 pounds, are known for their remarkably pure tone, and were the first chime introduced in Newton. They were cast in the summer of 1873 by William Blake & Co., utilizing techniques Blake acquired during his apprenticeship with Paul Revere, III. Grace's chimes define the bucolic soundscape of the Farlow and Kenrick Parks Historic District, having pealed to celebrate the end of world wars, to solemnize 9/11 and the Boston Marathon Bombing, and most recently, at the request of local teachers, to honor Newton's class of 2020 as they observed their graduation in the midst of a pandemic.

## **Summary & Justification of Proposed Treatment: Restoration**

Based on the Tower Structural Masonry Conditions Update of September 2019 provided by Structures North Consulting Engineers, Inc., and John Wathne, PE.

The tower of Grace Episcopal Church—the structure’s dominant historically significant feature in the Farlow and Kenrick Parks Historic District of Newton Corner—is constructed of mass wet-laid stone masonry. The exterior is faced with un-coursed ashlar granite and Roxbury pudding stone with buff and brown sandstone trim, constructed against a wet-laid random rubble back-up at the interior. Core-drilled holes into the back-up construction find the rubble to be well-bonded with a high volume of what appears to be lime and cement mortar, but with small fissures and voids as would be expected with the irregularity of the stone units.

Preliminary recommendations include:

- Cracks are to be repaired by pinning and injecting with a pozzolanic lime grout.
- Supplemental horizontal restraint within the tower will be created to resist the spreading that has allowed these cracks to occur. This can be done with the installation of two segmented (L-shaped) or three-segmented galvanized steel tensioning frames that are mounted onto the interior surfaces of the walls at the corners of the tower and anchored into the masonry. Sprung rods are then run between the frames that exert a constant horizontal compression into the masonry.
- The existing metal strap must be stopped from further rusting, either by exposing and coating it, which given its integrally embedded position is unfeasible, or cathodically protected, and the cracks should be repaired. Cathodic protection consists of electrically connecting sacrificial anodes to the bar and embedding the anodes into the masonry to reverse the corrosion current on the ferrous metal. Replacement of this embedded and critically loaded member would be a difficult endeavor.
- Exterior masonry should be deeply cut and repointed so water infiltration can be stopped.
- Cracks in individual ashlar stone units, mainly those that are not to be removed, repaired off-site and re-set, can also be cross-pinned and injected with a variety of cement-based or adhesive-based stone restoration products.
- Buttress rebuilding consists of dismantling and reconstructing these elements with the addition of internal stainless steel ties that prevent them from spreading in the future. Whereas, buttresses appearing to be materially sound enough internally can be remedied by jet-cleaning cracks, pinned across with Port Anchors (patented to Structures North), and grout injected between the buttress and the wall.
- On the exterior, moderately eroded stones can be left in place and/or surface patched while the most damaged (spalled/deeply eroded) stones should be replaced or built-out with fitted Dutchmen.
- At the spire level, locally and sequentially remove shifted stone elements and quoins, excavating and restoring the back-up construction, and then reinstalling the removed stone units using hidden stainless steel ties to the back-up construction to prevent future separation. There will be the chance that some areas of the back-up will be in such poor condition that the excavations may go all of the way to the interior, and require full thickness rebuilding.