

VILLAGE OF CAMBRIDGE, NEW YORK

Village Intelligence Intake Protocol

North Park Street Cemetery / Old White Church Cemetery

Ownership and Maintenance Inquiry

Matter type	Property ownership / cemetery maintenance inquiry
Property	Washington County Tax Map Parcel 256.17-1-26
Source record	AICR No. 2026-08-11-NPSC-01
Evidence period	Through August 11, 2026
Date prepared	August 12, 2026
Status	OPEN
Extraction confidence	High for source-record extraction; title and legal responsibility remain unresolved

Evidence-based municipal matter record, action ledger, status crosswalk, and assignment tracker

This VIIP report translates the controlling AICR into a human-readable administrative record. It does not determine title or legal responsibility.

Document Guide

How to read this report

This report separates what the record establishes from what remains reported, disputed, or unknown. The source AICR is the controlling administrative record for this version.

Marker	Meaning
CONFIRMED	Established by the AICR or an identified official record summarized in it.
REPORTED	A statement or recollection in the record that has not yet been independently established.
UNRESOLVED	A material question that remains open pending primary-source review.
NO ACTION	No ownership, maintenance, liability, or policy change was made.

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1. Matter Identification

Field	Record
Matter	North Park Street Cemetery / Old White Church Cemetery ownership and maintenance inquiry
Property	Washington County Tax Map Parcel 256.17-1-26
Related property	Turnpike Cemetery, Town of Cambridge
Responsible official	James W. Sweeney, Mayor
Originating inquiry	Ken Gottry inquiry concerning permission for proposed Historical Society cemetery talks
AI system named in source	Cambridge Civic AI Suite - White Creek, NY Historian
AICR date	August 11, 2026
VIIP preparation date	August 12, 2026
Record status	Open - awaiting County Clerk / Archives response

2. Executive Evidence Snapshot

The record identifies a genuine administrative inconsistency. Washington County assessment information classifies the North Park Street Cemetery parcel as a village-owned cemetery for real-property assessment purposes. At the same time, local operational history reported by the Village DPW Superintendent indicates that the Town of White Creek has historically arranged for maintenance and may be responsible for the property.

The AICR does not treat either fact as conclusive evidence of legal title. Instead, Mayor James W. Sweeney directed that the chain of title be established through primary governmental records before any ownership or statutory-maintenance conclusion is adopted. A deed-chain inquiry was therefore transmitted to the Washington County Clerk.

- Confirmed: County assessment records classify the parcel under exemption code 13660 as a village-owned cemetery for assessment purposes.
- Reported but unverified: The Village DPW Superintendent recalls that the cemetery is not Village-owned and that the Town of White Creek historically arranges maintenance.
- Confirmed administrative action: The Mayor requested deed-chain assistance from the Washington County Clerk.

- Unresolved: Current recorded owner, full chain of title, basis for maintenance responsibility, and applicability of Town Law §291.
- No policy change: The AI-assisted research did not change ownership, maintenance responsibility, municipal liability, or public policy.

3. Source and Evidence Guide

Source / information type	How used	Evidentiary weight in this VIIP
AICR No. 2026-08-11-NPSC-01	Controlling administrative source record	Primary source for this report
Washington County assessment information	Parcel classification and exemption code 13660	Official assessment evidence; not treated as conclusive title evidence
Village DPW Superintendent recollection	Historical maintenance and ownership recollection	Reported operational history; not independently verified
New York Town Law §291	Potential statutory responsibility under certain cemetery circumstances	Relevant legal context; applicability not established
New York Village Law provisions	General village property/cemetery legal context	Considered in AICR; specific controlling provision not established in source
Washington County Clerk / Archives deed-chain records	Requested to establish title history	Controlling next-step evidence; response pending
Turnpike Cemetery municipal records	Comparison property with clearer municipal ownership/maintenance history	Contextual comparison only

4. Issue-to-Status Crosswalk

Issue	Record evidence	Current result
Who owns North Park Street Cemetery?	Assessment classification points to Village ownership; local maintenance history points toward Town of White Creek responsibility.	UNRESOLVED - deed chain requested

Issue	Record evidence	Current result
Who maintains the property?	Town of White Creek reportedly has historically arranged for maintenance and contracts for it.	REPORTED - operational practice, legal basis not established
Does assessment code 13660 prove title?	AICR expressly rejects treating assessment classification alone as conclusive legal title evidence.	NO - not conclusive
Does Town Law §291 control?	Statute may apply under particular circumstances involving burial grounds or abandoned cemeteries.	UNRESOLVED - fact-dependent
Can the Historical Society hold a cemetery talk?	Current communication advises approval from Town of White Creek and Village of Cambridge, preferably both, while ownership is clarified.	INTERIM ADMINISTRATIVE GUIDANCE
Was municipal responsibility changed?	AICR states no change in ownership, maintenance, liability, or public policy resulted from AI-assisted research.	NO ACTION
Turnpike Cemetery status	AICR states ownership and maintenance are substantially clearer and point to the Town of Cambridge.	COMPARISON MATTER - clearer than NPSC

5. Administrative Action Ledger

ID	Action	Responsible party	Status	Result / condition
ACT-001	Identify the legal-title question rather than rely on assessment classification or recollection alone.	Mayor	Completed	Primary-source deed-chain review selected as controlling next step.
ACT-002	Transmit deed-chain inquiry for Parcel 256.17-1-26.	Mayor -> Washington County Clerk	Completed / pending response	Requested current owner, latest deed book/page, earlier conveyances, municipal transfers, and

ID	Action	Responsible party	Status	Result / condition
				research procedure.
ACT-003	Respond to originating Historical Society permission inquiry.	Mayor	Completed	Interim guidance supplied while title remains unresolved.
ACT-004	Avoid unsupported legal conclusion concerning Town Law §291.	Mayor with AI drafting support	Completed	Applicability left open pending facts and legal review.

6. Ownership and Maintenance Evidence Matrix

Evidence point	Supports / suggests	Limit or caution	Classification
Assessment exemption code 13660	Village ownership classification for assessment purposes	Assessment classification is not conclusive deed/title evidence	CONFIRMED
Town of White Creek maintenance history	Possible Town responsibility, agreement, custom, or statutory duty	Does not itself establish ownership or legal basis	REPORTED
DPW Superintendent recollection	Possible non-Village ownership	Institutional recollection requires documentary corroboration	REPORTED
Town Law §291	Possible town responsibility in defined cemetery circumstances	Applicability depends on facts not yet established	UNRESOLVED
Deed-chain inquiry	Path to establish current and historical recorded ownership	County response / archival review pending	PENDING

7. Correspondence and Stakeholder Communications

Washington County Clerk inquiry

- Purpose: establish the current recorded owner and the chain of title for Tax Map Parcel 256.17-1-26.
- Requested details: current owner; most recent deed book and page; earlier conveyances involving the Village, Town of White Creek, church, cemetery association, trustees, or other entities; records showing how ownership or control passed to a municipality; and research procedures if staff cannot conduct the title inquiry.
- Status: transmitted before preparation of the AICR; response remains pending in the controlling record.

Response to Ken Gottry and original recipients

- Explained that County tax records classify the property as village-owned, while the Town of White Creek reportedly maintains the property and contracts for maintenance.
- Advised that a deed-chain inquiry had been initiated with the Washington County Clerk and Archives.
- Provided interim permission guidance: approval from the Town of White Creek and Village of Cambridge, preferably both, would reasonably address permission while ownership history is being clarified.
- Explained that the Turnpike Cemetery situation is substantially clearer and points to the Town of Cambridge.

8. Financial Summary

The source record contains no expenditure totals, maintenance-contract amounts, budget lines, insurance costs, tax implications, grant amounts, or other financial schedules for the North Park Street Cemetery matter. No financial impact can be quantified from the current record.

Financial question	Status
Current annual maintenance cost	Not established in source record
Town of White Creek contract amount	Not established in source record
Village expenditure history	Not established in source record
Insurance / liability cost	Not established in source record
Budget or appropriation impact	Not established in source record

9. Legal and Regulatory Context

The AICR identifies New York Town Law §291 as potentially relevant to certain burial grounds, abandoned cemeteries, or cemeteries lacking another legally responsible controlling body. The AICR does not conclude that the statute applies to this parcel. Its applicability depends on unresolved facts concerning title, historical control, acquisition, abandonment, and municipal responsibility.

The source record also states that relevant provisions of New York Village Law concerning village property and cemeteries were considered, but it does not identify a specific Village Law provision as dispositive. Any definitive legal interpretation is reserved for municipal counsel after the deed and archival record is developed.

10. Commitments and Assignment Tracker

ID	Action / commitment	Responsible party	Due date	Status	Dependency / next step
COM-001	Determine recorded chain of title for Parcel 256.17-1-26.	Mayor / County Clerk / Archives	Not established	OPEN	County Clerk or Archives response and primary record review
COM-002	Identify legal basis, if any, for Town of White Creek maintenance activity.	Village administration / counsel as needed	Not established	OPEN	Title history, contracts, municipal records, statutory analysis
COM-003	Route definitive title / responsibility interpretation to Village Counsel.	Mayor / Village administration	After record development	PENDING	Completion of deed and archival research
COM-004	Maintain interim dual-permission approach for Historical Society program while ownership is unresolved.	Village / Town of White Creek contacts	As needed	CURRENT GUIDANCE	No contrary title determination

11. Public-Facing Guidance and Current Administrative Position

- The Village is investigating the ownership history rather than presenting the tax-roll classification as a final title determination.
- Operational maintenance by the Town of White Creek is acknowledged in the record, but the legal basis for that maintenance remains unestablished.
- For a Historical Society cemetery program during the inquiry, the working administrative guidance is to obtain approval from both municipalities, preferably both, to address reasonable permission concerns.
- No change to legal ownership, maintenance responsibility, municipal liability, or public policy has been made.

12. Key Metrics for Infographics

Metric	Value	Context	Reporting period
Primary parcel under review	1	Tax Map Parcel 256.17-1-26	Through Aug. 11, 2026
Assessment ownership classification	Village-owned cemetery	Exemption code 13660, assessment purposes	Current record
Primary title inquiry transmitted	1	Washington County Clerk request	Before Aug. 11, 2026
Definitive ownership determinations	0	Title remains unresolved	As of Aug. 12, 2026
Municipal policy changes resulting from AI review	0	No ownership, maintenance, liability, or policy change	As of Aug. 12, 2026

13. Evidence Gaps and Credibility Assessment

Confirmed

- Washington County assessment records classify the parcel as a village-owned cemetery for assessment purposes.
- The Mayor transmitted a deed-chain inquiry to the Washington County Clerk.
- The AICR expressly states that no final legal conclusion was adopted.
- The AICR expressly states that no municipal ownership, maintenance, liability, or policy change resulted from the AI-assisted research.

Reported but unverified

- The Village DPW Superintendent recalled that the cemetery may not be Village-owned.
- The Town of White Creek has historically maintained the property and contracts for maintenance.

Unknown or not established

- Current recorded fee owner.
- Most recent deed book and page and complete chain of title.
- Whether title ever vested in the Town of White Creek.
- Whether a church, cemetery association, trustees, or another entity previously held title.
- Whether any municipal transfer occurred by deed, statute, judicial proceeding, dedication, abandonment, or other operation of law.
- Whether Town maintenance reflects ownership, statutory duty, agreement, customary practice, or another arrangement.
- Whether exemption code 13660 accurately reflects current legal title.
- Any financial obligations associated with present or future maintenance.

Credibility assessment: High confidence in the extraction of what the AICR says. No confidence rating is assigned to the underlying title conclusion because the controlling primary records have not yet been obtained.

14. Counsel Notes - Internal

- Title / property: Do not treat the assessment roll as dispositive evidence of fee title.
- Statutory responsibility: Review Town Law §291 only after the ownership, abandonment, control, and maintenance facts are developed.
- Intermunicipal responsibility: Determine whether a contract, resolution, historical agreement, dedication, or other municipal record explains White Creek maintenance.
- Liability / insurance: The current AICR does not establish liability allocation or insurance responsibility.
- Public communications: Continue distinguishing assessment classification, recorded title, operational maintenance, and legal responsibility.

Legal Review Required - Please route to municipal counsel before adoption, enforcement, filing, or publication of any definitive legal conclusion.

15. Publication and Review Notes

Field	Note
Date prepared	August 12, 2026
Point of contact	James W. Sweeney, Mayor, Village of Cambridge
Status	Draft for Internal Review - Open

Field	Note
Controlling source	AICR No. 2026-08-11-NPSC-01, dated August 11, 2026
Public disclosure	Drafting support: Cambridge Civic AI Suite. Reviewed and approved by municipal officials before publication.

Standard municipal disclaimer

These materials are prepared for internal municipal use and public communication drafting. Confirm final legal content with municipal counsel and applicable statutes, regulations, codes, and source records before adoption or publication.

Source-control note: This VIIP report is derived from the uploaded North Park Street Cemetery AICR. Where the source record does not establish a fact, this report labels it as reported, unresolved, or not established rather than supplying outside assumptions.