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Volunteers Clean-up First Ward Cemetery *Results of Underground Imaging Revealed*

SYRACUSE, June 9, 2007 — Gilberti Stinziano Heintz & Smith, P.C., a leading environmental law firm headquartered in Syracuse, coordinated a volunteer effort to clean-up the First Ward Cemetery today as part of their First Ward Cemetery beautification project. The project, coordinated by Rebecca Neri and Kim Wolf Price was initiated by Josh Heintz after reading an article by Dick Case in the Syracuse newspaper about a Northside resident, Nancy Mulcahey-Condolora, who needed help cleaning up the park near her house.

Research showed the park was in fact the old First Ward Cemetery, final resting place of several historic figures, such as the first President of the Village of Salina, the first Postmaster of Onondaga County, and several Revolutionary War veterans. The cemetery was eventually abandoned and fell into disrepair. In 1938, a young boy was killed by a falling tombstone. Shortly after that, the remaining headstones were removed or buried and the ground re-graded.

Gilberti Stinziano Heintz & Smith, P.C. called on its usual partners for help with the First Ward Cemetery beautification project -- Spectra Environmental Group, a leading environmental and engineering firm, and Environmental Design & Research, an environmental landscape architectural design firm. John Ciampa of Spectra Subsurface Imaging, LLC (Spectra) employed the UIT Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) System on the site. The most advance subsurface imaging process available in the US, UIT is exclusively provided by Spectra in New York State.

The UIT was able to detect a variety of features at the First ward Cemetery, including pathways and buried headstones. Specifically, a central circle was clearly identified and appears to serve as a pathway hub at the center of the cemetery. The main pathways radiating from the central circle appear to align diagonally across the site, most likely connecting with the four corners of the cemetery. A much narrower secondary pathway appears to run between Grant Boulevard and Second North Street, bisecting the central circle area.

Spectra also identified numerous other features at varying depths along the survey area, from 0-7 feet, which appear to be potential gravesites, individual graves and grave clusters, headstones, foundations, walls, or other demarcations. Other subsurface features include utilities and tree roots.

Environmental Design & Research will use the underground mapping as a guideline for design and usage plans to help preserve the sanctity of the cemetery, ensure the dignity of those who remain interred there and provide a public use for this beautiful green space. According to Shelly Swanson and Dave Crandall of Environmental Design & Research, the design and usage plan should be revealed later this summer, with final installation to take place in the Fall.

In the meantime, the green space was cleaned up today. The Clean-up Day was a success as a result of the efforts of many volunteers. Rebecca Neri is grateful to everyone who volunteered and showed support and assistance, especially Mayor Matthew Driscoll, Parks Commissioner Patrick Driscoll and Councilman Pat Hogan.

“We could not have come this far without the donation of time and resources of Spectra, Environmental Design & Research, Donny Utz, Tim Sanders and Penn Can Asphalt, the Boy Scouts Hiawatha Seaway Council, Avalon Printing, Tomorrow’s Neighborhoods Today (TNT) and Northside resident Nancy Mulcahey-Condolora,” says Neri.

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