

**Town of Concord
Cemetery Committee Meeting
February 3, 2021 via ZOOM**

Members Present: Mr. Paul Cooke – Chair
Ms. Andrea Solomon – Vice Chair
Mr. Leo Carroll
Mr. Brian Davidson
Mr. Jerry Soucy

Also Present: Mr. Aaron Miklosko - Highway & Grounds Superintendent
Ms. Patricia Hopkins – Cemetery Supervisor
Ms. Justine St. John – Administrative Assistant for Highway & Grounds
Ms. Susan Bates – Select Board Liaison

Additional Residents: Tanya Gailus, Melissa Saalfield, Tom Evarts, Kevin Plodzik, Priscilla Struges, Rebecca Purcell, Jim and Minxie Fannin

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

A-1 The meeting was called to order at 4:04 pm. It was announced that the meeting was being video and audio recorded. By roll call vote, the following members were present: Paul Cooke, Andrea Solomon, Jerry Soucy and Brian Davidson. Leo Carroll joined after roll call.

A-2 It was announced that the meeting was being video and audio recorded.

A-3 Zero deeds for signing.

A-4 Next Meeting will be March 3, 2021 AT 4:00PM via ZOOM

A-5 Meeting Minutes from January 6, 2021 were approved with edits as follows:

Andrea Solomon moved to accept the January 6, 2021 minutes with edits, Paul Cooke seconded and it was voted as follows to approve:

Andrea Solomon – Aye
Jerry Soucy – Aye
Leo Carroll - Aye
Paul Cooke – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

D-1: CHAIR COMMENTS:

Mr. Cooke reported the annual report had been submitted to the Town offices. He also highlighted an example of stone restoration, which was included in the report. He is still working with CIO Stevens to let the public know about the update regarding mausoleums. He has finished a summary of the early history of the Cemetery Committee and would like it reviewed and possibly attached as an appendix to the Master Plan. Mr. Cooke also asked to take agenda items out of order, switching D-5 and D-4. There were no objections.

D-2: STAFF REPORT:

Highway Superintendent Miklosko reported (6) full interments, (4) cremation interments and (1) cremation lot grave sold in the month of January. CPW has responded to winter events and continues to work to get the Cemetery open quickly after storms. Ms. Hopkins had nothing further to report.

D-3: PRESENTATION OF CEMETERYFIND:

Ted Dooling, owner of CemeteryFind, gave an update on the records scanning project. He explained the work that is going into scanning all of the cemetery documents and creating a searchable database for employees and the public. His company also continues to work on the mapping portion. He gave demonstrations on how to search for data and explained many features that will be included upon completion. Leo Carroll asked if there was a way to account for the property boundaries that could indicate space that may be available for tree planting. Mr. Dooling explained the boundaries would have to have been marked on the individual maps, as they are just adding the information to the database. Paul Cooke asked how many cemeteries are included in this project. Sleepy Hollow is the only Cemetery at the moment, but the names of the other two cemeteries have been loaded into the drop down menu and information can be added at a later date if it is available. Ms. Hopkins explained there are no plans at the moment to do that, as there is limited information for those cemeteries.

D-5: NOTICE OF ZBA SPECIAL PERMIT-18 WINDMILL HILL ROAD PROPOSED PROJECT:

Committee discussed a special permit that the Zoning Board of Appeals will be considering for 18 Windmill Hill Road. Mr. Cooke explained this was brought to his attention by the President of the Friends of Sleepy Hollow after receiving a letter expressing concerns, inquiring if the Cemetery Committee would be submitting any comments about the project. He advised that the jurisdiction of the Committee regarding private property abutting the Cemetery is very limited, however one of the considerations could be if there is a consensus to submit a letter of concern. Mr. Cooke expressed his concern and opened it up for each board member to speak, and there was no consensus to issue a letter. Tom Evarts, owner of 18 Windmill Hill Road, spoke to the plan and shared his plans for landscaping in the area around the fence. Leo Carroll spoke of a concern about planting hemlock trees, due to wooly adelgid, and asked him to consider looking at other options with his landscaping designer. Public comments-Tanya Gailus, 62 Prescott Road, asked if this would interfere with animals and their travel patterns. Mr. Cooke explained that isn't in the purview of the Cemetery Committee. Melissa Saalfield, 7 Concord Greene Unit 7, inquired if there were plantings planned for the Cemetery side of the property. Mr. Evarts spoke to planting ivy near the fence line so ivy could grow up the fence. He also spoke about possibly planting trees on the Cemetery side, if they wanted it. Ms. Saalfield encouraged the Cemetery Committee to consider that. Kevin Plodzik, 98 Baker Avenue, thanked the Cemetery Committee for having the meeting and allowing for a healthy exchange of ideas.

D-4: CONSIDER PETITION FOR THE PURCHASE OF 8 SINGLE GRAVES-OWEN FAMILY:

Ms. Hopkins advised a couple with three children wants to purchase 2 graves and 2 for each of their children, totaling 8 single graves. She does not see a concern with it. Andrea Solomon moved to accept the request. Brian Davidson seconded and it was voted as follows to approve:

Andrea Solomon – Aye
Jerry Soucy – Aye
Leo Carroll - Aye
Paul Cooke – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye

D-6: UPDATE ON PRIORITY PROJECTS:

Mausoleum Sites: Work continues to promote the mausoleums.

Records Scanning: The presentation earlier summed up the status of this project.

Headstone Restoration: Nothing further to report.

D-7: MASTER PLAN CONTINUED DISCUSSION:

Tree Planting: Mr. Carroll spoke about the goal to stop the erosion in the Cemetery. He advises this appears to have been an ongoing issue for a long time. Mr. Miklosko advised they will continue to look for areas to plant some trees and ground cover to try to mitigate the erosion. He states there are challenges due to the lack of irrigation and drought conditions over the past few years. Mr. Carroll acknowledged there have been attempts made in the past, and suggested possible engagement with another organization to specialize in stopping the erosion. Mr. Miklosko advised they do send soil samples to the UMASS Extension labs for Recreation, and they could consider doing that for the Cemetery. Mr. Carroll and Mr. Miklosko will work together to get samples submitted in the future.

Columbaria: Ms. Solomon and Mr. Soucy advised they are going to try meet on Saturday at 1:00 in the Knoll, to discuss Columbaria. Will be posted Thursday.

Undeveloped Land Use: Mr. Davidson continues to look at the issue, he is considering that it could be an appendix to the Master Plan. He is also continuing to follow updates regarding the trails. Trails appear to be well used. Mr. Miklosko plans to have the signage posted in the spring.

Cemetery Stone Walls: Mr. Carroll and Mr. Miklosko met and walked parts of Sleepy Hollow. They believe there can be repairs made for some of the walls, and they will work on a list to prioritize the repairs. The Bedford Street side and Old Burial Ground walls will need extensive repair. It has been discussed that possibly CPA funding could be pursued for next year.

Mausoleum Sites for New Area of Sleepy Hollow: Mr. Miklosko advised they haven't been able to mark out areas for the new sites yet, as the ground is still snow covered. He will work with Engineering to mark the locations and then will provide the committee with a plot plan and survey plan.

D-8: COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

Mr. Davidson advised Mr. Carroll that the White Pond Advisory Committee also has also looked at erosion issues, and maybe they would have some resources that would offer some assistance. Mr. Cooke asked Ms. Bates about the Reformatory Trail/Bicycle issue. She advised there has been no movement on that issue at the moment. Ms. Solomon asked Ms. Bates if the Select Board is going to consider having the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Committee take over the Reformatory Trail Committee. She said the Select Board does need to consider their charge and if so, it would have to be changed.

Mr. Carroll asked if it became part of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, would it still be Concord’s responsibility. Ms. Bates said it would, as members of that committee would be Concord residents.

Mr. Cooke advised he and Ms. Solomon’s positions will be open and they cannot be reappointed, so they will be looking for new members for the committee.

D-9: PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Ms. Gailus spoke to follow up regarding Ms. Bates’ comments regarding paving of the Reformatory Trail. Discussion between Ms. Bates and Ms. Gailus regarding the considerations of paving the Reformatory Branch Trail. It will be discussed at a later time during a Select Board meeting.

D-10: SUMMARY OF FOLLOW UP ITEMS

Mr. Carroll to look into soil and erosion considerations with UMASS extension. Mr. Miklosko will work with Engineering to plot out the mausoleum sites in the new section. Mr. Soucy and Ms. Solomon will meet and discuss columbaria. Ms. Solomon asked if the Cemetery Committee should send a letter regarding 18 Windmill Hill Road regarding the discussion this evening. Members didn’t see a need to do so.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Solomon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 17:50P.M. Mr. Carroll seconded.

- Andrea Solomon – Aye
- Brian Davidson – Aye
- Jerry Soucy – Aye
- Paul Cooke – Aye
- Leo Carroll - Aye

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved,

Justine St. John
Administrative Assistant, Highway & Grounds Division

Paul Cooke, Chairperson
Cemetery Committee