Hello Cemetery Owner,

The Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning (DPZ) and the Cemetery Preservation Advisory Board (CPAB), through the efforts of many volunteers such as the Howard County Genealogical Society, began a County-wide cemetery survey in 2014 to document the current conditions of historic cemeteries located in Howard County. From that documenting effort, it was determined that about a third of our historic cemeteries are in great condition, a third are in average condition and a third are in poor condition. From this assessment, a $5,000 County cemetery grant was created in 2016. Five cemeteries applied and received funding for their restoration efforts.

This year, the County is providing grant funding totaling another $5,000. The grant will be administered in this coming 2017/2018 winter. Deadline information and application availability will be posted and announced by November 2017. This grant will also be a one-time opportunity for any projects that support the historic cemeteries outreach, repair, protection, or landscape.

Maryland Cemeteries Grant: The Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites is a State-wide nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting and preserving historic Maryland cemeteries. The Trader Foundation for Maryland Burial Sites is providing grants up to $2,000 to “rejuvenate endangered historic Maryland cemeteries.” The grant application deadlines are January 1 and July 1 of each year. This Statewide grant opportunity can be found on the Coalition’s new website: http://cpmbs.org/

Tax Credits: Currently there is a 25% property tax credit for restoration work that is pre-approved by the Historic Preservation Commission for a historic cemetery. Section 20.112 of the County Code say eligible cemetery restoration work may include repair or maintenance of existing gravestones, walls, fencing or other site features [including historic outbuildings] of an eligible property that is a historic cemetery listed on the Inventory under section 16.1303 of the County Code. New construction and landscaping are not included. This credit is also for the rehabilitation of any historic home on the Historic Sites Inventory. I can answer any questions you have regarding tax credits. The Historic Property Tax Credits application can be found: https://www.howardcountymd.gov/Departments/Planning-and-Zoning/Application-Forms-and-Fees

Please return to this webpage in the fall for more grant information and look for the County’s outreach letter that will also be mailed to cemetery owners by November 2017 that will include an application for the new upcoming grant. If you would like more information about future cemetery clean-ups, are interested in helping with the continuation of the cemetery surveys, or if you are the owner of a cemetery and don’t believe you received information on the surveys, please contact me at 410-313-4341 or email bburgess@howardcountymd.gov. Thank you for reading this information to share the efforts and opportunities that Howard County is making towards the preservation of historic cemeteries. On behalf of the Cemetery Preservation Advisory Board, we hope you will submit a project for this first cemetery grant.

Sincerely,

Beth Burgess
Cemetery Preservation Advisory Board, Executive Secretary
Resource Conservation Division, Chief
Department of Planning and Zoning