



HOWARD COUNTY CEMETERY PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

3430 Court House Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043

Administered by the Department of Planning and Zoning

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March 2018 Minutes

Tuesday, March 6, 2017; 10:00 -11:30 a.m.

The bi-monthly meeting of the Cemetery Preservation Advisory Board was held in the Clarksville Room at 3430 Court House Drive, Ellicott City, MD 21043. All cases are public meetings unless otherwise indicated. All inquiries should be made to: 410-313-2350.

Members Present: Liz Larney, Chair; Chip Plitt; Fred Dorsey; Mike Bennett; David Zinner, Liaison to the Maryland Advisory Council on Cemetery Oversight

Absent: Edward Glawe

Staff Present: Beth Burgess, Ken Short, Yvette Zhou

Public: Melinda Chaney Farnsworth, Secretary of Savage Cemetery Company; Steve Breeden and Jim Shultz from SDC Properties

General Topics

Ms. Larney moved to approve November 2017 minutes. Mr. Dorsey seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

CPAB grant applications update

- Ms. Burgess reported there are seven applications submitted. The total amount of grant requests is \$27,745 compared to the \$6,500 grant in total available (\$5000 from this year and \$1500 from last year). Ms. Burgess is working with the Howard County Genealogical Society to be the recipient of this grant, the same as last year.
- Mr. Bennett asked about the grant's eligibility criteria because St. Augustine Cemetery is still actively selling burial sites. Ms. Burgess said she will double check that fact as active burial sales would prohibit an application from being eligible. Ms. Burgess said she had spoken to St. Augustine because they questioned their eligibility being a church but the discussion was only around them having and maintaining a historic cemetery and not about having new active burial sites available for sale.
- Mr. Dorsey asked if previous applicants who have applied again will be limited on how much they are awarded because they are a repeat applicant. Ms. Burgess said there was no criteria stating a cemetery owner who applied last year couldn't apply again this year. She said the subcommittee has not met yet but she thinks the priority would be to the scope of work and to new applicants. She said, the only repeat applicant is St. Paul's Cemetery. The determination of the grant award should be based on need and scope.

Cemetery Updates:

35-4 Inglehart

- Mr. Breeden introduced the River Hill Garden site redevelopment plan to the Board. He said during the planning process a gravesite on the property was discovered. The gravesite is located next to the River Hill High School site within the buffer close to the property line and not in the center of the development. Mr. Breeden spoke with the previous owner because the current owner did not know the graves existed. Mr. Breeden obtained 1985 aerial photos and narrowed the site based on conversation with the previous property owner who remembered the headstones being between a chicken house and the property line. Mr. Breeden provided a drawing where he showed the possible location of the graves to the Board. Ground penetrating radar (GPR) was conducted and the foundations of the old chicken house was identified but no grave shafts were identified.
- Mr. Breeden said the previous owner kept the headstones in his garage and would provide them for the site. The headstones were four children in the 1850's to 1860's between the ages of one to seven years. Mr. Dorsey said there was whooping cough and cholera epidemic during that period.
- Mr. Shultz said the exact locations of the graves may be hard to find since the site has already been developed over the years.
- Ms. Larney asked what the site will be used for. Mr. Breeden said the redevelopment of the site will still be commercial/retail.
- Mr. Dorsey said if the plan is to memorialize the site, the headstones should lay flat on the ground instead of standing vertically in order to preserve the structural integrity of the stones.
- Mr. Short said Julie Schablitsky, the Chief Archaeologist of Maryland State Highway Administration, recommends using dogs instead of GPR to locate human remains. Mr. Breeden said he will research further since there is periwinkle in the area they believe to be the graves.
- Mr. Bennett said the soil around the grave shafts although from the 1860's is still soft compared to surrounding soil. However, the area has been disturbed by previous drainage fields.
- Mr. Zinner asked about the correct spelling of the "Inglehart" family. Mr. Breeden said there are seems to be different spelling variations and he will check which is correct. The Board agreed with the approach taken by the developer.

Preservation and Restoration Initiative for Neglected Cemetery Entities (PRINCE) Update

- Mr. Zinner said the Office of Cemetery Oversight has been working with the Department of Corrections to develop a program for prisoners to work at the cemeteries that may help prisoners secure jobs in the cemetery industry upon their release.
- Mr. Zinner shared a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is being drafted between the Office of Cemetery Oversight and the Department of Corrections. Discussions are ongoing about payment options. For example, six prisoners working for eight hours would cost \$300. Each cemetery must have a main contact acting as the coordinator. Therefore, cemeteries in poor condition on the inventory list may not be eligible due to lack of ownership.
- Mr. Zinner said having the cemetery inventory with all the conditions of each site noted would be helpful to identify top ten priorities. Another option is to integrate with the CPAB grant.
- Mr. Bennett is interested in the program and asked how long it will take for the program to fully implement. Mr. Zinner said the process is moving along but many details need to be worked out. Mr. Zinner said the prisoners would most likely perform landscape and low maintenance work and would not be able to work with chemicals or chainsaws without the approval of Department of Corrections.
- Mr. Zinner said the cemetery has to provide the tools. The Office of Cemetery Oversight applied for a grant to cover the cost of tools. Also, the Rosa Bonheur Society has a trailer and Mr. Zinner has approached the Society about renting the trailer.

Howard County cemetery suggestions for PRINCE

- Ms. Burgess said Howard County's MOU process would take time to route through the appropriate channels.
- Ms. Burgess said the County's inventory list rates the cemeteries as good, fair, poor. Mr. Zinner asked if the cemeteries in fair conditions should be considered for PRINCE. Ms. Burgess said given the grant decisions should be made within the next few weeks, it may not be enough time but perhaps next year. However, the program can be promoted for community outreach. Ms. Burgess said she can send the fair condition contacts to Mr. Zinner for priority consideration.

Coalition to Protect Maryland Burial Sites update

- The 2018 Annual Conference will take place on May 5th from 9:00am-3:00pm at the Sheppard Pratt Conference Center in Towson. The registration cost is \$50 for members and \$55 for non-members. Please sign up at www.cpmbs.org.
- Mr. Dorsey said the Coalition is working with Preservation Maryland on a project with cemeteries in Charles County.

Legislation: House Bill 877

- Mr. Dorsey said the Bill is a second time for Delegate Knotts. The proposed bill requires a person who brings a certain action for sale of a burial ground to conduct a certain genealogical and historical search; authorizing a court to reject the sale of a burial ground under certain circumstances; prohibiting a person from desecrating human remains; requiring that the owner of a burial site that is more than 50 years old and in which the majority of persons interred have been interred for over 50 years shall consult with the Maryland Historical Trust regarding certain matter.
- Mr. Zinner said he is pushing for the bill to remove the State's Attorney's authority for disinterment for non-criminal matters. Delegate Knotts requested statistics on the number of non-criminal disinterment from the State's Attorney office but received no reply.

Other Business

- Mr. Zinner said the Rosa Bonheur Society is very close to drafting a MOU with the neighboring developer. The developer is ready to sign the agreement that he will make his best efforts to acquire the property and preserve the cemetery including landscaping, walking path, signage and other amenities.
- Mr. Zinner would like to organize a bike ride again in the summer, visiting five historic cemeteries sights similar to last year's event.

Ms. Larney moved to adjourned. Mr. Plitt seconded. The motion was unanimously approved, and the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 am.

Next meeting, Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 10am in George Howard building