

**Town of Concord
Cemetery Committee Meeting
October 6, 2021
Via Zoom**

Members Present: Mr. Leo Carroll
Mr. Brian Davidson
Mr. Rod Riedel
Mr. Jerry Soucy
Ms. Rebecca Purcell

Also Present: Ms. Patricia Hopkins – Cemetery Supervisor
Ms. Justine St. John – Administrative Assistant for Highway & Grounds
Ms. Linda Escobedo - Select Board Liaison
Ms. Erin Stevens - Town Staff
Ms. Eleanor Carr - Resident
Mr. Roberto Mighty - Applicant

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

- A-1 The meeting was called to order at 4:04 pm
- A-2 It was announced that the meeting was being audio/video recorded.
- A-3 Seven deeds submitted for signing.
- A-4 Next Meeting will be November 3, 2021 at 4:00PM
- A-6 Meeting Minutes from September 1, 2021 were approved.

Brian Davidson moved to approve the September 1, 2021 minutes, Rod Riedel seconded and it was voted as follows to approve:

Rod Riedel – Aye
Leo Carroll - Aye
Jerry Soucy – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Rebecca Purcell – Aye

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

D-1: STAFF REPORT:

Ms. Hopkins provided the staff report. Engineering is looking into the stone wall repairs, but there is nothing further to report at the moment. Headstone repairs were due to start earlier but have been delayed due to weather and scheduling on the vendor's part. She is hoping he will be able to start in the next week. They are still working on the mapping portion of the records scanning project and are aiming to have that completed by the end of the year. The Tyler family donated money for plantings near their lot in Sleepy Hollow. That should be completed in the next week. Einsteins will be doing their final cut for the season in the next month. Ms. Hopkins is working to

pick up the flags off the graves of the veterans in the next week, in preparation for the Veteran's Day Ceremony.

There were (11) lots sold, (1) full interment and (3) cremation interments in September.

Mr. Riedel asked for a breakdown cost for the headstone restoration-\$8,100 for 27 headstones, \$1,000 for 5 footstones, total of \$9,100. He followed up with asking how much it cost for the cleaning of the 29 headstones the previous year. He is looking to gather information in the event he completes a grant proposal. Mr. Riedel also asked about the process that took place to accept the donation from the Tyler family. Ms. Hopkins explained it was donated to the Friends of Sleepy Hollow, who then approached the Select Board to have them accept that donation to the Cemetery Division for the plantings.

Ms. Purcell asked about the location of the headstones that will be restored. Ms. Hopkins advised there are several different areas, including Author's Ridge and the "new hill" section. Ms. Purcell was asking because she had received an email concerned about the condition of some of the headstones in the Author's Ridge section.

D-2: DISCUSSION-REQUEST FROM FRIENDS OF SLEEPY HOLLOW FOR EVENT ON OCTOBER 2, 2022:

Friends of Sleepy Hollow are looking to have an event in October of 2022. Ms. Hopkins explained this isn't an event they've done before. They have done a smaller event, when they dedicated the Thurston-Handley Garden, but it was one location with a small ceremony. Ms. Purcell had attended their last meeting and there were not a lot of specifics, just general ideas. They were looking to initially send out an invitation and work more of the details of the event out later. Ms. Hopkins is looking for additional information such as: where the event will actually take place (will it move around), where the tables will be set up, if there is a contingency plan if there is a funeral that day, and what their parking plan is. Mr. Riedel asked if Sundays are used for burials-Ms. Hopkins advised yes. Mr. Riedel asked if this was something where they would ask to cap the number of attendees. Ms. Purcell stated that she thought they were going to be sending out a town-wide mailing regarding this. Mr. Soucy said it felt like more of a festival/outdoor event, which he isn't opposed to, but as a member of the committee acknowledges they need to take the request very seriously. He does not see the need to respond today, but that it is something to think about in the coming meetings. Mr. Carroll suggested putting together a list of concerns for them to address. Mr. Soucy believes they should come to the committee with their idea, and they can speak to the concerns then. Mr. Carroll suggested Ms. Purcell invite someone from the Friends of Sleepy Hollow to present at the next meeting so they can elaborate on their plans. She will pass the message along.

D-3: PETITION FOR PURCHASE OF 8 SINGLE GRAVES-CHAN FAMILY:

Mr. Carroll spoke to the reason the committee was considering this petition—any request to purchase over (3) two grave lots requires committee approval. The Chan family is looking to purchase (4) 2 grave lots.

Brian Davidson made a motion to grant the request and Jerry Soucy seconded the motion and it was voted as follows to approve:

Rod Riedel – Aye
Leo Carroll - Aye
Jerry Soucy – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye

Rebecca Purcell – Aye

D-4: FILMING REQUEST-REVIEW APPLICATION:

Mr. Roberto Mighty spoke to the request. He is filming segments for a program called “Greatest Cemeteries in the World”. He is the host of this program and films high profile cemeteries, typically with a tour guide. He uses battery operated cameras and “gentle” lighting. He is aware the cemeteries they film in are in operation and is respectful of mourners. Filming date will be October 11th or 12th weather dependent. Mr. Riedel asked if it was a concern that Concord staff wouldn’t be present due to the holiday. Ms. Hopkins advised that it is important to know when they will be here, even if Town staff isn’t, but that has happened in the past. Erin Stevens, film liaison to the Town, also advised she would be in touch with Mr. Mighty as well. Ms. Hopkins requested for Mr. Mighty to reach out via email so she could provide him with the permit. She also asked that he focus on the authors and famous people and if any other headstones are visible in the video, to blur the names to protect the privacy. Also, if he finds someone who has a backstory he wants to include, he should check with the family first. Mr. Mighty advised he might want to try filming by drone as well. Ms. Stevens advised she will help him with that, to check with the FAA due to the proximity of Hanscom AFB.

Brian Davidson made a motion to approve the permit and Rod Riedel seconded the motion and it was voted as follows to approve:

Rod Riedel – Aye
Leo Carroll - Aye
Jerry Soucy – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Rebecca Purcell – Aye

D-5: DISCUSSION-LETTER TO SELECT BOARD REGARDING CEMETERY TRAILS:

Mr. Davidson offered a letter for consideration to submit to the Select Board in advance of the Envision Concord meeting that will be taking place in November. It will discuss a number of different trails and their access and historical attractions so he felt it would be an opportunity to raise the general concerns regarding bicycle activity in the Cemetery so they can be fully informed. Committee members suggested a few edits, which Mr. Davidson agreed with.

Rod Riedel made a motion to accept the letter with edits and Rebecca Purcell seconded the motion and it was voted as follows to approve:

Rod Riedel – Aye
Leo Carroll - Aye
Jerry Soucy – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye
Rebecca Purcell – Aye

D-6: DISCUSSION-GROUND COVER:

Mr. Carroll spoke about his continued mission to increase the groundcover in Sleepy Hollow, thereby reducing erosion. He was at Garden in the Woods in Framingham, and he spoke with a groundskeeper there. The groundskeeper explained that bringing in loam and grass seed isn't necessarily the best way to grow groundcover, because it could diminish the chances of success for growth of certain native species. He suggested finding plugs of native species to plant. Mr. Riedel added that the groundskeeper gave them a few suggestions of plants to try. He thinks this is a good starting point to plan to identify some potential sites in the spring and maybe use some of these suggestions. He will be looking to put together a presentation for an upcoming meeting with proposals, after he's had a chance to review with Mr. Miklosko and Ms. Hopkins. Mr. Carroll added that it may be time to grow other cover instead of grass. Mr. Davidson commended Mr. Carroll and Mr. Riedel on their efforts. Mr. Soucy spoke to how this work could help columbarium planning, as landscaping in that area will be very important.

D-7: COMMITTEE MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

Mr. Davidson spoke about the trend of more cremations, and he wants to make sure residents understand how many cremations are allowed in a single or two grave lot when they make these purchases. He is wondering if there should be some language drafted to add to the fee schedule to help educate the consumer. Ms. Hopkins explained that the number allowed are in the Rules and Regulations, and it is explained at every lot sale.

D-8: PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Eleanor Carr, 138 Minuteman Drive, inquired about the Reformatory Branch Trail. Mr. Davidson advised they aren't currently taking a position on the Reformatory Branch Trail but are sending a letter to the Select Board requesting to be included in long term plans. Mr. Carroll also advised the cemetery abuts Great Meadows, but they don't control it. Ms. Carr doesn't think it is good for bicycles to come into the cemetery from the Reformatory Branch Trail. She is concerned that there may be an increased speed of bicyclists if the Reformatory Branch Trail is paved. Mr. Carroll encouraged her to get involved in the committees such as the Trails Committee regarding these concerns. Mr. Davidson also mentioned the Transportation Committee and a bicycle subgroup. Ms. Carr suggested that leaving it in its present state would be the best option.

Ms. Escobedo commended the Cemetery Committee on their seriousness discussing all of the items on the agenda. She also wanted to comment generally about ways to keep informed. She believes the burden on keeping informed falls on the citizens. As a citizen, she routinely peruses agendas about a variety of topics. She encourages people to go to the website to do that as well. She also wanted to clarify that there is town wide discussion about the Reformatory Branch Trail, however, no definitive actions have been taken by any Town Committees on this topic and she expects there will be ample time for public discussion regarding it.

ADJOURNMENT:

Brian Davidson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 17:32 P.M. Mr. Riedel seconded. (5-0)

Rod Riedel – Aye
Leo Carroll - Aye

Jerry Soucy – Aye
Brian Davidson – Aye

Respectfully Submitted,

Justine St. John
Administrative Assistant, Highway & Grounds Division

Approved,

Leo Carroll, Chairperson
Cemetery Committee