

NANTUCKET CEMETERY COMMISSION
Posted Meeting of November 10, 2021, at 3:00 pm
Virtual Meeting via Zoom Video Conference

FINAL AND APPROVED MINUTES

Attendance: Commissioners: Frances Karttunen, Scott McIver, Allen Reinhard (Chair), and Lee Saperstein.

Absent: Barbara White

1. Call to Order.

Chair Allen Reinhard called the meeting to order at 3:03 pm. A roll-call of attendees showed that a quorum existed.

2. Public and Commissioner Comments.

There was no public comment. Ken Beaugrand, Real Estate Specialist, while apologizing for an inability to attend because of a conflicting emergency meeting, sent an e-mail containing his proposed comments. Lee Saperstein read the e-mail and the salient comments are repeated here.

- (1) Vicki Marsh, Town Counsel, has reviewed the first draft of the MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) and, when approved by the Hick's counsel, it will go to the Committee for review;
- (2) The appraisal has been ordered and is in progress as to the valuation of the parcels to be swapped; and
- (3) I need to arrange a surveyor to do a plan of the parcels to be exchanged. I will check with Steven Arceneaux at the DPW to see who they had engaged for this part of the process.

3. Approval of Minutes from October 13, 2021.

Frances Karttunen moved, Scott McIver seconded, and the Commission unanimously approved the minutes from the meeting of October 13, 2021. The vote was by roll call.

4. Approval of Lot Sales Since Last Meeting.

Allen Reinhard reported that his meetings with Phyllis Ruguaru, DPW Office Administrator, have been very productive. Her search in the files has found several transactions that need to be affirmed or corrected; she has also reviewed and improved the application forms and improved the filing system. He then proceeded to list the lot sales that have been made recently and require approval and also the corrective actions that need to be made and approved by the Commission. All of these actions are for lots in Polpis Cemetery.

- Lot E-24 (sale). Thomas W. and Jean A. Austin.

- Lots D-22 & 23 (double lot sale). Perry Edwards, III, and Evelyn Hall.
- Lot E-22 (sale). Brooks C. and Sally B. Hall.
- Lot E-23 (sale). Virginia Hall Birch.
- Lots F-17 and D-17 (Swap). Penny Dey exchanged F-17 for D-17, leaving F-17 without a conflict with Homer Ray, see below.
- F-27 (sale). Charles R. (Richard) and Christine (Teena) Loftin.
- F-16 & 17 (sale confirmed). The 2015 sale of these two lots to Homer Ray was confirmed and the records corrected.
- F-16 (refund). Stefania Speck received a refund for F-16, which she relinquished.
- F-18 (refund and clarification). Jeff Lee received a refund for F-18 and its ownership by Elaine Dubois was confirmed.

After careful review of these actions, the Commission agreed to vote on one motion of approval for all of them; so moved by Frances Karttunen, seconded by Scott McIver, and approved unanimously by roll-call vote.

Allen Reinhard then went on to explain that some early transactions had not been filed correctly. A great deal of research by Phyllis Ruguaru found the paperwork for these early sales, some complete and some with applications and no payments. Allen Reinhard found earlier notes on potential sales for which no applications had been filed. After seeking current telephone numbers for the principals of these applications, they were able to complete the earlier records. Four applications remain with no payment but for which promises have now been made.

5. Polpis Cemetery Latest Developments.

In addition to the newest developments for the land swap with the abutting neighbors that was given by Ken Beaugrand (see above in Public Comments), Allen Reinhard noted that we had originally laid out 135 lots at Polpis, three of which were invalid because they extended beyond the cemetery boundary and two of which will be used for the unclaimed cremains inurnments. Of the 130 available, 105 have already been sold. These numbers demonstrate the urgency for completing the land swap. Lee Saperstein suggested that, once the surveyor has defined the areas to be swapped and even before conveyances are made and recorded, that we could plot lots on a map of the land coming into the cemetery so that the actual staking can be done the moment that conveyance is approved. Allen Reinhard then added that we need to order additional toe markers and they will have to be enumerated with the new lot numbers. We will also need more corner posts. [Action: Allen Reinhard to advise Ken Beaugrand of the need for speed; also, to work with Phyllis Ruguaru to order toe and corner markers.]

6. Record-Keeping Issues and Resolution.

As explained in Item 4. Lot Sales, Phyllis Ruguaru has done a lot of work in fixing files and records. She has also updated the application procedure to make it swifter and more reliable and, while doing so, worked with Allen Reinhard to revise the various forms. [Action: Put procedural guidance and new forms onto the Cemetery Commission web site. If the forms can be made to be fillable, this would be a good thing.]

7. Inurnment of “Whale-Oil Gus”, Sunday, October 17, 1:30 pm at Prospect Hill Cemetery.

Allen Reinhard said that the inurnment of Augustus E. Folger’s remains (Whale Oil Gus) went extremely well. The weather was good and the comments by Frances Karttunen were excellent. He noted that Scott McIver had arranged for a memorial stone, which was already there, and that the Reverend Georgia Snell had given an invocation for Mr. Folger. The report in the “Nantucket Current” was an excellent summary of the event and included a complete obituary for Mr. Folger.

8. Ledbetter/Swain and Brenizer Lots at Polpis; Gerhard Lot at Old North: Form for Ownership and How Many Inurnments?

Allen Reinhard reminded the Commissioners that we had discussed the number of potential inurnments for the large-sized lots (10’ by 10’) in Polpis and the similarly sized lot in Old North at the previous meeting. He believes at this time that the total number of inurnments, for cremated remains, i.e., cremains, should be six. All present concurred and Allen Reinhard offered to inform the three families of this decision. [Action: Allen Reinhard to inform these lot owners of the decision for six inurnments in each plot and to create a form for ownership.]

9. Monument Restoration Project Underway.

Allen Reinhard asked Scott McIver to report on the monument restoration project, which he was happy to do. The contractor’s experts have been on Island for over five days and will be issuing a report soon on the condition of monuments in the five cemeteries that they were asked to survey. Once the report is received, they have suggested that we schedule a Zoom call among the Commissioners and them for them to answer any questions that we might have.

10. Cemetery Issues.

Allen Reinhard reflected on the earlier work done by the Commission to survey cemetery conditions and noted that there is an outstanding work order to repair or replace fences. Given the change in management in the DPW, he said that he would check with the Director on their thinking about replacing damaged rails or installing new fencing as was originally proposed by the former director. The cemeteries that need fencing renewal now are New and Old North and Newtown Cemeteries. Frances Karttunen added that the corner fences at the Quaise Asylum Burial Ground need to be renewed and the brush that has grown up around them needs to be cut. She also said that the proposed signage at Altar Rock Road and the parking lots may prove to be insufficient. She asked that at least one sign be placed along the path indicating the direction to the cemetery. Allen Reinhard said that he would check with the DPW and its sign maker on the status of fences and signs. Quaise Asylum Burial Ground belongs to the Nantucket Conservation Foundation and he will approach their Executive Director to find out about renewing the fencing there and providing signage along the path. She also suggested that the memorial dedication at Quaise will need to wait until there is new fencing and appropriate signage. [Action: Allen

Reinhard to talk with the DPW Director about replacing fencing and the creation of signs at Quaise; also to talk to NCF about Quaise renovation.]

11. Old, New, and Other Business: Green Burials and Updating Cemetery Regulations.

Lee Saperstein said that it was time to move the proposed amendments to the Cemetery Regulations into a public hearing and thence to the official regulations. He moved that we ask the Town for a public hearing on the proposal and Scott McIver seconded the motion. In discussion, Frances Karttunen suggested editorial changes to reflect the current and correct names of the Historic Coloured Cemetery and the Miacomet Indian Burial Ground. With those changes, the Commission voted unanimously to forward the proposal.

Frances Karttunen asked also if logistics for the inurnment of the eight unclaimed cremains had been determined. She felt that some sort of ceremony would be appropriate.

12. Adjournment came by consensus at 4:14 pm.

Next regular meeting: Wednesday, December 8, 2021, at 3:00 pm by Zoom Video Conferencing. If regular face-to-face meetings resume, a notice will be sent with the agenda for the September meeting. The Zoom link remains the same through the end of this year.

Respectfully submitted: _____; Date: _____
Lee W. Saperstein, Secretary

Nantucket Cemetery Projects List.

Cemetery monument condition survey.
Consolidation of lots at Newtown Cemetery with recordable ground survey.
Split rail fence at Polpis Cemetery.
Survey to lay out additional lots at Polpis.
Toe and lot corner markers for new Polpis lots when laid out.
Dedication of new monument at Quaise Asylum Burial Ground.
Fencing at the Historic Coloured Cemetery.
Fencing and brush removal at New and Old North Cemeteries.