

**Cemetery Commission of Frankestown
Minutes of Meeting on June 14, 2023
Informational Meeting on Green Burial (FINAL)**

Trustees and Alternates: Polly Freese, Ethel Mac Stubbs, Bridget Howell, Trustees
Meghan Hardwick, Janet Taft, Alternates

Attendees: Robin Haubrich, Ben Haubrich, Janet Hazel, Brad Howell

Meeting commenced at 6:15 p.m.

Green Burial Discussion

Welcome and introductions.

- Ethel notes this meeting is intended to impart information on green burial and to get information and feedback from citizens. The Commission has NOT voted on the issue of whether we are now or in the future allowing green burials in town cemeteries. Ethel notes some citizens have previously asked Trustees if green burial will be available both in the near future (i.e. if we have an immediate request) and down the road, so there is demand. At least two Trustees agree we need the option, at a minimum, in the future.
- Handouts were given. One had illustrations showing the differences between traditional burial post Civil War (i.e. casket with embalmed body) and green burial of body not embalmed. Another handout had frequently asked questions. The Green Burial Council provided laminated cards with website for more information. Bridget noted we have additional people interested who could not come to meeting who have given us their email addresses and we should advise them of meetings etc.
- As to mechanics of each kind of burial, one question answered question as to concrete vault, which is now used in traditional burial in Cemetery 3. One function of that is to prevent sinkage of ground above.
- Discussion of green burials in Cemetery No. 3 versus using land directly west of turnpike acquired by the town in 2016 per town meeting vote (referred to below as "Annex").
- Disadvantages of green burial in Cem 3 (if we intersperse graves between traditional graves) : sinkage means need continual replenishment of dirt, mowing issues and possible liability for injury of mowers.
 - the burial mounds which are typically atop the graves and the aesthetics (eg they will not look like other graves, what if not tended). It is noted we

do not have employees, only independent contractors who mow, not weed.)

- Do we have a separate , not used big space, in Cemetery 3 for separate green burial cemetery? Possibly Southeast corner of cemetery, which is small, Question arises as to water table, space.
- Advantage of using Southeast corner is that it is accessible, unlike Annex which will have to have selective logging and trail or road.
- Pros and cons use cemetery Annex
 - Pros: land was donated with condition of use by cemetery. It will have a natural look i.e. not manicured or tended cemetery, which is likely desired by those wanting this option. No mowing would be done
 - Additional benefit to town: serene space with natural area, trails for walking available, wild park- like setting.
 - Noted that although surveyed lots or maps do not exist right now, like maps we have in Cemetery 3, GPS could be used to identify different burial plots so we do not have problem identifying individual burial sites.
 - Cons...need road access and perhaps civil engineer or planner so paths and roads could be mapped. These services and road building are expensive. We have cemetery capital improvement fund, however. Question, whether ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 funds) could be accessed for Annex green burial cemetery.
 - Whether, in general , we need Select Board approval for Annex green burial cemetery.
 - Mechanics of green burial issues: how does green burial work with time constraints of body decay i.e. the preliminaries must be done immediately (eg lot identified, deed given , burial permit checked). Unlike Lebanon we have no employees on staff to verify burial permit etc. Using sexton? How do we verify people are responsible with cooling body? Refrigeration would work if citizen will use funeral home (but at big cost) and then green burial could be delayed for some weeks. There is "green burial" funeral home in Manchester.
 - Need a sexton who will do green burials , e.g. will measure depth of grave, make sure the grave safely dug , get permits, get other paperwork and hold harmless agreements.
 - If we could publicize with pictures what some of these graves and grave cemeteries look like, it would give citizens more of an idea what we are talking about. Perhaps Francestown News could publish pictures for us.

Meeting adjourned 7:30 pm