



THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT
CHAPEL HILL

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13 October 2003

Mr. Curtis Brooks
Landscape Architect /Urban Forester
Town of Chapel Hill
Department of Public Works
306 North Columbia Street
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516

Re: The Repair and Reconstruction of the Stone Walls at the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery.

Dear Curtis,

Enclosed please find the archaeological investigations memorandum prepared by Mr. Stephen Davis, Associate Director of the Research Laboratories of Archaeology at UNC-Chapel Hill. The investigations focused on the northwest section of the cemetery where the section of the cemetery stone walls has been removed.

As we discussed on September 10th at the Cemetery, there are three types of stone walls in the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery. The western section where the old African-American plot is located has stone walls that are piled on grade without mortar but are square and range in height from 24 inches to 28 inches and are approximately 24 inches to 30 inches wide. The middle section of the Cemetery, which is where the nineteenth century plots are located also have stone walls that are 24 inches to 28 inches tall and are composed of stacked stones without mortar. However, the caps of these walls are mortared. The eastern section is the twentieth century section of the Cemetery and here, the stone walls are mortared and square and are 24 inches tall and wide.

Based on my conversations with you and Mr. Mitch Wilds of the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources, the University proposes to restore and repair the stone walls in the following manner:

1. The west walls will be repaired in place. New matching "Chatham" stones will be stacked on the wall where wall sections are missing stones. A new stacked or "piled" stone wall will be built in the northwest section where the wall is entirely missing. It will match the existing west wall in the way it is built, the height, the base width and the type of stone-"Chatham" stone. The location of the missing section wall will be sited in accordance with findings in Davis Archeological Memorandum. Mr. Davis will be available for on-site consultation as we rebuild this section of the wall.

2. The south/center section walls will be repaired where they are damaged. This will largely encompass replacing missing stones and rebuilding damaged mortar caps on this wall. The overall color, strength and consistency of the existing mortar will be matched as closely as possible.
3. The east walls will be repaired at areas where the wall has experienced mortar and stone damage due to excessive vegetation and freeze/thaw cycles.

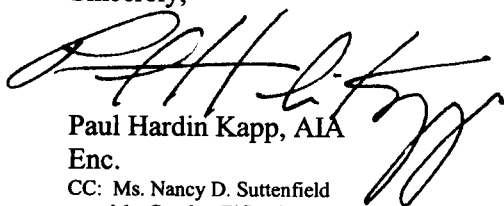
This particular project will only address the repair and renovation of the west, south and east walls. The north wall will be repaired as part of the landscape improvement package of the Northeast Chiller and Parking Deck Project. This project as you may recall, proposes increasing the planting buffer, redoing the bollards at the entry drives and repairing the north stone walls. During our visit on site, you mentioned that the Town had already arranged to replace the existing damaged steel bollards with ones that are provided by the Public Works Department. This item will be coordinated during the design phase of the Chiller/Deck Project.

The current project will be a joint effort by the UNC Facilities Services Masonry Shops and the Chapel Hill Public Works Department. Public Works will clear off vegetation on and around the stone wall work area and the UNC Masonry Shops will perform stone repair and renovation. You and I will coordinate this work in order to facilitate the project and to determine an acceptable end product. I propose that we meet regularly on site with your landscape supervisor and Mr. Nickey Pennix, Director of the UNC Masonry Shop. During these meetings we should determine where each crew will need to work and if work that is finished is acceptable. We will need to regularly document completed work that has been determined acceptable for the record of the project. The progress of this project will need to be conveyed to the Town, the University and the Department of Cultural Resources.

The stone walls of the Cemetery are an important part of history of the Cemetery, it is imperative that their integrity and significance be retained. Over the course of many years, the Cemetery stone walls have developed a certain character, which came initially in their construction and evolved with the landscape and vegetation that grew around them. Mr. Wilds conveyed this sentiment to me during our meeting in the Cemetery and I concur with him. I believe that the scope of work described earlier in this letter respects the historic qualities of the walls and I am looking forward to working with you in implementing this laudable project.

I will contact you to arrange a meeting with Mr. Pennix, Mr. Davis and myself next week. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Paul Hardin Kapp, AIA
Enc.

CC: Ms. Nancy D. Suttienfield
Ms. Carolyn Elfland
Mr. Bruce Runberg
Ms. Anna A. Wu
Mr. Jim Mergner
Mr. Steve Copeland
Mr. Jerry Guerrier
Mr. Cal Horton
Mr. Mitch Wilds
Ms. Catherine Frank
Ms. Linda Convisser
File

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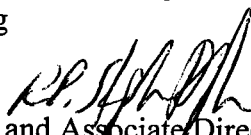
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MEMORANDUM

To: Paul H. Kapp
Campus Historic Preservation Manager
UNC Facilities Planning

From: R. P. Stephen Davis, Jr. 
Research Archaeologist and Associate Director
Research Laboratories of Archaeology

Date: September 26, 2003

Re: Archaeological investigations at Old Chapel Hill Cemetery to identify unmarked graves in areas of upcoming construction

On September 24-25, 2003, staff from the Research Laboratories of Archaeology investigated two areas of Old Chapel Hill Cemetery. The purpose of these investigations was to identify unmarked graves which might be impacted by upcoming construction to: (1) restore the stone wall at the west edge of the cemetery; and (2) extend a walkway at the east end of the cemetery for access to a proposed ashes garden. Work was conducted by Steve Davis and Brett Riggs (RLA research archaeologists), and two undergraduate research assistants.

Investigations along the west edge of the cemetery consisted of systematically probing beneath the surface with 2-cm-diameter soil augers to identify subsurface anomalies which likely represent grave pits. To do this, we pulled a measuring tape along the west wall, starting from the south end, and augered at one-meter intervals approximately one meter from the inside edge of the wall (or projected edge where the wall no longer exists). We assumed that the wall, when restored, will be approximately 70 cm wide and follow the inside edge of the property line (as recently marked by stakes with blue flagging tape). We also tried to auger along the edge of the wall but found this impossible due to numerous buried rocks. When a potential grave pit was identified, additional auger probes were made nearby to confirm the identification. We did not attempt to identify the edges of grave pits, as this would have required numerous auger disturbances into the top of the grave pit. A total of about 180-200 auger tests were made.

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In places where no graves were found, the auger encountered orange clay subsoil at approximately 10-70 cm depth. Subsoil was encountered deepest at the south end where there has been substantial soil deposition over the years; at the north end, subsoil was encountered immediately below humus. In places where probable graves were identified, the auger passed through a layer up to 50 cm thick of mixed, disturbed subsoil before encountering very loose soil or a void created by settling after the underlying body and coffin had decayed. In some graves elsewhere in the cemetery, all of the pit fill has slumped, creating a linear depression over the grave. Our maximum auger depth was one meter (about three feet), and in no instance did the auger encounter the actual grave.

These investigations identified 11 subsurface anomalies which likely represent unmarked grave pits (see attached map). We also mapped 10 marked graves and one family monument which lie within about a meter of the stone wall (when restored), and we located our "positive" auger tests relative to the existing rock wall (inside edge) and the projected restored wall. All of these graves have been marked on the ground with red pennant flags so the stone masons will know where they are.

It is our recommendation that the workers use care in the areas of identified graves and avoid creating any deep soil disturbances. In areas where the restored wall encroaches on the cemetery beyond the existing wall, additional investigation (perhaps including removing topsoil to expose the top of the grave pit) might be needed to insure that the wall is not placed over a grave. This might be the case along the northern half of the wall where few visible remnants of the original wall remain. Just let us know if and when this might be necessary.

We also examined, in similar fashion, the projected pathway to the proposed ashes garden at the east side of the cemetery. Based on our visual inspection on September 23rd, and our conversation with David Swanson, this area was not expected to contain any graves. We augered the center and each side of the projected walkway at one-meter intervals and did not find any probable grave pits. We did, however, encounter a large object (perhaps a rock) about 20 cm below surface at the south edge of the proposed walkway, between the Duke and Alfred Stratton Lawrence monuments. No further archaeological investigation is recommended for this area.

The total cost for this work was \$600.

