

A QUICK REPORT

DATE: May 14, 2004
TO: W. Calvin Horton, Town Manager
FROM: Curtis Brooks, Landscape Architect/Urban Forester
SUBJECT: Old Chapel Hill Cemetery Task Force
May 13, 2004

Attending: Council Member Dorothy Verkerk (chair), Rebecca Clark, Catherine Frank, Paul Kapp, Bruce Runberg, Faison Sessoms, Bland Simpson, Cat Williams Absent: Jill Coleman, Steven Moore, Kirk Pelland, John Sanders

Staff Attending: Curtis Brooks, Emily Cameron

The Old Chapel Hill Cemetery Task Force met in the Council conference room at 3:30 pm on Thursday, May 13, 2004. Council Member Verkerk convened the meeting with a summary of the Old Chapel Hill Cemetery update that will be presented to the Council at its May 24, 2004 meeting. She continued with a review of the Council's charge to the Task Force to provide recommendations for improvements to the Cemetery utilizing the \$150,000 in available funding.

Curtis Brooks then provided updates on several ongoing efforts including: the Town's work to eliminate invasive exotics from the cemetery; a summary of a meeting with David Owens from the Institute of Government's outlining the Town's responsibility and authority to maintain and improve individual plots; a status report on the condition and format of the Town's Cemetery records and plans to duplicate and distribute the Cemetery Directory; and, a review of the Town's responsibility to budget adequate resources to provide perpetual Cemetery maintenance.

After considerable discussion about the format and accessibility of Cemetery records, it was agreed that a subcommittee of the Task Force should study this issue in more detail. Paul Kapp then provided a recently developed cost estimate of approximately \$60,000 for restoration of the cast metal fencing around the Dialectic and Philanthropic Society plots for further consideration by the Task Force, and a proposal by the University to install a historical marker acknowledging African Americans interred in the Cemetery along the South Road frontage. The Task Force unanimously endorsed installation of the proposed marker.

Council Member Verkerk then asked each of the Task Force members to volunteer to work on one or more of three subcommittees proposed to develop more specific recommendations during the upcoming summer. The subcommittees include:

Archives and Public Information – Chaired by Council Member Dorothy Verkerk
Pedestrian Improvements – Chaired by Catherine Frank
Historic Preservation – Chaired by Paul Kapp

The Task Force's next full meeting was not specifically set but is expected to be scheduled for the third week of August. For further information, I can be contacted at 968- 2800 ext. 122.