

**Old Cemetery Task Force(OCTF), Middletown Springs(MTS), VT  
Official minutes of Meeting as of September 26, 2017**

In attendance: David Wright (DW), John Arsenault (JA), Nora Rubinstein (NR) and Kelly McElheny (KM)

Meeting began at 5:05pm.

Agenda was reviewed with one change by JA of the date of the last meeting minutes to be approved, September 6th. The change was accepted without objection. KM made motion to accept the minutes. JA seconded the motion. OCTF meeting minutes from September 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 were accepted unanimously. NR's list of tasks was reviewed with the following discussion:

- The most recent aerial photo provided by the Rutland Regional Planning Commission was reviewed. It was discussed that it could be used for mapping the cemetery in the future. JA showed the group the Dorset Historical Society – Maple Hill Cemetery electronic catalogue of information and cemetery map as the end example of what he would like to see for the Old Cemetery in the future. It was discussed that the mapping and cataloguing project would be a complementary project in conjunction with the GIS mapping that may be done in the spring by Green Mountain College (GMC) students. No formal action taken.
- JA discussed that the scanning of DW's original mapping and drawings done in 1976(?) were not coming out with good resolution. He was going to try a different technique. Still working on this. No formal action taken.
- JA reviewed the scanned document discovered in the MTS town meeting minutes from 1922 when the Copeland Cemetery fund was begun. He is working on transcribing the document. It was determined from the document that the Selectboard does not control the income on this fund. It was discussed that the Trustees of the fund have not released any income in the last few years in order to see the fund grow. The balance in the fund can be found in the MTS Annual Report FY 2015-2016 page 27.
- It was further discussed that the Pleasant View Cemetery is receiving \$1500 from the town per the MTS Annual Report FY 2015-2016 page 30-31.
- JA discussed that after our conversation with Tom Giffin of VOCA, we would like him to do demonstration day for MTS select board members at the end of October. JA will follow up with looking at the treated stone.
- JA will follow up with the GIS mapping through Green Mountain College.
- After reviewing the PVC fund, it was determined that we need to look at the documentation of the Cramton Fund. JA will follow up with trying to locate the Cramton fund document.
- KM conveyed her discussion with Hartgen Associates. She spoke with Justin about the need to do traunching or ground-penetrating radar (GPR) to find the missing stones and graves that may be impacted by heavy equipment being brought in to remove the pine tree. Because we do not yet have a clearly defined area of discovery, Justin reiterated that the he would not be able to give us a clear idea of cost estimate. KM explained her background in anthropology and archaeology and that she was trained in performing excavations and had worked on both a Clovis point site and a 1530s Native American site in WNY and northwest PA. She and Justin discussed this and that potentially doing 8 to 10 test digs would be beneficial to designating areas needed for GPR. He agreed that it would be beneficial going forward for clarity. After discussing this with her sister, Susan Sherwood of Wendel (<https://wendelcompanies.com/>) about historic preservation rules, it was determined that KM need contact the state archaeologist to discuss the ramifications of doing test digs on a Nat'l Historic Site. There may be state regulations and they may be the group to conduct the test digs. KM will continue to follow up on this issue.
- KM discussed that there was no further information gathered about preserving the Gardner Monument other than the same information DW provided about using pneumatic house moving equipment.

- KM discussed that she will begin cataloguing the stones on the south boundary stone wall after the frost.
- DW reviewed his list of tasks. There has been no further communication regarding the house mover. He will continue to follow up. He was not sure why Gawet and Bowker were listed as contacts for the Gardner monument restoration. He felt that they may be good contacts for referrals.
- NR reviewed her list of tasks. There has been no further communication with Tony Genier. She will follow up. Terry Redfield will be discussing the use of fire company equipment and she will follow up with him and with Chris Smid re. experts who may be able to help with the Gardner monument.
- It was discussed with the group about a reference to a mason in Brattleboro, Peter Welch who was referred by Darryl Calkins. JA has attempted to contact Mr. Welch by email without success. KM discussed that she knows Peter Welch through a mutual friend in Brattleboro. She will follow up about Peter's contact information.
- The group discussed the recommendations for the select board going forward and our options. The following items were discussed.
  1. Doane's strategy seemed to be logistically somewhat risky.
  2. Least intrusive is Tree's Inc. approach of bringing the crane over the cedars from South St.
  3. The logistics of the four quotes we received are as follows:
    - a. Vallaincourt – crane in the cemetery (\$12,000 to \$15,000).
    - b. Trees Inc. – crane outside of the cemetery (\$12,000 to \$15,000).
    - c. Limbwalkers – trim the windsail (\$2200).
    - d. Doane – cut, buffer existing stones and graves, snake wood out using a winch and cable, done during winter freeze and extract through DW property (about \$5,000 but no written estimate received yet).
  4. The prep work to start the job, depending on the approach selected, is of concern. The select board should consider setting aside \$15,000 to \$20,000 to eventually remove the pine tree.
  5. KM will contact the county arborist to discuss the tree for a third opinion.
  6. The Phase I priority is the Tree. Phase II is restoration, conservation, and management, including straightening of the Gardner Monument.
  7. The full report is due to the Select board at the end of October.
  8. DW recommended that we begin with a request for \$2500 in next budget and \$1000 per year after that. Do we petition for an item on the ballot or request through the select board? This will be clarified.
  9. December is when the select board begins budgeting and when we put in our request.
  10. It should be further noted that the select board members be made aware of the VT Secretary of State report called "Digging Deep" <https://www.sec.state.vt.us/media/616600/digging-deep-2014.pdf>, to be aware of their roles and responsibilities with regard to historic cemetery maintenance.

Next OCTF meeting is scheduled for October 11, 2017 at 5:00pm at the MTS Town Office.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:27pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly McElheny

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