



M O H R & S E R E D I N

Landscape Architects, Inc.

June 21, 2010

Ms. Cynthia Loebenstein
Vice President, Friends of Evergreen
164 Concord Street,
Portland, Maine 04103

Re: Master Plan for Brentwood Parcel, Evergreen Cemetery

Dear Cynthia

I am pleased to provide you with the attached Master Plan for the 6 acre Brentwood Parcel of the Evergreen Cemetery in Portland, Maine. This piece of land has been a part of the cemetery for decades, but has never been developed or used by the cemetery. In fact, it does not feel like a part of the cemetery at all, but rather more like a piece of vacant land, and it invites dumping of trash and partying.

The recent proposal by the Deering Center Neighborhood Association to use this portion of the cemetery for a community garden has raised many questions about the long-term use of the land. The 1994 Evergreen Cemetery Master Plan by Halvorson Associates gives very little guidance for its use.

The Friends of Evergreen received two grants, one from the Rines/Thompson Fund of the Maine Community Foundation, and one from the Davis Family Foundation cultural Arts Grant to develop a Master Plan for the Brentwood Parcel. An advisory board was assembled with members from the Neighborhood Association, the Historic Preservation Committee, Planning and Historic Preservation, and Parks and public works, as well as citizen members and Friends of Evergreen. The Master Planning process included meetings with the advisory board and two public meetings which were advertised in the local papers and with invitations sent to the abutting neighbors. The attached report documents the planning process.

The long range Master Plan envisions integrating the parcel into the larger cemetery while retaining a distinct character – in a similar fashion to the development of the existing, historic cemetery. There is a new, ceremonial entrance developed at the entrance to the cemetery which includes an allee of trees, gates, and entry columns that echo the main entrance from Stephen Avenue. A memorial garden is located in the lawn behind the trees which serves as a scatter garden and a place to sit. Names are engraved in a low granite edging around the garden. Columbarium walls with niches for cremation urns are proposed for the central portion of the site, and they are accessed from the existing cemetery driveways. A total of four walls are proposed which will provide 3,200 to 3,800 niches. The lower, western portion of the property is proposed to be used for stormwater management and treatment which will help the Capisic Brook watershed. There is enough space in this area to create a small tree nursery to start trees for planting along the buffers, and for overall cemetery maintenance.

The Master Plan is shown in three phases. The first phase includes the temporary community gardens proposed by the neighborhood association, along with cemetery entrance improvements, buffers, and drainage improvements. The second phase shows the transition between the use of the property for community gardens and the long range use for interment, and includes planting and fencing the perimeter for buffering and security. The third and final phase, when implemented has the potential to generate significant revenue for the city of Portland through the sales of niches.

The Master Planning was a positive, inclusive process which brought together several interested groups, and the result is a plan that is enthusiastically embraced by the Friends of Evergreen, the abutters, the Deering Center Neighborhood Association Community Gardens group, Historic Preservation groups, and city staff. In addition, if the entire master plan is implemented, it will generate income for the city of Portland.

The final step for the Master Plan for the Brentwood Parcel of Evergreen Cemetery is to be adopted as an amendment to the 1994 Evergreen Cemetery Master Plan.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tatyanna Seredin', written in a cursive style.

Tatyanna Seredin, ASLA
Maine Registered Landscape Architect
Mohr & Seredin, Landscape Architects, Inc.