

**New York Quarterly Meeting
Cemetery Committee Meeting
October 21, 2019**

Present: Jessica Fleischer-Black, John Major, Chris Roddick, Bryan Oettel (C)

Excused: Suzanne Stout

21.10.1. Meeting begins at 5.35 PM with a moment of silence.

21.10.2. The agenda is reviewed and approved.

21.10.3. The sexton's report is read and approved. Report is attached.

21.10.4. Suzanne Stout's phone report is read and approved.

21.10.5. The committee discusses 2020 budget requests and priorities with the goal of settling on a preliminary budget to submit for the NYQM's November review. We prioritize the follow for 2020:

1. Installing benches in new areas to expand the cemetery's accessibility;
2. Hiring an architect consultant to provide needed guidance on improving the cemetery facilities including, but not limited to, a new building with office space designed to meet future needs, upgraded bathroom, increased storage space, possibly setting up wifi, and adding a pavilion. Chris Roddick to research and come back with a budget estimate before November.
3. Hiring a part-time host to cover increased openings of the cemetery, starting in April 2020. John Major to coordinate search once the budgeting process is complete.
4. Discretionary fund to cover a possible wheelchair purchase, consulting fees, workday snacks, and other unaccounted for expenses.

21.10.6. Committee reviews Suzanne Stout's cemetery proposals (attached herewith) and incorporates into the budget discussion. We also agree that we'll maintain a policy of discouraging photos being taken of stones while stressing the hope that everyone respects the space. We acknowledge that modern technology makes it extremely difficult to have a blanket "no photography" policy.

21.10.7. The committee approves our Sexton's request for a plot reservation as a member in acknowledgment of his long-standing dedication to the care of the cemetery and those who enter it.

21.10.8. A cemetery walk-through with the Prospect Park Alliance is covered, and Chris Roddick is to reach out to PPA and arrange.

21.10.9. We continue to go over the plot reservation process and look at making it more consistent and easier for everyone involved. The majority of the time is spent on how to ensure that we receive payment without being intrusive. It's agreed that payment for a plot and any other fees, such as scattering or burying ashes, should be received before the reservation is considered complete. For any other remaining fees, we look for the NYQM office to coordinate with the funeral home/director to collect.

21.10.10. The November 16th Cemetery Work Day (from 10am-4pm). John Major has contacted Brooklyn Friends, Mary McDowell, and Friends Seminary for participation, and have received confirmations from Brooklyn and Mary McDowell. November 23rd is set as a rain date. Bryan Oettel to coordinate with the Communications Committee on getting the announcement out to all the meetings in the NYQM.

21.10.11. The next meeting will take place on November 25th at 5.30pm at NQYM Room 1, 15 Rutherford Place.

21.10.12. The meeting closes at 6.45pm.

Cemetery Report 19.10.21

I have been doing the normal

- checking fence and grounds
- cleaning shed
- picking up and resetting stones
- picking up fallen branches
- picking up and removing trash
- filling holes
- in regular communication w/ clerk, committee members, PPA and office and Mary K
- maintaining locks
- working on records
- pruned
- pulled saplings

charged and maintained cart

expense for Data \$50 per month

2 Visitors to Norma Reed

3 Visitors to Mary Benninton

4 Visitors for the release of 4 young squirrel

Got the fence repaired

Painted the front of the shed to cover and prevent future graffiti

Purchases

▪ Herbicide	16.31
▪ Velcro fasteners	4.89
▪ Paints	27.00
▪ Primer	43.49
▪ herbicide	29.96
▪ rags	11.48
▪ mineral spirits	7.98
▪ graffiti remover	8.98
▪ latex glove scruber	2.99
▪ handi wipes	7.28
▪ baking soda	1.95

total \$ 355.36

Cemetery Sexton

Bob Wilber

Dear Friends,

As we move toward 2020, we need to re-think and perhaps re-configure our thinking about our cemetery on a few issues:

Access, accessibility for an increasingly and ongoing aged population and photography.

Access:

For years we've been asked to have the cemetery be open

on a regular basis, for limited hours to allow members to come and visit the graves of loved ones, or simply sit quietly in the sacred space without having to make a specific appointment, and require the sexton or a committee member to be there to open the cemetery and escort them.

Friends balk, for several different reasons at having to call make an appointment and all the rest. Most cemeteries have daily hours they're unlocked and open and loved ones, often filled with emotion can come privately without so much necessary interaction and the feeling of imposition they feel in having to ask volunteers to come there with them.

We had in the past two years, designated an open time on Saturdays, and our past clerk Mary Eberhardt Owen, and/or our Sexton, Bob Wilbur went to the cemetery and waited for visitors. Except for one visitor, who came once, no one came.

Since we are situated in a public park we cannot have our cemetery opened and left unattended. Nor can we ask our committee members, all of whom work full time demanding jobs, to give up their Saturdays, a day when they take care of all the other business in their lives. The request for a day a week

when the cemetery is open to serve its members should be met.

but how?

After much thought and after hearing concerns raised at the last NYQM about access, we feel the only solution is that we hire someone, perhaps an employee, or two to share the job, already on staff at Brooklyn Meeting House or another meeting, to open and protect the cemetery, and check visitors in, etc. on Saturdays

We could establish 10- 4 hours every Saturday, make it wildly known, suggest picnics, meditation, etc. and we feel then friends would begin to visit more frequently.

Of course this solution requires a budget and approval. But it answers a real need friends have and increases the use and knowledge of the cemetery.

Accessibility:

Our cemetery is a beautiful sacred space, but it is also

a place that's difficult in places to navigate for the sure-footed, and downright hard and dangerous for the disabled. We need a handrail along the shrub bed wall leading to the glade, as its slope is difficult to transverse for the elderly, especially when the ground is often littered with sweet gum balls, which can

catapult one down the hill. There are several other areas, which need the benefit by a handrail and steps.

Yes, these changes require a professional assessment and

a fiscal commitment, but it's our mandate to protect and maintain the cemetery, so it can serve our members as far into the future as we can imagine.

To not make these changes: Staffing the cemetery on Saturdays and adding safety railings, steps, etc. is to not meet the needs and challenges of friends today, nor prepare for future generations of friends.

Photography:

With the arrival of cell phones, it's become near impossible to adhere to a "No photos" policy. We need to change our policy to request no photography of stones that show names or dates, as families consider this information private. We should maintain our rules about no video or filming in the cemetery, and we do get frequent requests especially from film students to film in the cemetery.