

Town of Provincetown  
Cemetery Commission

Special Meeting, Feb. 23, 2010 – Town Offices, Jerome Smith Rd.

The meeting convened at 3:00pm

Present: Richard Olson, Chair; Greg Howe, Mark Collins; Sebastian Araugo [Alt.]

Excused: Astrid Berg & Tom Myers

Together with: Sharon Lynn, Town Mgr.; David Gardiner, Asst. Town Mgr.; Brian Carlson, Health Agent; Tony Lemme, B&G Supt.; Billy Rogers & Richard Waldo, Engineering consultants.

David Gardiner introduced the subject of the meeting, the proposed development of cemetery facilities north along Alden St., from the pre-existing cemetery grounds. He explained that we are dealing with a report submitted by a specialist for the Natural Heritage Endangered Species Program [NHESP] under the MA. Endangered Species Act[MESA] ; in reference to the habitat & breeding habits of the Eastern Spade foot Toad. This toad appears to be a “protected species,” but not an “Endangered species,” and would, according to the report, have its habitat impacted to a “low to moderate” degree by the proposed cemetery expansion.

David Gardiner said that our Commission discussion may be somewhat premature, in view of the bureaucratic involutions yet to come.

Tony Lemme discussed the added expenses to the Town if the Cemetery expansion had to be moved from the proposed site to an area of steep drop-off behind the Cemetery Office that would require many tons of fill and a significant retaining wall.

Billy Rogers expressed the view that the report we are looking at is only an assessment. He would like to have a conversation with Dr. Eve Schuler, Dir. of the NHESP, with whom he has had positive discussions before.

David Gardiner counseled that we be conciliatory, but should emphasize the Town’s concerns about time demands and expense of developing the alternative solution for our urgent burial needs.

It was noted, in connection with a reference in the environmental assessment to herbicides, that we don’t use them and that our Cemetery grounds are not manicured lawns, as mentioned in the assessment.

There will be a conference call on the subject of the assessment with state environmental officials next week, and Greg Howe volunteered to represent the Commission.

We discussed whether an Article should be included in the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting in April to cover changes of location or cost of the Cemetery expansion project. The Town Administration will work with the Commission.

There was discussion as to whether deeds should be issued for purchased lots, rather than book entries in the Cemetery office – to be continued.

Discussion reverted to the habitat of the toads, and to the possibility of carving out parts of the “low to moderate” habitat for Cemetery purposes, at least as a temporary measure.

Mr. Rogers re-iterated that he will undertake to negotiate with State authorities, perhaps to develop a “Plan B.”

The meeting adjourned at 3:40pm.

Richard B. Olson  
Chair & Sec. pro-tem