

Town of Springfield – Cemetery Commissioners

Minutes

Selectmen's Hall - 96 Main Street - Third Floor

Wednesday, December 6, 2017

Commissioners present: Hugh Putnam, Scott Page, Gerald Patch, John Swanson and Barbara A. Courchesne, Ex-Officio.

Called to order at 5:12 p.m.

Additions to the Agenda: Hugh Putnam mentioned that John Hughes objected to the cutting down of the maple tree marked with an X in Summer Hill Cemetery. Commissioners discussed that this is the decision of public works and they don't remove a tree without good reason.

Public Comment: None

Approval of Minutes dated October 4, 2017: Motion made by John Swanson and seconded by Hugh Putnam to approve October 4, 2017 Minutes. No discussion. All in voted in favor.

Update to Cemetery Rules: Commissioners discussed at length making changes to the current cemetery rules to include limits to the number of burials allowed per single grave; limits to size of monument and foundation as well as the number of monuments or markers per grave; and requirement for corner markers on double and larger lots.

The State of Vermont currently does not limit the number of burials allowed in a grave. Springfield's catholic cemetery updated its rules in 2013 to limit one burial and one urn per lot or two urns per lot. Trends indicate more cremations are being squeezed into single lots, therefore, monuments and foundations are increasing in size to accommodate and are encroaching on other lots. Recently, there have been encroachments that had to be mitigated. Ordinance now has regulations on foundation and depth but not size. Size is important to regulate to avoid encroachment and allow for mowing/maintenance. A single lot is 40 inches in width. Most cemeteries require corner posts which can be mowed over and provide permanent known boundaries to avoid disputes. Section J in Oakland; Section 5 in Pine Grove and future expansions would be the affected by requirement of corner posts; these sections do not have pathways.

Motion made by Hugh Putnam and seconded by John Swanson to amend Ordinance 2011-2 (adopted May 18, 2011) as follows:

2.11 Remove the word "above".

Discussion that this is necessary to allow rules appearing after 2.11 to be included in the statement. All in favor.

Motion made by Gerald Patch and seconded by John Swanson to amend Ordinance 2011-2 (adopted May 18, 2011) by adding the following:

“2.12 All lots shall be limited to allow one full burial and two urn burials per single grave or three urn burials per single grave.”

Discussion surrounded number of urn burials. All in favor.

Motion made by John Swanson and seconded by Hugh Putnam to amend Ordinance 2011-2 (adopted May 18, 2011) by adding the following:

“2.13 One upright monument allowed per lot and two flush markers per grave or three flush markers per grave, if no upright monument is placed on the lot.”

Discussion as to defining the rule with “flush”. All in favor.

Motion made by Hugh Putnam and seconded by Gerald Patch to amend prior amendment 2.13 as follows:

“2.13 One upright monument allowed per lot [grave] and two flush markers per grave or three flush markers per grave, if no upright monument is placed on the lot.”

No discussion; all in favor.

Motion made by John Swanson and seconded by Gerald Patch to amend Ordinance 2011-2 (adopted May 18, 2011) by adding the following:

“2.14 Single grave shall allow maximum length and width of 24” monument or marker with a maximum length and width of foundation of 30”. Double grave shall allow maximum monument length of 60” with a foundation length maximum of 66” and a maximum width of marker to be 24” with maximum foundation width of 30”. This allows a minimum of a 7” space on each side of the purchased lot to allow room for corner posts. Larger lots will be calculated by the number of total graves and must allow a minimum of 7” on each side of the foundation to the edge of the purchased lot size to allow room for corner posts.”

Discussion regarding scenarios of markers and monuments. All in favor.

Motion made by Gerald Patch and seconded by Hugh Putnam to amend Ordinance 2011-2 (adopted May 18, 2011) by adding the following:

“2.15 All double and larger cemetery lots require four corner posts be installed by the purchaser when a monument is installed or within one year of the lot purchase. The corner posts will be purchased from and installed by a monument dealer of the purchaser’s choice.”

Discussion ensued regarding not requiring corner posts on single lots since a monument or marker would naturally provide two corners at the head. All in favor.

Barbara Courchesne discussed that once minutes are prepared they will be passed along to the town manager for the selectboard’s information as well as a copy provided to Steve Ankuda to review and

create the proposed ordinance amendment and hopefully be ready for its first review at the next meeting.

Adjourn: Next meeting will be January 3, 2018. Motion made and seconded to adjourn at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Barbara A. Courchesne*

Barbara A. Courchesne  
Cemetery Commissioner, Ex-Officio