

MINUTES
ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY
HONOR SUBCOMMITTEE
TOMB OF REMEMBRANCE/QUEUEING LANES UPDATE
OCTOBER 22, 2014
ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, ARLINGTON, VA

1. Summary. The Honor Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery met on 22 October 2014 at 0900 to receive a status update on the Tomb of Remembrance and the Funeral Procession Queueing Area. The subcommittee was present with 60% of the appointed members. Subcommittee members were able to ask questions and discuss concerns.

2. Attendees.

a. Honor Subcommittee. LTG retired James Peake, chairperson; LTG retired Russell Davis; and Mrs. Debra Fix.

b. Arlington National Cemetery. COL Doug Guttormsen, ANC Engineer; DFO, Ms Renea C.Yates; and ADFO, SGM Brenda Curfman.

c. Others. Mr. Gregg Schwieterman, HNTB; Mr. Rory Franklin, American Battle Monuments Commission; and Mr. George H. Mears, USACE Project Manager

d. Not Present. Mr. Thomas “Chet” Edwards and Mr. Thomas G. Kelley.

3. Presentation.

a. Tomb of Remembrance: COL Guttormsen briefed the Subcommittee. The purpose of the project is to establish a dignified way to give final disposition to cremated remains that may be commingled, unidentified or unclaimed. The 15 percent concept was submitted to the Commission on Fine Arts (CFA) in July. The CFA’s concern was ambiguity of concept; they were unable to determine if it was supposed to be subtle. The CFA strongly felt there should be above-ground delineation of the vault as well as they were not in favor of the selection of shrubbery and trees, and were concerned about the durability of the marble marker. To address their concerns, the ANC team presented CFA with a keystone layout intended to show the circumference of the vault. The shaft was given a cairn concept, and the wall behind it was slightly adjusted. Both the team and the CFA felt the diversity of stones in the cairn better communicated the idea of the tomb than a single marble shaft. The team proposed using granite rather than marble because it is easier to maintain. The granite that visitors walk on will be thermally treated so it is not slippery. The proposed inscription will contain the words “Tomb of Remembrance” and in smaller letters, a quote from Lincoln’s letter to Mrs. Bixby. The Federal Advisory gave its approval in September. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) approved the site development plan this month. The

Tomb of Remembrance will be located in the area near the niche wall and sections 72-74.

b. Funeral Procession Queuing Area: Mr. Schwieterman briefed the Subcommittee. The existing parking area outside the administration building is not sufficient to support the volume of vehicle traffic. There is often confusion during burial service queuing and insufficient family parking; displaced staff parking; and pedestrian safety concerns. The key objectives of this project are to maintain the utmost dignity and respect at all funerals, provide safe and convenient access and queuing at time of arrival, and increase parking capacity. Additionally, this will be a model for storm water management. The project will be divided into two phases to sustain dignified operations. The 35 percent design drawings are under review. It creates a new lot north of King Drive with nine ADA-accessible spaces, six spaces for cemetery representatives, and five for Women in Service to America volunteers. There will be a parking area for visitors and staff separate from the queuing area. The queuing area will have four queuing lanes, electronic signage, and an additional egress point. The CFA has approved the concept design, and NCPC has approved the preliminary submittal. The design is expected to be complete in April 2015; construction in October 2017.

4. Suggested Areas for Consideration. The Subcommittee had the opportunity to ask many questions and provide comments.

a. Tomb of Remembrance: Mr. Davis asked if there would be anything explaining the significance of the Tomb of Remembrance. Ms. Yates said it would be on the website. Mr. Peake asked if the team would need to seek further approval from the CFA. COL Guttormsen said they would consult with CFA staff, but not the full commission. Mr. Peake also asked about the design of the mechanism to deposit the cremated remains. COL Guttormsen said they were still in the process of determining that. Mrs. Fix asked about the arrangement of the stones. COL Guttormsen replied that they're meant to give people a sense that there's something beneath the ground. Mr. Peake and Mr. Davis expressed concern about the placement of the bench; the walkway runs between it and the tomb. Mr. Davis asked about the timing and funding of the project. COL Guttormsen said ANC had money available for completion of design and construction. The design is expected to be complete in early 2015. Advertising for construction should begin in the spring. Mr. Peake said the project looked better because of CFA's input; COL Guttormsen agreed.

b. Funeral Procession Queuing Area: Mr. Davis commented that the angle parking in the lot north of King Drive creates greater flexibility. Mr. Peake asked about the capacity of each queuing lane. Mr. Schwieterman said they attempted to consider every possibility however each lane would accommodate approximately 25 cars. Mr. Peake noted there are 20 spaces for government-owned vehicles. Ms. Yates said those spaces are necessary. Mrs. Fix asked if there have been any complaints about the existing arrangement. Ms. Yates said there was one incident where a family missed a service.

c. Other Matters: Mr. Peake asked about the land swap deal with Arlington County concerning the Navy Annex site. COL Guttormsen said that was ongoing.

5. Due Outs COL Guttormsen's team will present to the full Committee. The Subcommittee will tour the aforementioned sites this afternoon.

6. Conclusion. After all questions were answered and initial Subcommittee comments were addressed, the meeting was adjourned.

Certified by:

///ORIGINAL SIGNED///

James Peake

Chair, Honor Subcommittee

Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery

RENEA C. YATES

Designated Federal Officer,

Advisory Committee on Arlington National Cemetery