



Memorandum

To: The Historic Preservation Commission
From: Niall Connolly
Date: August 2nd, 2024
Re: Pioneer Cemetery Policy

Introduction

The Historic Preservation Commission has previously invested time in surveying the Pioneer Cemetery. Additionally, an Intensive Level Survey of the cemetery was completed by Korral Broschinky, Historian, on behalf of the Town. Ms. Broschinsky is currently preparing an application for the cemetery to be placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Historic Preservation Commission has discussed various options for how this historic asset should be managed. While no conclusive decision has been made, the general consensus has been that the cemetery should be, first and foremost preserved as a quiet place of reflection dedicated to those who are laid to rest there, as well as their families. Further, there should be no attempt to actively advertise its existence or encourage more visitation.

Policy for Managing the Pioneer Cemetery

The Town occasionally receives requests to add new memorial stones from those who believe their ancestors are buried in one of the unmarked graves in the cemetery. Staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission creates a policy for managing such requests. At the same time, this policy could address how to preserve and share the research the HPC has done on the Pioneer Cemetery. Staff has prepared a draft policy, which is attached to this document. Town Staff has worked with the Utah Cemeteries Program Manager at the State Historic Preservation Office to make sure that the draft policy is consistent with best practice preservation standards for historic cemeteries.

The key points of this policy are:

- The Town would construct a short memorial wall, where the names of those who are buried in unmarked graves could be added.
- The memorial wall could include the map and list of graves that was completed by Commissioner Krause. This would assist relatives in finding a grave, and preserve this important research into the future.
- Removal, replacement or re-engraving of historic headstones is not permitted.

Commissioners may also want to consider if they would like to authorize the re-purposing of some of the sandstone slabs that were excavated from the historic irrigation ditch during the SR-9 reconstruction project to construct the memorial wall.

Action

Commissioners should review and discuss the proposed draft policy for the pioneer cemetery. The commission should decide if this policy should be adopted or not, and make recommendations to staff on any proposed amendments. If the Commission votes to proceed with this policy (with or without amendments), it should make a recommendation to the Town Council to adopt this policy.

Sample Motion Language

The Commission may refer to the following sample language when making a motion:

*The Historic Preservation Commission recommends that the Town Council **adopts/ does not adopt** the proposed Pioneer Cemetery Policy, as discussed in the Commission meeting on August 14th, 2024. The Historic Preservation Commission also **authorizes/ does not authorize** the re-purposing of sandstone slabs that were excavated from the historic irrigation ditch to construct the memorial wall.*

This is based on the following findings:

[LIST FINDINGS]

Draft - Proposed Town of Springdale Pioneer Cemetery Policy

Section 1- Purpose

Springdale's Pioneer Cemetery is a historic gem that the Town wishes to preserve. It stands as a memorial to those who settled in Zion Canyon in the latter half of the 19th century, and established the Town of Springdale. Some of the families of these early settlers still live in Springdale and the wider area.

The cemetery is on land owned by the Town. No new burials have taken place there in many years. There are many unmarked graves, and occasionally the Town receives requests to add new memorial stones from those who believe their ancestors are buried in one of the unmarked graves.

This policy intends to set out how such requests will be dealt with. This policy also sets out the Town's approach to managing and preserving this important site.

Section 2 - Aims

The Town aims to maintain the cemetery in a semi-natural state and to preserve its historic integrity. The intent is that it should remain a quiet place of reflection dedicated to those who are interred there, as well as their families. The Town sees the value in providing visitors to the cemetery with relevant historical information. The Town also recognizes the importance of allowing family members to commemorate their ancestors who may be buried there.

Section 3 - New Memorials

As highlighted above, there are many unmarked graves at the cemetery, and the Town occasionally receives requests to add new memorial stones. To preserve the historic integrity of the cemetery, the Town will not allow new headstones or markers to be installed at the cemetery. Instead, the Town will build a short memorial wall with a metal plaque affixed where the names of those understood to be buried in the cemetery may be added. The metal plaque will be removable so that names can be added. The plaque will also include a map of the cemetery and a listing of all those named on the headstones, using the research carried out by the Historic Preservation Commission (appended to this report for reference). The intention is that this plaque both records and preserves the research done by the Commission and allows visitors to the cemetery to benefit from this information. It also creates a space where additional names can be added.

A plaque already exists in Pioneer Cemetery, which was installed by the Zion Canyon Lioness Club. This simply bears the inscription:

*In memory of the Springdale, Utah Pioneers who rest here 1862-1957.
Monument donated by the Zion Canyon Lioness Club 1977.*

The proposed monument and plaque would be in the same spirit as the Lioness Club plaque, but serve a slightly different purpose.

The Town will maintain, and improve as necessary, the foot trails through the cemetery to help visitors to stay on the trail.

Section 4 - Approval Process

For an individual to receive permission to have a family member's name included on the plaque, they need to provide evidence to the Town that demonstrates to a reasonable degree of certainty that their ancestor is actually buried there. The text will be limited to the individual's name, birth and death dates, and if available, location of birthplace. Approval for new engravings on this plaque will be given by the Director of Community Development (DCD), or designee. The DCD will consult with the Parks and Recreation Department before giving approval.

If approved, the engraving will be done by a craftsman appointed by the Town. The cost of the engraving will be borne by the party requesting the engraving. The Town will cover the cost of the monument stone itself and the plaque.

Section 5 - Repairs to and Replacement of Existing Headstones

The pioneer cemetery property is owned by the Town of Springdale, and all the headstones and markers are the property of the Town. Re-engraving on historic headstones or markers is not permitted as it is very likely to damage the stone. If a family wishes to preserve information from a headstone that is fading, they may place a flat marker at the base of the headstone with the relevant information engraved there.

Historic headstones and markers may not be removed or replaced. If a headstone poses a safety risk, the Town will work with the State Historic Preservation Office (who has expertise in this topic) to address these risks.

Approval for new markers must be received from the Town Sextant. The Town Sextant may consult with the Director of Community Development as part of the approval process.

Section 6 - General Town Policy for the Cemetery

The Town retains the title to the cemetery property. All headstones and markers are property of Springdale Town.

Decorating of headstones will not be permitted. All decorations will be removed and discarded from all headstones. Springdale Town will not be responsible for flowers or other personal property left at the cemetery.

There will not be any planting allowed in the cemetery.

Children under the age of eight shall not be allowed in the cemetery unless accompanied by a responsible adult. Dogs should not be allowed to roam the cemetery. If not kept within a vehicle, they must be controlled on a leash and shall not soil the graves.

Cemetery grounds are considered sacredly devoted to the interment or repose of the dead. In those rare circumstances where it is necessary to disinter or remove remains from the cemetery, it will be necessary to comply with all applicable State laws. Town personnel cannot perform the exhumation beyond removing soil.

The Town of Springdale reserves the right to enter upon any graves to perform all work necessary for the care and upkeep of all lots and graves in its cemeteries.

Special exceptions to the policies may only be granted by application to the Springdale Town Council.

The acts and activities found in sections 7-6-14: Prohibited Acts and Activities and 7-6-18: Regulated Activities of the Town Code are not permitted at the Pioneer Cemetery.

No individuals are permitted within the cemetery between the hours of 11.00 pm and 6.00 am.