DHR | Virginia Department of Historic Resources

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION FORM (PIF) for INDIVIDUAL PROPERTIES

DHR No. (to be completed by DHR staff) 159-5013

Purpose of Evaluation. Please use the following space to explain briefly why you are seeking an evaluation of this property.

We are seeking historic designation of this property in order to highlight it as an historical resource in the Town of Luray. Being able to post this designation on one of the entrance piers to the cemetery and on all of the literature (brochures, informational mailings, public education events) will be an important tool in educating visitors about the historical significance of this cemetery during the railroad boom. Once we are on the Registry, we plan to apply for a Virginia Highway Historic Marker, and to place an interpretive sign inside the cemetery and a kiosk with a walking brochure, map, and list of the 1500+ interred.

Are you interested in applying for State and/or Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credits? Yes _____ No X

Are you interested in receiving more information about DHR's easement program? Yes X No ___

1. General Property Information

3 maps enclosed

Property name: Green Hill Cemetery

Property address: 202 West Main Street P O Box 303
City or Town: Luray , Va.
Zip code: 22835

Name of the Independent City or County where the property is located: Page County

Category of Property (choose only one of the following):
Building ____ Site X Structure _____ Object _____

2. Physical Aspects

Acreage: 2.5

Setting (choose only one of the following):
Urban _____ Suburban _____ Town X Village _____ Hamlet _____ Rural_____

Briefly describe the property's overall setting, including any notable landscape features:

The Cemetery is on the highest spot on east Main Street, the main artery through town, just east of the Historic Downtown District of Luray. Surrounded on three sides by a 4-6 foot limestone wall with capped stone columns every 12', the main entrance to the cemetery is directly on Main Street, flanked by 2 very large, ornate wrought iron gates. Inside the cemetery are several large and significant trees that complement the overall layout (designed in 1876) of a central grassy "roadway" that splits to go around centrally located family plots, comes back together to approach a large 20' obelisk (monument marking the burial of the town's founding families of Ruffner and Marye) on the highest spot in the cemetery, and then splits again to circle the obelisk. The cemetery continues downhill behind the central obelisk and is partially fenced in the rear by wooden fencing of two homes that back up to its southern boundary.

There are 1,542 identified graves in the cemetery, and probably another 75 without tombstones. All of the lots had been sold by 1954. There continues to be 1 or 2 burials a year of great-grandchildren of empty plots.

3. Architectural Description

Architectural Style(s): Victorian rural garden cemetery

If the property was designed by an architect, landscape architect, engineer, or other professional, please list here: Daniel Fagan, marble cutter and former Mayor of Luray, laid out the design for this cemetery.

If the builder is known, please list here: Daniel Fagan

Date of construction (can be approximate): Began design in 1876. Established formally in 1877. Tombstones with death dates back to 1810.

Narrative Description:

In the space below, briefly describe the general characteristics of the entire property, such as its current use (and historic use if different), as well as the primary building or structure on the property (such as a house, store, mill, factory, depot, bridge, etc.). Include the architectural style, materials and method(s) of construction, physical appearance and condition (exterior and interior), and any additions, remodelings, or other alterations.

The main entrance to the cemetery is on Main Street and occupies a corner lot. The property is flanked on both sides by Victorian-era homes, and St. Mark Lutheran Church (1874) is directly across the street. A mortared limestone wall surrounds the cemetery on 3 sides, with the rear of the cemetery abutting the back of two private residential properties. This replaces the original dry-stack wall, and was built in 1937. Research is ongoing to determine if the wall was built as a WPA or CCC project. The native dolomite random coursed wall has beaded joints and flat cement coping with raised stone columns every 12 feet. The front entrance has two large ornate wrought iron gates that meet in the middle, hinged onto two stone columns at either side of the entrance. While the first 15 feet of the drive into the entrance is concrete, the remainder of the "drive" and the walking paths through the cemetery are grass.

At the high point near the center of the 2.5 acre cemetery stands a 20'obelisk in the middle of a large circular grass plot with several tombstones commemorating two of the founding families of the town of Luray – the Ruffner and the Marye family.

The cemetery was carefully laid out with many family plots – some fenced in iron, some edged in a concrete coping. The family plot enclosures include cast iron fencing, wrought iron fencing, gas-pipe fencing, and iron bow and picket fencing. Trees were planted around the central obelisk. Of significance or 2 very large hemlock (Tsuga candensis) trees – significant because they are now quite rare in Virginia, most having succumbed to the wooly adelgid. There is also a very large magnolia (Magnolia grandiflora), and a very large maple tree. There are 8 very large eastern redcedars (Juniperus virginiana), one oak tree, and several other large trees in the rear yet-to-be identified. Research is ongoing to determine if any these trees might be eligible for the Virginia Big Tree Register.

Photos enclosed on CD

As the owner of the cemetery was a successful "marble cutter" with a thriving tombstone/monument business on the corner of the busiest intersection of town -- Broad Street and Main Street -- many of the tombstone and monuments are works of art. He filled his cemetery with mostly marble monuments in the first decades. Many monuments are signed. Some of these signature include "Fagan," "Haines & Graber, "Bradley," "Hargus & Kelly." Monument survey is ongoing and funds have been raised to begin the restoration and repair of many of the monuments that have fallen over or are broken.

Briefly describe any outbuildings or secondary resources (such as barns, sheds, dam and mill pond, storage tanks, scales, railroad spurs, etc.), including their condition and their estimated construction dates.

There are no buildings in the cemetery. There is a temporary wooden informational kiosk inside the front entrance with names and plot locations of the interred posted. This was built about 2009.

4. Property's History and Significance

In the space below, briefly describe the history of the property, such as significant events, persons, and/or families associated with the property. Please list all sources of information used to research the history of the property. (It is not necessary to attach lengthy articles or family genealogies to this form.)

If the property is important for its architecture, engineering, landscape architecture, or other aspects of design, please include a brief explanation of this aspect.

Daniel Fagan, a local marble cutter and once mayor of the town of Luray, purchased the 2.5 acres from a 32 acre tract at what was the edge of the town of Luray in 1876 and laid out a model "garden" cemetery. In keeping with the popular English landscape garden movement of the day, he envisioned a beautiful place that would invite visitors to come and walk around. He designed his cemetery with a central walking path that split and circled, designed centrally located family plots with a variety of iron fences and marble cornerstones, arranged smaller plots in rows at the outside boundaries of the laid-out family plots, and strategically planted trees. In order to accentuate the garden aspect of his design of the cemetery on Main Street with homes on either side, Mr. Fagan enclosed his cemetery on three sides with a dry-stacked stone wall and iron gates. (These gates were later rebuilt as dolomite random coursed walls in 1937.) Mr. Fagan convinced many of the prominent families of the day to purchase family plots. Many of these families then chose to reinter their deceased family members who had been buried in home graveyards or abandoned churchyards within the town.

According to *WPA Guide to Virginia : The Old Dominion State*, the town of Luray was laid out in 1812 by William Staige Marye (buried at the prominent high point in Green Hill) after his father, Peter Marye, built the first turnpike to cross the Blue Ridge from Culpeper. The site of Luray was part of a tract of land owned by the family of his wife, Mary Ruffner (buried at Green Hill.) Local historians have name her the "mother of Luray." William Staige Marye and Mary Ruffner are both buried here.

There are at least 95 Civil War veterans interred in Green Hill in addition to another 25 veterans of the Mexican American War, WWI, WWII, and the Vietnam War. Several mayors of the Town of Luray are buried here, and a Virginia Senator (Gen. Robert Franklin Leedy).

Also buried here is the nationally renowned sculptor, Herbert Randolph Barbee, his wife, and infant child.

Josephine Lincoln, one of the Virginia Lincolns, (Abraham Lincoln's father was born in the Shenandoah Valley) is buried here alongside her second husband. She and Abraham Lincoln shared great-great grandfathers ("Virginia" John Lincoln d. 1788 in Linville, Va.)

Two delegates of the Virginia Secession Convention of 1861 are buried here: Raphael Morgan Conn and Peter Bouck Borst . Mr. Borst also served for many years as the Commonwealth Attorney for Page County, and was the first president of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad.

At least one "real daughter" of the American Revolution is buried in Green Hill, Fannie Elizabeth Glenn Stewart (daughter of Virginia patriot James Glenn). Research is ongoing to identify additional connections.

There is one African-American known to be buried here in the Ford Family plot. Research is ongoing to determine if she had been a slave. Inscription reads Aunt Lett 1810-1887 "Faithful unto death."

South

North

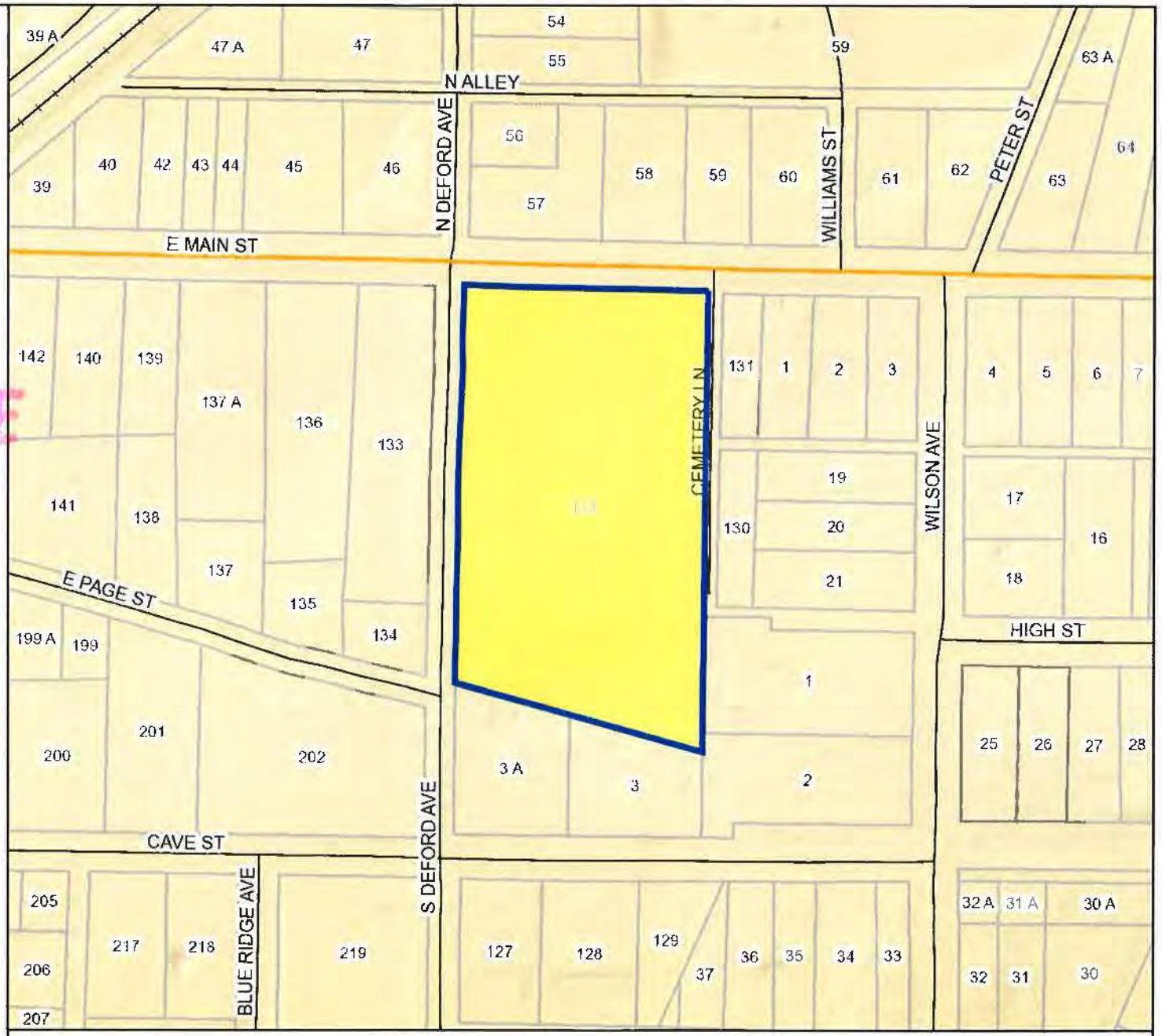
Green Hill Cemetery
Saint Mark Evangelical
Lutheran Church
Google

Page County, Virginia

Legend

- Major Roads
- Roads
- Railroads
- Other Counties
- Parcels
- Shenandoah River
- Streams

N
W E
S



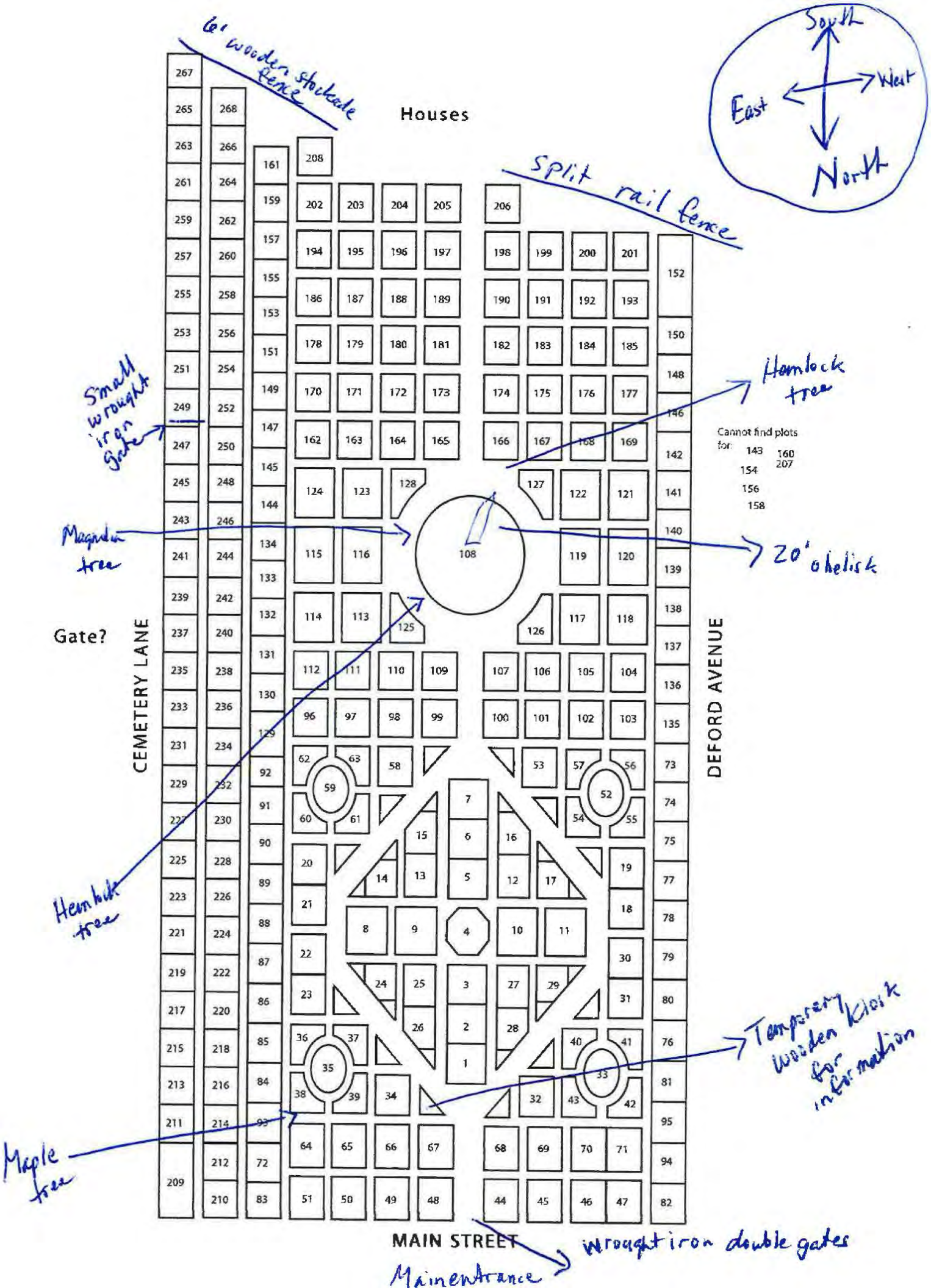
Feet

0 50 100 150 200

Title:

Date: 11/5/2018

DISCLAIMER:THIS MAP IS PROVIDED WITHOUT WARRANTY OF ANY KIND, either expressly or implied, but no limited to, the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose. Site-specific information is bes obtained after an onsite visit by a competent professional. Please call Page County, VA for specialized products. Any person, firm or corporation which uses this map or any of the enclosed information assumes all risk for the inaccuracy thereof, as Page County, VA expressly disclaims any liability for loss or damage arising from the use of said information by any third party.In addition use of Virginia Base Mapping Program (VBMP) statewide aerial photography requires the following disclaimer: " Any determination of topography or contours, or any depiction of physical improvements, property lines or boundaries is for general information only and shall not be used for the design, modification, or construction of improvements to real property or for flood plain determination."


6' wooden stockade fence
Houses
Split rail fence
South
West
East
North
Small wrought iron gate
Hemlock tree
Magnolia tree
20' obelisk
Gate?
Hemlock tree
Temporary wooden kiosk for information
Maple tree
wrought iron double gates
Main entrance
CEMETERY LANE
DEFORD AVENUE
MAIN STREET
Cannot find plots for: 143 160 207 154 156 158

5. Property Ownership (Check as many categories as apply):

Private: X Public\Local _____ Public\State _____ Public\Federal _____

Current Legal Owner(s) of the Property (If the property has more than one owner, please list each below or on an additional sheet.)

name/title: Trustees of Green Hill Cemetery Association
organization: Green Hill Cemetery Association
street & number: 202 East Main St. POB 303 ~~Luray VA 22835~~
city or town: Luray state: VA zip code: 22835
e-mail: smytheroseann@gmail.com telephone: 540.631.5771

Legal Owner's Signature: _____ Date: 11/1/2018

• • Signature required for processing all applications. • •

In the event of corporate ownership you must provide the name and title of the appropriate contact person.

Contact person: Michael Noblette, Chairman of Trustees
Daytime Telephone: 540.743.6470

Applicant Information (Individual completing form if other than legal owner of property)

name/title: Rose Ann Smythe, Trustee
organization: Green Hill Cemetery Association
street & number: 127 S Court St
city or town: Luray state: VA zip code: 22835
e-mail: smytheroseann@gmail.com telephone: 540.631.5771

6. Notification

In some circumstances, it may be necessary for DHR to confer with or notify local officials of proposed listings of properties within their jurisdiction. In the following space, please provide the contact information for the local County Administrator, City Manager, and/or Town Manager

name/title: Steve Burke, Town Administrator
locality: Town of Luray
street & number: 45 East Main St.
city or town: Luray state: VA zip code: 22835
telephone: 540.743.5511