

**Update on Whispering Maples Memorial Gardens, Inc. (Whispering Maples)
September 15, 2016**

The work of reconstructing files and organizing the operations of Whispering Maples continues thanks to the efforts of the Court's Receiver for operations, Ms. Connie Goedert. Connie continues to perform her tasks without compensation and on behalf of the residents of our community, we thank her for her hard work.

At this time, all parties have agreed that an extension of the receivership is the best course of action for the continued organization of operations at the mausoleums and crematory as well as for the construction bidding period. We have been advised that the Office of the Attorney General will be shortly submitting an extension of the receivership to the Court until at least December 31. This will assist in staff transitions and financial reporting.

Behind the scenes work is being done with the engineer as the biddings documents are finalized and we prepare to be notified of the bids going out for restoration of the facilities. This work will cost approximately \$100,000 and the funds for this phase have been supplied by the State's Abandoned Cemetery Fund.

On September 13, 2016, the Supervisors of Plattsburgh and Ellenburg were able to join together to go to Albany to meet with elected and appointed officials regarding the restoration and abandonment of Whispering Maples. We are thankful to Senator Betty Little as she joined us for some of these meetings and arranged others. It was a productive day at the Capitol.

We first met with our Albany consultants to discuss the details of the bidding process and the restoration process. We followed that discussion with a very important meeting with the Counsel and staff of the Association of Towns of New York State. During this meeting we discussed possible bills for the upcoming legislative session to make sure that a situation like the abandonment of Whispering Maples is not repeated. We also discussed possible legislation to provide long-term repair funds for towns that are required to take over mausoleums. The Association will be reviewing resolutions for possible legislation at their February meeting in New York City.

Also while in Albany, we were able to meet with the Governor's Deputy Director of State Operations and Deputy State Comptrollers to discuss the restoration and investigations following the Whispering Maples abandonment. We then met with Deputy Secretary of State and a senior staffer for discussions outlining how important a quick and full restorations of these facilities are to our community. Further, we discussed the need to work together to get this project completed as soon as possible.

We concluded our round of meetings with a few Deputy Attorneys General at which time we discussed the extension of the receivership as well as possible investigations. During this meeting, the Office of the Attorney General echoed the town's concerns that we first address stabilizing the operations of the facility and getting a qualified receiver in place. Now that those goals have been met, their office has begun to look into matters involving the past administration of Whispering Maples, the handling of not-for-profit funds and the records of the operations. While they will not comment on the detail of any potential investigation, we appreciate that they heard our call and that of our taxpayers, to look into any possible penalties associated with the allegations of inappropriate management at Whispering Maples.

Follow-up meetings and calls on these issues will continue in the weeks ahead.

If you have any specific questions about ownership activities and operations of the cemetery during this period of receivership, please feel free to contact Ms. Connie Goedert at 518-594-7500.

Thank you.

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Supervisor

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