

## **Fort Ward Follow-up**

### **from 01/21/16 Monitoring Group meeting:**

1. Oral History Project: OHA staff to get the information out to stakeholders on the next round of the oral history meetings and the genealogical efforts for Ms. Cornelia Spence's grave site.

Staff Update: OHA staff met with the Fort Ward descendants on March 11 to discuss dates for oral history training of descendant volunteer interviewers, interview process and review interview questions. The FW descendants will determine the prioritization of those individuals to be interviewed and inform OHA so that arrangements can be finalized. Staff also emailed the genealogical information related Ms. Spence to Mr. Gideon Pollach. Regarding Ms. Spence's grave site, a location was investigated archaeologically but it does not contain a grave. So the current plan is to move her grave stone to this location and keep it there until more information is available regarding her burial location. At that time, her grave stones will be moved to the actual burial location. Also, OHA staff has scheduled training on oral history interviews for use by members of the Fort Ward and Seminary African American Descendant Society. It is scheduled for April 2nd (a Saturday) at 1 pm at Episcopal High School, Townsend Hall, Room 200.

2. Interpretive Planning Committee: OHA staff to follow-up on formation of the subject group.

Staff Update: OHA staff held the first monthly meeting with the committee on March 11. After the introduction of the 10 members was completed, staff reviewed departmental resources, the planning process and projected timeline. Interpretive themes and time periods of significance were also determined. The next meeting will be held on April 14 and finalize historical sub-themes, and goals and objectives of the plan for the RFP.

3. Oakland Baptist Church Cemetery: TES staff to evaluate the request from Oakland Baptist Church (OBC) for the ADA accessible entrance to the OBC cemetery.

Staff Update: TES staff met with OBC members to discuss the access enhancements. Based on this meeting, OBC has scaled back their request. Current plan is to incorporate OBC entrance improvements in to work that is being done by the Interpretive Plan Development Committee.

4. Site Archeology: OHA staff to provide Lena Rainey and Michael Williams at Oakland Baptist Church with scans of grave locations.

Staff Update: Staff provided the scans as requested.

5. Craven Property Foundation: RPCA staff to follow up on installing erosion control measures to protect the foundation for the Craven property.

Staff Update: OHA and RPCA staff met on the site and decided to hydro-seed the area to reduce erosion. A private contractor completed the hydro-seeding of this area on March 25, 2016.

6. Trees and Park Maintenance: a) Ensure that tree stump removal in the sensitive part of the Craven area does not involve ground disturbance; b) plant native trees as we replace them; and c) staff to send plans for the ADA accessible replacement picnic tables and access paths to all Monitoring Group members.

Staff Update: a) RPCA and OHA staff has coordinate the tree stump removal process to ensure tree stumps in the sensitive Craven areas are cut close to the ground level (instead if grinding the stump below ground level) to avoid any ground disturbance; b) tree replacement in spring 2016 will only include native trees; and c) plans for the replacement picnic tables and accessible paths have been sent to all members of the Monitoring Group, as requested.