

Enclosure 1 to Cemetery/Burial Ground Land Development Permit:

Recovery Methodology

Location and Probable Number of Interments

Current investigations have identified that at least four probable interments, are present in the Densler Cemetery. The cemetery is located at 11305 White Bluff Road in Savannah, Georgia. Markers were removed prior to acquisition by the current land owner (Polestar GA Savannah, LLC) and there were no surface evidences indication grave locations. New South Associates, Inc. removed surface soils and were able to identify grave shaft stains in a location adjacent to a former house structure. No excavation was conducted. Grave stains were mapped, documented, photographed and covered in a protective layer of plastic. Once documentation was completed, the burial area was backfilled to the original ground surface. Details of the identification project are outlined in Matternes (2019) and in Enclosure 3, Initial Survey Coverage. A working time line is provided in the enclosed table.

Table 1. Working Time Line for Densler Relocation Project

Interval	Calendar Day	Activity
Day 1	Work Day 1	Permit Received and Notice to Proceed Issued by Client to NSA
15 days	Work Day 16	Commence Field Work
5 Work Days	Work Day 21	Complete Field Work
10 Work Days	Work Day 31	Examine Artifacts and Human Remains
1 Work Day	After Work Day 32	Return Artifacts and Remains for Reinterment (Dependent on Reinterment Facility Schedule)
20 Work Days	After Work Day 52	Draft Report Submitted to Client
10 Work Days	After Work Day 62	Comments Addressed After Review and Received by NSA
1-3 Work Days	After Work Days 62-66	Generation of Final Report After Notification of Report Approval

Method of Disinterment

The archaeological recovery of the graves will commence once appropriate permitting and a notice to proceed have been received. The project area will consist of the grave sites and at least a three-meter circumference around them. This area will be mechanically stripped to the level of the original excavation and cleaned to verify grave locations. Prior to excavation privacy screens will be erected to shield human remains from public view and the site treated as a closed work area. Soils filling the grave shafts will initially be excavated by hand and shovel sorted for artifacts. If graves are positioned relatively deeply in the subsoil (i.e. greater than about one meter [36 inches] below the working floor), the recovery team may opt employ a backhoe to excavate the upper fill from each grave shaft. Excavation areas will be banked as needed to meet OSHA standards. The remaining lower portion of each grave will then be excavated by hand using small excavation tools (trowels, picks, spoons, brushes, etc.).

Relative to material preservation and how the interment was initially deposited, the vault will be exposed, followed by sides and top of the coffin, then the decedent, and finally the base of coffin, vault and grave shaft. As much as possible, artifacts and human remains will be left in-situ until the excavation is completed. All soils associated with the actual interment will be passed through a 0.6-centimeter (0.25-inch) mesh screen to recover small artifacts and human remains. Plan view maps of each interment will be generated to record the position of artifacts and human remains.

Photographs of grave contents and each skeleton will be taken to help illustrate what materials were recovered and their location in the grave.

Once the grave's contents have been fully exposed and removed, remaining portions of the grave will be excavated to ensure that all remains have been recovered and to obtain the final dimensions of the grave pit. Final plan view photos will be taken to document the grave. Once all excavations are completed, the former interment site will be backfilled to its former grade.

Handling and Packaging of Grave-Related Materials

All exposed materials will be brushed to remove sand and other debris and allowed to air dry before removal. Specially generated field forms that enhance field examinations will facilitate documentation of the skeleton, coffin hardware, clothing artifacts, grave goods, and other materials. Detail photographs will be taken of human remains and artifacts in-situ as an aid to help interpretation.

Skeletal remains and artifacts will be bagged separately and then placed in relocation caskets for transport and eventually, for reburial. Relocation caskets consist of styrene plastic containers made specifically for the funeral industry. Each casket will be marked with the corresponding feature number. The head and foot ends will be marked to allow the interment to be reinterred following its original orientation. Human remains will be wrapped in acid-free tissue. Artifacts will be placed in unused plastic bags and included in the casket. If large planks of wood are encountered, they will be wrapped in plastic and set aside for transport, examination and inclusion at the reinterment site.

Artifacts and human remains will be examined in an archaeological laboratory at New South Associates' office in Stone Mountain. Details for this are provided in Enclosure 2, Analysis of Human Remains and Grave Artifacts.

Location and Method of Deposition of Human Remains

Once removed from the grave, remains will remain in the custody of the project's mortuary archaeologist until they are reinterred or transferred to another agent (cemetery or funeral director) for reinterment. Prior to reinterment, human remains will be arranged in relative anatomical order within the relocation casket. Artifacts will be placed in the casket so as to not crush or damage the bones.

In consultation with the Savannah Department of Cemeteries, we have learned that there are at least three lots which have been deemed abandoned in the Densler Family plot in Laurel Grove Cemetery. The Department of Cemeteries has agreed to make these available for interment of the Densler remains. Since vaults will not be required and the projected recovery will be considerably less than the modern human form, it is anticipated that two individuals can comfortably be placed in a single plot. Opening and closing will be handled by the City of Savannah. Consultation with Mr. Richard Garbasi, confirmed that the Department of Cemeteries believes there is space to place interments in the Densler Family Plot (Richard Garbasi, Personal Communication, May 6, 2019). Costs for the interment range between \$400 and \$750, relative to the size of the interment.

If possible, reinterment caskets will be placed with the head ends oriented to the west and the foot ends towards the east. New South Associates plans to have a monitor present to verify and document opening and closing. The specific location in the reinterment facility will be recorded and included as part of the project's report. The markers originally associated with the Densler remains were moved in the late 1990s-early 2000s by the previous landowners to the Gravel Hill Cemetery in Bloomingdale. Hutton did not acquire the property until 2015. With the approval of Gravel Hill Cemetery, our intention will be to remove the markers from Gravel Hill Cemetery and reunite the markers at the Densler's final resting place.

In the event that the Laurel Grove Cemetery plots are claimed prior to reinterment, our backup plan is to utilize the Westside Memorial Gardens, located on Adams Road in Bloomingdale, for interment. In this setting, interments will likely be placed one per plot. Grave vaults are required at Westside and will be installed as part of the opening and closing of graves -- to be handled by Westside Memorial Gardens. Mr. Jim Goodman of Savannah Heritage (which manages Westside Cemetery) confirmed that there is space in Westside Cemetery and that plots (includes opening and closing) would be available for \$1,500.00 per interment plus vault charges (Jim Goodman, Personal Communication, May 7, 2019).

All remains will be handled professionally and treated respectfully. The remains will be treated as culturally sensitive materials and will not be made available for public display. Images of all materials will not be posted on social media.

Construction Monitoring

New South recognizes that with the identification of unmarked grave sites on a landscape, there is always a possibility that other unmarked graves may be present. Since all suspected burial areas have been examined, an archaeologist will be present during ground breaking to ensure that any other unmarked graves present on the grounds are identified. If additional graves are identified, work in the vicinity of the recovery area will terminate until the newly discovered grave sites are fully recovered. Coordination with the City of Savannah Development Services Department take place to ensure that avoidance actions conform to the city's building, development, and cemetery regulations.

Reporting

The results of this effort will be incorporated into the project report, which will present a brief history of the project area, the methods employed in the recovery, regional burial and biological patterns, temporal and/or social divisions within the cemetery, information recovered by this project concerning the relocated population, relocation efforts and coordination with the descendent communities during the relocation. A complete inventory of all remains and artifacts by feature number will also be provided.

Reference:

Matternes, Hugh B. (2019) *Archaeological Investigations to Locate the Densler Family Cemetery along White Bluff Road in the City of Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia*. Report prepared for Hutton, Chattanooga, Tennessee. Report prepared by New South Associates, Stone Mountain, Georgia.