

North Stonington Cemetery Commission  
Minutes of the Special Meeting of June 7, 2023

The meeting was attended by all NSCC members as well as by Bob Carlson, First Selectman , Ron Lewis, Mr. Lewis' attorney ,Harry Heller, and Robin Hall, Mr Lewis' realtor.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the burial ground noted as #104 on the North Stonington Historical Association map of 1988 ,and also noted by GPS coordinates in 2008.

This is a typical field stone burial site often marking Native American graves. The property was recently purchased by Mr. Lewis as a building lot.

Attorney Heller spoke after the introductions. He stated that all due diligence had been taken during the transaction and that there was no record in the land documents. He expressed doubt that the cemetery actually exists. He called it "anecdotal ". Rachel White, a member of this commission, has been long familiar with this site and has photographed the field stones marking the graves.

At an impasse, the attorney stated that they had arranged for a local company to conduct a ground penetrating radar test to prove or disprove the presence of graves. This is necessary as the field stones had been removed by an excavator hired by Mr. Lewis. Mr Heller invited the commission to hire their own GPR . Robin Hall claimed there is a conflict of interest in Ms White's participation, but it was unclear what she referred to. There is no financial interest in this situation involving Ms White.

The decision was made to have three commission members present on June 16, 2023 ,at 8AM, during the GPR test. Also, Donna Brandelli suggested we find out from local tribes and academics about burial practices so as to help ascertain the validity of this site. Diane Preston suggested contacting both the Mashantucket Museum and the Ct. State Archeological department to find more information about this cemetery. She also asked Mr. Lewis if he still planned to make restitution by restoring the property if proven to be a cemetery. He had previously stated that the property would be so restored and, additionally, that he would fund the placing of identifying signage at all other cemeteries which do not have such at this time. Mr. Lewis appeared to back off of those claims.

The meeting then ended at 2:30 PM.