

September 7, 2020

Town of Primrose Board

Dear Board Members,

I want to register my support for the mowing of cemeteries that have a primary cover of assorted perennial lawn grasses, quack grass, various clovers and assorted weeds. In cemeteries that have active burials and are visited by close relatives and friends of the deceased mourning the passing this makes the most sense. I also prefer this look for cemeteries that are viewed at road speed. I have a family history of visiting cemeteries on Memorial Day and at other times of the year. I also clean veteran grave markers. My observation over the last twenty years is that the amount of damage to monuments in all mowed cemeteries has increased in frequency and severity. Substantial monuments that have stood unmolested for decades are knocked askew off their bases and are gouged by the modern powerful mowers. This is more the fault of the operator than the equipment. Still, the look at road speed of a mown cemetery is visually appealing.

The Mount Pleasant Cemetery is not that kind of cemetery. There has not been a burial in decades. In fact, I don't think we could sell a lot until a ground penetrating radar study is done to establish where all the graves actually are. In a conversation with Mr. Crimmins, an adjacent landowner, it was revealed that a lot of the markers were stored in his barn and repatriated back to the cemetery at some point. Of course there was no mapping and where the stones were placed could not correspond to the actual graves in my opinion. This cemetery in actuality belonged to the Baptist Church of Mount Vernon. All records were lost when the church burned.

I do not know why the pioneers chose this site. I would guess that they were tired of toting their dead to the Greene Prairie Cemetery where the early Primrose pioneers were interred. The La Follettes are buried at Greene Cemetery. The Mount Pleasant Cemetery is not the best farm land. I would agree as a bonus it did contain pretty flowers. Perhaps it was all of these or none of these. By default the pioneers have left us a time capsule of what the land was before it was settled. That is what makes Mount Pleasant notable

today. I respect the two veterans who died of disease. One did not even make it out of Dane County before passing. They should be honored but mowing the grass short does not equate to that.

This time capsule has yet to be fully opened and accounted for. The plants are coming back they just need the opportunity to be able to grow then we can see what is actually there. The cemetery needs to be managed. Two years ago no one knew it was there, today more town residents are asking to help out. Ruth has done a fantastic job keeping a path mowed to the veterans graves. Perhaps a better solution would be for the town to pay for a sign to recognize and honor the veterans installed at the gate and not mow the cemetery. This is the approach taken at Greenes Cemetery. It works.

Our land use plan states "Preserve the Town's unique and sensitive natural resources to ensure a high-quality environment for the benefit of future generations." This postage stamp sized cemetery does just that if not mown. It is also in Section 22 one of the few denoted as rare terrestrial features in the comprehensive plan. I think that designation pretty much sums up what this cemetery contains. That is why I am urging you to not mow this cemetery.

Sincerely,

Edward Flesch, D.C.

Resident Town of Primrose