



City of Newnan

Farmer Street Cemetery Commission

Farmer Street Cemetery Commission Timeline...

February 1999 – City halted construction on a proposed walking path system through the subject cemetery property.

June 1999 – City hired R. S. Webb & Associates to perform cemetery delineation services to estimate the cemetery size and grave count. Mr. Webb, as part of the project, provided a map of 249 possible grave locations and a recommended cemetery preservation area. Concluded that the subject area was definitely a cemetery.

February 2000 - City Council adopted an ordinance for the protection and preservation of the Farmer Street Cemetery. City Council also established the Farmer Street Cemetery Commission (FSCC), a nine member, City Council appointed, volunteer Commission.

April 2000 – Initial meeting of the Farmer Street Cemetery Commission (FSCC). FSCC Meetings continued meeting until June of 2003. Overall, between 25 and 30 FSCC meetings were held.

May 2000 – City had a boundary survey completed for the subject cemetery property.

July 2000 – Applied for State historic preservation grant for exhaustive genealogical research, ground penetrating radar, and exhumation of a limited number of graves. Grant was not successfully awarded.

March 2001 – After the City conducted a competitive bid process between six firms, they hired Southern Research to conduct exhaustive genealogical and archival research of the historical records associated with the Farmer Street Cemetery.

July 2001 - Received genealogical and archival research report back from Southern Research. See attached report for methods, results, conclusion, and recommendations.

July 2003 – Farmer Street Cemetery Commission issued its final report on accomplishments, plans, goals, and recommendations to City Council. See attached final report.

August 2006 – After a meandering walking path was installed, the City again hired R.S. Webb & Associates to sample seven possible grave locations situated on the eastern edge of the cemetery property along Farmer Street to determine if the depressions were human grave shafts or disturbances caused by some unrelated activity. The sampling concluded that six of the seven sampled locations were grave shafts.

List of experts utilized by the Farmer Street Cemetery Commission to educate and/or inform...

- Steve Webb, Archaeologist & Physical Anthropologist, R.S. Webb & Associates
- John & Ellen Ehrenhard, Archeologists & Local Residents
- Keith Jacobi, Physical Anthropologist, University of Alabama
- Carey Oakley, Director of Archaeological Studies, University of Alabama
- Ian Brown, Professor of Archaeology, University of Alabama
- Lynn Miller, Planner, Chattahoochee/Flint Development Authority
- Steve Kress, Archaeologist, State of Georgia
- Dean Wood, Principal Archaeologist, Southern Research

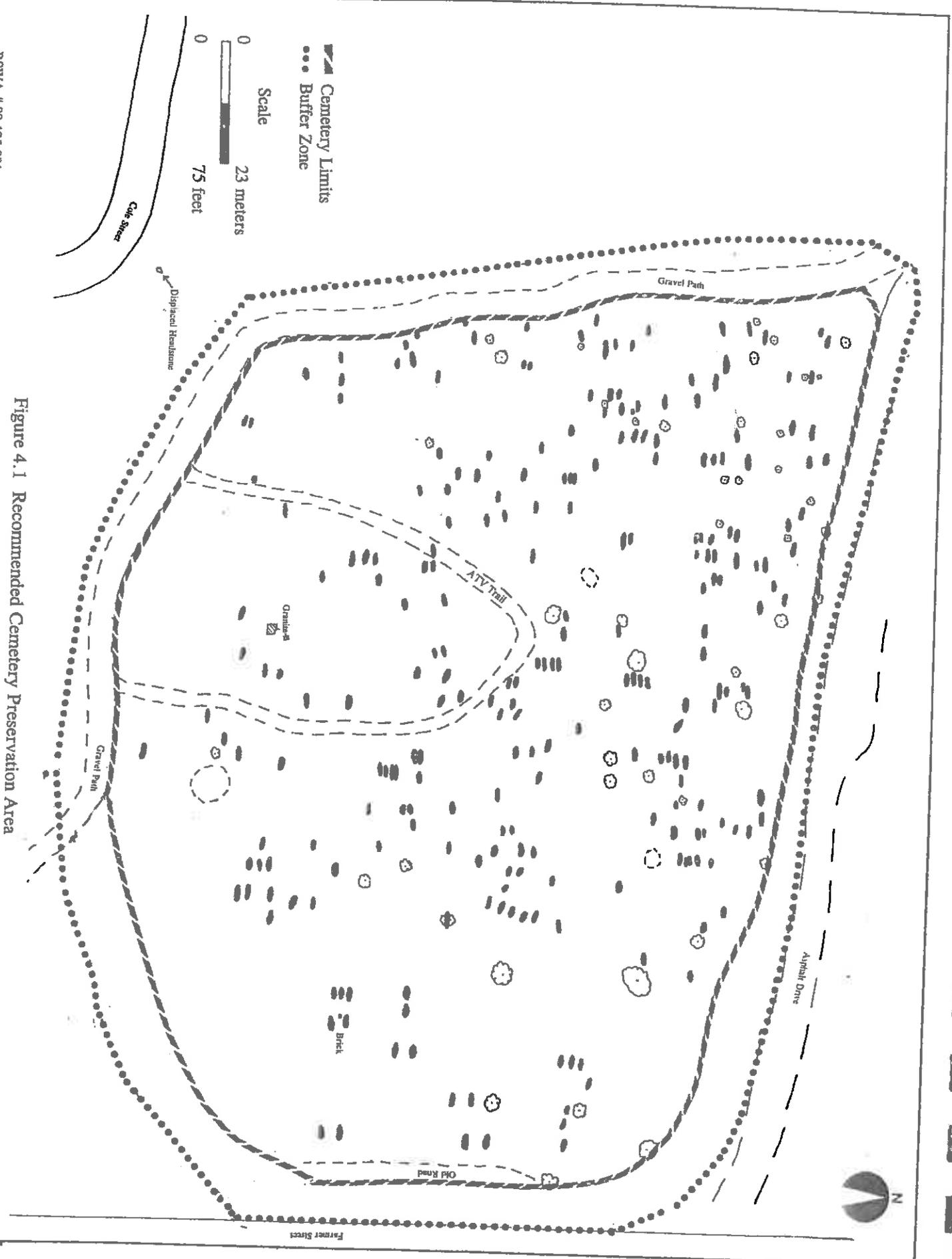


Figure 4.1 Recommended Cemetery Preservation Area



City of Newnan

Farmer Street Cemetery Commission

2003 Final Report of the Accomplishments, Plans, Goals & Recommendations of the City of Newnan Farmer Street Cemetery Commission

Purpose of Report

The City of Newnan Code of Ordinances, Chapter 7, Article III, Sec. 7-71, asks the Farmer Street Cemetery Commission to develop plans and establish goals for the establishment, development, care, preservation, maintenance, and placement of improvements and structures in or around the perimeter of the Farmer Street Cemetery and to present such plans, as a recommendation, to the mayor and council on or before October 1st of each calendar year or as often as may be necessary to insure orderly development of a plan of preservation, care, and maintenance of said cemetery. May this report serve as the final report of the Farmer Street Cemetery Commission. The final report is intended to summarize the accomplishments, plans, goals, and recommendations of the Commission from its inception to the present date.

Former and Present Members

Over the past three years, the appointed nine member, Farmer Street Cemetery Commission has consisted of the following volunteers who have served faithfully during their respective tenure:

Chairman Bobby Olmstead (2000-2002)
Helen Bowles (2000-Present)
Natalie Helvie (2000-2001)
Hulon Kemp (2000-2002)
Betty Jim Owings (2000-2003)
Minnie Robinson (2000-Present)
Nancy Teller (2000-2002)
Dianne Webb (2000-2002)
Sara Williams (2000-Present)

Chairman Laurie Pope (2002-Present)
Beth Barnett (2002-Present)
Cynthia Rosers (2001-Present)
Moses Woodruff (2002-Present)
Patricia Williams (2002-Present)

Overall Accomplishments

The nine member Farmer Street Cemetery Commission was appointed by the City Of Newnan City Council on February 22, 2000. Since that time, the Cemetery Commission has met, at least, monthly for the past three years. During that period of time, many questions have been raised about the Cemetery and its history. The Commission has diligently gathered information from numerous professional sources in their efforts to develop plans and establish goals for the preservation of the Farmer Street Cemetery. In an attempt to be as accurate as possible in our design and preservation decisions, the Commission has spent the last three years gathering data, analyzing the data, and formulating a plan for the Cemetery. A great deal of information has been collected and evaluated by professional surveyors, State Historical Preservation officers, local historians, genealogists, professional researchers, and archeologists. The following is a listing of the some of the items we have completed over the past three years:

1. Hired a surveyor to complete a boundary survey of the Cemetery. (\$850 - Completed in May 2000)
2. Submitted a grant application for research funding. (Submitted in July 2000)
3. Erected signage to prohibit trail riding and allow for foot traffic only. (Erected in July 2000)
4. Organized three separate volunteer clean up days. (Completed in August, October, and November 2000)
5. Established general maintenance program for City Beautification Department. (Established in January 2001)
6. Participated in discussions and a site visit with State Historic Preservation office. (Met in March 2001)
7. Participated in various discussions with professional archeologists. (Met in 2000, 2001, and 2002)
8. Generated numerous articles of publicity for the Cemetery. (2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003)
9. Enlisted professional archeologist to provide exhaustive archival research report. (\$3900 - Completed July 2001)
10. Produced two lengthy reports on archival research related to Cemetery. (Submitted in March 2001 and July 2001)
11. Participated in over forty (40) meetings to discuss various aspects of the Cemetery. (2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003)
12. Produced formal recommendations to the Newnan's City Council concerning the Cemetery. (Submitted in July 2003)

Recommendations

The Farmer Street Cemetery Commission is honored to present to Council its final recommendations for the Farmer Street Cemetery. As stated previously, a great deal of information has been collected, analyzed, and evaluated. Based on the overall information and the evidence gathered and evaluated, it is the overall consensus of the Commission that the property is in fact a cemetery and should be preserved as such. After much discussion and deliberation, the Commission also recommends that the Cemetery retain the name it has presently, the Farmer Street Cemetery. It has also been clearly established that African Americans are indeed buried within the Cemetery dating back to at least 1868. The following items are additional recommendations by the Commission:

- 1) Cemetery Maintenance & Preservation Plan:
 - a) Working closely with the City of Newnan and its Beautification Department, the Commission has established general guidelines for the overall maintenance and preservation of the Cemetery.
 - b) All future maintenance would be performed by the City's Beautification Department.

- 2) Resources/Programs for Public:
 - a) The Commission would like to see the existing "Shotgun House", now known as the Coweta County African American Heritage Museum and Research Center, used for educational purposes as part of the overall Cemetery.

- 3) Specific Plans for the Establishment, Maintenance, and Improvement of the Cemetery:
 - a) Establish formal main entrance of Cemetery along Farmer Street at its current location. Formal entrance would consist of small rock entrance walls with appropriate landscaping and signage that would clearly denote the entrance. Approximate cost would be \$3000.
 - b) Establish formal boundary markers at the property corners. Boundaries would be established with a pile of rocks at each of the four corners of the property. There would be no enclosure of the Cemetery's perimeter. Approximate cost would be \$750.
 - c) Establish a sample grave marker grouping of 10 to 12 graves that would represent a typical grouping. All other graves locations have been field flagged and located on a map.
 - d) Establish location of original Cemetery entrance. Original cemetery entrance would be formally marked by a historical marker erected along East Washington Street. Approximate cost would be \$3500.
 - e) Mark location of the Charlie Burch headstone. The single Charlie Burch headstone would be formally marked by a historical marker erected along Cole Street. Approximate cost would be \$3500.
 - f) Retain the established formal name of the Cemetery as the "Farmer Street Cemetery"