

Lynn Richardson

From: Jim and Beverly Wiggins [jimerly@embarqmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, July 05, 2009 3:32 PM
To: Trenton Stewart
Cc: Jane Pyle; Lynn Richardson
Subject: Re: Legend Oaks Phase III Cultural Resource Report

Mr. Stewart:

Thank you for sending the cultural resource report for Phase III of Legend Oaks. We are pleased that you took this step to document the historical features of your property.

Your plans for the Riggsbee cemetery--installation of aluminum fencing and maintenance by the homeowners' association--are positive steps toward preserving the site. We enthusiastically support your plan to erect an attractive fence around the perimeter of the Riggsbee cemetery, as this should reduce foot and bicycle traffic in the fragile area. We hope that you will erect signs to provide some of the historical information you discover about the site. If it would be helpful, we will be happy to work with you to suggest sign content when more information becomes available. We believe that, in combination with other information about the area, such signs may increase neighborhood pride in the area and thus help ensure its preservation.

We have given some thought to the various options for maintenance of sites like the Riggsbee cemetery, trying to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each. For example, cemeteries are often grassed as a way to control erosion, but we think a more natural, wooded state would be appropriate for the old cemetery on your property. The more natural state will require less mowing and other maintenance that could threaten the historical artifacts that are present on your site. So, we would like to see the area maintained in a relatively natural, wooded state, with minimal tree and brush removal and no grass. If you (or later, the homeowners association) desire to tidy the area by removing excessive deadfall and/or invasive species, care should be taken not to disturb the historical features. For example, stones on the property should not be moved because their placement is part of the archaeological evidence that might still provide clues about the location of graves on the site. If herbicides are used to control unwanted growth, they should be very carefully administered, to avoid accidental extermination of desirable species and also to avoid potential corrosive effects on the grave markers and artifacts. You may discover daffodils or other plantings within the historical area that have survived since the last century, and we would urge you to preserve these as well.

It is important that homeowners be made aware of their responsibilities to the site if they are to be in charge of its maintenance and protection. We would like to see specific restrictions on the use of the cemetery property--such as the ones mentioned above regarding site maintenance, and other suggestions for the respectful use of the site--incorporated into your covenants (or whatever other legal documents will establish and guide the homeowners' association) to ensure continued protection for the site.

As for the Durham-Edwards cemetery, we hope that you will make all subcontractors and others who will be determining where the land will be disturbed aware of the possibility that this site is located on the property and have them notify you if any evidence of the site is found so that it can be examined.

We see that the archaeologist recommended preservation of the old home site and road trace--though we understand that this is not a requirement. We would like to be informed when you decide how these resources will be treated, and we encourage you to consider preserving these artifacts if at all possible. We believe that the residents of your development will view them as historically interesting additions to their community.

Have you considered putting a display of artifacts found on the property in your sales office? Some of the photos included in the cultural resources report might be of interest as well. There are some interesting facts about the property that might well interest potential buyers. If you decide to use the history of the area in your marketing materials, we will be happy to share with you what we have discovered in our research to date. While we do not have the resources to undertake extensive research on behalf of any private enterprise, we have come across some interesting leads that might suggest productive lines of inquiry. For example, some very early settlers were located on the waters of Cubb Creek--possibly on your property. It probably would not be difficult to determine whether your property was part of the land grant made to Mark Morgan by Lord Granville. We suspect that it was, and believe that Morgan's daughter lived on Cubb Creek. Additional research could turn up some very interesting information.

A booklet on the history of your area could include information on deeds, wills, and anything else you discover, along with other interesting facts and speculations about the area. For example, noting the types and ages of some of the grand old trees on your property would be of interest to many. The Riggsbee family might be able to provide some information on some of the people known to be buried in the cemetery, and it might be possible to learn more about Nathaniel Riggsbee, who obtained the land not long after the Civil War. We think that kind of information is engaging and helps people come to know and love Chatham County. Site-specific information can be supplemented with more generic historical information—such as what kinds of plants grew in Chatham County gardens at the time the collapsed chimney was likely standing, how chimneys or wells were constructed, information about the nearby old Chapel Hill Road that cuts through your property, what churches or stores were nearby, etc.

We thank you for keeping the Chatham County Historical Association apprised of your plans, and commend your voluntary undertaking of the cultural resource report. Please let us know if we can facilitate your efforts to preserve the interesting historical resources located on your property.

Sincerely,
Beverly Wiggins
jimerly@embargmail.com
Jane Pyle
pyb@earthlink.net
for CCHA

----- Original Message -----

From: Trenton Stewart
To: cemeterysurvey@chathamhistory.org
Sent: Thursday, July 02, 2009 8:16 AM
Subject: Legend Oaks Phase III Cultural Resource Report

Ms. Wiggins or Ms. Pyle

We have submitted Legend Oaks Phase III for Preliminary approval to the Planning Department. I am attaching the cultural resource report we had completed for the subject project. Lynn Richardson asked that I send you a copy. Lynn also asked us to let you know the improvements the owner/developer will make to the cemetery on our site. At this stage of the development the owner plans to install black aluminum fencing around the perimeter with a gate to the public right-of-way for access. The cemetery lot will be part of the open space within the subdivision and will be maintained by the homeowners association.

Please let me know if you need any additional information or questions in regards to the subject project.

Trenton D. Stewart, PE
Arcadia Consulting Engineers, PLLC
PO Box 2077
Apex, NC 27502
Telephone: 919 363-1422
Facsimile: 919 363-1477

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