



PO Box 31, Granite, MD 21163

October 2020

Julian E. Jones, Jr., Council District 4
Baltimore County Council
400 Washington Avenue
Towson, MD 21204

Re: Natural Burial Ground as Permitted Use in RC 6 Zoning

Dear Councilman Jones,

The concept of Natural Burial and related property use was introduced to the GPCA community in November of 2019. Due to an unavoidable agenda limitation for that presentation, GPCA wanted more time to better publicize and understand this form of human burial and its use in areas such as ours. We hoped to do that early in 2020. Before GPCA was able to accomplish that, we were all shut down by the important/essential COVID-19 protocols.

Nevertheless and since then, GPCA has gained essential information and understanding of Natural Burial, in particular from continuing valuable communication with local property-owner advocates and their professional associates. We also have become more familiar with nationally recognized methods of operation and governance for these kinds of cemeteries, most notably set forth and adhered to by the Green Burial Council (GBC). The GBC differentiates among three categories of this kind of burial - hybrid, conservation, and natural - based on what property/program is being used. But the underlying method of "green" burial is the same for all.

We acknowledge that Natural Burial use needs County Council action to be permitted in the RC6 zone, of which the GPCA community has the largest concentration in Baltimore County. Since Conservation Burial, which is the same as natural burial but less dense for conservation purposes, is currently permitted in RC 8 zones, it would appear that green burial use is appropriate for RC 6 zones as well. Thus, GPCA has no objection to Natural Burial use by special exception in RC 6.

Such use, however, must be subject to appropriately amended Baltimore County Zoning Regulation Sections 1A07.3.B and 401.1 to include Natural Burial. GPCA endorses the burial density limitations set forth in GBC Certification Standards, as well as the environmental and regulatory requirements applicable to conservation burial use in RC 8. These requirements are reflected in our proposed legislative language, which is attached.

Sincerely,

Carlton (Butch) Oakman
President, GPCA