

City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

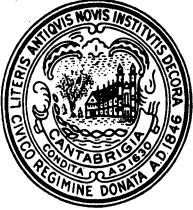
In City Council July 30, 2001

Mgis Consent Agenda

YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT	
✓				Ms. Kathleen L. Born
✓				Mr. James Braude
✓				Ms. Henrietta Davis
MM		✓		Ms. Marjorie C. Decker
✓				Vice Mayor David P. Maher
✓				Mr. Kenneth E. Reeves
✓				Mr. Michael A. Sullivan
✓				Mr. Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
✓				Mayor Anthony D. Galluccio

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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' SERVICES

51 Inman Street, Second Floor
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

TEL: (617) 349-4761

FAX: (617) 349-4766

TTY: (617) 492-0235

ROBERT M. STEVENS
DIRECTOR

TO: Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

FROM: Robert M. Stevens, Director *RMS*

DATE: June 25, 2001

RE: Council Order #6, dated May 21, 2001

It has been a long-standing policy that only Veterans' are allowed to be buried in the War Lots located in the Cambridge Cemetery. At the time of a Veteran's death, spouses are apprised of the our policy and are given the option of having their husband buried with other Veterans or being buried in a private lot, where spouses can be buried with them. Spouses also have the option of having their husbands buried in a National/State Cemetery, where they can be buried with their husbands.

We have several Veterans' lots that are filled and there are no surviving spouses that could be buried in them. (Civil War, Spanish-American and WWI.) At the time of those spousal deaths, our policy prohibited them from being buried with their husbands. *Would changing our policy be fair to those families who were denied spousal burials with their husbands?*

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs reimburses the city \$150.00 for every Veteran buried in the War lots. The VA does not provide for reimbursement for spousal burials. In addition, the VA supplies a universal Veterans' grave marker, free of charge, to all honorably discharged Veterans. *Spousal names cannot be added to these markers as they are US Government property and only Veterans' information is allowed on them. Headstones are not allowed in our Veterans' Lots. If spousal burials were allowed, spousal markers would have to be uniform and universal in design and layout. In addition, the spouse's next of kin or estate would be responsible for all costs associated with the burial. Currently, the city maintains all Veterans' markers, who would be responsible for spousal markers?*

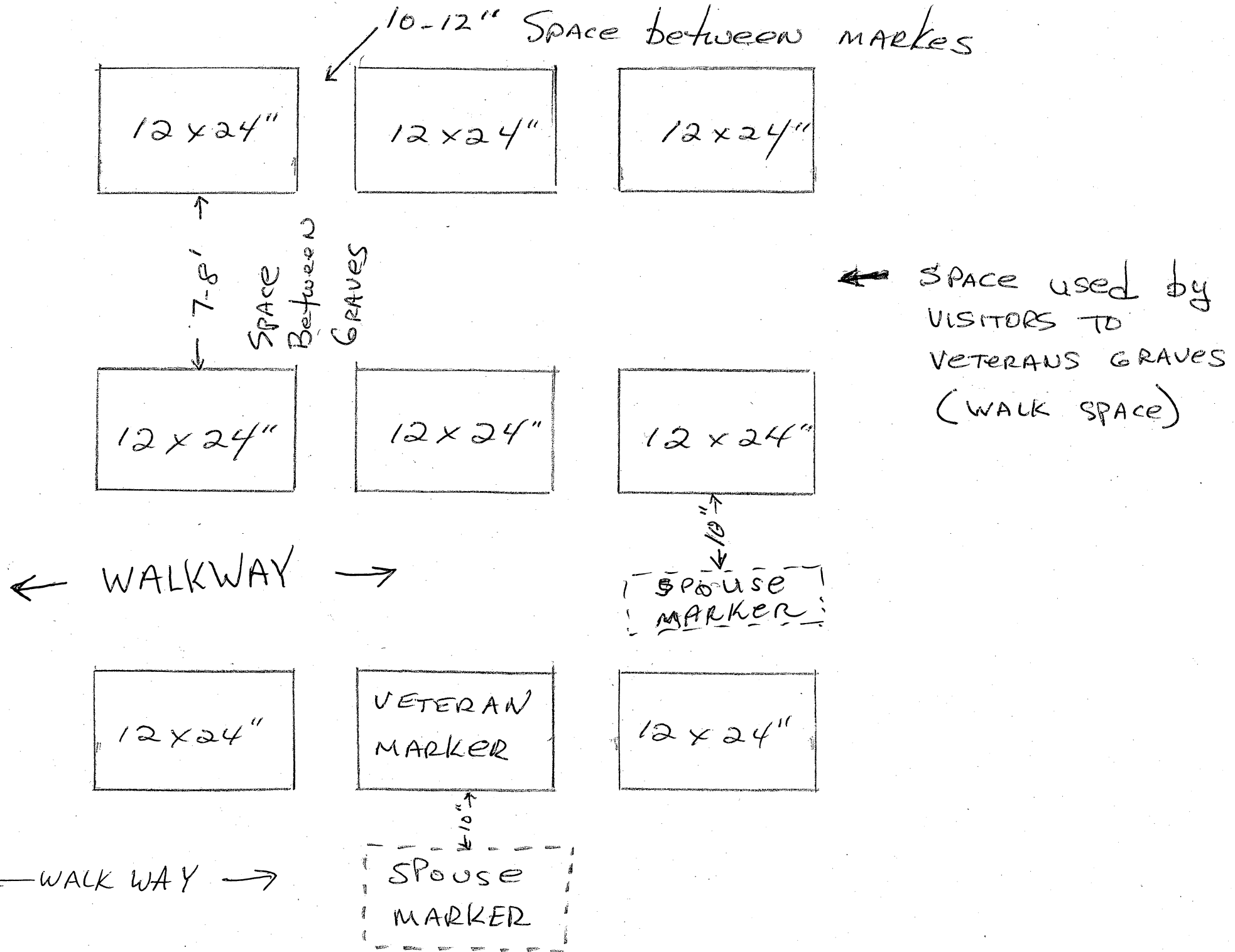
The physical layout of Veterans' Graves makes the placement of a side-by-side marker impossible. Spousal markers would have to be placed (laterally) in the walk area used by families visiting the gravesites. (See attached diagram) *Adding markers in the walk areas would diminish the aesthetic and symmetrical design the lots currently display. Each Memorial Day, every grave is decorated with an American flag; spousal markers could not be decorated with a flag, as they are not Veterans.*

While this office is fully cognizant of the sacrifices made by the spouses of our Veterans, regrettably, we do not support this initiative.

At our present rate of burials, it is anticipated that we will run out of burial space for Veterans within the next three years. If the city were opening a new Veterans' Cemetery, we would be extremely supportive of spouses being buried with their husbands. However, given the policy that has been in effect for the past hundred years and the imminent closing of our current Veterans' Lots, it is our opinion that the current policy of Veterans only, remain in effect, without change.

Should you require any further information or clarification regarding this matter please contact me at x 4764.

CAMBRIDGE CEMETERY - WAR LOTS





CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

July 30, 2001

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 01-199, regarding the feasibility of changing the policy of the cemetery to allow the cremated remains of widowed spouses to be buried in the Veteran's plots, received from Robert Stevens, Director of Veterans' Services.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy".

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment



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Consent Agenda #1

Awaiting Report Item
Number 01-199, regarding
the feasibility of changing
the policy of the cemetery
to allow the cremated
remains of widowed
spouses to be buried in the
Veteran's plots.

In City Council July 30, 2001

PLACED ON FILE