Eastview Cemetery Vision
Project Name: East View Cemetery Vision

Location: Ashby Street, Americus, GA

Description: Located in close proximity to downtown Americus the Eastview Cemetery is in need of aesthetic improvements to help improve the overall look and feel of the site. The Oak Grove Cemetery on the other side of town was recently cleaned up and landscaped prompting the city to begin improvements on the Eastview property.

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Date of Initial Site Visit: 1.14.2009

Students Assigned: Hazel Lewis
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Final Products: Master Plan and sketches of proposed improvements for the Eastview Cemetery. Report also includes recommendations for plant palette and improvements for way finding and signage.

Date Delivered: 06.15.2009
Eastview Cemetery was built in 1834. Historically it is believed that at one time persons who were not allowed to be buried in nearby Andersonville were buried here; as evidenced by a large section of the cemetery where several unmarked graves have been recently discovered. The older NW part of the cemetery can be described as scenic having successfully retained much of its older tree canopy despite recent tornado activity that destroyed many trees in other parts of the site. The presence of the canopy has helped to preserve the ground cover and soil stability in this area.

General landscaping also seemed to be lacking (particularly in the newer parts of the cemetery) resulting in substantial areas with bare/exposed dirt that are heavily eroded.

Our site visit also revealed a general deterioration of many individual grave stones contributing to the neglected feel of the site. Some headstones are falling apart, have sunken into the surrounding soil or have tilted from their original positions over time. We recommend minor cosmetic treatments to the existing grave stones that will easily improve the overall aesthetic of the cemetery.

Treatments include raising sunken headstones, repairing broken walls, and repainting flaking grave stones.

Sinking or Deteriorating Gravestones

Many individual burial sites in the cemetery were noticeably deteriorated or had become compacted into the earth beneath them causing a “sunken look”. While several headstones appeared to be in good physical condition there were others that were crumbling or heavily cracked due to weathering and age. Poor maintenance over time seems to be the main cause of dilapidation.

Dangerous or Exposed Ditches

A number of wide and potentially deep ditches were noticed on the property. These openings ranged in size and were not properly screened or landscaped to provide a safe atmosphere for persons walking through the cemetery. In some cases where wild plants had partially covered over the ditch it became difficult to judge where the ditch began and the solid ground ended; relying on the individual’s judgment for safety is an accident waiting to happen.
Soil Erosion And Exposed Dirt

Much of the ground surface in the cemetery was comprised of bare/exposed dirt. The lack of an appropriate ground cover has resulted in severe soil erosion over the course of time which is most evident in steeper areas of the site and particularly between gravestones that are not sheltered by an overhead canopy. The worst cases of erosion were observed in the newer part of the cemetery where the tree canopy is more sparse.

Tool/ Workman’s Shed

The sole shed on the property that functions as both a tool storage area and the worker’s office is small and lacks aesthetic appeal. While there is no need for an elaborate structure it is important that the shed not detract from the overall look and feel of the cemetery. At the very least the large waste disposal bins that are currently stacked next to the building need to be properly screened from view.

Infant Burial Area

We feel that this small yet very significant area of the cemetery seemed ‘forgotten’ along the chain-linked fencing. Infant burial sites are especially revered for many families and as such we feel this space needs to be better defined and landscaped to create an area that is better suited for the purposes of reflection and meditation.
Repurposing the Old School Property

The existing school buildings located near the front of the property are soon to be demolished and the grounds used as new burial area for Eastview. As such the chain-linked fence that now separates the two properties will have to be removed and additional landscaping will be necessary to identify this area as burial ground. In addition to new plots we propose the addition of a drop-off / waiting area that is very much needed at the front of the property and close to the main street. This can help to facilitate large crowds at funerals and help to alleviate some vehicular traffic within the cemetery.

Opportunities for Improved Landscaping

There is abundant opportunity for more aesthetically appealing landscaping in areas of the site that are not usable as burial plots. Much of the existing vegetation in these areas is overgrown and 'unkempt' looking which detracts from the overall look and feel of the cemetery. Overgrown bushes and clumps of vines leave the visitor with the impression that the cemetery is a neglected and forgotten space; quite contrary to its purpose as a place of remembrance.

Entryway into Cemetery Grounds

The existing fence and entryway into the site seems insubstantial when compared with the size and scale of the cemetery grounds. The entryway needs to be better defined and more noticeable to drivers approaching from the street. At present the entrances are difficult to distinguish and the low fencing does not provide a clear sense of the boundaries between the cemetery and the surrounding neighborhood uses.
Landscaping and Plant Palette

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Overgrown bushes and clumps of vines leave the visitor with the impression that the cemetery is a neglected and forgotten space; quite contrary to its purpose as a place of remembrance.

Due to the relatively harsh environment of the cemetery we recommend plants that are both drought and flood tolerant. Low-maintenance, sturdy, non-invasive plants should be used on the site. Suggested vegetation include:

**Recommendations**

**Vines and Ground Covers**
- Carolina Jessamine
- Periwinkle
- Yellow Root
- heavenly bamboo

**Shrubs**
- Winterberry
- American Snowbell
- Sparkleberry
- Heavenly Bamboo
- Chinese Juniper ‘Sea Green’
- Barberry ‘Rose Glow’
- Burning Bush ‘Dwarf’

**Trees**
- Eastern Arborvitae
- Fringe Tree
- Flowering Dogwood
- Water Oak
- Eastern Red Cedar
- Weeping Willow
- Sugar Hackberry
- River Birch
- Winterberry
- Water Oak
- Fringe Tree
- Carolina Jessamine

**Due to the relatively harsh environment of the cemetery we recommend plants that are both drought and flood tolerant. Low-maintenance, sturdy, non-invasive plants should be used on the site. Suggested vegetation include:**

**Please refer to Appendix I for specific plant uses and landscape applications.**
Aesthetic Improvements

One of the major issues identified on site is the absence of adequate ground cover vegetation to protect soils. Large areas of exposed dirt have not only resulted in substantial soil erosion but also to a ‘brown and dusty’ aesthetic for the cemetery. To address this issue we recommend the introduction of appropriate ground covers that can provide a more ‘pastoral and green’ aesthetic.

‘Trouble spots’ can be covered using a combination of vegetation and pea gravel to help control soil erosion.

In addition to landscape improvements we propose a general clean-up and/or repainting of individual headstones to provide a more consistent appearance in the landscape.

Given that inadequate maintenance by individual grave owners was cited as one of the main reasons for dilapidated headstones we suggest a more community-based maintenance effort for steady upkeep in the future.

This is a good avenue for local groups such as garden clubs, girl scouts, church groups, etc to be involved in preserving the memory of their loved ones.
Signage and Way finding

To improve way finding on the site we recommend:

• Naming the various streets and sections of the cemetery
• Adding large maps of the site near to entrances showing both street and section names
• Signs that incorporate the history and patronages of Eastview Cemetery

The following are some examples of what we deem to be suitable for the site:

Wrought iron signage with bronze or black finishes add a sense of character to the cemetery.
The outdoor chapel area consists of a pergola planted with Carolina Jessamine or similar native vines provides a designated ceremonial space within the cemetery.

Low maintenance pea gravel and seat walls complete the space

The two areas are visually connected by granite bands of paving that suggest the arc and radii of a circle

A smaller contemplative area comprised of a seat wall nestled in a grove of Red Buds and Dogwoods provides a more private place for reflection

An allée of Short-leaf Pines leads visitors up the drive into the space. The pines’ characteristic straight trunks and canopies will create an architectural element as the trees mature.
- A wildflower meadow serves as a commemorative memorial for the unmarked graves in Eastview Cemetery.
- A pathway winds through the meadow with benches to rest and enjoy the flowers.
- Signage along the path imparts information about who may be buried here as well as the history of the entire cemetery.
- Groundcover, like *Vinca minor*, should be planted on the bank along the road to prevent further erosion and to reduce maintenance needs.
View of the existing tool shed with CMU brick walls and exposed waste disposal bins.

- **Industrial grade security light**
- **Concrete base**
- **Wooden enclosure for waste disposal bins**
- **Additional fixed windows provide greater internal light**
- **Hardiplank siding overlay is durable and easy to clean**
- **CMU brick footing 3 feet in height**
- **Wire mesh openings improve ventilation**
View of the existing infant burial area located at the edge of the property next to school site. At present the area does not offer any privacy and is not suitable as a place for quiet contemplation. It lacks any significant features that would help to distinguish it as a special section of the cemetery.
Trees with a columnar habit help to visually continue the ‘fence line’ to the street.

View into main cemetery entrance located immediately next to school’s driveway. The existing fence does not adequately address the definition of the space.
View of secondary entrance into cemetery site showing existing fence and driveway. The current fence disappears into the background due to faded brick color; a stronger visual entrance is necessary for this space.

- **Sidewalk treatment** enhances the entryway for pedestrians.
- **6 inch curb treatment** continues along driveway into cemetery.
- **6 foot columns** frame a definite entryway into the space.
- **3 foot wall and 3.5 ft. columns spaced 6 ft. apart** extends along front of property.
The existing school site is to be acquired in the near future and all buildings are to be demolished. The new property will serve primarily as additional burial space for new plots.

New streets connecting to existing road network

New 5 ft. walls create an enclosed infant burial space

Existing wooded area

New parking area with turnaround for vehicles

New trees for shade

Ground cover to control erosion on sloped soil

Plant ID: Juniperus chinensis ‘Sea Green

Fence continues along property front
Trees to be planted along drainage swale on east side of property to visually separate the swale from the cemetery. Trees must be sited far enough away from the underlying sewer line to prevent root penetration.

- Weeping Willow
- Sugar Hackberry
- River Birch

Trees to be planted in Unmarked Graves Area.

- Eastern Red Cedar
- Short-leaf Pine
- Water Oak
### Appendix I – Landscape Uses and Applications for Suggested Trees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
<th>Scientific Name</th>
<th>Landscape Use/ Application</th>
<th>Season of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weeping Willow</td>
<td>Salix babylonica</td>
<td>Able to tolerate standing water (ditches or flooded areas) to help absorb excess runoff and control soil erosion on steep banks. Invasive roots; avoid planting near sewers and water lines</td>
<td>Foliage – Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>River Birch</td>
<td>Betula nigra</td>
<td>Lovely exfoliating bark; commonly found along stream banks and areas that flood</td>
<td>Foliage – Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bark – All season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Red Cedar</td>
<td>Juniperus virginiana</td>
<td>Easily transplanted, tolerant of most conditions. Can be used for screening, windbreaks, foundation plantings. Also good for difficult sites.</td>
<td>Evergreen – All season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-leaf Pine</td>
<td>Pinus echinata</td>
<td>Requires dry or moist soil and can tolerate drought. Good for providing tree canopy.</td>
<td>Evergreen – All season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flowers - Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Arborvitae</td>
<td>Thuja occidentalis</td>
<td>Tough evergreen plant; excellent for screens, windbreaks, accent plants, or hedges.</td>
<td>Evergreen – All season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringe Tree</td>
<td>Chionanthus virginicus</td>
<td>Fairly adaptable and requires little maintenance once established. Used in naturalistic plantings, shrub borders or in urban sites due to pollution tolerance.</td>
<td>Flowers – Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flowering Dogwood</td>
<td>Cornus florida</td>
<td>Plants should be watered weekly during droughts, with watering done in the morning, avoiding wetting the foliage. Used as a specimen, in borders and naturalistic areas, at the edge of woods. Has four season appeal in flowers, fruits, fall, color, bark and branching character</td>
<td>Foliage - Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Flowers/Fruit – Spring to Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bark – All season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Redbud</td>
<td>Cercis canadensis</td>
<td>Used in foundation plantings, specimen, entranceway, group planting, woodland edge, naturalization, or as a spring accent tree.</td>
<td>Flowers – Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fruits – May persist for one year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugar Hackberry</td>
<td>Celtis laevigata</td>
<td>Used as a reclamation plant and shade tree. Tolerates extended flooding.</td>
<td>Foliage - Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water Oak</td>
<td>Quercus nigra</td>
<td>Reclamation plant and shade tree. Successful in areas with air pollution, poor drainage, compacted soil, and/or drought.</td>
<td>Foliage - Fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix I – Landscape Uses and Applications for Suggested Shrubs, Vines and Groundcovers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Common Name</th>
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<th>Landscape Use/ Application</th>
<th>Season of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Winterberry</td>
<td>Ilex verticillata</td>
<td>Commonly used for its fruit display in fall and winter. Useful in wet soils, in mass planting, along water and in shrub borders.</td>
<td>Fruit - Winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Snowbell</td>
<td>Styrax americana</td>
<td>Performs well in moist soil along streams and in standing, shallow water.</td>
<td>Fruit - Fall, Flowers – Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sparkleberry</td>
<td>Vaccinium arboreum</td>
<td>Drought-tolerant; suitable for xeriscaping. Provides winter interest</td>
<td>Foliage – Fall, Flowers - Early spring to late winter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavenly Bamboo</td>
<td>Nandina Domestica</td>
<td>Excellent choice for entryways, patios or foundation plantings. Multiple plantings may be used as a screen or hedge.</td>
<td>Foliage – Fall, spring, Fruit – Summer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese Juniper</td>
<td>Juniperus chinensis ‘Sea Green’</td>
<td>Good drought tolerance; once established little maintenance required. Can be used as a groundcover, in hedges or screens .</td>
<td>Evergreen – All season</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barberry ‘Rose Glow’</td>
<td>Berberis atropurpurea</td>
<td>Tolerates light shade, but needs full sun to produce best foliage color. Very adaptable shrub that is tolerant of many pollutants in urban areas and some drought. Japanese barberry forms an excellent barrier or hedge.</td>
<td>Foliage – Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burning Bush ‘Dwarf’</td>
<td>Euonymus alatas ‘Compacta’</td>
<td>Very adaptable to poor soils, compacted soils, various soil pHs, heat, and drought. Used in hedges, borders, entranceways, foundations, or at water’s edge (but not wet site tolerant).</td>
<td>Foliage – Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Root</td>
<td>Xanthorrhiza simplicissima</td>
<td>Excellent for difficult shady ground; tolerant of dry as well as heavy soils.</td>
<td>Foliage – Fall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periwinkle</td>
<td>Vinca minor</td>
<td>Adaptable to soils of average fertility, soils of various pH, and occasional drought (once established), but is not tolerant of full sun.</td>
<td>Foliage – All season, Flowers - Spring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carolina Jessamine</td>
<td>Gelsemium sempervirens</td>
<td>Frequently trained to grow over arbors or to cover walls. Parts of plant are poisonous if ingested.</td>
<td>Foliage – All Season, Flowers – Early spring, early fall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>