

PALS Cultural Landscape Study: Cedar Hill Cemetery, Suitland, Maryland

Hannah Cameron, Francesca Evans, and Devon Murtha

Dr. Dennis Pogue and Paula Nasta

Course #: HISP-GAPALS-F2020-2
The University of Maryland – College Park
Fall Semester, 2020



PALS - Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability
An initiative of the National Center for Smart Growth

Gerrit Knaap, NCSG Executive Director
Kimberly Fisher, PALS Director

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Section I: Introduction

Overall Purpose and Project Goals

In the fall semester of 2020, a team of PALS graduate assistants at the University of Maryland conducted research and analysis on the history and conditions of historic resources of the Cedar Hill Cemetery in Suitland, Maryland. This cultural landscape study gathered information regarding the development of Cedar Hill Cemetery since its establishment in the early 20th century, assessed the condition of historic structures and resources, and compiled a comparative analysis of similar cemetery case studies in Maryland and across the United States. This study also analyzed the historical context and significance of several works by notable sculptor, Dionicio Rodriguez, located at Cedar Hill Cemetery.

In partnership with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, the PALS graduate assistant team compiled research and analysis that met the following course deliverables:

- Historical context statement on sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez
- Case study analysis of planned cemeteries listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- Conditions Assessment Report
- Draft Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) form for Cedar Hill Cemetery and sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez

Methodology and Structure of Report

This report presents the Cedar Hill Cemetery Cultural Landscape Study in three sections. The first section presents a conditions assessment of Suitland, Maryland, which surrounds the cemetery, and provides a historical background of the community, a compilation of the population demographics, and an overview of land use and zoning. The second section presents a conditions assessment of Cedar Hill Cemetery, which includes a description of the conditions of structures and buildings, as well as background and archival research on significant elements of the cemetery. The third section provides a historical context statement of the sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez and describes the condition and significance of each work.

The cultural landscape study concludes with recommendations for preserving and maintaining the sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez, and also offers suggestions for preserving and promoting significant aspects of the cemetery within the context of the Washington, D.C. area.

History of Planned Cemeteries

The origins of planned cemeteries in the United States begins with Mount Auburn Cemetery, near Boston, Massachusetts. Under the direction of Harvard University professor, Dr. Jacob Bigelow, beginning in 1831, the cemetery became a place of interment for wealthy, elite Boston residents. A private organization still holds ownership and authority over the cemetery operations. Along with private

management, members of the Garden and Cemetery Committee within the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, held other responsibilities focused on landscape design and maintenance of the cemetery. Designed after the Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris, Mount Auburn Cemetery spurred the rural, garden cemetery movement in cities across the country.¹

Constructing planned cemeteries not only created places of interment for urban communities but also offered a public park and escape from overcrowded, heavily industrialized cities of the late 19th century.² This connection to natural landscapes grew as an American ideology and was supported by landscape designer, Frederick Olmstead, and writers Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau, during the City Beautiful Movement.^{3,4} Attention to landscape and natural aesthetics, such as hills, meadows, forests, greenery, and water, were emulated in designing rural, garden cemeteries.⁵ Symbols representing the Egyptian Revival era appeared in cemeteries including obelisks, pyramids, and torches.⁶

Later in the 19th century, the lawn cemetery approach appeared and gained popularity with the design interventions of Adolph Strauch in Cincinnati's Spring Grove Cemetery. Much of the design and layout features implemented by Strauch grew from his experiences designing suburban landscapes. The key elements emphasized viewsheds, sight lines, and manicured landscapes and meadows that were navigable with paths and roadways throughout cemetery grounds. Strauch also saw the importance of maintaining cemetery landscapes and formed a group of groundskeepers to preserve and manage Spring Grove Cemetery. Both design elements and ongoing maintenance were implemented by other lawn cemeteries during this time.⁷

¹ Ken Worpole. "Chapter Six: A Walk in the Paradise Gardens." In *Last Landscapes: The Architecture of the Cemetery in the West*, 132–51. London: Reaktion, 2003.

² David Charles Sloane. "Memory and Landscape: Nature and the History of the American Cemetery." *SiteLINES: A Journal of Place* 6, no. 1 (2010): 3–6.

³ Worpole, "Chapter Six: A Walk in the Paradise Gardens", 132-51.

⁴ Sloane, "Memory and Landscape: Nature and the History of the American Cemetery", 3-6.

⁵ Worpole, "Chapter Six: A Walk in the Paradise Gardens", 132-51.

⁶ *Ibid*, 132-51.

⁷ *Ibid*, 132-51.

Section II: Conditions Assessment surrounding Cedar Hill Cemetery

Historical Background of Suitland, Maryland

Prior to the Civil War, the land that would later become Suitland, Maryland, was overwhelmingly used for agriculture, which was similar to conditions throughout the American South at that time.⁸ Substantial plantations surrounded Washington, D.C., many of which also sold crops and goods to residents living in the city center.⁹ During Emancipation and the Civil War, much of the freed black community around Suitland left plantations and migrated to Washington, D.C.¹⁰ Land previously functioning as large-scale plantations was parsed into smaller farms and some freed black residents continued working and living on the farms as tenant workers.¹¹

Population and development grew in the late 19th century with the arrival of Samuel T. Suit, also known as “Colonel” Suit. An influential businessman and Maryland senator, Suit established businesses and built a railroad line and main roadway into Washington, D.C. The area became known as Suitland, and soon offered a post office, stores, schools, and churches to residents; the community remained an unincorporated town into the early 1900s, however.¹²

After World War II, Suitland witnessed major development projects in the form of federal government sites and suburban residential neighborhoods. Two examples include the Suitland Federal Center, which was established in 1941, followed by Andrews Air Force Base in 1943. Both of these entities created employment opportunities and spurred population growth in suburban areas outside of Washington, D.C. Construction of the Suitland Parkway improved connectivity to the city center and Andrews Air Force Base. In the 1990s and early 2000s, the Suitland area experienced a decrease in both businesses and population. Recently, in an effort to spur growth, the Prince George’s County planning department drafted plans for mixed-use development in the Suitland area that will offer residential and commercial spaces.¹³

⁸ The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. 2006. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*. Development Plan, Upper Marlboro: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 7-8.

⁹ Ibid, 7-8.

¹⁰ Ibid, 7-8.

¹¹ Norton, Darlie, and George Norton. 1976. *A History of Suitland: Prince George's County, Maryland, United States of America, 1867-1976*. Place of publication not identified: publisher not identified.

¹² The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*, 7-8.

¹³ The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*, 7-8.

Demographic Analysis

To understand the current population surrounding Cedar Hill Cemetery, this cultural landscape study analyzed key demographic characteristics, including racial distribution, education attainment, annual household income levels, and unemployment rates. The following demographic analysis examines 2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates data provided by the U.S. Census and defined by the County Subdivision, District 6, Spauldings geographic locations, which includes Suitland and Silver Hill, Maryland.

In 2018, the racial distribution of residents was majority African American, accounting for 87.2 percent of the population living in the Suitland and Silver Hill areas (see Figure 1). White and Latino or Hispanic residents accounted for 5.4 percent and 6 percent of the population, respectively.¹⁴

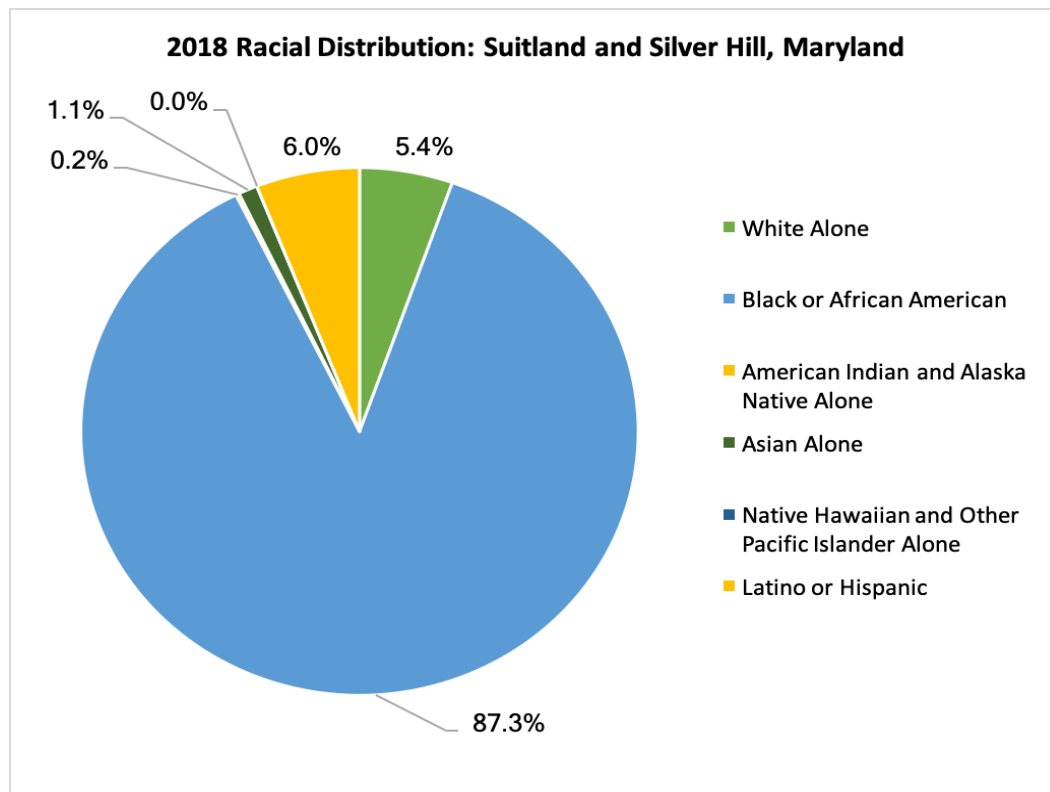


Figure 1: Racial Distribution, 2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates data, County Subdivisions, District 6, Spauldings, Maryland

¹⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. A03001 Race, Spauldings, Prince George's County, Maryland, American Community Survey 2018 5-Year Estimates. Prepared by Social Explorer. Accessed Jan 24, 2021. https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2018_5yr/R12722343

Another key finding in the demographic analysis, as seen in Figure 2, showed lower levels of education attainment in 2018 for the population of Suitland and Silver Hill. Most residents, 70.4 percent, hold high school diplomas and equivalents or some college education. The second highest education attainment level represented includes holders of a bachelor’s degree, at 12.2 percent of the population.¹⁵

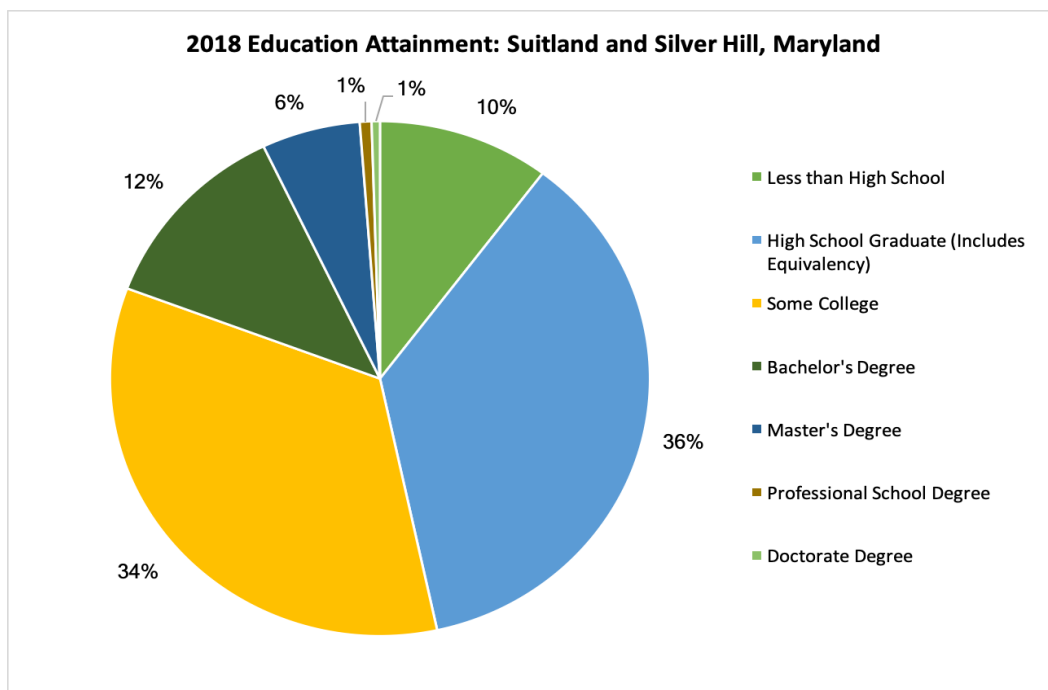


Figure 2: Education Attainment, 2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates data, County Subdivisions, District 6, Spauldings, Maryland

¹⁵ U.S. Census Bureau. A12001 Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Over, Spauldings, Prince George’s County, Maryland, American Community Survey 2018 5-Year Estimates. Prepared by Social Explorer. Accessed Jan 24, 2021. https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2018_5yr/R12722345

The demographic analysis revealed an even distribution of household income levels for residents in 2018.¹⁶ As seen in Figure 3, the highest percentage represented (26.5 percent) accounted for household income levels of \$100,000 or more.¹⁷ Comparatively, income ranges of \$25,000 to \$49,999 and \$50,000 to \$74,999, each represented 22 percent of the population in that year.¹⁸ Additionally, the unemployment rate for the Suitland and Silver Hill area, 8.3 percent, demonstrated higher rates than the State of Maryland and the nation.¹⁹

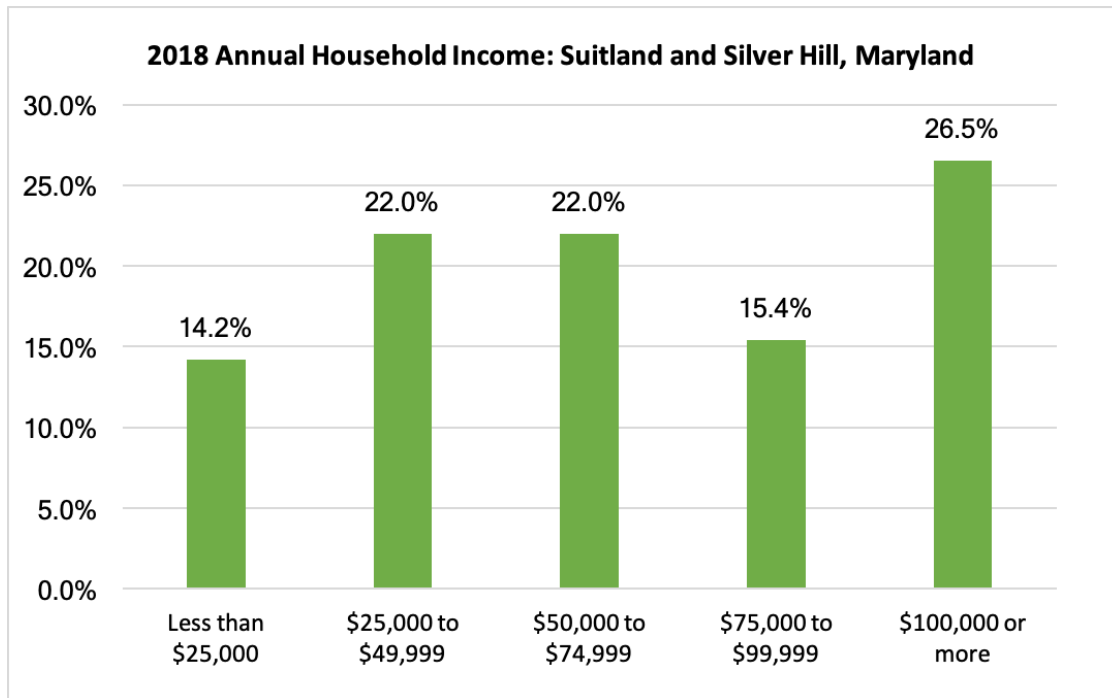


Figure 3: Annual Household Income, 2018 American Community Survey five-year estimates data, County Subdivisions, District 6, Spauldings, Maryland

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau. B14001 Household Income (In 2018 Inflation Adjusted Dollars) (Collapsed Version), Spauldings, Prince George’s County, Maryland, American Community Survey 2018 5-Year Estimates. Prepared by Social Explorer. Accessed Jan 24, 2021. https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2018_5yr/R12722345

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau. A17005 Unemployment Rate for Civilian Population in Labor Force 16 Years and Over, Spauldings, Prince George’s County, Maryland, American Community Survey 2018 5-Year Estimates. Prepared by Social Explorer. Accessed Jan 24, 2021. https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2018_5yr/R12722345

Land Use and Zoning

Current zoning of Cedar Hill Cemetery shows Open Space, or O-S, under the residential zoning category.²⁰ This zoning category promotes low-density residential uses and use of the land for agriculture and recreation.^{21,22} Properties near Cedar Hill are zoned single-family and multi-family residential, including One-Family Detached Residential (R-55), Multifamily High Density Residential (R-10), and Townhouse (R-T).²³ The Cedar Hill property boundaries are adjacent to two cemeteries, Lincoln Memorial and Washington National, both of which are also zoned Open Space.²⁴

Major transportation systems surround Cedar Hill Cemetery with Pennsylvania Avenue to the north and Suitland Parkway to the south.²⁵ Two Metro transit stations, Suitland and Naylor Road, provide connections to the cemetery and the Suitland area.²⁶ Properties surrounding the Metro stations are zoned Mixed-Use Town Center (MU-TC) and Mixed-Use Transportation Oriented (M-X-T).²⁷ Both zoning designations foster opportunities for residential and commercial development while also leveraging accessibility to multi-modal transportation and creating local redevelopment strategies.²⁸

In October 2018, the Prince George's County Council approved an update to county-wide zoning ordinances.²⁹ This ongoing update will rezone Cedar Hill Cemetery as Agricultural and Preservation (AG) under the zoning category Rural and Agricultural.³⁰ According to new zoning designations, AG seeks to restrict large-scale development and advocates for preserving natural landscapes including those of historic and cultural significance.³¹

²⁰ Prince George's County. "Story Map Swipe and Spyglass." Accessed January 24, 2021. <https://mncppc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/StorytellingSwipe/index.html?appid=4791688f446b42f5ae0096dad0b6771a&embed>.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Prince George's County, Maryland Planning Department. 2010. "Guide to Zoning Categories". *The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission*.

²³ Prince George's County. "Story Map Swipe and Spyglass." Accessed January 24, 2021. <https://mncppc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/StorytellingSwipe/index.html?appid=4791688f446b42f5ae0096dad0b6771a&embed>.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Prince George's County, Maryland Planning Department. 2010. "Guide to Zoning Categories". *The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission*.

²⁹ Prince George's County. "Project Purpose – ZoningPGC." Accessed January 24, 2021. <http://zoningpgc.pgplanning.com/about/>.

³⁰ Prince George's County. "Story Map Swipe and Spyglass." Accessed January 24, 2021. <https://mncppc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/StorytellingSwipe/index.html?appid=4791688f446b42f5ae0096dad0b6771a&embed>.

³¹ Prince George's County, Maryland. "Part 27-4 Zones and Zone Regulations, Sec. 27-4200 Base Zones, 27-4201 Rural and Agricultural Base Zones, 27-4201(c) Agriculture and Preservation (AG) Zone". *Zoning Ordinance*. Accessed January 24, 2021.

Key Takeaways and Relevance to Cedar Hill Cemetery

The conditions assessment of the area surrounding Cedar Hill Cemetery presents key factors that have influenced the cemetery's development in the past, and which will continue to shape its future. A significant takeaway from the conditions assessment demonstrates how the surrounding area developed, which influences today's land use and zoning guidelines.

Throughout the 20th century, the Suitland area developed to meet the needs of a growing suburban population. In particular, the construction of suburban neighborhoods and multi-mode transportation formed boundaries around Cedar Hill Cemetery and continue to influence land use and zoning surrounding the cemetery today.³² As Prince Georges' County implements zoning updates, Cedar Hill Cemetery's zoning designation will change from Open Space under the Residential zoning category to Agricultural and Preservation.³³ This shift in land use guidelines will preserve the cemetery's natural and rural aesthetics while also protecting the historical and cultural significance of Cedar Hill.³⁴

https://gisdata.pgplanning.org/files/projects/ZR/Subtitle27/Division4_ZONES_AND_ZONE_REGULATIONS/Section20_0_BASE_ZONES/AG.pdf

³² The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. 2006. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*. Development Plan, Upper Marlboro: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1-73.

³³ Prince George's County. "Story Map Swipe and Spyglass." Accessed January 24, 2021.

<https://mncppc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/StorytellingSwipe/index.html?appid=4791688f446b42f5ae0096dad0b6771a&embed>.

³⁴ Prince George's County, Maryland. "Part 27-4 Zones and Zone Regulations, Sec. 27-4200 Base Zones, 27-4201 Rural and Agricultural Base Zones, 27-4201(c) Agriculture and Preservation (AG) Zone". *Zoning Ordinance*. Accessed January 24, 2021.

https://gisdata.pgplanning.org/files/projects/ZR/Subtitle27/Division4_ZONES_AND_ZONE_REGULATIONS/Section20_0_BASE_ZONES/AG.pdf

Section III: Conditions Assessment within Cedar Hill Cemetery

Historical Background of Cedar Hill Cemetery

Established in 1927 by William Harrison, Cedar Hill Cemetery in Suitland, sits on a 135-acre tract of land approximately one-half mile east of the Washington D.C. border. The cemetery was originally founded by land speculators Francis Baker and Reese Carpenter in 1885 under the name of Forest Lake Cemetery. Other shareholders including George Starkweather would manage and develop Forest Lake Cemetery into the early 1900s.³⁵

Cedar Hill Cemetery plays an important role in the historical timeline of Suitland. Prior to the Civil War, the area that later developed as Suitland, operated as a plantation economy and sold crops and goods to residents of Washington, D.C.³⁶ In particular, the land that would later become Cedar Hill Cemetery began as Nonesuch Plantation.³⁷ After Emancipation, much of the freed black community in the Suitland area left plantations and migrated to find opportunity and live in Washington, D.C.³⁸ However, some freed black residents remained in the area and continued working and living on the smaller farms as tenant workers.³⁹ During the Jim Crow era, cemeteries in metropolitan Washington, D.C. were segregated, and Cedar Hill served as a cemetery for white residents, while the neighboring Lincoln Memorial Cemetery served African American residents.⁴⁰

Cedar Hill Cemetery contains nine reinforced concrete *faux bois* sculptures created in the late 1930s by notable Mexican sculptor, Dionicio Rodríguez. The ability of Rodríguez to receive a commission to create these sculptures for Cedar Hill is notable due to anti-immigrant (especially immigrants from Mexico) sentiment in America throughout the 1930s and 40s. Cedar Hill Cemetery is unique in possessing these sculptures as they are the only significant examples of Rodríguez's work on the East Coast.⁴¹

Cedar Hill Cemetery was designed in the park-lawn style and has hilly topography with a slope that increases from north to south, sloping upward to its highest elevations at the southern end of the cemetery. The cemetery's roads wind in organic paths to eventually form a central cul-de-sac. Overall, the cemetery's boundaries result in a lopsided triangular shape, with the interior roads serving as boundaries for many of the demarcated sections of the cemetery. The headstones and flat grave markers denote individual graves and family plots. There is only one section that contains mausoleums. A comparison of an early plot map (Photo 1) and current aerial image (Photo 2) shows that the overall layout of Cedar Hill has remained largely unchanged since its inception.

³⁵ Norton, Darlie, and George Norton. 1976. *A History of Suitland: Prince George's County, Maryland, United States of America, 1867-1976*. Place of publication not identified: publisher not identified.

³⁶ The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. 2006. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*. Development Plan, Upper Marlboro: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1-73.

³⁷ Norton, *A History of Suitland: Prince George's County, Maryland, United States of America, 1867-1976*.

³⁸ The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*. 1-73.

³⁹ Norton, *A History of Suitland: Prince George's County, Maryland, United States of America, 1867-1976*.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ Light, Patsy Pittman. *Capturing Nature: The Cement Sculpture of Dionicio Rodríguez*. Texas A & M University Press, 2008, 4-13.

Additionally, the cemetery contains four main structures: the Cedar Hill Funeral Home with a one-story chapel, the Ukrainian mausoleum, an abandoned chapel and mausoleum, and the cemetery's former sales house. Today, Cedar Hill is a privately owned and active cemetery, with and approximately 65,000 interments.⁴²

A conditions assessment of the structures and an overview of significant areas in Cedar Hill Cemetery is provided below.

Historically and Culturally Significant Sections

In conducting a conditions assessment of Cedar Hill Cemetery, our research team assessed key sections based on their historical and cultural significance. The following map images depict notable sections of the cemetery: Sections A, B, and C; Sections 2 and 4; and Sections 9, 10, and 12.

⁴² Cedar Hill Funeral Home, Inc. 2017. *Our Cemetery*. Accessed December 7, 2020. <https://www.cedarhillfuneralhome.com/page/our-cemetery>.

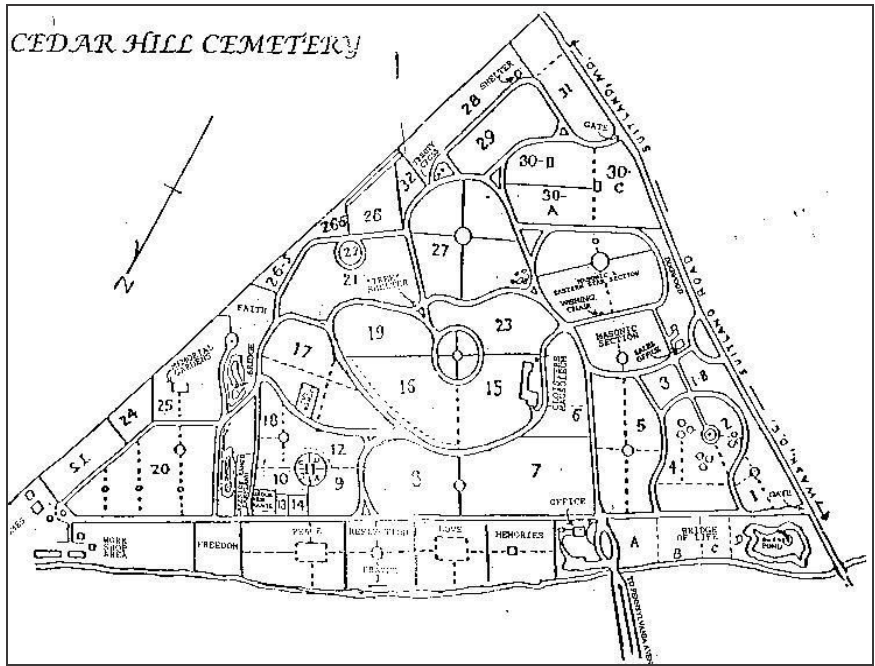


Photo 1: Historic map of Cedar Hill Cemetery
 Photo Source: <http://www.tntcarden.com/tree/ensor/CedarHillCemeteryMap.html>



Photo 2: Current aerial view of Cedar Hill Cemetery
 Photo Source: Aerial map of Cedar Hill Cemetery, ArcGIS Imagery Hybrid, World Imagery Base map (Accessed February 24, 2021).

The Ukrainian National Cemetery: Sections A, B and C



Photo 3: Ukrainian National Memorial Cemetery marker, Sections A and B, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

These three sections comprise the Ukrainian National Cemetery, which is denoted by both a small, engraved stone and a large black granite cross monument. The grave markers in this section appear relatively new, with graves dating from the early 1980s. Based on their proximity to the unfinished Ukrainian Mausoleum to the west of the entrance gate, it is possible that these sections were meant to be a part of a larger Ukrainian cemetery complex. Burial markers in these sections are varied and include both upright headstones and flat plaques. Headstones in these sections are dramatically different from other tombstones in the park, as a significant number of them are made of black granite. The tombstones are etched with floral patterns, crosses, and inscriptions in English and Ukrainian.

Sections 2 and 4



Photo 4: Family mausoleum, Sections 2 and 4, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Sections 2 and 4 are distinctive as the only sections with large family mausoleums. The sections encompass several ornate stone mausoleums, as well as rows of older headstones and flat grave markers. There are roughly half a dozen family mausoleums, each measuring approximately ten feet by ten feet. Many of the front façades of the mausoleums have ornamental iron gates.

Sections 2 and 4 have some of the oldest graves in the cemetery, dating back to the late 1800s. Although most of the headstones are in good condition, some are leaning, and one has been toppled over. Generally, the grave markers are arranged in rows, although the orientation of these rows varies throughout the section.

Sections 9, 10, and 12



Photo 5: Tombstone, Sections 9, 10, and 12, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Sections 9, 10 and 12 have some of the cemetery's oldest grave markers, dating to the early 1900s. These sections are connected by interior cemetery roads. The sections are slightly hilly, with the topography sloping down toward the north. Tree cover in this section is scattered, and many of the trees appear mature.

Conditions Assessment of Structures

Another aspect of the assessment was documenting the conditions of key structures on the cemetery grounds. As seen on the following map, these structures include the chapel at the entrance of Cedar Hill Cemetery, the abandoned chapel and mausoleum, the Ukrainian Mausoleum, and the Sales House.

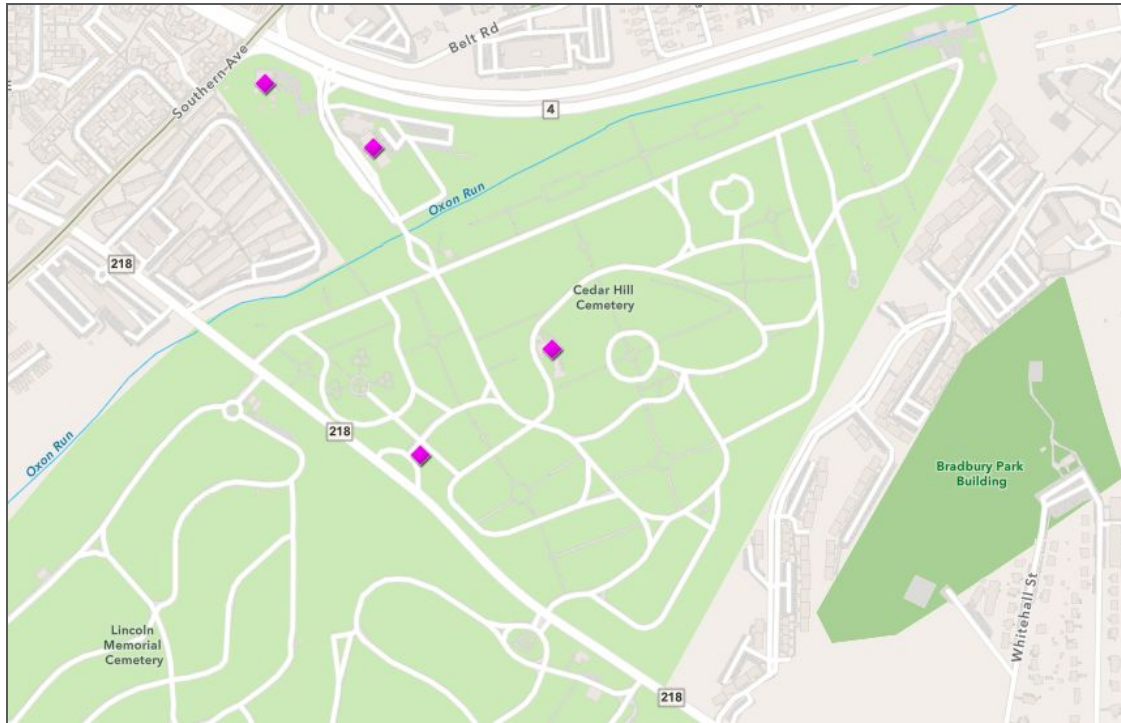


Photo 6: Map of Cedar Hill Cemetery with structures marked

Photo Source: Map of Cedar Hill Cemetery, ArcGIS Community Base map (Accessed January 22, 2021).

Chapel at the Cemetery Entrance



Photo 7: Chapel at the entrance to Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

A large chapel constructed of cut and finished stone blocks is located directly to the east of the Cedar Hill Cemetery main entrance road off Pennsylvania Avenue. The one-story chapel measures roughly 170 feet by 60 feet and is in good condition. Although the exact date of construction cannot be determined, historic aerial photographs of the cemetery date the building between 1930 and 1965.

The building is composed of large, uniform stones with thin, pointed joints. The focus of the east façade is its central entrance, with two decorative metal doors. The entrance is accessed through a simple, square, enclosed concrete and glass portico. Directly above the entrance is a tiered, vertical stone projection that extends upward to a nave tower. The tower rises a full story above the building and is topped with a dome and a small stone finial. The fenestration of tall stained-glass windows on the south façade and the east façade has a number of fixed windows.

Abandoned Chapel and Mausoleum



Photo 8: Abandoned chapel and mausoleum, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

In the center of Cedar Hill Cemetery lies a small chapel and mausoleum, which appears to be in extremely poor condition. The building has an L-shaped footprint and is characterized by large, uniform stone block façades, thin, everted joints, and pointed arches over window and door openings. Several of the windows and main openings have drip-mold crown elaborations. The building's west side faces a cemetery road and is fronted by several decorative cannons pointing west. Overgrown vegetation in front of the cannons blocks the view of the cemetery and also covers a stone stairway leading to the front of the chapel. Based on the stairs and direction of the cannons, it is evident that the vegetation has become overgrown and may not have been in existence when the chapel was built. The building's east side is partially set into a steep hill, allowing pedestrians to walk directly onto the roof in the rear of the building.

A one-story chapel, measuring roughly fifty feet long, is at the north end of the building. The chapel has a moderately pitched, side-gabled slate roof and paneled metal entrance doors set within a small, slightly projecting center gable. The entrance doors are flanked by tall stone urns. Chapel windows appear to be extremely rusted. The roof is visibly failing in the rear, where it is slate toward the ridge, and a mix of metal and shingles toward the eaves. There is also vegetation growing on the chapel roof. An attached stone tower on the north side of the chapel, shows evidence of displacement and spalling. A large, square tower, attached to the chapel's east side, appears to function as a mausoleum.

An approximately 150-foot-long, one-story cloister extends south from the chapel. The east side of the cloister is set into the hill. The cloister can be accessed from the west side, through a series of segmented arch openings. The interior wall of the cloister holds stacked internment sites.

Ukrainian Mausoleum



Photo 9: Ukrainian Mausoleum, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

A partially completed mausoleum, originally intended to serve as a burial place for the D.C. Metropolitan region's Ukrainian population, sits near Pennsylvania Avenue on the northwest corner of Cedar Hill's property boundary. The building, constructed in the late 1980s, was never completed. Although it was originally intended to have multiple wing extensions, only one wing was built. The completed wing is on the northern end of the building, facing Pennsylvania Avenue. On the building's south side, hidden from view, are the foundations for the other wings. These foundations are overgrown with vegetation.

The existing wing currently serves as an active mausoleum. The building is two stories, with a flat roof. The east exterior wall is made of pink granite and houses multiple stacked burial vaults. The front façade, facing Pennsylvania Avenue, features large decorative glass panes within a concrete face. Raised stonework forming abstract lines and arched shapes decorate the front of the building. An entrance to the mausoleum, on the south side of the building facing east, is composed of multiple arched entrances and a decorative metal gate.

Inside the mausoleum are more stacked burial vaults. A functioning elevator takes visitors to a basement level, which houses vaults similar to those on the first floor. Several colorful, decorative glass murals, depicting various fauna, adorn the ceiling. The murals share an expressive geometry with the decorative lines adorning the front of the building.

Sales House



Photo 10: Sales house, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

A two-story frame house, in a state of advanced disrepair, is located on the west side of Cedar Hill. The house sits directly behind a side entrance to the cemetery from Suitland Road. The side entrance, which appears to no longer be in use, looks markedly like the main entrance, with similar stone pillars. The simple house has white painted wood siding and a one-story wrap-around porch. The house has a hipped shingle roof and one-over-one sash, wood frame windows. The shingled roof of the porch is extremely damaged and appears to have failed entirely on the south corner of the house.

Case Study Analysis of Planned Cemeteries

Methodology and Purpose:

This survey of selected cemeteries was conducted to place Cedar Hill within the context of current historic cemetery nominations. The properties selected for this brief survey provide insights into four major topics that relate to the Cedar Hill Cemetery: cemeteries in the Washington D.C. metropolitan region, cemeteries with park-lawn style elements, cemeteries with sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez, and cemeteries with a history of segregation.

The historic registration form for each cemetery was reviewed with special attention to the narratives of significance. Variables such as the date founded, cemetery style, name of designer or founder, and stated significance were all recorded in the survey.

This survey was conducted with two primary goals. The first was to establish why cemeteries with similar characteristics to Cedar Hill were nominated to the National Register. The rationale and context behind cemetery nominations will guide further research into Cedar Hill and its eventual nomination. The second goal was to compare Cedar Hill to these other cemeteries and look for thematic gaps in the nomination forms to determine what is distinctive about Cedar Hill. With all of the information that this cemetery survey provides, we hope to create a historic resource nomination form for Cedar Hill that will contextualize it within the history of cemetery movements, while also highlighting the unique historical features that merit its nomination.

Case Studies

Lincoln Hill Cemetery (Suitland, MD)

Established: 1927

Cemetery type: Park-Lawn, Memorial Park, African American, Segregated

Designed by: John H. Smalls

Significance: Lincoln Cemetery is significant as a public cemetery for African Americans in the D.C. metropolitan region. It is an example of early 20th century trends in cemetery development. The MIHP form states that the formation of Lincoln Cemetery was indicative of demographic shifts between 1910 and 1930 when D.C.'s African American population grew substantially.

Overview: Located on land from the Nonesuch Plantation, Lincoln Cemetery shares a boundary on Suitland Road with Cedar Hill Cemetery. It has in the past had shared management with Cedar Hill, and the history of the two cemeteries is very much linked. Both Lincoln and Cedar Hill were segregated cemeteries during the Jim Crow era, with Cedar Hill representing the white-only counterpart. The

relationship between Cedar Hill and Lincoln Cemetery is instructive about the practices of segregation in D.C. in the 20th century.⁴³

Mount Zion Cemetery (Washington, D.C.)

Established: 1809/1877

Cemetery type: Urban

Founded by: Mount Zion Church/ Female Union Band Society

Significance: Mount Zion Cemetery is significant as a space of African American history as well as women's labor history. Although the nomination form describes the cemetery itself, it mainly focuses on the history of its two founding organizations.

Overall: The nomination form for Mount Zion notes that it was likely a mixed-race grave site prior to the Civil Rights era. Many historic D.C. cemeteries appear to have less explicit segregation policies than Cedar Hill Cemetery, and often interred bodies of members of different ethnic groups throughout their history.⁴⁴

Bohemian National Cemetery

Established: 1884

Cemetery type: Urban Park-Lawn

Significance: The Bohemian National Cemetery's primary heritage narrative is of Czech Ethnic Heritage. The cemetery was a burial and meeting place for Czech immigrants in Baltimore, and was significant during the time of Czech immigration to the United States from 1880-1912. The cemetery's historic functions are as a funerary and social space for Czech immigrants, as well as the presence of "significant headstones illustrating a distinct Czech-Bohemian funerary style," drawing a strong connection between the community and the cemetery.

Overall: Bohemian National Cemetery makes a convincing case for often overlooked European-Ethnic heritage narratives. The nomination form includes multiple paragraphs of description about notable Czech figures buried at the cemetery, as well as a section on the historical background of Czechs in America at the time.⁴⁵

⁴³ Maryland Historical Trust, Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, Suitland, Prince George's County, Maryland, Inventory N. PG:75A-30.

⁴⁴ National Register of Historic Places, Mount Zion Cemetery, Washington, District of Columbia.

⁴⁵ National Register of Historic Places, Bohemian National Cemetery, Baltimore, Maryland, National Register B-5167.

Mount Hope Cemetery

Established: 1912

Cemetery type: Park-Lawn

Significance: The stated period of significance for Mount Hope Cemetery is 1912-1930. This cemetery is the prototype for the Modern Cemetery Movement in the country, and retains the park-lawn cemetery design. The Modern Cemetery Movement relates to innovations to cemetery business models and operations.

Overall: Mount Hope is relevant both for its history with the Modern Cemetery Movement, as well as for having an Old Serbian Orthodox section. The Serbian Orthodox section, although not the primary narrative, explores European ethnic heritage as a narrative.⁴⁶

This survey leads to several preliminary conclusions about Cedar Hill.

Segregated Cemeteries

In conjunction with Lincoln Cemetery, Cedar Hill tells an important story about D.C. in the time of segregation. Its proximity and familial relationship to Lincoln Cemetery allows for comparative analysis. Although many historic cemeteries were not racially inclusive, the way segregation operated at Cedar Hill and Lincoln Cemeteries is unique in the D.C. region. Lincoln and Cedar Hill operated as separate but connected cemeteries, which were established during the Jim Crow era. This differs from other all-white or all-black cemeteries in the area, which didn't operate in tandem. Many historically black cemeteries (like Mount Zion Cemetery) were established by African American churches or organizations and did not have a relationship with a white cemetery. Other cemeteries were segregated by having white and non-white sections on the same property (like Decatur Cemetery in Georgia). Two D.C. cemeteries, Woodlawn Cemetery and Mount Zion Cemetery, are reported to have some degree of racial integration. Cedar Hill is unique in how segregation played an explicit part of its planning and marketing.

Ethnic Heritage

This survey shows how Ethnic heritage can be included in the significance narrative. Bohemian National Cemetery in Baltimore was nominated in part as a historic meeting and burial place for the Czech community. Mount Hope Cemetery in Missouri mentioned a Serbian Orthodox section of the cemetery, which relates to the significance of European Ethnic Heritage. The ethnic heritage sections of these nomination forms noted how the cemetery served a specific community, and noted any visible traditions in those sections, especially relating to cemetery design.

⁴⁶ National Register of Historic Places, Mount Hope Cemetery, Lemay, St. Louis County, Missouri.

During our research and site visit, we determined that Cedar Hill has a large section of Ukrainian interments. The section had originally been its own cemetery but was later combined with Cedar Hill. A never-completed Ukrainian Museum sits at the entrance to the cemetery. There are several unique black granite headstones, as well as a stone marker inscribed with the title “Ukrainian National Cemetery,” in sections A through D of Cedar Hill.

Dionicio Rodriguez Sculptures

A particularly significant survey finding is that the presence of Dionicio Rodriguez sculptures alone may not merit a national register nomination. In considering Dionicio Rodriguez’s sculptures in other cemeteries, it appears that Cedar Hill is a modest example of his work. However, examples of his sculptures on the East Coast are exceedingly rare, only consisting of the group at Cedar Hill and a possible installation at the adjacent Lincoln Cemetery. The sculptures are in reasonably good condition and should be one of the focuses of the cemetery’s MIHP form.

Section IV: Dionicio Rodriguez and his Sculptures

Historical Context and Statement of Significance

Throughout his lifetime, Dionicio Rodríguez (1891-1955) designed numerous artistic works in the *faux bois* style that can be categorized into three groups: faux stone, natural stone, and faux wood. Without the use of pre-sketched or planned designs, Rodríguez created sculptures that adorned both the private homes of individuals who commissioned him and public spaces for all to enjoy. Most of his work was completed during the Great Depression; he used inexpensive materials and kept his labor costs low. His works, located in eight states, include building facades, tables, gates, fences, steps, grottos, baskets, hollow “tree” shelters, fountains, bridges, and fallen “tree” and thatched roof benches. His sculptures feature such naturalistic elements as broken-off branches, insect holes, lichen, and peeling bark, which often mimicked the same growth patterns of trees found in Mexico and southern Texas. Some of his sculpture designs, such as palapa-roofed tables and benches, fallen “tree” benches, tree stump seats, and hollow “tree” houses, were repeated at other sites but varied in their overall shape and details. Notably, Rodríguez’s sculptures were appropriately used as embellishments for new cemeteries developed during the 20th century that featured flat burial markers.⁴⁷ Many of his works are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Texas

- Garden of the Spanish Governor’s Palace, San Antonio, Texas (NR, 1970)
- Large hollow tree structure and a small bench in Alamo Plaza, San Antonio, Texas (NR Historic District, 1977)
- Sculpture at the Stuckey House, Longview, Texas (Nugget Hill Historic District, NR, 1998)
- Palapa-Roofed Trolley Stop, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)
- Entrance to Japanese Tea/Sunken Gate Garden, Brackenridge Park, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)
- Buckeye Park entrance gate, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)
- St. Anthony of Padua, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)

Tennessee

- Memorial Park Cemetery, Memphis, Tennessee (NR, 1990)

Arkansas

- Lakewood Park, Couchwood and Little Switzerland in Garland, Pulaski and Hot Spring Counties, Arkansas (NR, 1986)
- T.R. Pugh Memorial Park and Crestview Park, North Little Rock, Arkansas (NR, 1986)

⁴⁷ Light, Patsy Pittman. *Capturing Nature: The Cement Sculpture of Dionicio Rodríguez*. Texas A & M University Press, 2008.

Trabajo Rústico Tradition

The work of Rodríguez has been called *faux bois* (imitation wood) or *trabajo rústico* (rustic work) and was not widely recognized during his lifetime. This type of work, however, was not unprecedented; there are documented *faux bois* works that span many centuries in the United States, Europe, Central and South America, and Asia. In 1869 in the United States, illustrations of rustic wooden seats created by George Woodward, a prominent landscape engineer, were printed in *Architecture and Real Art*. Earlier, in 1854, Calvert Vaux, an architect who worked with Frederick Law Olmstead during the early design stages of Central Park, published his own drawings of rustic wooden shelters and a bridge for the park.⁴⁸

The construction of Rodríguez's sculptures, like the creation of similar *faux bois* works today, was a multi-stage process. First, a concrete foundation was poured to support the structure before a frame made of reinforcing rods was installed, roughly outlining the finished work. Wire mesh was wrapped around the reinforcing rods to further outline the sculpture and to provide an area between the rods and surrounding mesh that could be infilled with concrete. While the construction methods for the structures of all *faux bois* works are similar in nature, Rodríguez's sculptures are noted for his finish work, particularly his realistic textures. After a final coat of a cement-rich concrete on the armature, Rodríguez would create the texture of bark. In his early years, Rodríguez used handmade tools for creating texture on each piece. If knots were included on the sculpture, they were made from small pieces of brick that were covered with the final coat of concrete. Rodríguez was very secretive about his techniques, especially in mixing and applying color while the concrete was still wet, the final step in his artistic process before the piece was hosed off with water.⁴⁹

Early Life

Dionicio Rodríguez, the son of Luz Alegría and Catarino Rodríguez, was born on April 11, 1891 in Toluca, outside of Mexico City. His family moved to Mexico City where, as a young man, he worked for Luis Robles Gil, a contractor who specialized in creating reinforced concrete works that mimicked wood or rock. During the 1920s, Rodríguez lived for a short time in Monterrey, where he created two *faux bois* benches for Cervecería Cuauhtémoc, a local brewery complex. Around 1924, after briefly living in Laredo, Texas, Rodríguez relocated to San Antonio where he found employment with the Alamo Cement Company.⁵⁰

Rodríguez's Work

Rodríguez was one of the myriad Mexican craftsmen, musicians, and performers who immigrated to San Antonio, Texas, during the early 20th century. The refugees sought to improve their financial prospects and escape the tumult of the Mexican Revolution, a major 20th century political and social revolution

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid, 21-23.

⁵⁰ Light, *Capturing Nature*, 19-21.

that began in November 1910.⁵¹ The large influx of Mexican immigrants to San Antonio brought new kinds of folk art to the southern United States, including jail art, murals, and concrete sculptures. Rodríguez's journey parallels the immigration of other skilled performers, musicians, and artisans who settled in San Antonio after crossing the border from the 1920s until the 1940s. According to statistics from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, over half a million Mexicans entered the United States from 1899 to 1928, while statistics from Mexico note that over 850,000 immigrants entered the United States between 1910 and 1928.⁵² In the decades before the Great Depression, Mexican migration to the United States was regulated based on labor demands, primarily those of the Southwest.⁵³ However, beginning at the end of 1929, state and local officials, reacting in a xenophobic way, forced unwanted Mexican laborers to return to Mexico.

Some of Rodríguez's earliest works were commissioned by Mexican surgeon, Aureliano Urrutia, and were located throughout Urrutia's estate. Out of the nine works Rodríguez created for Dr. Urrutia, the fallen "tree" bench is a design that Rodríguez replicated, with varying details, for other clients. Word of mouth was the primary way Rodríguez gained new clients, including Charles Baumberger, founder of the Alamo Portland Cement Company. Most of Rodríguez's works are located in Texas, including Alamo Plaza, Brackenridge Park, the garden of the Spanish Governor's Palace, and Jacala Restaurant in San Antonio. Additionally, Rodríguez's work can be found at the Albert Steves Ranch, the Eddingston Court Apartments, the Houston Zoo, on the James Richard Marmion Property, and at the Phelan Mansion. In addition to Texas, Rodríguez was commissioned to create sculptures in seven other states: Arkansas, Maryland, Alabama, Illinois, Tennessee, Michigan, and New Mexico.

Rodríguez's Final Years

Rodríguez was diabetic and his condition began to worsen in 1941, thus there are very few works of his created from 1940 until his death in 1955. Additionally, Rodríguez was limited to making smaller sculptures during World War II because it was difficult to acquire large amounts of cement and steel. His later, smaller works were created as decorative garden features, including deer, small tables, and baskets. In the decade before his death, Rodríguez created his final large works, including a bridge at the Lake View Motel in Arkansas in 1945 and the façade of San Antonio's Jacala Restaurant in 1952. After years of declining health, Rodríguez passed away on December 16, 1955, and was interred in the San Fernando Cemetery II in San Antonio.⁵⁴

Significance of Dionicio Rodríguez Sculptures

The level of realistic detailing in the *trabajo rústico* sculptures of Dionicio Rodríguez is unmatched by any other *faux bois* work created by other artists in the 20th century. Rodríguez was a sought-after Mexican

⁵¹ National Endowment for the Humanities. "The Mexican Revolution: November 20th, 1910." NEH.gov. 2012.

⁵² Aguila, Jaime R. "Mexican/U.S. Immigration Policy Prior to the Great Depression." *Diplomatic History* 31, no.2 (2007): 210. JSTOR.

⁵³ Ibid, 212.

⁵⁴ Ibid, 105-107.

immigrant artist who was able to create his sculptures despite Depression-era efforts to coerce Mexicans, who had immigrated to the United States in the early 19th century to escape the tumult of the Mexican Revolution, to repatriate. His ability to secure work throughout the nation is also significant due to the financial hardships Americans faced during the Depression, as well as through shortages of materials he used, especially metal, during World War II. His work can be found in eight states, however the sculptures at Cedar Hill are the only significant examples of works located on the East Coast.

Case Study Analysis of Other Cemeteries with Sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez

The rise of memorial park plan cemeteries during the early 20th century is attributed to Hubert Eaton, who popularized the use of flat headstones throughout cemeteries with sculptures placed as decoration. Rodriguez's sculptural style conformed well to this design aesthetic, and his works are found in seven cemeteries in five states.

Memorial Park Cemetery, Memphis, TN

In 1924, Clovis Hinds, inspired by the success of Hubert Eaton's memorial cemetery design at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Los Angeles, sold his insurance company and began planning a cemetery with a similar design. Hinds commissioned Rodríguez to make various Biblical-themed sculptures, many of which are situated along the road that runs through the cemetery. Rodríguez's major works in the cemetery include a footbridge covered by what appears to be a large hollow fallen tree, the Crystal Shrine Grotto, God's Garden (three rock sculptures resembling Colorado's Garden of the Gods), the Pool of Hebron, and the Fountain of Youth. Additionally, several sculptures in Memorial Park Cemetery were replicated by Rodríguez elsewhere, including a large hollow "tree" sculpture (named "Abraham's Oak in this cemetery), a fallen "tree" bench, a footbridge, and an Annie Laurie Wishing Chair.⁵⁵

Hinds was instrumental in spreading the word about Rodríguez and encouraging other cemetery owners incorporate his work into their own cemeteries. The 1937 Southern Cemetery Association Convention, held in Memphis, Tennessee, included a visit to Memorial Park Cemetery and exposed many other cemetery owners to Rodríguez's scope of work (The Sculptures of Dionicio Rodríguez at Memorial Park Cemetery, NR 1991).

Lincoln Park Cemetery, Brentwood, MD

The owner of Lincoln Park Cemetery, Lobell O. Minear, an acquaintance of Hinds, hired Rodríguez in 1935 to create a work of art for his cemetery located just outside Washington, D.C. Although not authenticated, the cemetery contains a cloister garden with a truncated vault ceiling that appears (upon inspection of what lies behind cracks in the ceiling) to be the work of Rodríguez.⁵⁶

Cedar Hill Cemetery, Suitland, MD

Also, following a recommendation by Hines (and possibly Minear), Rodríguez was hired to create several sculptures for Cedar Hill Cemetery, beginning in 1936. The sculptures he created included two wooden footbridges (one is flanked by two Chinese lanterns), a hollow "tree" sculpture, an Annie Laurie Chair under a pergola, a wooden table also covered by a pergola (the pergola is no longer extant), a Mayan-influenced bench, and a fallen "tree" bench. Supposedly, the manager of Cedar Hill asked

⁵⁵ Ibid, 88-94.

⁵⁶ Light, *Capturing Nature*, 94-95.

Rodríguez to replicate the Annie Laurie Chair after seeing an illustration of a similar chair published in a magazine. According to Rodríguez's niece, Manuela Vargas (Theall), she created the molds for the seat's decoration which included floral motifs and a dragon figure.⁵⁷

Elmwood Cemetery, Birmingham, AL

In 1938 Rodríguez was commissioned by John Jemison, owner of the Elmwood Cemetery. Many of the pieces Rodríguez created were similar to those he made for Cedar Hill Cemetery, including a faux wooden bridge with a Chinese lantern on a pedestal at one end and a fallen "tree" bench. Works also created for Elmwood include a footpath made of split logs and a palapa-roofed shelter with sculpted seats underneath.⁵⁸

Cedar Park and Acacia Park, Chicago, IL




Leonard Cowen, who developed many cemeteries, hired Rodríguez in 1939 to create sculptures for two of his burial parks in Chicago's suburbs, Cedar Park in Calumet Park and Acacia Park in Norridge (now known as Westlawn Cemetery and Mausoleum, Inc.). Both burial parks feature a palapa with thatched-roofs and log seats underneath.⁵⁹



⁵⁷ Ibid, 95-98.

⁵⁸ Ibid, 99.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 100-101.

Rubric for Assessing Sculptures

Issue	Description	Image
Spalling	Surface-level pieces of concrete break off or deteriorate. Spalling can be caused by oxide jacking, moisture infiltration, freeze-thaw cycles, salts, etc.	
Cracking	Complete or incomplete separation of concrete in two or more parts due to fracturing or breaking. Cracking can be caused by freeze-thaw cycles, oxide jacking, moisture infiltration, settlement, drying shrinkage, chemical reaction, corrosion, weathering, poor construction practices, externally applied overloads, etc.	
Biological Growth	The growth of vegetation on a surface. Biological growth on concrete can be caused by a reduction in surface alkalinity over time due to exposure to carbon and rainfall, thereby creating a more suitable environment. As the biological growths become larger, the roots can grow into cracks and increase stresses that lead to larger cracks and spalling.	

<p>Exposed Rebar</p>	<p>Structural elements of concrete structures that are exposed to the elements when concrete breaks away. Rebar can be exposed due to concrete spalling, which is caused by the corrosion of the rebar due to a gradual reduction in the alkalinity of concrete and the steel's exposure to moisture and oxygen.</p>	
<p>Graffiti</p>	<p>Writing or drawings sprayed or scribbled illicitly on walls or other surfaces in public places.</p>	

Conditions Assessment of Sculptures

The varying degrees of deterioration for each Rodriguez sculpture in Cedar Hill Cemetery result from a range of factors. While it's difficult to pinpoint the causes of deterioration since the exact composition of his various concrete mixtures is not known, there are several common issues that plague all concrete structures. Before discussing the causes of deterioration and recommendations for the preservation of the sculptures, it is important to distinguish between concrete and cement, since the terms are often used interchangeably.

Cement is an ingredient of concrete, while concrete is a mixture of paste, composed of water and Portland cement, and aggregates, usually crushed stone or sand and gravel. By volume, cement usually comprises 10 to 15 percent of a concrete mixture. There are also many different types of cement, including blended cements. Research has indicated that the final coating of Rodriguez's sculptures is a cement-rich layer of concrete, but details of the mixture for each sculpture cannot be known without conducting lab analyses.⁶⁰

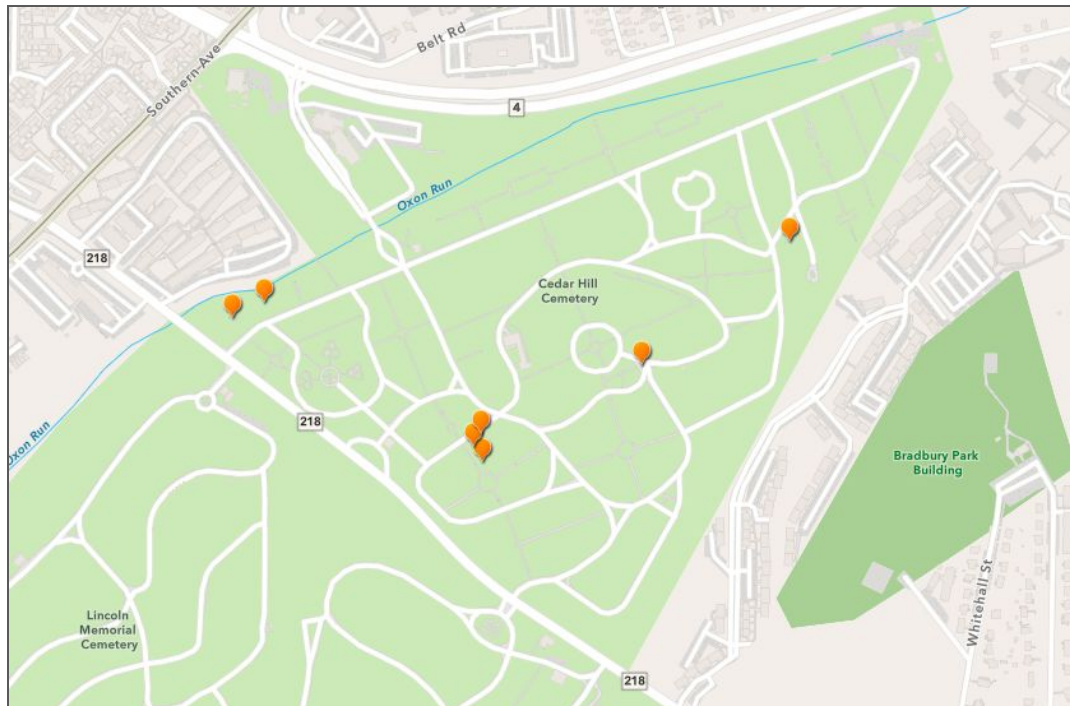


Photo 11: Map of Cedar Hill Cemetery with sculptures marked
Photo Source: Map of Cedar Hill Cemetery, ArcGIS Community Base map (Accessed January 22, 2021).

From research into the process Rodriguez used to create his sculptures, it is evident that he formed the structures using concrete, but that the final layer before adding texture consisted of a high concentration of cement. This practice appears similar to early 20th century practices where concrete was occasionally

⁶⁰ Gaudette, Paul, and Deborah Slaton. "Preservation of Historic Concrete". *Preservation Briefs 15*. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. n.d., 1-16.

added in several layers parallel on the exterior surface. In this practice, a base concrete was created using formwork and then a mortar layer (that contained higher amounts of cement) was applied to the exposed face of the concrete. The greater concentration of cement in the outer layer provided a more water-resistant and finished surface and was often called “waterproofing.” Deterioration in this type of work occurs due to “deboning” between layers and can speed up once the protective cement-rich layer starts to break down.⁶¹

The deterioration of the sculptures could also be due to cracks in the outer layer of concrete that have been penetrated by biological growth and moisture. The roots of biological growth or vegetation can grow into the cracks, increasing stress and leading to increased cracking or eventual spalling. In addition, the penetration of moisture into small cracks in the outer cement layer can cause large cracks and spalling during the freeze-thaw cycle.⁶²

Another cause of deterioration and subsequent exposure of the structural rebar can be caused by “oxide jacking.” As the concrete’s high alkalinity, which prevents or minimizes corrosion, lessens over time, the reinforcing steel rods in concrete can begin to corrode. As the byproducts of corrosion expand (the volume of the rods can increase up to six times more than their original size), high stresses are created on the adjacent concrete, which eventually cracks and becomes displaced or spalls.⁶³

⁶¹ Gaudette, Paul, and Deborah Slaton. “Preservation of Historic Concrete”. *Preservation Briefs 15*. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. n.d., 1-16.

⁶² *Ibid*, 1-16.

⁶³ *Ibid*, 1-16.

Section V: Recommendations and Conclusion

The analysis conducted for the cultural landscape study of Cedar Hill Cemetery demonstrates key recommendations and opportunities related to preserving and protecting the sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez, bringing awareness to the Mexican American cultural heritage at Cedar Hill Cemetery, and fostering opportunities for community engagement in the Washington, D.C. area.

Preserve and Maintain Sculptures

While there are treatments for the minor issues, such as biological growth, found with each sculpture, more severe issues should be addressed separately, based on their severity.

For the issues that plague each sculpture, notably biological growth, several rounds of water washing may be the best first option, followed by water washing with non-ionic detergents. While an acid-based cleaning solution is recommended for concrete since concrete is not an acid-sensitive masonry, the outer layer of the sculptures is primarily cement and may react differently to acidic cleaners. In addition, it's not clear whether an acidic cleaner will affect the pigmentation of the outer layer. In regard to the graffiti painted inside the hollow tree sculpture, it is often best removed using a poultice. A poultice is composed of a clay powder or absorbent material combined with a liquid to form a paste that is applied to the stained or painted area. As with all cleaning methods, it is best to conduct limited tests prior to using a certain treatment on the entire sculpture.⁶⁴

If the severe spalling is being caused by oxide jacking, impressed current cathodic protection (ICCP) could help prevent further deterioration. In the ICCP process a small electrical current is sent through the concrete to the steel reinforcement to stop the corrosion of the steel. Installing ICCP can help control corrosion for many years. However, this method may be visually obtrusive, depending on the instruments used.⁶⁵

If large cracks and spalling are due to moisture penetration and the freeze-thaw cycle, sealants may prevent further deterioration. It is imperative to consider the finished appearance of the sealant application when selecting the product to use. Elastomeric sealants are often used to seal concrete cracks and joints and provide some movement capabilities. Silicone sealants must be tested prior to application to ensure they don't cause staining or change a sculpture's appearance. While there are clear penetrating sealers available to protect concrete, they may also change the concrete's appearance. They can't be effectively removed and are thus considered irreversible. Lab and field testing to determine possible changes in appearance and to gauge the effectiveness of the treatment is highly recommended prior to

⁶⁴ Gaudette, Paul, and Deborah Slaton. "Preservation of Historic Concrete". *Preservation Briefs 15*. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. n.d., 1-16.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 1-16.

widespread application. Once methods of cleaning and preservation are chosen, they should be conducted on a cyclical basis.⁶⁶

Raise Awareness of Mexican American Cultural Heritage

Dionicio Rodriguez's work at Cedar Hill Cemetery provides a unique opportunity to raise awareness and educational opportunities using these sites of Mexican American cultural heritage. Connecting with the Mexican Cultural Institute of Washington, D.C., and other local organizations could promote and organize community events and educational activities that support Mexican American cultural heritage awareness.⁶⁷

Foster Community Engagement at Cedar Hill Cemetery

Cedar Hill Cemetery holds historical and cultural significance in the past, present, and future of the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. Many notable and historic figures are interred at Cedar Hill, including past "mayor" of Chinatown, Charlie Moy, athletes, senators, Supreme Court Justices, and other influential Washingtonians.^{68,69} Our team recommends fostering community engagement opportunities with families of those interred and local historical and cultural organizations to build awareness of Cedar Hill Cemetery's unique connection to the history and culture of Washington, D.C.

⁶⁶ Gaudette, Paul, and Deborah Slaton. "Preservation of Historic Concrete". *Preservation Briefs 15*. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. n.d., 1-16.

⁶⁷ Mexican Cultural Institute of Washington, D.C. "Mission & Outreach." Accessed January 25, 2021. <https://instituteofmexicodc.org/index.php/about/>.

⁶⁸ "Cedar Hill Cemetery in Suitland, Maryland - Find A Grave Cemetery." Accessed January 25, 2021. <https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/80827/cedar-hill-cemetery>.

⁶⁹ "Grieving Crowd Packs Street for Funeral of Charley Moy: 'Mayor' of Capital's Chinatown Buried in Cedar Hill Cemetery in Golden Casket; Oriental, American Bands Play for Rites." *The Washington Post (1923-1954)*, Aug 10, 1937. <https://search.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/grieving-crowd-packs-street-funeral-charley-moy/docview/150941456/se-2?accountid=14696>.

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Appendix A

Sculptures by Dionisio Rodriguez at Cedar Hill Cemetery

Bridge of Life

Description: The first bridge designed by Rodríguez in the cemetery, known as the Bridge of Life, is located in the southwest corner near Suitland Road. It is a 42-foot-long rustic bridge spanning a small section of a pond and displays obvious Chinese influence. This bridge makes a dramatic, semi-circular arch over the water, beginning at the pond's outer edge and ending at a small, grass-covered island. The bridge rises 11 feet above the water at its highest point. Its widest points, at each end, are eight-feet wide. The bridge's walkway is made of faux bois planks with bark texture. On each side, the railing posts are made from a thick *faux bois* branches topped by two arching branches that run the length of the bridge. The ends of the bridge are flanked by two Chinese lanterns.

Condition: The bridge is in fair condition and displays some evidence of deterioration. There is biological growth on some sections, indicating moisture infiltration. The concrete has cracked and spalled in some areas, exposing the rebar and metal lath underneath.



Photo 12: Bridge of Life, Cedar Hill Cemetery

Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 13: Exposed rebar and metal lath on the Bridge of Life, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 14: Spalled or debonded broken outer concrete layer revealing the base concrete layer
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Chinese Lanterns

Description: Made of *faux bois*, the first lantern to the north of the bridge, stands nine-feet-tall on a six-foot-wide base. Rising from the wide, circular base is a tall, thin stem. Atop the stem is a hollow rectangular shelter for the burner. The lantern is topped with a traditional Chinese shade, complete with upturned corner eaves. The initials “JRL” are inscribed into the sculpture.

The second lantern, located on the pond’s small island at the southern end of the bridge is approximately four-feet, eight-inches tall. The lantern’s base is composed of four curved legs. The hexagonal shelter is topped with a sloped, circular shade.

Condition: Both lanterns are in fair condition. Lantern 1 appears to have surface biological growth, and areas where the outer concrete coating has chipped away. On Lantern 2, the biological growth is concentrated at the top of the lantern. Some concrete has broken off around the top edges, exposing the rebar used to frame the sculpture.



Photo 15: Lantern 1 near Bridge of Life, Cedar Hill Cemetery

Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 16: The initials "JRL" inscribed into Lantern 1, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 17: Lantern 2 near Bridge of Life, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 18: Lantern 2, areas where concrete has chipped off
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Mayan Influenced Bench

Description: Directly north of the Bridge of Life is a tiled bench, 20-feet-long and about 4.5-feet tall, with a Mayan-influenced design. Unlike many of Rodríguez’s sculptures in the cemetery, this concrete bench doesn’t attempt to imitate wood, but is the cemetery’s only example of his “trabajo rustico” style.

Across the length of the back rest, the concrete is cut with perpendicular diagonal lines in a diamond pattern. In each diamond is a simple floral bas-relief. Simple faux tiles line the edges of the backrest and contain complex geometric designs. The two armrests, at either end of the bench, are adorned with elaborate swirls at their ends, and zig-zag patterns on the front.

The bench has many prominent holes incorporated into the backrest, large enough to pass an arm through. These holes appear to be intentional and give the bench the impression of being older than it is.

Condition: The bench is in good condition, although biological growth and pink staining is present in many areas. It is difficult to ascertain the extent of concrete spalling; the design’s intentional holes may obscure actual issues.



Photo 19: [Mayan Influenced Bench, Cedar Hill Cemetery](#)
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 20: Mayan Bench details, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Hollow Tree Sculpture

Description: The hollow tree sculpture, located near the center of the cemetery, stands approximately 20-feet-tall and about 11-feet-wide, with a circumference of 36 inches at its widest point near the base. The sculpture, constructed of *faux bois*, mimics a tree trunk; its base is the widest part of the sculpture and the “tree trunk” narrows as the sculpture increases in height. The entire sculpture is textured with well-defined bark. The hollow tree has two arched entrances into the interior of the sculpture. Inside are two carved benches. Both entrances are gated with horizontal and vertical iron bars, preventing access to the inside. Small pockets on the side of the tree serve as planters for growing vegetation, which appears to be intentional.

Condition: This sculpture appears to be structurally sound and in fair condition, despite a variety of superficial issues. Large pieces of the outer concrete layer are missing, revealing the rebar and metal lath underneath. In addition to vegetation growing on the structure, the interior of the tree is completely covered with spray paint.



Photo 21: Hollow Tree Sculpture, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 22: Hollow Tree Sculpture, damaged area where the outer concrete layer has fallen away, revealing the concrete and rebar underneath. The exposed rebar has begun to rust.
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 23: Inside the Hollow Tree sculpture painted with graffiti

Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Annie Laurie Wishing Chair

Description: The Annie Laurie Wishing Chair, named for the subject of the famous Scottish song of the same name, is in the cemetery's southern section. The *faux bois* sculpture faces east and is located under a wooden pergola set on fieldstone columns. The back of the chair, inscribed with "Annie Laurie's Whishing Chair," is visible from the road. A fieldstone wall connects the two fieldstone columns on either side of the chair. A plaque describes the tradition of the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair and its Scottish origins. Two stones located beneath the plaque are inscribed with dates. A marker facing the chair is inscribed:

"Dressed in our best and all alone,
we sit within the wishing chair,
which bodes success for everyone,
exchanging fond caresses there."

The chair measures 2 feet, 5 inches by 4 feet, 9 inches by 7 feet, 6 inches. The rectangular footprint of the entire sculpture, including the pergola and low walls between each column measures 16 feet, 6 inches by 15 feet, 6 inches, giving the sculpture a total footprint of approximately 256 square feet.

Condition: The sculpture's condition is good and, unlike some of the others, has no rebar showing. However, the concrete is beginning to crack and spall in some places and there are non-original markings inscribed into the back of the chair, likely from cemetery visitors. Additionally, the chair has small patches of vegetation growing on the concrete.



Photo 24: Rear view of Annie Laurie Wishing Chair
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 25: Front view of Annie Laurie Wishing Chair
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

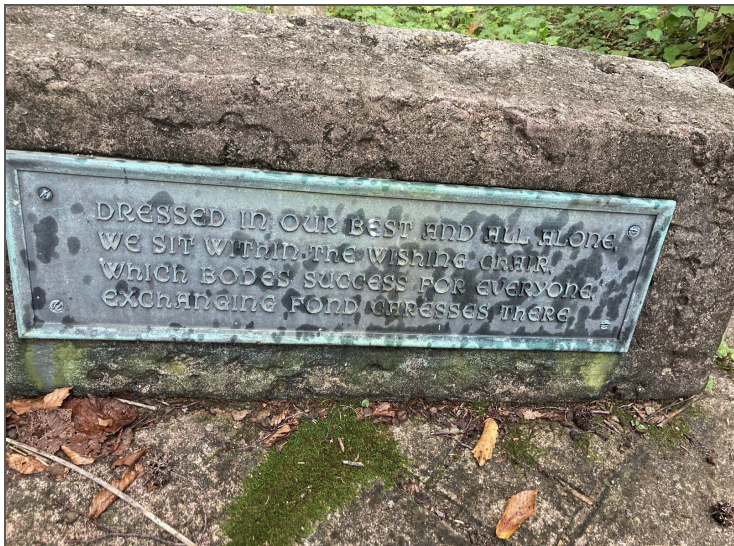


Photo 26: Plaque facing the Wishing Chair
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Fallen Tree Bench

Description: Located north of the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair, the fallen tree bench is also in the cemetery's southern section. The sculpture consists of a single faux bois tree trunk, which is bent to provide seating and curves around to create a backrest. The chair's seat is smoothed, and measures approximately 2-feet, 6-inches by 19-feet, 5-foot 6-inches. The initials "DR" appear on the seat.

Condition: The bench is in fair condition. its exterior coating has chipped in several areas, revealing rebar and metal lath, along with the rougher, base concrete layer. Vegetation is growing on various parts of the surface, mostly moss along the rear side of the backrest. The sculpture also shows some signs of vandalism, etched into the concrete, including two hearts pierced by an arrow with initials inscribed in the hearts, in the center of the bench.



Photo 27: Fallen Tree Bench, Cedar Hill Cemetery

Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 28: Close-up image of symbols etched into the sculpture
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 29: Biological growth on the rear of the sculpture
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Wooden Table

Description: East of the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair, in the cemetery's southern section, is the small tree table that is almost entirely hidden by surrounding vegetation. The table is in the form of a tree stump with several off-shooting branches comprising its base and three halved logs creating the flat tabletop. The table has a surround similar to the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair—four fieldstone pillars and a concrete wall between two sets of pillars (as opposed to three at the Wishing Chair). However, the wooden pergola that once rested atop the fieldstone pillars is no longer extant.

Condition: Some vegetation is growing on the table's base and the pergola no longer in existence; nonetheless, this sculpture is in very good condition.



Photo 30: Faux wooden table set within fieldstone columns that once supported a wooden pergola
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 31: Wooden Table, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Fallen Tree Bridge

Description: The second bridge is located on the cemetery's northeastern side and spans a small creek. The bridge is in an area overgrown with vegetation, giving it a "fairy book" sensibility. *Faux bois* planks create the bottom treads of the bridge, while intertwining branches create the railings. This bridge has a lower arch than the Bridge of Life but is similar in length, approximately 41-feet long. At one end is a small tree trunk seat measuring 2-feet wide and about 3-feet high.

Condition: The bridge is in fair condition. As with the other sculptures, there is vegetation growing on it and there are many places where the finished coat of concrete has broken off, exposing the metal lath, rebar, and mixed concrete used to create the shape of the structure.



Photo 32: Fallen Tree Bridge, Cedar Hill Cemetery
Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team



Photo 33: These various problems are common to many of the sculptures, including cracking and breaking off of the outer layer of highly cementitious concrete, the exposure of rebar, and biological growth

Photo Source: Photograph taken by PALS Research Team

Appendix B

Draft Maryland Inventory of Historic Property Form

CAPSULE SUMMARY

PG:

Cedar Hill Cemetery

4111 Pennsylvania Avenue

Suitland, Prince George's County

1913

Private

Established in 1927 by William Harrison, Cedar Hill Cemetery in Suitland, Maryland, sits on a 135-acre tract of land approximately one-half mile east of the Washington D.C. border. The cemetery was originally founded by land speculators Francis Baker and Reese Carpenter in 1885 under the name of Forest Lake Cemetery. Other shareholders including George Starkweather would manage and develop Forest Lake Cemetery into the early 1900s.⁷⁰

Cedar Hill Cemetery plays an important role in the historical timeline of Suitland, Maryland. Prior to the Civil War, the area that later developed as Suitland, operated as a plantation economy and sold crops and goods to residents of Washington, D.C.⁷¹ In particular, the land that would later become Cedar Hill Cemetery began as Nonesuch Plantation.⁷² After Emancipation, much of the freed black community in the Suitland area left plantations and migrated to find opportunity and live in Washington, D.C.⁷³ However, some freed black residents remained and continued working and living on the smaller farms as tenant workers.⁷⁴

During the early part of the 20th century, influenced by the policies of the Jim Crow Era, Cedar Hill operated as a segregated cemetery that was only open as a burial place to whites. For almost a century, Cedar Hill has bordered Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, which was founded in 1927 as one of the few designated areas in the D.C. region where African Americans could be interred. The proximity of Cedar Hill to Lincoln Memorial is one facet of the cemetery's significance as it demonstrates the existence and practice of Jim Crow policies in the D.C. region during the early 20th century. In addition, early 1980s newspaper articles from the "Ukrainian Weekly" suggest that sections A-D of Cedar Hill and land north of the entrance gate were intended to become the Ukrainian National Cemetery and the construction of a mausoleum began. While the mausoleum was never completed and the Ukrainian National Cemetery never fully realized, the existence of these sections at Cedar Hill is significant in that it provides a strong reflection of Ukrainian heritage in the D.C. region.

Cedar Hill Cemetery contains nine reinforced concrete *faux bois* sculptures created in the late 1930s by Mexican artist, Dionicio Rodríguez. His to receive a commission to create these sculptures is notable due to anti-immigrant (especially immigrants from Mexico) sentiment in America in the 1930s and 40s. Cedar Hill is significant for its possession of these sculptures; they are the only significant examples of Rodríguez's work on the East Coast. The sculptures are in fair condition overall and possess a moderate level of integrity. Changes in vegetation have altered the setting of several of the sculptures and a pergola that was once located over one of the sculptures is no longer extant. The sculptures share common problems such as biological growth and damage from moisture penetration.

At the cemetery's northern end, just inside the entrance gate, is the Cedar Hill Funeral Home, an additional administrative building, and a one-story chapel. These three structures are separated from the historic burial grounds by Oxon Run Creek and its associated riparian zone. Directly to the north of the entrance gate is a partially completed mausoleum, originally intended to serve as a burial place for the D.C. region's Ukrainian population. Only the building's north wing has been completed and serves as an active mausoleum with stacked burial vaults. An abandoned chapel and mausoleum, characterized by large, uniform stone block façades, pointed joints, and pointed arches over window and door openings, are located in the center of the cemetery. The cemetery's former sales house, a two-story frame structure in a state of advanced disrepair, is located on the west side of Cedar Hill Cemetery. The house sits directly behind a former side entrance to the cemetery from Suitland Road.

⁷⁰ Norton, Darlie, and George Norton. 1976. *A History of Suitland: Prince George's County, Maryland, United States of America, 1867-1976*. Place of publication not identified: publisher not identified.

⁷¹ The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. 2006. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*. Development Plan, Upper Marlboro: The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, 1-73.

⁷² Norton, *A History of Suitland: Prince George's County, Maryland, United States of America, 1867-1976*.

⁷³ The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. *Suitland Mixed-Use Town Center Development Plan*. 1-73.

⁷⁴ Norton, *A History of Suitland: Prince George's County, Maryland, United States of America, 1867-1976*.

Cedar Hill Cemetery was designed in the park-lawn style and has a hilly topography with a slope that increases from north to south, sloping upward to reach the highest elevations at the cemetery's southern end. The cemetery roads wind in organic paths to eventually form a cul-de-sac in the center. Overall, the cemetery's boundaries created a lopsided triangle shape, with the interior roads serving as boundaries for the demarcated sections of the cemetery. The headstones and flat grave markers denote individual graves and family plots. There is only one section that contains mausoleums.

Cedar Hill Cemetery has a moderate-to-high degree of integrity. Early plats and maps indicate that the overall layout of Cedar Hill has remained largely unchanged since its inception. The addition of new plantings, as well as newer gravestones, reflect Cedar Hill's continued use as a cemetery. Although the landscape demonstrates a high level of integrity, several of its structures, notably the abandoned Ukrainian mausoleum and the Sales House, are in a semi-derelict state.

Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No.

1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Cedar Hill Cemetery
 other

2. Location

street and number 4111 Pennsylvania Avenue ___ not for publication
 city, town Suitland ___ vicinity
 county Prince George's

3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Osiris Holding of Maryland Inc.
 street and number 3600 Horizon Boulevard, Suite 100 telephone
 city, town Trevese state PA zip code 19056

4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Prince George's County liber 7996 folio 784
 city, town Upper Marlboro tax map 80 tax parcel 19 tax ID number 0452649

5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- Recorded by HABS/HAER
- Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- Other: Prince George's County Planning Department, MNCPPC

6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count		
district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape		
Contributing	Noncontributing				
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	2	4 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	___	___ sites
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	2	___
structures					
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	___	___ objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	___	___ Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown		
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use		

Number of Contributing Resources

industry other: cemetery

previously listed in the Inventory

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Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

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7. Description

Inventory No.

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

SUMMARY

Cedar Hill Cemetery sits on a 135-acre tract of land in Suitland, Maryland, roughly one-half mile east of the Washington D.C. border. Originally founded in 1885 under the name of Forest Lake Cemetery by land speculators Francis Baker and Reese Carpenter, the site was sold in 1913 to William Harrison, who formed Cedar Hill Cemetery. The cemetery is especially well-known for its inclusion of nine reinforced concrete sculptures by Mexican artist Dionicio Rodríguez. The cemetery is also known for its past segregationist policies, as it served as a whites-only cemetery during Maryland's Jim Crow era. The cemetery boasts a number of unique ethnic sections, including a well-defined Ukrainian ethnic heritage section.

The main entrance gate is located off of Pennsylvania Avenue and is composed of multiple stone pillars, which extend westward into a low wall. The Cedar Hill Funeral Home and adjacent parking lot are located east of the entrance gate, and there is a partially completed mausoleum to the west of the gate. The cemetery was designed in the park-lawn style, with a hilly topography. The slope of the park increases from north to south, sloping upward to reach the highest elevations at the southern end of the park. The administrative buildings and funeral home are located on the northern end of Cedar Hill and are separated from the historic burial grounds by Oxon Run Creek and its associated riparian zone. The dense vegetation surrounding the creek provides a visual and auditory barrier between Cedar Hill and Pennsylvania Avenue.

The cemetery is bound on the north by Pennsylvania Avenue. Lincoln Memorial and Washington National Cemeteries are to the southeast of Cedar Hill, separated by Suitland Road. The cemetery's roads wind in organic paths around the hilly topography and form a cul-de-sac in the center. The overall shape of the burial area is a lopsided triangle, with the roads serving as boundaries for the demarcated sections of the cemetery.

SECTION DESCRIPTIONS

Sections A, B and C

These three sections comprise the Ukrainian National Cemetery, which is denoted by both a small, engraved stone and a large black granite cross. The grave markers in this section appear relatively new, with graves dating from the early 1980s. Based on their proximity to the unfinished Ukrainian Mausoleum to the west of the entrance gate, it is possible that these sections were meant to be a part of a larger Ukrainian cemetery complex. Burial markers in these sections are varied and include both upright headstones and flat plaques. Headstones in these sections are

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dramatically different from other tombstones in the park, as a significant number of them are made of black granite. The tombstones are etched with floral patterns, crosses, and inscriptions in English and Ukrainian.

The topography of these sections is relatively flat. Sections A-D are bordered on the northwest by the Oxon Run Creek and its associated riparian zone. The boundary of these sections extends southwest to the paved cemetery road. Vegetation in these sections is sparse, save for the Oxon Run riparian zone and a few large bushes.

Section D

This section has very few gravestones. Mainly, Section D encompasses a failing retention pond and several Dionicio Rodríguez sculptures. The section is bounded by Suitland Road, Oxon Hill Run, and an interior cemetery road.

Sections 2 and 4

Sections 2 and 4 are located in the westernmost corner of Cedar Hill Cemetery, bounded by a semi-circular cemetery road. A road bisects the two sections, culminating in a cul-de-sac in the center. Sections 2 and 4 sit on a gently rolling hill, spotted with large trees. There are several large, slightly raised grass circles devoid of grave markers in this section.

Sections 2 and 4 are distinctive as the only sections with large family mausoleums. The sections encompass several ornate stone mausoleums, as well as rows of older headstones and flat grave markers. There are roughly half a dozen family mausoleums, each measuring approximately ten feet by ten feet. Many of the front façades of the mausoleums have ornamental iron gates.

Sections 2 and 4 have some of the oldest graves in the cemetery, dating to the late 1800s. Although most of the headstones are in good condition, a few are leaning, and one that has toppled over. Generally, the grave markers are arranged in rows, although the orientation of these rows varies throughout the section.

Memories, Love, Reflection and Prayer Sections

The "Memories," "Love," "Reflection," and "Prayers," sections all sit on the northwest edge of the cemetery, bounded by an interior cemetery road and the Oxon Run creek. These sections are dominated by flat grave markers, dating from the 1940s to the present. These sections are flat with little to no tree cover or vegetation, although the dense riparian zone of Oxon Run blocks the view toward Pennsylvania Avenue. Grave markers in this section appear to be in good condition, although some of the markers are sinking into the ground. A few larger elements disrupt the largely flat plane of these sections, including a large, octagonal family tomb and a stone gazebo.

Masonic Section

The Masonic section is bounded on all sides by cemetery roads. This part of the cemetery has hilly topography, as well as modest tree cover. Grave markers in this section include flat markers and headstones. Many of the headstones bear Masonic or Eastern Star symbols. The Masonic monument, a rough stone obelisk with a metal plaque dedicated to the Free Masons, marks the section. Grave markers represent a wide variety of dates, which is consistent with the burial patterns of Cedar Hill.

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Sections 9, 10 and 12

Sections 9, 10 and 12 have some of the cemetery's oldest grave markers, dating to the early 1900s. These sections are connected by interior cemetery roads. They are slightly hilly, with topography sloping down toward the north. Tree cover in this section is scattered, and many of the trees appear mature.

The grave markers alternate between rows of erect headstones and flush grave markers. Most of the headstones are in good condition, although some are leaning, and a few have toppled. A few headstones and many of the flat grave markers show evidence of advanced discoloration and biological growth. There are some unique headstones in this section, including grave markers with sculptures of cherubs and animals, which appear to be lambs (a common marker for the grave of an infant). A few of the gravestones in this section bear script outside the Latin alphabet, indicating some cultural diversity of interred people.

Section 27

Section 27, on the cemetery's southern side, is bounded by curvilinear interior roads. This section has a relatively high elevation compared to other sections of the cemetery. Section 27 is dominated by flat grave markers, although there are several erect headstones. The most significant element of this section is the Trinity Cross, a large granite memorial surrounded by a paved circle and multiple engraved benches. There are many large, mature oak trees in this section.

BUILDING DESCRIPTIONS

Chapel at the Cemetery Entrance

A large, stone block chapel is located directly east of the Cedar Hill Cemetery main entrance road off Pennsylvania Avenue. The one-story chapel measures roughly 170 feet long by 60 feet wide and is in good condition. Although the exact date of construction cannot be determined, historic aerial photographs of the cemetery date the building between 1930 and 1965.

The building is composed of rows of large, uniform stones with thin, pointed joints. The focus of the east façade is its central entrance, with two decorative metal doors. The entrance is accessed through a simple, square enclosed concrete and glass portico. Directly above the entrance is a tiered, vertical stone projection that extends upward into a nave tower. The tower rises a full story above the rest of the building and is topped with a dome and a small stone finial. The fenestration of long stained-glass windows on the south façade and the east façade has a number of fixed windows.

Abandoned Chapel and Mausoleum

In the center of Cedar Hill Cemetery lies a small chapel and mausoleum, which appears to be in extremely poor condition. The building has a L-shaped footprint and is characterized by large, uniform stone block façades; thin, pointed joints; and pointed arches over window and door

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openings. Several of the windows and main openings have drip-mold crown elaborations. The building's west side faces a cemetery road and is fronted by several decorative cannons pointing west. Vegetation has overgrown the cannons, blocking the view of the cemetery and covering a stone stairway leading to the front of the chapel. Based on the stairs and direction of the cannons, it is evident that the vegetation has become overgrown and may not have been in existence when the chapel was built. The building's east side is partially set into a steep hill, allowing pedestrians to walk directly onto the roof in the rear of the building.

A one-story chapel, measuring roughly 50-feet long, comprises the north end of the building. The chapel has a moderately pitched, side-gabled slate roof and paneled metal entrance doors within a small, slightly projecting center gable. The entrance doors are flanked by tall stone urns. Chapel windows appear to be extremely rusted. The roof is visibly failing in the rear, where the roof is a mix of slate toward the ridge, and metal and shingles toward the eaves. There is also vegetation growing on the chapel roof. An attached stone tower, on the north side of the chapel, shows evidence of displacement and spall. A large, square tower, attached to the east side of the chapel, appears to function as a mausoleum.

An approximately 150-foot-long one-story cloister extends southward from the chapel. The cloister's east side is set into the hill. The cloister can be accessed from the west side, through a series of segmental arch openings. The interior wall of the cloister holds stacked internment sites.

Ukrainian Mausoleum

A partially completed mausoleum, originally intended to serve as a burial place for the D.C. metropolitan region's Ukrainian population, sits on Pennsylvania Avenue in the northwest corner of Cedar Hill. The building, constructed in the late 1980s, was never completed. Although it was originally intended to have multiple wing extensions, only one wing was built. The completed wing is on the building's northern end, facing out Pennsylvania Avenue. On the building's south side, hidden from view, are the foundations for the other wings. These foundations are overgrown with vegetation.

The constructed wing is currently an active mausoleum. The building is two stories, with a flat roof. The east exterior is composed of multiple stacks of burial vaults in a pink granite. The front façade, facing Pennsylvania Avenue, features large decorative glass panes in a concrete facade. Abstract lines and arch shapes, slightly raised from the building, decorate the front of the building. An entrance to the mausoleum, on the south side of the building facing east, is composed of multiple arched entrances and a decorative metal gate.

Inside the mausoleum are more stacked burial vaults. A functioning elevator takes visitors to a basement level, which holds similar vaults to those on the first floor. Several colorful, decorative glass ceiling murals, depicting various fauna, adorn the ceiling. The murals share an expressive geometry with the decorative lines adorning the front of the building.

Sales House

A two-story frame house, in a state of advanced disrepair, is located on the west side of Cedar Hill. The house sits directly behind a side entrance to the cemetery off Suitland Road. The side entrance, which appears to no longer be in use, looks markedly like the main entrance, with similar stone pillars. The simple house has wood siding, painted white and a one-story, wrap-around porch. The house has a hipped shingle roof and one-over-one sash, wood frame windows. The porch's shingled roof is extremely damaged and appears to have failed entirely on the south corner of the house.

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SCULPTURE DESCRIPTIONS

There are nine concrete Rodríguez sculptures in the cemetery. While the sculptures show varying signs of deterioration, they are all generally in fair condition.

Bridge of Life

The first bridge designed by Rodríguez, known as the Bridge of Life, is located in the southwest corner near Suitland Road. The 42-foot-long rustic bridge spans a small section of a pond and displays obvious Chinese influence. This bridge arches dramatically over the water, beginning at the outer edge of the pond and ending at a small, grass-covered island. It rises 11 feet above the water at its highest point and its widest points, near each end, are 8-feet wide. The walkway is made of faux bois planks with bark texture. The railing posts are made from a thick faux bois branches topped with double arched railings along the length of the bridge. The ends of the bridge are flanked by two Chinese lanterns.

The bridge is in fair condition and displays some evidence of deterioration. There is biological growth on sections of the bridge, indicating moisture infiltration. The cement has cracked and spalled in some areas, exposing the rebar and metal lath underneath.

Chinese Lanterns

Made of faux bois material, the first lantern is north of the structure, standing 9-feet tall on a 6-foot-wide base. A tall, thin stem rises from a wide, circular base. Atop the stem is a hollow rectangular shelter for the burner. The lantern is topped with a traditional Chinese shade, complete with upturned corner eaves. The initials "JRL" are carved into the sculpture.

The second lantern, on the small island in the pond at the southern end of the bridge is much smaller, measuring approximately 4-feet, 8-inches high. The lantern's base is composed of four, curved legs. A hexagonal shelter is topped with a sloped, circular shade.

Both the first and second lanterns are in fair condition. Lantern 1 has biological growth on its surface, and areas where the outer coating of concrete has chipped away. On Lantern 2, the biological growth is concentrated at the top of the lantern. Some cement has broken off around the top edges of the lantern, exposing the rebar used to frame the sculpture.

Mayan Influenced Bench

Directly north of the Bridge of Life is a tiled bench with Mayan-influenced design, measuring 20-feet long and approximately 4.5-feet high. Unlike many of Rodríguez's sculptures, this concrete bench does not imitate wood; it is the cemetery's only example of his "trabajo rustico" style.

Across the back rest, the concrete is cut with perpendicular diagonal lines, forming a diamond pattern. In each diamond is a simple floral bas-relief. Tiles line the edges of the backrest and contain complex geometric designs. The two armrests, on either side of the bench, are adorned with elaborate swirls at their ends, and display zig-zag patterns on the front.

The bench has many prominent holes located on the backrest, large enough to stick an arm through. These holes appear to be intentional and give the bench the impression of being older than it is.

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The bench is in good condition, although biological growth is present in many areas. It is difficult to ascertain the extent of concrete spalling; the intentional holes may hide actual issues.

Hollow Tree Sculpture

The hollow tree sculpture, near the center of the cemetery, stands approximately 20-feet tall and about 11-feet wide, with a circumference of 36 feet at its widest point near the base. The *faux bois* sculpture mimics a tree trunk; the base is the widest part of the sculpture and the “trunk” of the tree narrows as the sculpture increases in height. The entire sculpture is textured with well-defined bark. The hollow tree has two arched entrances into the interior of the sculpture. Two carved benches are located inside the sculpture. Horizontal and vertical iron bars create a gate across the two openings in the sculpture, preventing access to the inside. Small pockets on the side of the tree serve as planters for growing vegetation, which appears to be intentional.

This sculpture appears to be structurally sound and in fair condition, despite a variety of superficial issues. There are large pieces of the outer cement coating missing, revealing the rebar and metal lath underneath. In addition to vegetation growing on the structure, the interior of the tree is covered with spray paint.

Annie Laurie Wishing Chair

The Annie Laurie Wishing Chair, named for the subject of the Scottish song of the same name, lies in the cemetery’s southern section. The *faux bois* sculpture faces east and is located under a wooden pergola atop fieldstone columns. The back of the chair is visible from the road behind the chair, where “Annie-Laurie’s Wishing-Chair” is inscribed in the concrete and fieldstone wall connecting two fieldstone columns. The chair features a plaque describing the tradition of the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair and its Scottish origins. Two stones located underneath the plaque are inscribed with dates. A low marker facing the chair is inscribed with the following:

“Dressed in our best and all alone,
we sit within the wishing chair,
which bodes success for everyone,
exchanging fond caresses there”

While the chair itself only measures 29 inches by 57 inches by 78 inches, the rectangular footprint of the entire sculpture, including the pergola and low walls between each column measures 16.5 feet by 15.5 feet, giving the sculpture a total footprint of approximately 256 square feet.

The sculpture is in good condition and, unlike other sculptures, has no rebar showing. However, the concrete is beginning to crack and spall in some places and there are non-original markings inscribed into the back of the chair, likely from cemetery visitors. Additionally, the chair has small amounts of vegetation growing on the concrete.

Fallen Tree Bench

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Located north of the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair, the fallen tree bench is also in the cemetery's southern section. The sculpture consists of a single tree trunk, which is bent to provide seating and curves around the sculpture to create a backrest. The seat is smoothed, and measures approximately 2.5 feet by 19 feet 5.5 feet. The initials "DR" appear on the seat.

The bench is in fair condition. The exterior coating has chipped away in several areas, revealing rebar and metal lath, along with the rougher base cement layer. This sculpture has vegetation growing across various parts of the surface, mostly moss growing along the rear side of the backrest. The sculpture also shows some signs of vandalism: two hearts pierced by an arrow with initials in the heart etched into the concrete.

Table

East of the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair, located in the same section as the chair and the fallen tree bench sculptures, is the small tree table that is almost entirely hidden by surrounding vegetation. The table's base is in the form of a small tree stump with several off-shooting branches and the tabletop is three logs cut in half to create a flat surface. The table has a similar surround as the Annie Laurie Wishing Chair, four fieldstone pillars and a concrete wall between two sets of pillars (as opposed to three side walls near the Wishing Chair). However, the wooden pergola that once rested on the pillars is no longer extant.

Even with some vegetation growing on the table's base of and the missing pergola, this sculpture is in very good condition.

Fallen Tree Bridge

The second Rodriguez bridge is located on the cemetery's northeastern side and spans a small creek. The bridge is situated in an area overgrown with vegetation, giving it a "fairy book" sensibility. *Faux bois* planks create the bottom treads of the bridge and intertwining branches create the hand railings. This bridge does not have as high an arch as the Bridge of Life but is similar in length at approximately 41 feet long. This bridge has a small tree trunk seat at one end that measures 2 feet wide and about 3 feet high.

The bridge is in fair condition. As with other sculptures, there is vegetation growing on it and there are places where the finished coat of cement has broken off, exposing the metal lath, rebar, and mixed concrete used to create the shape of the structure.

INTEGRITY

Cedar Hill Cemetery

Cedar Hill Cemetery has a moderate-to-high degree of integrity. Early plats and maps indicate that the overall layout of Cedar Hill has remained largely unchanged since its inception. The addition of new plantings, as well as newer gravestones, reflect Cedar Hill's continued use as a cemetery. Although the landscape demonstrates a high level of integrity, several of the structures, notably the abandoned Ukrainian mausoleum and the Sales House, are in a semi-derelict state. Despite this, Cedar Hill Cemetery overwhelmingly retains its historic design, setting, location, workmanship, materials, and feeling, and association with the periods of significance.

Sculptures

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Based on a conditions assessment of each sculpture and through research on other works by Rodríguez, the sculptures at Cedar Hill Cemetery appear to possess a moderate-to-high level of integrity. The sculptures are all in fair condition but share common problems such as biological growth and signs of moisture penetration and damage through visible cracks, exposed rebar, spalling, and/or debonding of the cement-rich outer layer from the concrete sublayer. In addition, research revealed that Rodríguez was asked to return to a previous cemetery that contained his sculptures to repair sculptures where the dye was fading. The original color of the sculptures at Cedar Hill upon their creation in the late 1930s is not known, however it is possible that the original color has faded over time. There is no evidence suggesting that the sculptures have been moved or altered since their creation. A pergola once located above the tree table sculpture is no longer extant. The vegetation in the cemetery has also changed since the 1930s and may have slightly altered the setting of the sculptures. Overall, Rodríguez's sculptures at Cedar Hill retain their original design, location, materials, workmanship, and association with the historic period. The setting has only changed slightly due to vegetation growth, which does not significantly alter the feeling and immediate setting around each sculpture.

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8. Significance

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Period
and justify below

Areas of Significance

Check

<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

Specific dates Cedar Hill Cemetery: 1913; Sculptures by Dionicio Rodriguez: 1936

Architect/Builder

Construction dates

Evaluation for:

National Register Maryland Register not
evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cedar Hill Cemetery is significant for its historic role as a segregated cemetery in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, the presence of Dionicio Rodríguez sculptures, and its various relationships with cultural groups. Upon its establishment in 1913 during the Jim Crow Era, Cedar Hill operated as a “whites-only” gravesite, which is notable when examining the founding of a burial place for African Americans, Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, southeast of Cedar Hill in 1927. The proximity of these two cemeteries demonstrates the existence and practice of Jim Crow policies in the D.C. region during the early 20th century. The clearly defined Ukrainian section in the cemetery, despite an incomplete Ukrainian mausoleum and wishes for a National Ukrainian Cemetery being unfulfilled, provides a strong reflection of Ukrainian heritage in the D.C. region. Cedar Hill Cemetery also contains several *faux bois* sculptures created by Dionicio Rodríguez. The work of Rodríguez, an immigrant from Mexico, was unmatched by any other early- to mid-19th century *faux bois* artist during his time and is primarily found throughout the South. Rodríguez’s ability to produce such works, and the desire of individuals to commission him is especially notable during a time when American attitudes toward Mexican immigrants were largely unfavorable. These sculptures make an important contribution to Cedar Hill’s significance as they are the only significant examples of Rodríguez’s work on the East Coast.

Historic Context

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Cedar Hill Cemetery sits on land once known as Nonesuch plantation; a 150-acre tract of land inherited by George Washington Young in 1826.⁷⁵ The land was passed down to Young's heirs after his death, and eventually subdivided and sold. Two New York land speculators, Baker and Carpenter, acquired Lots 2 and 4 of Nonesuch, comprising roughly 100-acres, which they began to develop as a Forest Lake Cemetery.⁷⁶ Their ownership of the land was short-lived; internal disputes and legal troubles led to the eventual bankruptcy of Forest Lake. The cemetery was then sold in auction to William Harrison, who formed Cedar Hill Cemetery in 1913.⁷⁷

Segregationist History

Cedar Hill Cemetery is significant for its unique status as a segregated cemetery in the Washington metropolitan area where it originally operated as a "whites-only" gravesite. Opened during the Jim Crow Era, the intentional exclusion of other races from the burial sites reflects the specific inequities of the time. Jim Crow policies, which took hold in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, enforced the social and institutional separation of people by race. Prior to the Civil War and federal abolition, many cemeteries were segregated; however, it wasn't until the "separate but equal" ideology was cemented in *Plessy v. Ferguson* in 1897 that this division of burial practices by race became a legal formality.⁷⁸

For nearly a century, Cedar Hill Cemetery has bordered Lincoln Memorial Cemetery, which was founded in 1927 on part of Nonesuch Plantation. Lincoln Memorial Cemetery was one of few designated burial places in the region for Black Washingtonians to be interred. Although the two cemeteries share a border on Suitland Road, the racial covenants of Cedar Hill and Lincoln Memorial put them in stark contrast to each other. Newspaper articles show congregations of Klan members at Cedar Hill, further enforcing its image as a whites-only space. Cedar Hill's relationship to Lincoln Memorial speaks to ways in which Jim Crow policies defined the spatial landscapes of the D.C. region, even in death.

Although many historic cemeteries were not racially inclusive, the way segregation operated at Cedar Hill and Lincoln cemeteries is unique in the D.C. region. Lincoln and Cedar Hill operated as separate, but symbolically linked, cemeteries, which were established during the Jim Crow era. A dramatic increase in the Black population of Washington, D.C. after 1910 increased the need for burial sites for the growing Black population.⁷⁹ Many cemeteries in the D.C. area, such as Mount Zion or Congressional Cemetery, pre-date these Jim Crow policies, and as such, were not planned with the same degree of explicit separation. Some of these cemeteries, such as Mount Zion, even boast some degree of early racial integration in their internment layout.⁸⁰ Other cemeteries have segregated sections, but do not operate as two separate entities. In contrast to this, Cedar Hill and Lincoln Memorial were rigidly segregated, despite sharing a border and real estate on the historic Nonesuch plantation.

⁷⁵ "Mary Denman Property." 2013. In *Rural Remnants of Washington County: An Architectural Survey of Washington's Historic Farms and Estates*. N.p.: District of Columbia's Historic Preservation Office.

⁷⁶ "Senator Depew Cemetery Director: Incorporation Papers Filed In Annapolis, MD." *The Washington Herald*, November 27, 1910. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/48236604/>.

⁷⁷ "Assignee's Sale of Valuable Real Estate." *The Prince George's Enquirer and Southern Maryland Advertiser*. July 18, 1913. <https://www.newspapers.com/image/609057957/>; "PLAN A NEW CEMETERY.: CEDAR HILL CORPORATION ACQUIRES TRACT NEAR PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE EXTENDED." *The Washington Post*. Dec 21, 1913. <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/plan-new-cemetery/docview/145248557/se-2?accountid=14696>.

⁷⁸ King, Charlotte. "Separated by Death and Color: The African American Cemetery of New Philadelphia, Illinois." *Historical Archaeology*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2010, pp. 125–137. www.jstor.org/stable/27820824.

⁷⁹ Proia, Rosemary Faya. "Maryland Inventory of Historic Places Form: Lincoln Memorial Cemetery." 2008. Olney, MD: The Ottery Group for M-NCPPC Planning Department.

⁸⁰ Beauchamp, Tanya. "National Register of Historic Places Form: Mt. Zion Cemetery." 1975. Washington, DC: Joint District of Columbia/National Capital Planning Commission Historic Preservation Office.

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Ukrainian Heritage

In the early 1980s, articles from the "Ukrainian Weekly" newspaper suggest that Sections A-D of Cedar Hill, as well as the land to the north of the entrance gate, were intended to be used as the Ukrainian National Cemetery.⁸¹ The partially completed mausoleum was advertised as a multi-million-dollar central internment site for the Washington region's Ukrainian population. Sections A-D of the cemetery are entirely dedicated to Ukrainian ethnic heritage, with unique black tombstones, a small section marker, and a large cross-shaped monument. Although the National Ukrainian Cemetery appears to never have been fully realized, and the mausoleum project was abandoned midway though, the remaining artifacts still reflect the Ukrainian ethnic heritage of the 1980s.

WORK OF DIONICIO RODRÍGUEZ

Significance of Dionicio Rodríguez Sculptures

The level of realistic detailing in the *trabajo rústico* sculptures of Dionicio Rodríguez is unmatched by any other *faux bois* work created by other artists in the 20th century. Rodríguez was a sought-after Mexican immigrant artist who was able to create his sculptures despite the Great Depression era efforts to coerce Mexicans, who had emigrated to the United States in the early 19th century to escape the tumult of the Mexican Revolution, to repatriate. His ability to secure work throughout the nation is also significant due to the financial hardships Americans faced during the Depression, as well as through shortages of materials he used, especially metal, during World War II. His work can be found in a total of eight states, however the sculptures at Cedar Hill are the only significant examples of his work on the East Coast.

Rodríguez's Career

Throughout his lifetime, Dionicio Rodríguez (1891-1955) designed numerous artistic works in the *faux bois* style that can be categorized into three groups: faux stone, natural stone, and faux wood. Without the use of pre-sketched or planned designs, Rodríguez created sculptures that adorned both the private homes of individuals who commissioned him and public lands for all to enjoy. Most of his work was completed during the Depression and, he used inexpensive materials and kept his labor costs low. His works, located in eight states, include building façades, tables, gates, fences, steps, grottos, baskets, hollow "tree" shelters, fountains, bridges, and fallen "tree" and thatched roof benches. His sculptures include broken off branches, insect holes, lichen, and peeling bark, which often mimicked the same growth patterns of trees found in Mexico and southern Texas. Some of his sculpture designs, such as palapa-roofed tables and benches, fallen "tree" benches, tree stump seats, and hollow "tree" houses, were repeated at other sites but varied in their overall shape and details. Notably, Rodríguez's sculptures were appropriately used as embellishments for the new cemeteries developed during the 20th century, which featured flat burial markers.⁸² Many of his works are listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- Texas:
 - Garden of the Spanish Governor's Palace, San Antonio, Texas (NR, 1970)
 - Large hollow tree structure and a small bench in Alamo Plaza, San Antonio, Texas (NR Historic District, 1977)
 - Sculpture at the Stuckey House, Longview, Texas (Nugget Hill Historic District, NR, 1998)
 - Palapa-Roofed Trolley Stop, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)
 - Entrance to Japanese Tea/Sunken Gate Garden, Brackenridge Park, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)

⁸¹ The Ukrainian Weekly. 1983. "Sulyk officiates at D.C. mausoleum groundbreaking service." October 2, 1983. Volume No. 40; Page 3.

⁸² Light, Patsy Pittman. *Capturing Nature: The Cement Sculpture of Dionicio Rodríguez*. Texas A & M University Press, 2008, 4-13.

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- o Buckeye Park entrance gate, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)
 - o St. Anthony of Padua, San Antonio, Texas (NR MPS, 2004)
- Tennessee:
 - o Memorial Park Cemetery, Memphis, Tennessee (NR, 1990)
- Arkansas:
 - o Lakewood Park, Couchwood and Little Switzerland in Garland, Pulaski and Hot Spring Counties, Arkansas (NR, 1986)
 - o T.R. Pugh Memorial Park and Crestview Park, North Little Rock, Arkansas (NR, 1986)

The work of Rodríguez has been called *faux bois* (imitation wood) or *trabajo rústico* (rustic work) and was not widely recognized during his lifetime. This type of work, however, was not unprecedented; there are documented *faux bois* works that span many centuries in the United States, Europe, Central and South America, and Asia. In 1869 in the United States, illustrations of rustic wooden seats created by George Woodward, a prominent landscape engineer, were printed in *Architecture and Real Art*. Earlier, in 1854, Calvert Vaux, an architect who worked with Frederick Law Olmstead on the early design stages of Central Park, published his own drawings of rustic wooden shelters and a bridge for the park.⁸³

The construction of Rodríguez's sculptures, like the creation of similar *faux bois* works today, was a multi-stage process. First, a concrete foundation was poured to support the structural frame of reinforcing rods, roughly outlining the finished work. Wire mesh was wrapped around the reinforcing rods to further outline the sculpture and to provide an area between the rods and surrounding mesh that can be infilled with concrete. While the construction methods for the structures of all *faux bois* works are similar, Rodríguez's sculptures are noted for his finish work, particularly his realistic textures. After a final coat of a cement-rich concrete on the armature, Rodríguez would create the texture of bark. In his early years, Rodríguez used handmade tools to create texture on each piece. If knots were included on the sculpture, they were made from small pieces of brick covered with the final coat of concrete. Rodríguez was secretive about his techniques, especially mixing and applying the color while the concrete was still wet, the final step in his artistic process before the piece was hosed off with water.⁸⁴

Dionicio Rodríguez, the son of Luz Alegría and Catarino Rodríguez, was born on April 11, 1891 in Toluca, outside of Mexico City. His family moved to Mexico City where, as a young man, he worked for Luis Robles Gil, a contractor who specialized in creating reinforced concrete works that mimicked wood or rock. During the 1920s, Rodríguez lived for a short time in Monterrey, where he created two *faux bois* benches for Cervecería Cuahtémoc, a local brewery complex. Around 1924, after briefly living in Laredo, Texas, Rodríguez relocated to San Antonio where he found employment with the Alamo Cement Company.⁸⁵

Rodríguez was one of the myriad Mexican craftsmen, musicians, and performers who immigrated to San Antonio, Texas during the early 20th century to increase their financial means and escape the tumult caused by the Mexican Revolution, a major 20th century political and social revolution that began in November 1910.⁸⁶ The large influx of Mexican immigrants to San Antonio brought new kinds of folk art to the southern United States, including jail art, murals, and cement sculptures. Rodríguez's story parallels the immigration of other skilled performers, musicians, and artisans who settled in San Antonio after crossing the border from the 1920s until the 1940s. According to statistics from the Immigration and Naturalization Service, over half a million Mexicans entered the United States from 1899-1928, while statistics from Mexico note that over 850,000 immigrants entered the United States between 1910 and 1928.⁸⁷ During the decades before the Depression, Mexican migration to the United

⁸³ Ibid., 12-15.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 21-23.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 19-21.

⁸⁶ National Endowment for the Humanities. "The Mexican Revolution: November 20th, 1910." NEH.gov. 2012.

⁸⁷ Aguila, Jaime R. "Mexican/U.S. Immigration Policy Prior to the Great Depression." *Diplomatic History* 31, no.2 (2007): 210. JSTOR.

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States was regulated based on labor demands, primarily those of the southwestern states.⁸⁸ However, beginning at the end of 1929, state and local officials, reacting in a xenophobic manner, forced unwanted Mexican laborers to return to Mexico.

Some of Rodríguez's earliest works were commissioned by Mexican Surgeon, Aureliano Urrutia and were located throughout Urrutia's estate. Out of the nine works Rodríguez created for Dr. Urrutia, one, the fallen "tree" bench, is a design that Rodríguez would replicate, with varying details, for other clients. Word of mouth was the primary way Rodríguez gained new clients, including Charles Baumberger, founder of the Alamo Portland Cement Company. Most of Rodríguez's works are located in various parts of Texas, including Alamo Plaza, Brackenridge Park, the garden of the Spanish Governor's Palace, and Jacala Restaurant in San Antonio. Additionally, Rodríguez's work can be found at the Albert Steves Ranch, the Eddingston Court Apartments, the Houston Zoo, on the James Richard Marmion Property, and at the Phelan Mansion. However, throughout his lifetime, Rodríguez was commissioned to create sculptures in seven other states: Arkansas, Maryland, Alabama, Illinois, Tennessee, Michigan, and New Mexico.

RODRÍGUEZ'S WORK IN CEMETERIES

The rise of memorial park plan cemeteries during the early 20th century is attributed to Hubert Eaton, who popularized the use of flat headstones throughout cemeteries with sculptures scattered throughout as decoration. The sculpted works of Rodríguez can be found in seven cemeteries in five states. While Rodríguez's sculptures at Cedar Hill are more modest than those he was commissioned to make for other cemeteries, the sculptures in Cedar Hill are important because they are the only significant examples of his work located on the East Coast.

Rodríguez's Sculptures at Cedar Hill

Following a recommendation by Elliot Hines (and possibly Lobell O. Minear), Rodríguez was hired to create several sculptures for Cedar Hill Cemetery, beginning in 1936. The sculptures he created include two wooden footbridges (one is flanked by two Chinese lanterns), a hollow "tree" sculpture, an Annie Laurie Chair under a pergola, a wooden table also covered by a pergola (the pergola is no longer extant), and a fallen "tree" bench. Supposedly, the manager of Cedar Hill asked Rodríguez to replicate the Annie Laurie Chair after seeing an illustration of a similar chair published in a magazine. According to Rodríguez's niece, Manuela Vargas (Theall), she created the molds for the seat's decoration which included floral motifs and a dragon figure.⁸⁹ The sculptures are located throughout the cemetery and are in generally fair condition.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 212.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 95-98.

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Chain of Title

Date	Grantor	Grantee	Liber	Folio
6/12/1991	Cedar Hill Memorial Park	Osiris Holdings of Maryland, Inc.	7996	784
5/17/1979	Cedar Hill Incorporation	Cedar Hill Memorial Park	5097	36
9/30/1926	William Harrison	Cedar Hill Cemetery Corporation	416	271
6/19/1913	Robert Pyles	William Harrison	300	96
1/5/1910	Francis Owens	Robert F. Routh	57	425
1/4/1910	Francis Baker	Francis Owens	55	385

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10. Geographical Data

	Acreage of surveyed property	<u>135</u>	
Acreage of historical setting	<u>135</u>		
Quadrangle name	<u>Anacostia</u>	Quadrangle scale:	<u>1:24000</u>

Verbal boundary description and justification

Cedar Hill Cemetery is bound on the north by Pennsylvania Avenue. Lincoln Memorial Cemetery and Washington National Cemetery are located directly to the southeast, separated by Suitland Road. To the east of the cemetery is a residential neighborhood.

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11. Form Prepared by

name/title	
organization	date
street & number	telephone
city or town	state

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Maryland Department of Planning
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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