

Disposition Application for 1237 & 1243 N. 13th St.

Narrative

HACM owns two adjacent vacant lots, comprising of .23 acres, that were acquired from the City in the early 2000s (when HACM was undergoing single-family developments) and that were never developed.

The two lots are currently being used as a vegetable garden across the street from the Guest House homeless shelter. The Guest House wants to purchase the lots and continue to use them as a garden.

Underneath the lots, however, is a mid-19th century cemetery with human remains. This was discovered when the Guest House excavated across the street to construct additional space. Clearing the remains was very expensive and exceeded the value of the land.


HACM learned of this after obtaining a standard appraisal. Once the appraiser learned about the cemetery, they responded:

“The appraisal report assumes that the subject is a typical developable lot. However, according to the report from UWM, there are likely remains on the property. Assuming that costs are similar to the excavation costs from the project across the street, the costs to get this lot to a developable status would exceed the value.”

Because it is not possible to appraise the lots (there are no comparables) and they are not practical to improve, HACM would like to sell the lots to the Guest House for \$1,000, which would cover the cost of the appraisal and closing costs. The sale would also meet the definition of commensurate public benefit as the food from the garden feeds the homeless in Milwaukee.

Remnant Cemetery

Results of the UWM-CRM excavations as well as available historical documentation suggest that a significant portion of the intact cemetery remains unexcavated. It is estimated that an area of roughly 4.75 acres (206,859 square feet) of the Second Ward Cemetery remains intact between W. McKinley Avenue and W. Juneau Avenue and between N. 12th Lane and N. 14th Street. This is based on the dimensions of the original land plot designated in the 1850 sale to W. Ferdinand Otto, as no reliable evidence of reduction in the area of the cemetery has been located.

The report can be accessed here  [ROI428 Report Book Update21March2018 1.pdf](#) (see page 30)