



DEPARTMENT OF CITYWIDE ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

One Centre Street, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10007
(212) 669-7140 • Fax: (212) 669-4664

Martha K. Hirst
Commissioner

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 18, 2009

www.nyc.gov/dcas

**DCAS INVITING PROPOSALS TO PURCHASE
CANARSIE CEMETERY**

The New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) is inviting proposals from qualified cemetery operators to purchase the Canarsie Cemetery in Brooklyn.

DCAS issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to Not-for-Profit New York State Cemetery Corporations interested in purchasing the cemetery. The RFP was prepared with input from a community panel to determine the future of the City-owned site. DCAS will place conditions on the sale to ensure that the 13-acre site remains a burial ground, and that any future structures added to the site are no higher than 20 feet, in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

“The City inherited this former town cemetery over a hundred years ago, and it’s long been recognized that everyone’s interests would be best served by transferring it to a nonprofit operator,” said DCAS Commissioner Martha K. Hirst. “I’m glad that we’ve addressed the community’s concerns in a way that ensures that this historic burial ground – the final resting place of a Brooklyn Borough President and a local Civil War veteran, among many others – will be properly maintained for future generations. I want to thank Council Member Fidler and the members of the Community Advisory Committee for their assistance, as well as the DCAS team that has pushed this initiative forward.”

“I am pleased that we are making progress in this effort to place Canarsie Cemetery in the hands of a responsible not-for-profit operator,” said Council Member Lewis A. Fidler, whose 46th Council District includes the cemetery. “I’m grateful to DCAS and the community volunteers who have participated in crafting this Request for Proposals.”

State legislation approved in 1998 authorizes the sale of the cemetery, subject to certain conditions and oversight. Any sale must be approved by the Mayor, City Council, the New York State Cemetery Board and a State Supreme Court judge.

(more)

*Citywide Personnel
Services*

*Facilities
Management &
Construction*

*Municipal Supply
Services*

Real Estate Services

*Citywide Equal
Employment
Opportunity*

*Citywide
Occupational Safety
& Health*

*Transportation
Services*

The City Record

CityStore

As required by the legislation, DCAS convened a Community Advisory Committee to make recommendations during the development of the RFP. The committee members were: Neal Duncan, president of the United Canarsie South Civic Association (UCSCA); Ira Kluger, co-president, Canarsie Historical Society; and Frank Seddio, former New York State Assembly Member for the 59th Assembly District, which includes Canarsie.

Under the terms of the RFP, proposers must be currently operating under the jurisdiction of the New York State Division of Cemeteries and must agree to maintain the site “as a non-sectarian burial ground for persons of all races, faiths and ethnic origins,” as required by the authorizing legislation. DCAS will also require that the height of any future mausoleums or other structures be limited to 20 feet.

The Canarsie Cemetery is located at 1370 Remsen Avenue at the corner of Remsen Avenue and Avenue K. It was acquired by the Town of Flatlands in 1888 from the estate of John Remsen. Responsibility for operating the cemetery was subsequently transferred to the City of Brooklyn, which later merged with the City of New York. Since 1969 the cemetery has been operated by the Department of General Services, now known as DCAS. No new burial permits have been sold by the City since 1993.

Of the cemetery’s 13 acres, 8.5 are developed and 4.5 are undeveloped and have the potential for new graves or mausoleums. The cemetery’s facilities consist of a two-story administration building of 3,500 square feet with offices and a chapel, completed in 1981, and two smaller buildings.

Notable figures interred in the cemetery include John Cashmore, who served as Brooklyn Borough President from 1940 to 1961, and John H. Nolan, a local Civil War veteran who was known as the Union army’s “little drummer boy” in the Battle of Cedar Creek.

Copies of the Request for Proposals (RFP) may be requested by writing, faxing or visiting the DCAS Division of Real Estate Services, One Centre Street, 20th Floor North, New York, NY 10007, fax 212-313-3486, or by emailing Edward Ong, Project Manager, at eong@dcas.nyc.gov.

Media Contact: Mark Daly (212) 669-7140