



# Douglas County to get fifth active cemetery

Seven Stones to develop on 33 acres off Titan Road

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Douglas County is about to get its fifth active cemetery — its first in 138 years.

Of the other four active burial grounds in the county, the newest one is Cedar Hill Cemetery in Castle Rock, which broke ground for its first inhabitants in 1875.

The others, Franktown Cemetery, Bear Canon Cemetery in Sedalia and Parker Cemetery, were all established between 1870 and 1874. And while numerous smaller burial grounds and family plots have been established throughout the years, those four remain the only active burial grounds in the county — until now.

Seven Stones, as it will be called, will be built on a 33-acre plot in northwest Douglas County, off the Titan Road curve, east of the Highline Canal and west of Rampart Range Road, just south of Chatfield and north of where Sterling Ranch will be.

“The land was originally zoned as agricultural in 1955, but has sat vacant since,” said Douglas County land-use planner Kati Rider. “The current property owners would like to develop a cemetery that complements the surrounding area through the use of compatible building materials and native plants.”

The proposal to change the land to a planned development for that specific use was approved 7-2 by the planning commission on Aug. 13, and the county commissioners unanimously approved it, 3-0, on Oct. 8.

“I think that it is a service that is deeply needed in Douglas County,” said County Commissioner Jack Hilbert. “I think that this is going to be a great amenity.”

Doug Flin, representing Seven Stones, addressed the aging population of Douglas County during the Oct. 8 public hearing, reminding those in attendance that between 2010 and 2015 the county’s population over age 65 will increase by 47 percent.

Flin also presented data from the U.S. Census Bureau and National Center for Health Statistics demonstrating a 60 percent increase in projected deaths in the United States between the year 2012 and 2045 as the population continues to increase.

“There is nothing in the area for residents of Douglas County, Jefferson County or Arapahoe to serve those neighboring communities,” Flin said, adding that due to the proximity of the Lamb Spring Archeological Preserve, Seven Stones has agreed to conduct an archaeological survey of the site prior to the issuance of grading permits.

If everything goes according to plan, Seven Stones will be built out in five phases, with the first phase seeing 11 acres built out over the next one to three years. The final phase is not expected to be completed until the year 2050.

Plans call for walking paths, limited driving areas, an outlying processional path, two entrances, and a concept that calls to mind the Highlands Ranch Backcountry Wilderness Area, Hudson Gardens and the Denver Botanic Gardens, Flin said.

“This is not about what I call a sea of turf,” he said. “We are going to be full service for internment of cremated remains, casket burial, pet burial, and offer a wide variety of memorialization.”