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PUBLIC NOTICE

**RE: Pilgrim Baptist Church
8900 Brookville Road
(Lyttonsville/Linden)
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910**

Montgomery County, Maryland, is in the process of acquiring the above property for the construction of Brookville Road. Several unmarked grave sites are located in the road right-of-way and will be relocated in another portion of the church cemetery. Many of these graves are unmarked and there are no church records to indicate the names of the deceased. Persons who have any knowledge or know of any persons who can assist Montgomery County in identifying these unmarked graves are asked to telephone or write the Division of Relocation and Renewal Operations, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20850, 301—279-1830.

Urban Renewal Uprooting Old Graves, Some Unmarked

By LINDA HOLM
Journal Staff

An urban renewal project in the Lyttonsville area of Silver Spring will make it necessary for the county to move 25 family graves from a church cemetery, some of them unclaimed by next of kin.

In a tersely written notice published in area newspapers last week, the county's Division of Relocation and Renewal Operations announced that the county is in the process of acquiring the Pilgrim Baptist Church and a part of its cemetery to widen Brookeville Rd. Because many of the graves are unmarked, it asked that anyone knowing of the persons buried there contact relocation office.

Lyttonsville, a mostly black community which sprang up during the middle of the last century, has been slated for re-development since 1967. It is located between Georgia Ave. and East-West Highway, with Brookeville Rd. serving as a main artery to the 64-acre community.

The 65-year-old Pilgrim Baptist Church on Brookeville Rd. will be razed and a new church will be built at a different location. The graveyard is adjacent to the church.

THE ROAD'S widening has been in the Silver Spring Master Plan for years and is "much needed," according to Gwen Coffield, a community leader, but has been delayed along with most other aspects of the urban renewal program. Miss Coffield was born and raised in Lyttonsville and claims four generations of family living there.

She said the road is overburdened with traffic because it is used as a shortcut between East-West Highway and Georgia Ave. It also leads to several county facilities, including a truck maintenance depot and liquor warehouse.

According to Al Livesay of the relocation division, the county is doing everything possible to contact the families of those who might

be buried in the old church yard. Along with the newspaper ads, flyers were distributed to the church congregation on Sunday.

HE SAID seventeen of the graves have been claimed so far, and that interviews are being held open in the hope that others will come forward to claim those as yet unidentified. If they are not claimed they will have to be moved anyway.

Livesay said the new church will probably be located at Lanier and Pennsylvania Drives and will involve a land swapping arrangement with the county. He said he does not know exactly when the graves will be relocated or when the new church will be built.

Miss Coffield has six relatives buried in the area to be affected by the expansion of the road from two to four lanes. She says she feels no bitterness over the necessity of moving the graves from the front of the cemetery to the rear.

"SOME MEMBERS of the community opposed the plan for various reasons," she said, "but have since come to accept it." She added, however, that she hopes the old church will not be torn down before the new one is built. "We've been involved in the urban renewal program for eight years now," she explained, "and so far, no ground has been broken anywhere. But nine houses have been torn down and never replaced."

She said one of the community's other leaders pointed out at County Council public hearing last week that the community has lost hope, faith and trust in the whole urban renewal program. She said all of Lyttonsville is anxiously awaiting some decision from the council, which promised some answers after October 17.

credit: Montgomery County Historical Society.