

First Presbyterian Church of Metuchen
NARRATIVE

Proposed Improvements Along Woodbridge Avenue and
Graveyard

Current Status:

The church graveyard is presently at capacity for traditional casket interment use. Members continue to want the support of the Church to assist with the interment of cremation remains, a practice that now generally exceeds traditional casket interment by an 80% to 20% ratio.

Cremation remains in the past have been interred in the Church Chapel Garden (between the sanctuary and Education Building), however, this space is now also at full capacity.

The hedge along Woodbridge Avenue represents a significant maintenance burden. The hedge contributes to security concerns relative to vandalism protection within the graveyard due to visibility limitations. We have received security concerns regarding the hedge from pedestrians when walking along Woodbridge Avenue after dark.

To replace the hedge, the Church Session has approved use of a cemetery fence with masonry support columns that may contain niches for cremation remains. The niches will be located on the side of the columns that face the cemetery, not the street.

To be economically viable we estimate that at least 8 cremation remains compartments per masonry column are required. For this reason, we propose that the masonry support columns only (not the entire fence) will need to be approximately five (5) feet tall.

The rendering on the plan drawn by Marcille Architecture dated May 11, 2023 shows the approximate appearance of our proposed fence as it would be if viewed from the Woodbridge Avenue side of the cemetery. Our goal is for the masonry to match and coordinate with the existing sanctuary and Social Center buildings so that it remains historically correct relative to the nature of the Church campus.