



MEMORANDUM

TO: BRANDY FORBES, AICP, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
FROM: AMY SEERATY, SENIOR PLANNER
DATE: MAY 5, 2025
SUBJECT: SITE PLAN REVIEW (CASE NO. PLSR2025-0047) FOR VIETNAM VETERAN'S MEMORIAL AT 27501 S. WESTERN AVENUE (GREEN HILLS MEMORIAL PARK); APPLICANT/OWNER – GREEN HILLS MEMORIAL PARK

RECOMMENDATION

Approve a Site Plan Review Permit to construct a 10-foot-high by 8-foot, 4-inch wide, free-standing stone Vietnam War Veteran's Memorial monument and install a 4,963 ft² decorative hardscape memorial with 8.2 yd³ of associated grading to accommodate the proposed improvements within Green Hills Memorial Park's Medal of Honor Flagpole area at the south corner of Memorial Terrace Drive and Bay View Drive, subject to the Conditions of Approval in Exhibit "A".

BACKGROUND

On February 6, 2025, pursuant to Condition No. 2.a(6) of City Council Resolution No. 2023-08 (Attached), Green Hills Memorial Park submitted a Site Plan Review Permit application requesting to construct a free-standing stone Vietnam War Veteran's Memorial monument along with decorative hardscape material and minor associated grading. The application was deemed complete for processing on April 10, 2025.

On April 17, 2025, a 15-day public notice was provided to all property owners and homeowners associations within a 700-foot radius of the project site for comments. A listserv message was also sent to all subscribers of the Green Hills Memorial Park listserv. Staff received no comments in response to the public notice.

SITE DESCRIPTION

Green Hills Memorial Park is a cemetery located at 27501 S. Western Avenue in the northeast corner of the City, bordering the Cities of Lomita, Rolling Hills Estates and Los Angeles. The cemetery was first established in 1948 and, at the time, was located within an unincorporated area of Los Angeles County. The property became part of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes when

the “Eastview” area was annexed in 1984. The property is approximately 121 acres in size, and is a privately owned and operated cemetery facility within the City’s Cemetery Zoning District. The cemetery is bordered by residential uses to the north and south, a major street to the east (Western Avenue) and Rolling Hills Covenant Church and Palos Verdes Reservoir to the west. The operation of the cemetery is governed by a Conditional Use Permit (CUP), most recently amended by the City Council on February 21, 2023, pursuant to Resolution No. 2023-08. The cemetery operates every day of the week, and consists of interments, mausoleum buildings, one office building, a mortuary, a chapel, a flower shop, and a maintenance yard and related buildings.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Applicant requests approval to construct the following improvements within Green Hills Memorial Park’s Medal of Honor Flagpole area at the south corner of Memorial Terrace Drive and Bay View Drive, further highlighted in the Figure No. 1 map below:

- Construction of a 10-foot-tall by 8-foot, 4-inch-wide, free-standing stone Vietnam War Veteran’s Memorial monument;
- Installation of a 4,963 ft² decorative hardscape memorial with 8.2 yd³ of associated grading to accommodate the proposed improvements; and,
- Create an enlarged ADA ramp from the street to this area.

Figure No. 1 - Aerial Map of Proposed Project Area (bubbled in red)

Source: City GIS, retrieved April 10, 2025



DISCUSSION

Site Plan Review Permit

Pursuant to City Council Resolution No. 2023-08, Condition of Approval No. 2.a(3), customary cemetery related features (including but not limited to upright memorial features, sculptures, and other artistic works) over 36-inches in height may be reviewed by the Director through a Site Plan Review Permit, provided that the height of such features do not exceed 16 feet. The Site Plan Review Permit process enables the Director to check development proposals for conformity with the provisions of the Development Code, such as heights and setbacks. Furthermore, Condition No. 2 requires public notification for a Site Plan Review Permit that is to be considered by the Director.

The proposed request is to allow the construction of a 10-foot tall by 8-foot, 4-inch wide stone Vietnam Veteran's War Memorial monument ("Monument") in the Medal of Honor Flagpole area (shown in Figure No. 2 above) of the project site. Also proposed as part of the project is a 4,963 ft² decorative hardscape area, consisting of concrete and colored pavers in a star within a circle design. Approximately 8.2 yd³ of grading (2.8 cy³ cut and 5.4 cy³ fill) is proposed to create a level area for the Monument and decorative paving, and to create an improved ADA ramp from the street to this area. The proposed improvements as outlined in the project plans (Attached) will be approximately 820 feet from the closest property line (front) to the east, whereas the minimum required front setback is 25 feet. At 10 feet in height, the structure also complies with the 16-foot maximum height of structures in the Cemetery Zoning District. The proposed improvements will improve the existing Medal of Honor Flagpole area, which is utilized for Green Hills' annual Memorial Day event.

Since 2005, 115,402 yd³ of grading has been conducted on the entire site (amount of grading in the Medal of Honor Flagpole area is not specified in CUP conditions) out of the additional 643,259 yd³ that is allowed for the entire site, so an additional 8.2 yd³ will still be within the total allowed for the site.

The proposed grading, decorative hardscape, and Monument are consistent with the findings made by the City Council for the Master Plan, and the proposed use is permitted throughout the entire project site, outside of the required setbacks. Therefore, as the proposed project complies with both the Municipal Code guidelines for Cemetery Zoning Districts and City Council-adopted Conditions of Approval (Resolution No. 2023-08), the Site Plan Review Permit can be approved.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Environmental Assessment

On April 24, 2007, pursuant to P.C. Resolution No. 2007-32, the Planning Commission adopted a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for Case No. ZON2003-00086 (Conditional Use Permit No. 55 Revision "D") for the Green Hills Cemetery Master Plan. In adopting the MND, the Planning Commission found that there would be no significant adverse environmental impacts resulting from the adoption of the Green Hills Cemetery Master Plan with the incorporation of mitigation measures. Subsequently, there were separate addendums approved for miscellaneous improvements, which were determined to be within the scope of the previously adopted MND.

The City Council conducted annual reviews of the Applicant's compliance with the Conditions of Approval associated with the CUP for the Master Plan on multiple occasions, with the most recent in 2025. The City Council approved revisions to the CUP consistent with the CUP findings as part of the 2016, 2017, 2019, and 2020 annual reviews, in 2021 for roof-top interments on the Inspiration Slope Mausoleum, and in 2023 for new crematorium building. No further environmental review was considered necessary in 2023 as the modifications to the Conditions of Approval reduced the impacts of on-site operations on adjacent properties; constituted minor alterations to existing structures or facilities involving negligible or no expansion of use.

The proposed improvements and associated grading have been determined to be in compliance with the Conditions of Approval for the Master Plan (Resolution No. 2023-08), as evidenced in the discussions under 'Site Plan Review Permit' above and will not introduce new or intensify environmental impacts. Therefore, the proposed project is within the scope of the previously adopted MND and no further environmental review is necessary.

Public Correspondence

Staff received no public comments in response to the public notice issued on April 17, 2025.

Permit Streamlining Act

Pursuant to the Permit Streamlining Act, since the application was deemed complete on April 10, 2025, the action decision deadline is June 9, 2025.

CONCLUSION

Based upon the discussion above, Staff recommends the Director approve a Site Plan Review Permit to construct a 10-foot-high by 8-foot, 4-inch wide, free-standing stone Vietnam War Veteran's Memorial monument and install a 4,963 ft² decorative hardscape memorial with 8.2 yd³ of associated grading to accommodate the proposed improvements within Green Hills Memorial Park's Medal of Honor Flagpole area at the south corner of Memorial Terrace Drive and Bay View Drive, subject to the Conditions of Approval in Exhibit "A"

Approved pursuant to Staff's Recommendation.

Accepted:  Dated: 5-1-25
Brandy Forbes, AICP
Director of Community Development

ATTACHMENTS

- Conditions of Approval – Exhibit "A"
- [City Council Resolution No. 2023-08](#)
- Project Plans

Exhibit "A"
Conditions of Approval
Green Hills Memorial Park
Site Plan Review Permit (Case No. PLSR2025-0047)

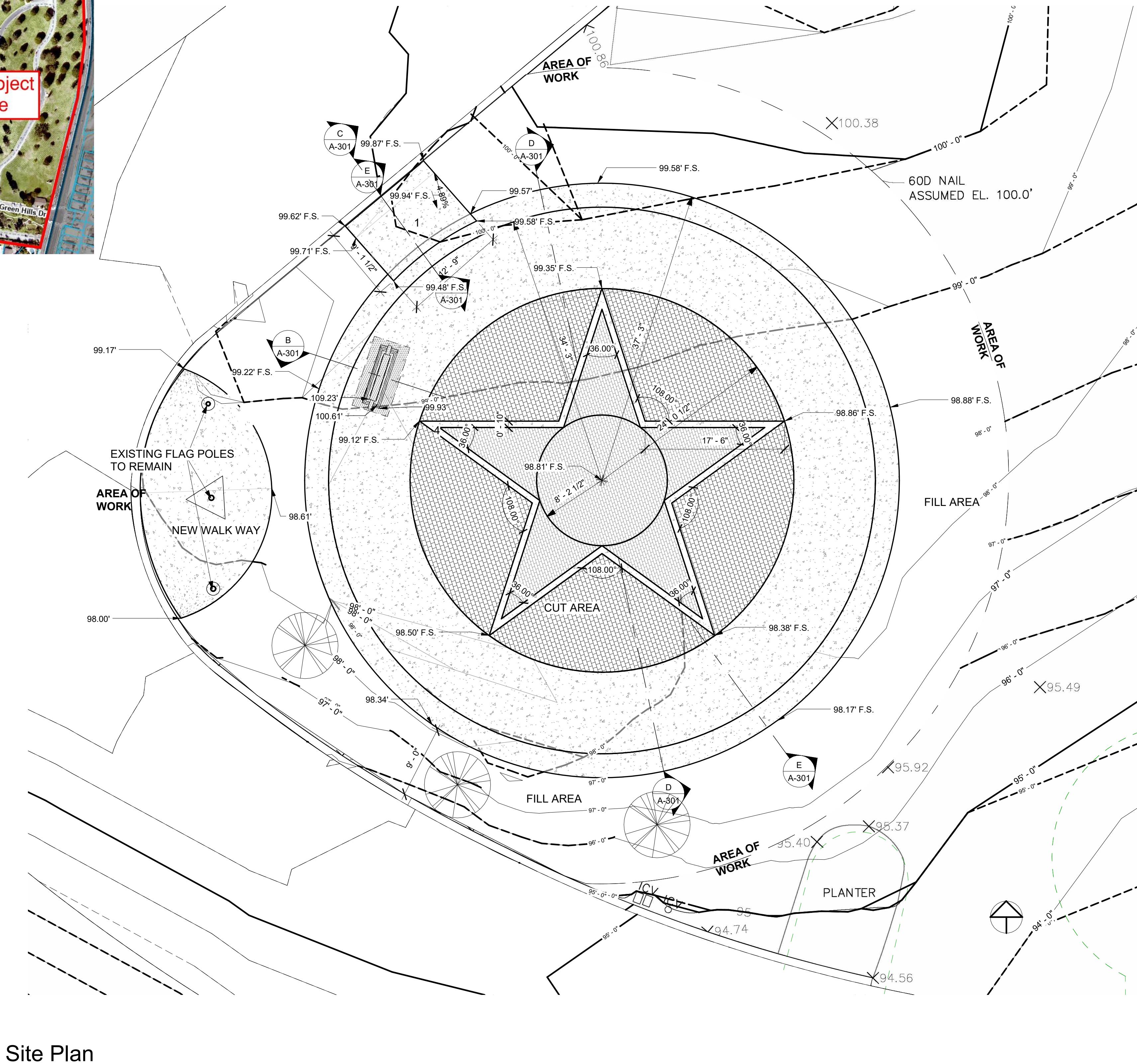
General Conditions:

1. This approval by the Director of Community Development of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes allows for the following improvements:
 - a. Construction of a 10-foot-tall by 8-foot, 4-inch-wide, free-standing stone Vietnam War Veteran's Memorial monument;
 - b. Installation of a 4,963 ft² decorative hardscape memorial with 8.2 yd³ of associated grading to accommodate the proposed improvements; and,
 - c. Creation of an enlarged ADA ramp from the street to this area.
2. The Conditions of Approval under Resolution No. 2023-08 shall remain in full force and effect, until and unless amended in the future by the City Council.
3. Prior to the submittal of plans for Building and Safety Plan Check, the Applicant shall submit to the City a statement, in writing, that they have read, understand, and agree to all conditions of approval contained in this Exhibit "A". Failure to provide this written statement within 90 days following the date of this approval shall render this approval null and void.
4. The Applicant shall indemnify, protect, defend, and hold harmless, the City, and/or any of its officials, officers, employees, agents, departments, agencies, and instrumentalities thereof, from any and all claims, demands, lawsuits, writs of mandamus, and other actions and proceedings (whether legal, equitable, declaratory, administrative or adjudicatory in nature), and alternative dispute resolutions procedures (including, but not limited to arbitrations, mediations, and other such procedures) (collectively "Actions"), brought against the City, and/or any of its officials, officers, employees, agents, departments, agencies, and instrumentalities thereof, that challenge, attack, or seek to modify, set aside, void, or annul, the action of, or any permit or approval issued by, the City and/or any of its officials, officers, employees, agents, departments, agencies, and instrumentalities thereof (including Actions approved by the voters of the City), for or concerning the project.
5. Approval of this permit shall not be construed as a waiver of applicable and appropriate zoning regulations, or any Federal, State, County, and/or City laws and regulations. Unless otherwise expressly specified, all other requirements of the City of Rancho Palos Verdes Municipal Code shall apply.
6. Pursuant to Condition No. 2.a(1) of City Council Resolution 2023-08, the Director of Community Development is authorized to make minor modifications through a Site Plan Review permit to the approved plans and any of the conditions that will achieve substantially the same results as would strict compliance with such plans and conditions. Any substantial change to the project shall require approval of a revision by the final body that approved the original project, which may require new and separate environmental review.

7. The project development on the site shall conform to the specific standards contained in these Conditions of Approval or, if not addressed herein, shall conform to the cemetery development standards of the Rancho Palos Verdes Municipal Code (RPVMC), Conditions of Approval, including but not limited to height, setback, and lot coverage standards.
8. Failure to comply with and adhere to all of these Conditions of Approval and the conditions of approval set forth in City Council Resolution No. 2023-08 or future related Council-adopted Resolutions, may be cause to revoke the approval of this grading permit pursuant to RPVMC Section 17.86.060, or administrative citations as described in RPVMC Section 1.16.
9. In the event that any of these conditions conflict with the recommendations and/or requirements of another permitting agency or City department, the stricter standard shall apply.
10. Unless otherwise designated in these Conditions of Approval, all construction shall be completed in substantial conformance with the plans stamped APPROVED by the City with the effective date of this Exhibit "A".
11. This approval is only for the items described within these Conditions and identified on the stamped APPROVED plans and is not an approval of any existing illegal or legal non-conforming structures on the property.
12. All construction sites shall be maintained in a secure, safe, neat, and orderly manner, to the satisfaction of the City's Building Official. All construction waste and debris resulting from a construction, alteration, or repair project shall be removed on a weekly basis by the contractor or property owner. Existing or temporary portable bathrooms shall be provided during construction. Portable bathrooms shall be placed in a location that will minimize disturbance to the surrounding property owners, to the satisfaction of the City's Building Official.
13. The construction site and adjacent public and private properties and streets shall be kept free of all loose materials resembling trash and debris in excess of that material used for immediate construction purposes. Such excess material may include, but is not limited to: the accumulation of debris, garbage, lumber, scrap metal, concrete, asphalt, piles of earth, salvage materials, abandoned or discarded furniture, appliances or other household fixtures. All landscape pruning, including but not limited to grass, leaves, branches, fertilizer, etc., shall be properly stored in areas with minimal visual impact to adjacent homeowners, and shall be stored in appropriate containers and disposed of in a lawful manner.
14. When not being used in the daily operations of the cemetery, equipment and supplies shall be stored in areas with minimal visual impact to adjacent homeowners or in the maintenance yard if possible. Equipment and supplies shall be neatly stacked so they do not pose a safety hazard or become a property maintenance issue. All landscaping equipment and vehicles, and all vehicles used for maintenance and/or burial preparation shall be stored in the maintenance yard.
15. Construction and grading activities, including but not limited to equipment warm up,

geologic investigations, interments excavation for placement of vaults and installation or removal of large landscape materials or landscaping maintenance shall be limited to 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on weekdays only. Notwithstanding the foregoing, within 120 feet of any property line abutting a Residential Zoning District, no construction or grading, including grading operations to prepare sites for earth interments, shall occur before 9:00 a.m. or after 3:30 p.m. All equipment shall be equipped with a muffler to reduce on-site grading and construction noise levels.

16. All proposed on-site grading activities including, but not limited to, noise and dust prevention techniques shall comply with Resolution No. 2023-08, and the associated Conditions of Approval and Mitigation Monitoring plan including for the project site for this permit.
17. Construction shall not interfere with pedestrian or vehicular circulation, including ingress and egress to the Applicant's property.
18. **Prior to any permit issuance**, all applicable soils/geotechnical reports shall be approved by the City's Geologist.
19. **Prior to any permit issuance**, all applicable drainage plans shall be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION
INSTALL CONCRETE PAD FOR 8' - 4" X 10'-0"
WAR MEMORIAL WITH NEW 42 SQ. FT. PAVED AREA

FLOOR TYPE:

	4" x 9" TAN BLOCK PAVER	516 SF
	6" x 8" TAN BLOCK PAVER	1,167 SF
	6" CONCRETE SLAB	3,280 SF

=4,963 sq ft

CUT / FILL				
Name	Area	Cut	Fill	Net cut/fill
AREA OF WORK	8,060.49 SF	2,812 CY	5,434 CY	2,622 CY

=8.4 CY

3800 PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY
TORRANCE, CALIFORNIA 90505
obeliskarc.com
310.373.0810 fax
310.373.3568 tel

Green Hills Vietnam War Memorial

27501 S. Western Ave.
Rancho Palos Verde, Ca.

REVISIONS
Description Date

PROJECT NUMBER
Project Number
DATE
March 18, 2025
STAMP



SHEET TITLE

Site Plan

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Green Hills Vietnam War Memorial

27501 S. Western Ave.
Rancho Palos Verde, Ca.

REVISIONS	
Description	Date

PROJECT NUMBER

Project Number

DATE
March 18, 2025
STAMP



SHEET TITLE

First Floor

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