

Anti-Vandal Steps Planned At Cemetery

By Jeff Valentine

After years of neglect that saw its monuments plundered and its grave markers vandalized, officials finally see a small ray of hope that something can be done to save old St. Vincent's Cemetery in Clifton Park. **APR 10 1978**

For decades, vandals had wreaked havoc with the hillside graveyard at the edge of the ninth tee of the Clifton Park golf course. Stones were toppled, crypts violated and caskets yanked out of the ground.

Now, **THE SUN** reports last month of the cemetery's sad condition. "There's some small reason for optimism," according to Donald T. Torres, with the Environmental Health Division of the city Health Department.

He called together representatives of the city police, parks, housing and health departments, as well as the principals of two nearby schools, to discuss the situation.

The city representatives agreed that they could do some things to improve the situation at the century-old cemetery, which belongs to the St. Vincent de Paul Catholic parish downtown.

Mr. Torres said the Police Department promised better surveillance of the 5½-acre tract and a quicker response to calls for help. "No Trespass" signs will be erected along the roadway. **THE SUN**

Parks Department, **THE SUN** also vowed to keep an eye out for vandals going through the graveyard. The Department of Housing and Community Development agreed to clean up the worst of the debris at the cemetery, using youths paid with federal funds. **APR 10 1978**

And the principals of East Clifton High School and Clifton Park Junior High School said they would remind their students that the cemetery is consecrated, private ground and off-limits to them.

"Every person who came to the meeting made commitments," Mr. Torres said.

Over the long term, however, bolder action is essential, he added.

Another, possibly more practical, proposal would be to remove all of the monuments and mausoleums at the cemetery and re-landscape the tract into a grassy hillside slope overlooking the golf course.