

200 North Third, #701
Boise, Idaho 83702
6 July 1990

Governor Cecil D. Andrus
Statehouse, Boise, Idaho

Dear Cece:

A copy of a letter to you from Dianne Pierce has just been handed to me by a messenger from Morningside Heights Partnership concerning their application for a Castle Rock residential subdivision.

More than a month ago when their application came to my attention, I expressed concern because it incorporated an Indian burial ground in its boundaries. Because it includes a site that is particularly sensitive for our Boise Shoshoni band, that issue merits careful consideration.

My awareness of that burial site goes back for about two decades. Bob Wilson, who settled near there in 1863 prior to location of Fort Boise, July 4, and to subsequent development of a nearby Boise townsite, paid close attention to other pioneer sites of that area. He went to great effort to inform his grandchildren of their location, along with a major Boise Shoshoni burial site directly below Castle Rock. That Indian site still was in use after he settled adjacent to later Warm Springs Avenue. It made more of an impression on his family than any of the others did. Because of its significance, I showed that burial site to Virginia Cox (Boise State faculty) some time before 1976, and to Tom Green shortly after he became Idaho State Archaeologist.

My duties do not include denial of applications for subdivisions. But when I know that one includes a sensitive Indian burial ground, I would be remiss in not calling attention to that situation. I did not manage to get in touch with Benson Gibson, whose ancestors venerated that site. But eventually he was informed, and I consulted with him about it. This is a matter of great concern to his people, and we ought to pay attention to their reactions. I have no connection with their observance tomorrow, but if I understand it at all, they will hold it on public land. Everything else in Dianne Pierce's letter is unworthy of comment.

Sincerely,
Merle
Merle Wells