

# Images of Forgotten Black Burial Ground Revealed; City to Relocate Tenants

Spectrum Bay News 9, Dave Jordan, Hillsborough County | PUBLISHED 5:23 PM EDT Aug. 30, 2019



**TAMPA, Fla.** — Archaeologists hired by the city to locate a forgotten African-American burial ground revealed radar images of the site at a **Tampa Housing Authority** meeting on Friday.

The grainy images of an estimated 126 coffins underneath the Robles Park Apartment Complex near Stratford and Moore in Tampa reduced some in the room to tears.

"These people were lost and forgotten purposely, and I don't think anyone in their right mind would want to continue to live on top of these people," said Clark Simmons, vice president of the Robles Park Village Tenants Council.

An investigative report back in June revealed the complex was built over the Zion Cemetery back in the 1950s. The cemetery dates back to 1901. Leroy Moore, senior vice president with the Tampa Housing Authority, said the agency knew nothing about the complex being built on top of the cemetery until that report was published.

The city is now working to relocate 29 families to other units. "We're well underway with getting our families notified and trying to make sure that we are there to meet whatever needs they have," Moore said.

As that happens, others are now wondering how best to honor those forgotten and paved over.

"My voice said it's ways in which dignity can be brought to those who have been buried on the site," said Connie Burton, a community activist.

Tenant relocations could take about two months to begin.