The Moscow Times
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War Cemetery Construction Project Canceled After Outcry

August 07, 2014

Moscow's City Hall has canceled plans to build a shopping center on the site of a cemetery where thousands of people killed in World War I are buried, according to a statement released Thursday by the preservation group Arkhnadzor.

The construction project, which would have seen the park hosting the memorial complex and the historic Leningrad movie theater sold into private hands, had provoked outcry from residents and preservationists, as well as the Public Chamber's commission for culture and the preservation of historical and cultural heritage.

Several rallies were held to protest the construction, and a petition with about 7,000 signatures was submitted to Mayor Sergei Sobyanin to call off the project.

As a result, Moscow's Architecture Committee instructed the Urban Property Department to look into canceling the construction deal and work out alternative ways to develop the land.

The Leningrad Park, on which the Brotherly Cemetery for those killed in World War I is

situated, has protected status as an object of cultural heritage of regional significance.

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