

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Text if my statement at the meeting on 28 March 2016:

I am Chief Warrant Officer Don Terrill, United States Army Retired.

- My family settled in Virginia in 1656.
- My 6th great-grandfather Joseph fought in the American Revolution, serving in George Washington's army in the 3rd and 7th Virginia Regiments.
- His son, William Terrell, served in the U.S. Army and later in the War of 1812 in the 3rd Georgia Infantry.
- My great-great-grandfather, John Terrill, served in the Confederate Army in the 25th Texas Cavalry and died in the war in February 1863.
- My father, William Terrill, served in the U.S. Navy during World War 2.

All of these men had one important thing in common: They are, under the laws of the United States, all defined as United States military veterans under Title 38 Section 1501, U.S. Code; and entitled to the same status, honors and benefits. Bottom line: Confederate soldiers are U.S. military veterans by law. And, Americans have an absolute right to recognize and honor that military service.

You may not wish to accept this truth, but the grievances arising from the War Between the States were forgiven and settled by our Nation long before any of you were born -- so that the United States might once again be "united."

Now, the city council has voted unanimously to purge, from the city, all street names honoring Confederate veterans. These elected city officials are no different from the hate-filled Americans who used to spit on our soldiers returning from the Vietnam battlefields -- because they didn't approve of the war. The city council is like the Soviet politburo, erasing from history persons who have fallen from their political favor.

Some of this committee has decided to make common cause with these hate-filled bigots and purge the names of military veterans from our streets. IT IS TO YOU that I address the following comments:

>> For those few of you who may yourselves be veterans, you are breaking faith with your fellow veterans.

You are setting the precedent whereby the next generation would be fully justified in erasing all public recognition of the military service of any veterans based on their own political prejudice.

>> And, for those of you who are slackers and decided not to serve in our country's armed forces, you have no moral authority to judge the service of any American veteran who served honorably. In fact, you're not good enough to shine their boots.

Added:

I ask that the Advisory Group do one of two things:

- a. Recommend to the city council that no street names be changed, or
- b. Vote to order the Advisory Group dissolved, and send no report to the city council

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Don

Last Name

Terrill

Title

Chief Warrant Officer, Retired

Organization

United States Army, Retired

Street Address

3836 Fairfax Parkway

Apt/Suite/Office**City**

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22312

Email Address

don.terrell@cox.net

Phone Number

7039148016

2.

Confirmation Email

Mar 28, 2016 23:02:06 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

At the meeting last night, chairwoman Mary Lyman suggested post the comments we made on the feedback form for further reflection and reference in the Ad-hoc Advisory Group's deliberations.

At the meeting on February 8, I made the following statement. (And I must say, I wish all the presenters, pro and con, would learn to brief, succinct, and to the point. Please strictly enforce that time limit with a gong or a bell!)

I am J.J. Smith. I live at 401 Wilkes. I have lived there for 31 years. I was born and raised in the Metro area. I have degrees from Washington and Lee and Harvard. I am a Viet-Nam era veteran. As you may remember, that war was unpopular. Our country was driven out of Viet-Nam. We lost the war in Viet-Nam. Today we have friendly relations with Viet-Nam, yet many of my comrades in arms were spit upon and disrespected for our service to their country.

Disrespect and lack of appreciation continues to this day not only of Viet-Nam era veterans, but veterans of others wars in which our country has engaged. The wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria are current examples. Our freely-elected political leaders make these decisions for what they feel is in the best interest of the United States, but they count on people like you and me to be the soldiers in this effort.

And the same can be said of our American Veterans who fought for the independence of the Confederate States of America. These men and women fought to protect their homes and families, to create a new nation, not to overturn the Federal government or defend slavery.

Many Alexandrians were engaged in this effort to expel the invasion and occupation by the Federal government. Over 71,000,000 Americans are descendents of Confederate soldiers.

Although these veterans failed in their efforts, just as they did in Viet-Nam, they are deserving of our respect and admiration.

Destruction or altering or destruction these memories would be fit for the Taliban or ISIS, but we Alexandrians or better than that. Wouldn't you agree?

On March 28:

In the most recent issue of Harvard Magazine, there is a very interesting article that has some bearing on the issues before this Ad-hoc Group and the City Council. (www.harvardmagazine.com)

In 1912, Harvard president emeritus, Charles William Eliot, addressed the Harvard Club of San Francisco on a subject close to his heart: racial purity. He was an outspoken supporter of eugenics: human progress depended on promoting reproduction by the best people in the best combinations, and preventing the unworthy from having children.

These ideas created no problems for him at Harvard for they were well within the intellectual mainstream at Harvard, other Ivy League schools, and Stanford University, and attracted considerable support from progressives, reformers, and the educated elites. His successor as president of Harvard, Lawrence Lowell, continued the university's support of the eugenics movement.

To cut to the chase: Harvard was the "brain trust" of the twentieth-century eugenics movement.

An offshoot of the eugenics movement was the forced sterilization of "undesirables," ruled to be constitutional in 1927 in a *Buck v. Bell* settled by an 8-1 decision of the United States Supreme Court, the majority opinion being written by Chief Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., Harvard class of 1861.

The death-knell to eugenics came in the 1930s as the field became associated with the Nazi government in Germany.

Nevertheless, *Buck v. Bell* remained the law of the land until 1981.

Quoting from the article: "It is understandable that the University is not eager to recall its part in that tragically misguided intellectual movement – but it is a chapter too important to be forgotten. Eugenics is part of Harvard's history. It is unlikely that Eliot House or Lowell House will be renamed, but there may be a way for the University community to spare a thought for Carrie Buck and others who have paid a high price"

It is interesting to me that Harvard does not denounce this part of its history, but shines a light on it by proclaiming "... science has advanced to the brink of a new era of genetic possibilities ... (the article lists a few) ... Given that, Harvard, again, will play a role in (these advances)."

Harvard has chosen build on its past, not to hide, distort, or obliterate it.

I suggest this city do the same.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Joseph Judson

Last Name

Smith III

Title

citizen

Organization

Street Address

401 Wilkes Street

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22314

Email Address

jossmith@mba1962.hbs.edu

Phone Number

7032991725

2.

Confirmation Email

Mar 29, 2016 06:20:56 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

I spoke at last night's Advisory Group meeting. I would just like to reiterate and expand on my remarks.

I am a native of New Jersey, but have lived in the Alexandria section of Fairfax County since 1989. I love this city and its history and have spent many hours over the past two years helping on the project to transcribe Julia Wilbur's diary pages for Paula Whitacre and Alexandria Archaeology. I have to admit when I first moved to Alexandria, I was shocked to discover that people my own age, had such different perspectives on the Civil War. As a Northerner, we learned that the Civil War was fought over slavery, and that the Southern perspective had long ago been discredited. When I discussed the Civil War with peers brought up in Alexandria however, they expressed outrage that the North had waged a "War of Northern Aggression" against the South and insisted that the war was not about Slavery. After all, few people actually owned slaves. I didn't realize until then that I was living in a Southern town and that my peers had been schooled at a time when Virginia still opposed de-segregation and civil rights for African Americans and that the Alexandria library was Whites only until 1939.

I am now retired, but for almost 20 years I traveled to and from my job for a Defense agency on Route 1 in Alexandria and Arlington. I cringed every time I saw the road signs designating Route 1 through those sections as "Jeff Davis Highway." It made me angry and resentful that modern municipalities could continue to honor this man this way. Jeff Davis was the head of a government whose goal was to perpetuate and expand a cruel and immoral economic system based on enslaving people of color. Street names should be reserved for honoring heroes and positive role models - Jeff Davis was neither. He was a traitor to the federal government of the United States of America. From a 21st century perspective, I find it incredible that modern and progressive city like Alexandria would tolerate having his name on such a prominent, well-traveled thoroughfare for one more second. Jeff Davis is a historical figure of great importance and should be studied in that context. However he does not deserve to be honored for the position he held. At the very least, please rename this street.

As for the Appomattox statue on Washington Street, I do not object to leaving it in place. I see no reason not to honor the sacrifices of Confederate soldiers, no matter how evil the cause for which they fought. It is the military and government leaders, including Jeff Davis and Robert E Lee, who should not be honored in such a manner. The statue is one of a soldier who is defeated and looking toward the ground. I like to think he is reflecting on the cause for which he fought and regretting that cause. If he were perched on a horse, looking heroic and waving a confederate flag, I would feel differently and would certainly request that it be removed.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Donna

Last Name

Martin

Title

Retired

Organization

Sometime volunteer for Alexandria Archaeology

Street Address

6613 E Wakefield Dr.

Apt/Suite/Office

A-2

City

Alexandria

State

Virginia

Zip

22307

Email Address

donnmartin6613@gmail.com

Phone Number

7037689573

2.

Confirmation Email

Mar 29, 2016 09:53:07 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Comments of Jube Shiver, Jr.

Before the Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names
Monday, March 28, 2016

I am, perhaps, the only person in this room that has a street named after them. I say that, not out of ego, but to underscore the fact that there really is no litmus test for being memorialized in public places.

In my case, my father Jube Shiver Sr., after being rejected by numerous banks in Virginia, built a community of 40 custom homes for African American families in Fairfax County on two streets named Jube Court and Shiver Drive.

So as I said, there is no litmus test for having a street named after a person or a monument erected in their name. But there is a long history of communities trying to strike a balance, and striving to put public recognition in context, over time.

According to Wikipedia, there were at least 89 streets in Europe, prior to 1950 that were named after Adolph Hitler. Today, the website claims, none of those streets bears the former German military leader's name.

When it comes to marginalizing hate and oppression, most civilized people in the world have the common sense and decency to do what the Europeans did. But some how, we here in Alexandria—whose citizens are among the wealthiest and best educated in the country—we can't act rationally.

Those who want to preserve the status quo seem to suggest there is some valor in memorializing our history of hate in the United States in statutes and street signs memorializing the leaders and defenders of slavery and oppression. However, we have plenty of streets and memorials named after leaders and enablers of the confederacy. What we don't have is balance.

We have the Franklin & Armfield Slave Market. We have Bruin's Slave Jail. But we have precious few streets and memorials named after the hundreds of brave people who fought the confederate military to defend the lives and preserve the stories of black people killed in the war and in the slave trade.

So I pose this question: Would we be having a debate here, in this room, if the City of Alexandria were to erect a memorial after someone who raped a member of your family but didn't acknowledge the family member who was raped. Or name a street after someone who enslaved your kids and not memorialize your kids or their accomplishments?

We will always know of Hitler's atrocities and his historical significance, just as we will always know of the Virginia politicians and military personnel who fought to defend slavery.

That's because we memorialize dozens of confederate figures here, in this city. However, today, it seems only reasonable that we prune the list and replace them with historical figures who fought on the other side of the ledger. Where is the street named after Samuel Tucker, who crusaded to end segregation in Alexandria's public school and staged a sit-in so blacks would have access to the city's public libraries? African Americans made up nearly half the population of Alexandria at the turn of the century. But now, after

decades of gentrification, African Americans make up just 13%. That's an historical fact. That is not about political correctness. This is about real history. And there are at least two sides to every story.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Jube

Last Name

Shiver Jr

Title

Mr

Organization

Shiver Management Group

Street Address

7959 Richmond Highway

Apt/Suite/Office

Suite 11

City

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22306

Email Address

Phone Number

703-780-6700

2.

Confirmation Email

Mar 29, 2016 12:35:13 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

First, ladies and gentlemen, I am concerned that the outcome of this exercise is most certainly preordained. When the principle membership of this "advisory group" neglects membership from such august and prestigious Civil War Historical organizations as:

- The Society of Civil War Historians (SCWH)
- The Sons of Confederate Veterans (SCV)
- Civil War Artifact Preservation Association
- Association for the Preservation of Civil War Sites
- Military Order of the Stars and Bars
- National Civil War Association
- National Order of the Blue and Gray

Second, I am concerned about a public meeting where Southerners during the Civil War were referred to as "tyrants, murders, and rapists." and the committee did absolutely nothing to limit or discourage such hate speech.

I would ask what institution could withstand modern scrutiny of its past deeds. If we look hard enough I'm sure there would be no end to offenders from most American institutions with a history. Few entities can withstand the scrutiny of the modern conscience, and physically disassembling the artifacts of the past, attacking its symbols and its ghosts is a fool's errand – no matter how lofty the cause. It illuminates little and is a "feel-good distraction" that comes at the expense of today's very real crises, And picking and choosing which ancient offenses warrant purging creates the danger of prioritizing one historically disadvantaged group over another, inadvertently importing into our own age the very toxins of bigotry that activists now seek to condemn.

We can endlessly denounce the long-departed and disavow the already-discredited, but to what end? What we should do instead is devote ourselves to living our lives in a way that allows our descendants to take pride in the history we leave behind.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Richard

Last Name

Cole

Title

Major, USAF (Ret.), Former Military Historian

Organization

Sons of Confederate Veterans

Street Address

13116 Mercury Lane

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Fairfax

State

VA

Zip

22033-3711

Email Address

dickcole1853@verizon.net

Phone Number

703-266-3333

2.

Confirmation Email

Mar 29, 2016 14:50:30 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Why Symbols and Images of the Confederacy Must Come Down; A Statement for the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names in the City of Alexandria; Prepared and delivered by Shop Talk Live, Inc Alexandria, VA Branch's Socio-Political Team

Before beginning we want to open with a quote from Dr. King because his words serve as the basis for our comments.

"Cowardice asks the question - is it safe? Expediency asks the question - is it politic? Vanity asks the question - is it popular? But conscience asks the question - is it right? And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular; but one must take it because it is right."

Over the past few weeks, months, and scores of years in cities across this nation, citizens have been struggling to understand the actual history of the seemingly immovable symbols associated with the Confederacy and the cause of the United Confederate States. Symbols that from one perspective are revered as time honored memorabilia of family heritage, history, and pride. On the other hand they are also seen and known to be associated with violent domestic judicial terrorism on a scale that has never been experienced in human history. This is the perspective that knows their experienced injustices are not yet over, and have only been scaled back, from time to time, over the years due to popular political convenience, not because of human decency and respect for life. This perspective understands that throughout the history of humans, symbols have been used to exalt the good and encourage the horror that lives in the hearts of people waiting for inspiration.

The challenge in determining which viewpoint we, as a society and community, should respect and honor has always been addressed from the perspective of whose interpretations of history are more or less accurate, instead of looking at the facts of history so we ensure we are respecting the truth of the history and honoring the history of the truth. The truth of the history is that one segment of the population in our society, though they hate to admit or acknowledge it and vehemently deny the facts of their own existence, has benefited or been on the upside of the legacy of this country's historically unprecedented love affair with slavery and racism. Another segment of the population has suffered immeasurable atrocities against their God given right to life in the wake of this country's demonic slave history. These are the facts of the truth, and they cannot be played with for political expedience.

We've heard people trying to explain and defend the practice of honoring the confederate heritage. We have heard some very impassioned, somewhat eloquent, and what we can surmise are people's sincere beliefs regarding what they think is the history and origin of the confederate's purpose for declaring secession from the United States. This information, we think, is provided so we have a better understanding of what it meant to be a member and means to be a descendent of the confederacy. Speakers offer a wide range of justifications for why nothing should be altered, from whether change is safe, politic, fiscally responsible, or popular. Ironically, these are some of the same nonsensical and baseless arguments put forth by naysayers who objected to making MLK Day a federal holiday recognized in every state.

Every conversation for why the confederacy should continue to be honored in the City of Alexandria has lacked something very important. What has been missing, up until now at least, has been the perspective from Alexandria's Black population. The Black citizens of the City of Alexandria were never allowed to have their voices, thoughts, or feelings known or heard when city council made the decision to honor its confederate heritage, no doubt in an attempt to snub desegregation and racial equality efforts. However,

the Black perspective is based on historical and current day to day experiences of those who for centuries have been the targets of racial injustice, violence and intolerance as a result of the legacy of the dehumanizing institution of slavery this country seems to excuse away as if it is just a little white lie.

Cases like the 1857 Dred Scott versus Sanford provide insight on Black people's perceptions, which are based in factual legal events. In Dred Scott the U.S. Supreme Court held that a Black person, whose ancestors were imported into the U.S., and sold as slaves, whether enslaved or free, could not be an American citizen and therefore had no standing in federal court, and that the federal government had no power to regulate slavery in federal territories acquired after the creation of the United States. The Dred Scott case also resulted in the opinion from then Chief Justice Roger B. Taney that stated Black people were beings of an inferior order with no rights which the white man is bound to respect.

It is in the interest of respecting our obligations to history that we must strive to be diligent in remembering how important it is for us to apply context to ongoing conversations. By this we mean we must make sure we know, respect, and honor the truth of the history and the history of the truth. We must make it known through our actions that we do not intend to disrespect or dishonor either the truth or history with slanted, re-worked, sanitized, cleaned-up versions of times long gone by because we think or feel it is the safer, more expedient and popular thing to do.

We do this not for our own edification, because we know the truth of the history. Our knowledge of this history is why there is such a contest for having the history favorably revised, or flat out ignored. We witness revisionist's attempts to re-write history when Virginians like Senator Kaine and Senator Warner produce editorials referring to Black African slaves as involuntary laborers or indentured servants. We know there is something nefarious afoot when text books produced and used in the school systems of Texas refer to African slaves as immigrant workers. This flawed effort is only made stronger by organizations like the NAACP, through its Washington DC chapter, standing silently looking over the shoulders of Kaine and Warner as they announced their plan for a 400 Years of African American History Act.

It was not until the contested passing of Reconstruction Era amendments to the U.S. Constitution that Africans were legally recognized by the country as citizens, so how can we have a legislative action claiming there are 400 years of African American history to honor or recognize? The last of the post-civil war era amendments was not ratified until 1870, or just 146 years ago, so what is the coded messaging intent behind the 400 years language in the title of the proposed legislation? The 14th Amendment to the Constitution was ratified in 1868. It granted citizenship to all persons born or naturalized in the United States, which included former slaves who were recently freed, but it does not say it is a retroactive action dating back to 1619 when it is widely held that the first of the Black African slaves arrived to this country.

The revisionist actions of the U.S. Senators from Virginia tell us that we must conscientiously speak to and defend the truth in its most unadulterated form for the sake of prosperity...our children's children...and we must do this so that the past is not re-written in a way that allows us to ever forget, thus steering us away from the true path of national redemption and reconciliation. The possibilities of the future cannot be realized if we are tricked into overcoming a white washed, safe, politic, and popular version of history.

The confederate heritage is not one that is simply about resistance, it is a heritage that is steep and deep in fighting against efforts to end the ownership of our Black African ancestors as slave property. It is not just a heritage of pride in the southern way of life; it is a heritage of pride in the southern implementation and execution of slavery and ownership of Black Africans. So when we speak about the "heritage" that many are exuberantly proud of and more than happy to honor, let us recognize exactly what is being said because words have meanings. By definition the word "heritage" means the traditions, achievements, beliefs, and property that are a part of the inherited history of a group of people. For the sake of safe expedient politics that are popular, we can choose to be selective in what we disclose about the history and heritage of the confederacy, but we cannot for any reason be selective in what the documented historical facts are about the confederacy. We neither have that authority nor do we innately have that right.

The words of those who authored the Declaration of Causes of Seceding States identify what the traditions, achievements, beliefs, and property of the confederacy were, and we cannot willingly allow anyone today to repackage the confederate heritage as one that stems from a glorified noble cause to do well and good in the face of tyrannical violations against a State's right. The State's Rights issue itself was about the ownership of Black African bodies and unfettered control over their lives. We know this is the truth and ignoring the truth means we are literally telling those voices that have been shut out of the process for centuries that not only do they not matter, but it was a justified cause for the United Confederate States to fight for keeping their ancestors as slave property. If this is really the message the City of Alexandria wants to send to its African American citizenry, then it must also acknowledge that it is engaging in the politically popular, still in practice today by all political parties alike, non-interference protocols of benign neglect first introduced to the Nixon administration by Daniel Patrick Moynihan.

Who from the city is going to explain how an atmosphere of racial reconciliation exists when the legitimate concerns of the African American community continue to be ignored? Who is going to tell us how we overcome our past to grab a hold of our future, which was this year's theme for Black History Month, while continuing to entertain those who want to shape our collective psyche and social consciousness by rewriting the past in a way that is favorable to a cause and legacy that did not and does not respect the right to life and pursuit of liberty and justice Black people are entitled to first and foremost as the architects and builders of every institution and industry this country is founded on? Black people certainly cannot depend on the Washington DC chapter of the NAACP pursue historical authenticity and accuracy because as was already stated, its leadership stood by in a press conference and watched the Senators from Virginia, the seat of Confederate power, label Black African slaves as involuntary laborers and indentured servants.

It is abhorrent at best to be constantly reminded, with consistent persistence, of this heritage when in public spaces and places with our children and grandchildren. The assertion that confederate memorials and street names in any city of the United States are nothing more than innocent attempts to pay respect to fallen U.S. soldiers, who were just following orders, is as sickening a statement as those made by the Nazi guards who were just following orders when they marched millions of Germany's Jewish citizens to their deaths. In 1958 Congress made it a law that Confederate soldiers are to be recognized as veterans of the U.S., but if Germany had passed such a law for Hitler's Nazi soldiers, that very same Congress would have lost their collective minds and this country would have sought to slap sanctions on Germany without hesitation. As a member of the world community we reject this nonsense for the distasteful display of cowardice that it represents. However, when it comes to commemorating the United Confederate States, we willingly meet to engage in civil discourse with its descendants and supporters to accept their hate born rhetoric. How is this not a blatant demonstration of hypocrisy that seems an awful lot like safe popular politics?

To claim these reminders of confederate aggression against Black people and the United States are intended to honor sacrifices made on behalf of family history and pride is attempting to discount, discredit, and dismiss the racism, the bigotry, the intolerance and the hate for Black people the confederacy is known to represent. When someone says it's about heritage or history, well those particular reasons are inseparable from hate, because it is about hate. It's about racism, and it's about slavery. The two are not independent of one another.

For every minute, hour, day, week, month, and year spent over 250 years in slavery, 90 years living under Jim Crow, 80 years existing in Peonage slavery, 60 years of separate but not equal our ancestors lost their heritage, history, language, religion, traditions, families, lives, property, lands, achievements, and their collective will to live has been severely diminished. Can any of the sons or daughters of the United Confederate States say they know what it feels like to have no knowledge of their ancestral heritage and history before slavery? No they cannot say they know what this feels like, because they were not the ones stripped of their ancestral heritage, history, language, religion, or lives for the politically popular benefit of capitalistic profits. No, the ancestors of these confederate sons and daughters are the responsible party for

setting the country on a course of uncivilized internal discourse, also known as the Civil War, simply because they wanted to be proud owners of Black African bodies.

Here we are in 2016, almost 400 years later, and these descendants and supporters of the confederate practice of having Black Africans as slaves are demanding Black people make more sacrifices and give up more of our power by accepting and accommodating their practice of honoring their slave ownership of our Black African ancestors? Have not Black people sacrificed, lost, gone through, and been made to give up enough blood, dignity, and self-respect in honor of these symbols and heritage that inspire, ignite, and incite racial hatred, oppression, aggression, intolerance, ignorance, violence, and injustice? We think the simple answer is yes.

Therefore we expect the Ad-Hoc Advisory Group to recommend the City of Alexandria do what is conscience and right. Remove these symbols of hate and bigotry so we can stop honoring deplorable behavior and begin respecting the safe and popular position that all men and women are created equal. This is a value the country proudly struts before the world to such regimes as China, Iran, North Korea and Cuba to name a few, yet it turns a blind eye for political expediency sake to the human tragedy occurring to Black people within its own borders. The sons and daughters of the confederacy make their position clear, and it is now time for the Black citizens of the City of Alexandria to make theirs known.

Given the history of death and destruction aimed at the Black people of this country, and the betrayal of trust against the United States, all of which was executed by the Confederate States, a refusal to remove or relocate from public spaces and places all confederate street names and memorials in the City of Alexandria is a clear message to every Black person across this nation that not one more dime of our collective \$1.3 trillion dollar buying power should be spent or invested in the businesses of Alexandria, especially those sympathetic to the confederate cause. It is the intent of Shop Talk Live to influence and galvanize such a local, state, and national movement should the City of Alexandria decide to keep showing sympathy to the traitorous confederate cause.

w: shoptalklive.org | e: Info@shoptalklive.org | twitter: Shop_Talk_Live
fb: Shop Talk Live, Inc DMV

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Chaka

Last Name

Lindsey

Title

Director of Operations

Organization

Shop Talk Live, Inc - DMV Branch

Street Address

426 Hume Ave

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22301

Email Address

info@shoptalklive.org

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Mar 30, 2016 12:40:46 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

IF it is decided to change street names in Alexandria:

- (1) Change *all* Union- and Confederate-related street names to be fair, equitable, and sensitive to *all* citizens, and
- (2) The City should be responsible for paying citizens, independent business, etc., the cost of having address information changed on checks, signage, web sites, buildings, etc. It may not be their choice to change the information. Why should they have to bear the cost?

You can revise, rewrite, and try to erase history but remember what Santayana wrote (in The Life of Reason, 1905): "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Lea

Last Name

Fowlie

Title**Organization****Street Address**

4747 W. Braddock Rd

Apt/Suite/Office

#104

City

Alexsndria

State

VA

Zip

22311

Email Address

leafowlie@comcast.net

Phone Number

703-379-0340

2.

Confirmation Email

Mar 30, 2016 21:41:37 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

I was dismayed by the ignorance of history and the facts displayed by several of the speakers at the session on March 28. Rather than present facts, they hurled unfounded accusations and unsubstantiated facts.

I won't go into a long dissertation on all of the misinformation presented to the committee, as I am sure its members have the intelligence to sift out fact from fiction.

Here are two egregious examples of oft-repeated errors and the facts:

"Jefferson Davis should have been tried for treason!"

Fact: to quote the Salmon Chase, the Chief justice of the Supreme Court, who would have presided at a Davis trial in Richmond: "If you bring these leaders to trial, it will condemn the North, for by the Constitution, secession is not rebellion...His [Jefferson Davis] capture was a mistake. His trial will be a greater one. We cannot convict him of treason."

If one follows Chase's argument and Davis had been tried, Davis would not have been convicted. Then we would stand today with the fact that a US Court had found secession legal, the US government invaded a foreign, sovereign state, and nearly a million lives taken in an illegal war.

"Robert E. Lee took an oath and should have been tried for treason!"

Fact: Lee took an oath upon completion of his education at West Point. In 1861, having more than fulfilled his duty to the United States, he resigned his commission from the US Army and retired. At the time, Lee commented: "I look upon secession as anarchy. If I owned the four millions of slaves in the South I would sacrifice them all to the Union, but how can I draw my sword upon Virginia, my native State?"

In the spring of 1865, the new president, Andrew Johnson, was vehemently in favor of trying Confederate civil and military leaders from what he called treason. Johnson's efforts to prosecute military leaders was curtailed by Ulysses S. Grant, who placed himself in the way of an attempt to try Robert E. Lee and other Confederate military leaders for treason after they had been indicted by a grand jury in Norfolk, Virginia.

In a face-to-face meeting, Grant told Johnson: "I will resign the command of the army rather than execute any order to arrest Lee or any of his commanders so long as they obey the law."

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Joseph Judson

Last Name

Smith III

Title

citizen

Organization

Judson Smith and Associates

Street Address

401 Wilkes Street

Apt/Suite/Office**City**

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22314

Email Address

jossmith@mba1962.hbs.edu

Phone Number

703-299-1725

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 03, 2016 06:29:05 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Council's proposal to remove a statue memorializing our city's common soldiers who died to protect their state, homes and loved ones from invaders is should be unthinkable. And erase all Confederate street names! Must we be defined by such misguided and ignominious acts? George Washington's, George Mason's and Robert E. Lee's hometown must set a better example – not destroy our American heritage.

Here are some suggestions for Council to express our feelings after the brutal murder of nine innocent people in Charleston, SC by a clearly mentally disturbed young man.

Pass a resolution decrying this heinous act and expressing our deepest sympathies to the families of those senselessly killed. Send each family a copy. This should have been done immediately.

Establish a committee of people knowledgeable about Confederate history to create a city-supported museum to present and preserve our 19c. heritage, especially the antebellum, War, Reconstruction and post- Reconstruction periods. Remarks at the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names March 28 public hearing revealed we have many citizens unfamiliar with that perspective and/or have mistaken but firm misunderstandings. The resulting sharp bitterness among our citizens must be addressed constructively. For 50 years Fort Ward has presented frequent programs about the Union side, but there has not been an equal city-backed effort for the Confederate side although Alexandrians were Confederate-leaning despite occupation.

We have many museums, parks, statues and cemeteries relating Black history. However, based on Black citizens' March 28 fervent testimony about their continued anguish at seeing physical reminders of slavery, the city should remove the Edmonson sisters statue, the sculpture and bas reliefs at the Contraband and Freedmen's Cemetery, the bronze sculpture and others in the beautifully landscaped African Heritage Park, all the graves, and limit the Black History Museum exhibits. Require the Urban League, owner of the Freedom House Museum building which held slaves, to post signs warning about its disturbing exhibits. Ironically, those impassioned speakers did not mention pain at seeing those reminders of the cruelty of slavery or call for their removal; they wanted just all Confederate ones removed. I wonder about their support for diversity in our city.

Many speakers who claimed to love and know history admitted not knowing why our streets were named for Confederate officers and wanted the names changed. Wanda Dowell's Feb. 8 testimony and Gazette letter noted that for the War's Centennial, the city spent \$500,000 for Union Fort Ward and has funded its expenses since. Council named new West End streets for Confederate officers. Because street signs were needed, the city incurred no extra expense for the Confederate remembrance. For this "balanced" approach, Alexandria received rare honors: its first All-America city award and a Congressional resolution.

If Council changes the streets' names, including Jefferson Davis Highway, hundreds of citizens and businesses will incur extra expenses and inconveniences - and memorable irritation. Also, Council will have to return our All-America City Award.

A city in debt and facing large necessary expenses should not spend money unnecessarily. Those favoring these unnecessary proposed changes must bear all their expenses and make the necessary adjustments so those affected experience the least trouble and disruption. That also includes taking care of "Appomattox", a priceless antique art treasure widely admired for artistic excellence. If not, they are not entitled to call the tune; their demands are just "whistling 'Dixie'".

A third recommendation: Effective immediately and until a new museum for our 19c. heritage opens, use

Fort Ward as a venue to present both sides as was done in the past, according to former director Wanda Dowell. Because Fort Ward has emphasized the Union side since it opened and many citizens are unfamiliar with the Confederate side's history, the museum should emphasize the Confederate side until the new museum is ready. Besides displaying Confederate articles, Fort Ward should present the principles behind various secession movements that arose several times before 1861. For example, Northern statesmen urged secession as early as 1803 and voted for it at the Hartford Convention. In 1846, former President John Quincy Adams, serving in the House of Representatives, urged secession and the formation of a Northern Confederacy. No states objected to their doing so.

It would also be appropriate to display a copy of Virginia's Ordinance of Secession which explains that our state seceded because "the federal government had perverted its powers, not only to the injury of the people of Virginia, but to the oppression of the Southern slaveholding States." Virginians had opposed secession until after Lincoln called for 75,000 troops to invade her sister Southern states and compel them back into the Union.

Note: Contrary to a March 28 assertion by a speaker that all the states seceded because they wanted to continue slavery, Virginia and other states seceded for other principles. That speaker missed including those essential points. I too have read all the secession ordinances.

The new 19c. museum should be housed at Lloyd House, which the city already owns and it has important associations with Robert E. Lee, although that information is omitted in the pamphlet about the house's history. The city lost the Boyhood Home in 2000, Alexandria's only three-star museum in the AAA Guide, and now has no property, statue or other memorial to one of our greatest sons.

The Office of Historic Alexandria could be housed in a restored Ramsey Homes building. Doing so would add interest to that part of the city and be a constructive use of that property.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Ellen

Last Name

Tabb

Title

Organization

Street Address

2507 Central Avenue

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22302

Email Address

ProfTabb1@hotmail.com

Phone Number

703-549-0466

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 04, 2016 16:24:04 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Request that, at the 11th April, 2016 meeting of the Advisory Group, the following be questions be answered,

and the questions and answers entered as a matter of record:

1. Why were none of the Alexandria 501(c)(3) organizations of Confederate heritage not included as members of the Advisory Group?
2. Specifically, why was the Alexandria chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, one of these 501(c)(3) organizations and owner of Statue Appomattox, not designated an Advisory Group member?
3. Was the omission of these organizations an oversight or deliberate?
4. If deliberate, what was the rationale for doing so?

Thank You

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

James

Last Name

Hardaway

Title

Mr.

Organization

Self

Street Address

311 South Union Street

Apt/Suite/Office**City**

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22314

Email Address

halhardaway@msn.com

Phone Number

4346459897

2.

Confirmation Email

| Apr 05, 2016 10:03:16 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Request that, at the 11th April, 2016 meeting of the Advisory Group, the following be questions be answered,

and the questions and answers entered as a matter of record:

1. Why were none of the Alexandria 501(c)(3) organizations of Confederate heritage included as members of the Advisory Group?
2. Specifically, why was the Alexandria chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, one of these 501(c)(3) organizations and owner of Statue Appomattox, not designated an Advisory Group member?
3. Was the omission of these organizations an oversight or deliberate?
4. If deliberate, what was the rationale for doing so?

Thank You

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

James

Last Name

Hard

Title

Organization

Street Address

Apt/Suite/Office

City

State

Zip

Email Address

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 05, 2016 10:13:45 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

I apologize if you are receiving this for the 2nd time, but my computer hiccuped on my initial submission, and cannot tell if you got this or not.

Request that, at the 11th April, 2016 meeting of the Advisory Group, the following be questions be answered, and the questions and answers entered as a matter of record:

1. Why were none of the Alexandria 501(c)(3) organizations of Confederate heritage included as members of the Advisory Group?
2. Specifically, why was the Alexandria chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, one of these 501(c)(3) organizations and owner of Statue Appomattox, not designated an Advisory Group member?
3. Was the omission of these organizations an oversight or deliberate?
4. If deliberate, what was the rationale for doing so?

Thank You

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

James

Last Name

Hard

Title

Alexandria Citizen

Organization

Self

Street Address

311 South Union Street

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22314

Email Address

halhardaway@msn.com

Phone Number

4346459897

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 06, 2016 09:49:32 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

I would respectfully urge that the statue remain in place, that no street or highway names be changed, and that the official Confederate flag fly on the two aforementioned Virginia State holidays.

It would be unduly expensive to change street/highway signage, not to mention signage on the Interstate highways, too.

In addition, as a practical matter, changing street/highway names would involve the U.S. Postal Service. My own experience leads me to believe that mail and checks would be misdirected/delayed for years to come.

Although, I do not live in the City, I do pay taxes to the City. Part of the charm of Alexandria revolves around it's unique history. The City should include and present all aspects of that history.

I hope that the City Council will not exclude and eliminate parts of Alexandria's history that are now seen by some as politically incorrect, even though it may be politically expedient to do so.

Thank you,

Mike Hahn

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Michael

Last Name

Hahn

Title

Mr.

Organization

Member of several civic groups in the City of Alexandria.

Street Address

4270 35th St., South

Apt/Suite/Office

#A-2

City

Arlington

State

Virginia

Zip

22206-1829

Email Address

MHahn10262@cs.com

Phone Number

703-578-3138

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 06, 2016 17:39:36 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

I wish I could attend the meeting but I can't. So this is what I have to say; Leave all things as they are without any changes and forget all of this nonsense over a false controversy. Alexandria is a southern town and should hold in high regards its heritage and keep honoring it's Confederate history.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

J. Terence

Last Name

Moore

Title**Organization**

Sons of Confederate Veterans

Street Address

6325 Indian Run Pkwy

Apt/Suite/Office**City**

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22312

Email Address

jt.moore@verizon.net

Phone Number

7033549610

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 07, 2016 00:59:47 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Instead of renaming all of the streets (except for Jeff Davis Highway; that one I get), consider rededicating them to people with the same last name who were not affiliated with the CSA. A lot of those generals were from local families that probably have other members worth honoring. It would avoid the hassle of changing addresses for so many people.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

James

Last Name

Corno

Title**Organization****Street Address**

111 N Floyd St

Apt/Suite/Office**City**

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22304

Email Address

jimmy.corno@gmail.com

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 08, 2016 16:18:11 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

April 8, 2016

Alexandria City Council
301 King St
Alexandria VA 22314

Dear Members of the Council,

I write to express my concern and disappointment with what I observed on March 28, 2016 at the Ad Hoc Advisory Group meeting on Confederate Memorials and street names.

I was shocked at the tone of much of the commentary desiring the elimination of memorials and renaming of streets. To hear comparisons of the officers of the Confederate States of America military to Nazis, to Hitler, and the atrocities of the Third Reich is in my view, unconscionable in every respect. Further to hear the terms "murderers", "rapists", "thugs", "bigots" used during this forum, in my view, destroyed any notion of the dignity, civility, or decorum that evening.

I found this level of apparent hatred and animosity frightening and appalling. I was also disappointed that there was no effort by the committee to advocate restraint and civil discourse. I worry that this dialogue will lead to further animus rather than creating an environment amenable to solution.

Abraham Lincoln was dedicated to making reconciliation his top priority. Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox and our government subsequently, established a process for pardons. The Confederate military that complied with these conditions were accepted legally as re-united citizens and were eligible and considered for retirement by the U.S. government.

Lastly, eradication of all things "confederate" because of slavery raises the ugly specter of wanting to eradicate all things about and from our founding fathers, slave holders, George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, George Mason, James Madison, and others from that time. While nobody can conceivably think of slavery as anything other than an abomination, that was part of our history well over 150 years ago. Tearing down memorials and eliminating street names, in my view, will only further divide people and increase animosity, even hatred within our society. I recommend all be left as it is.

Sincerely,

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Last Name

Title

Organization

Street Address

Apt/Suite/Office

City

State

Zip

Email Address

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 08, 2016 16:20:49 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

I was privileged to attend the Group's March 28 meeting. I listened to those presenting both positions, but was unable to understand how those who wished to make the changes could support their position in good conscience. The first person to speak appeared to believe that changing the names of streets over 150 years subsequent to the unconscionable actions would somehow relieve their pain. Another spoke of a relative who was not granted a mortgage. No information was provided to support the contention the relative should have been entitled to such a loan. A third person suggested that many who are in favor of this action do not go to any of the locations involved in the subject of this controversy. One might wonder if those of the Jewish faith would feel that eliminating the concentration camps in Europe would erase all thought and understanding of the horrible events which occurred there. One of the speakers pointed out the similarity of this action to that found in Orwell's opus "1984" where those people and things that were no longer "politically correct" were simply erased from history. This is a standard operating procedure in "several" nations of today's world such as Russia air brushing Trotsky out of pictures and the North Korean regime doing the same to those unfortunate enough to run afoul of the "Dear Leader's" wishes. Even more to the point we have American universities insuring that only those of the appropriate view point be allowed to speak in order to insure that students be "protected" from anything which might cause them any mental anguish.

On a more practicable level, I would suggest the cost of these changes be considered. This includes what understand to be over a quarter million dollars just for new signs. It also should include the cost of all those who have to change their address and insure that all necessary people and organizations be informed. I moved every nine months or so growing up and such a burden is not to be taken lightly. Even the cost of companies changing signs and paper work could be substantial.

Thank you.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

John

Last Name

Murphy

Title**Organization****Street Address**

2181 Jamieson Ave

Apt/Suite/Office

unit 610

City

Alexandria

State

Va.

Zip

22314

Email Address

jlmurphy6@comcast.net

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 09, 2016 19:27:44 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

I live on N. Early Street off of Duke Street. I understand N. Early is one of the streets under consideration for a name change.

This is not a simple change-street- signs issue. It could possibly affect close to 50% of the streets in the City changing names. Residents will have to change their address on government documents including driver's licenses/permits, vehicle registrations; bank accounts, medical/insurance/employer related information and other legal documents as well as the many internet sites one does business with on a regular basis. This will also have an impact on the delivery of mail, 911 emergency/police/fire responses, DMV, IRS, GPS, existing maps, very likely the Decennial Census that is currently in the planning stages with a shortened planning window now that we are in 2016. There is also considerable impact to the hundreds of businesses on South Pickett, Van Dorn, Walker, as well as, Beauregard Street and Wheeler Avenue and the financial costs of the changing their addresses.

As a resident who will be forced to change my address should a name change occur to N. Early Street, I find it a great inconvenience and personal administrative burden in both time and effort. It is one thing when one moves on one's own and another when Government foists a change on it's citizens.

It will also result in considerable cost the City to rename the streets in terms of time/effort/planning/designing new signage and the cost of implementing/installing new signage.

I understand the concerns of many about the Confederate history. It is one thing to remove statues, it is however another undertaking altogether changing street names especially when close to half of City of Alexandria may undergo name changes. Smoothing over history and pretending it never existed seems misguided. It is history. Good, bad or ugly. Teach to the future to explain the history.

Thank-you for your consideration of my comments.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Fran

Last Name

Vogel

Title

Organization

Street Address

41 N. Early Street

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22304

Email Address

fran.vogel@verizon.net

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 10, 2016 21:02:02 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

My name is Daniel Jones. I came to Washington following graduation from Law School to work at the US Attorney's Office and bought a townhouse in Alexandria in 1972. I chose to live in Alexandria specifically because of its important role in American History. Bethesda, McLean, Arlington, Oakton have no historic village and, therefore, little charm. Alexandria is unique and, therefore, valuable - specifically because of its historic streets, 18th and 19th century buildings, and the great men who called this city home. It is simply impossible for any serious student of American history not to develop a monumental respect for the undeniable courage, self-sacrifice, and incontrovertible strength of character of two of Alexandria's native sons; namely, Generals George Washington and Robert E. Lee. In many respects, we are an original Williamsburg. We have a duty and a very real responsibility to safeguard and maintain the historic sites and monuments of the unique city they knew and loved for future generations.

Alexandria was once the third largest seaport in North America and was sacked by the British in the War of 1812. Thereafter, no effort was made to change the names of King, Queen, Prince, Princess, Duke, Royal, Pitt, or St. Asaph Streets. Alexandria was invaded again in May, 1861 and many brave young residents assembled at the intersection of Prince and South Washington Streets in order to defend their families and property. The courage and sacrifice of those who did not return from that horrific war is appropriately honored by the monument "Appomattax". Historic monuments are essential in a civilized society – not because they celebrate good or evil – but because they mark an important event in history. And ignorance of history necessarily leads to barbarism as we have recently witnessed in the wanton and tragic destruction of priceless ancient artifacts by ISIS in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Palmyra, Syria.

As always, education is the answer. Only the shrill and ignorant attempt to erase history. Ethnocide is the deliberate and systematic destruction of the culture of an ethnic group. The Alexandria City Council, which has been entrusted with the goodwill of its citizens, cannot and certainly should not attempt to deny or cover up any part of the 267 years since the town of Alexandria was chartered in 1749. Our role in American History is what makes us different from other Washington suburbs... and more attractive. I urge you to leave our history alone.

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Daniel

Last Name

Jones

Title

Organization

Street Address

3903 Pine Brook Road

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Alexandria

State

Va.

Zip

22310

Email Address

h.daniel.jones.iii@gmail.com

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 11, 2016 10:22:46 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

Statement to the
Ad Hoc Advisory Group on
Confederate Memorials and Street Names

By Richard E. Merritt

Submitted March 8, 2016

I was dismayed to learn ("War of Passive Aggression, Alexandria Gazette Packet, February 11, 2016) that of the eight white residents who addressed the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names at their February 8 meeting, every one of them spoke against renaming the streets and moving the memorial. Had I been present, the paper would have reported one white speaker in support of renaming and removal.

I would suggest that where one stands on the issue depends very much on how you answer the question posed by John Hennessy, a historian with the National Park Service: "Is it possible to honor the Confederates without honoring the Confederacy?" My view is that it is not possible; these memorials, and what they represent, I believe are totally antithetical to the cultural and community norms embraced by most Alexandrians today, and therefore should be removed.

The resolution unanimously adopted by City Council establishing the Advisory Group charged the body to develop recommendations on actions with respect to the Appomattox statue, the streets named after Confederate generals and the name of Jefferson Davis Highway. The only guidance given to the Group, however, was to "bring community values, knowledge, and ideas into its discussion and considerations." Unfortunately, there are no instructions as to which or whose "community values" should be considered.

Since the resolution sprung from the City Council, I checked the Council's Strategic Plan for guidance and landed on the following declaration: "Alexandria is a caring and inclusive community that values its rich diversity, history and culture..." So, it seems fair to say that "history," "diversity" and "inclusion" are all held in high esteem throughout the Alexandria community.

The question is: Given the very particular charge at hand before the Advisory Group, can these values be accommodated or reconciled?

On the one side, those favoring "history" argue that the symbols (the street names, statue, etc) convey only respect and regard for the confederate soldiers who fought and died or returned from the war, and therefore they must not be "vilified," nor their history "sanitized".

To others who favor "diversity and inclusion," however, those symbols have a very different meaning; they reflect an ugly period of racism, prejudice and division in our nation's history. They would likely acknowledge that many of the City's ancestors did fight bravely for the Confederacy, but they would be quick to add that they were fighting for a regime committed to white supremacy and racial purity.

No matter how well a few revisionist historians have managed to cover the misdeeds and crimes of the

Confederacy with what Sally Jenkins (see "Erasing ugly history isn't a cure," Washington Post, June 28, 2015) calls "a counterfeit varnish of patriotism," its true raison d'etre was and remains the clear enemy of communities that wish to foster racial and ethnic diversity and cultural inclusion.

So, with such contrasting views on the meaning of the symbols and their historical representation, it is very difficult to see how the values of "history" and "diversity/inclusion" can be reconciled in this instance. I believe a choice has to be made and for me the clear choice is diversity and inclusion.

In a recent article titled, "The Robert E. Lee Problem," New York Times columnist David Brooks wrote: "Every generation has a duty to root out the stubborn weed of prejudice from the culture." The Advisory Group is well-positioned to respond to that challenge and I sincerely hope it will. But in so doing, it must not allow itself to be distracted by the argument some would have us believe that this is all about "rewriting history".

It's "not about rewriting history," Brooks would counsel. "It's about shaping the culture going forward." At the same time, it's about coalescing around the communal values that we as Alexandrians want to live by and be known by. If we agree that diversity and inclusion shall remain among our most cherished values, then we must work even harder to diminish and devalue the symbols and artifacts of racism, bigotry and prejudice that undermine those values.

The resolution creating the Advisory Group called for more than "community values" to be brought to bear on the discussion; it called for new ideas as well. Here's two I'm proposing for the Advisory Group's consideration.

First, in an unmistakable nod to "diversity" and "inclusion," let's rename every street sign within the city limits of Alexandria that bears the name Jefferson Davis (the president of the Confederacy) to William D. or Bill Euille, the first African American mayor of the City of Alexandria.

Second, let's donate the Appomattox statue on South Washington Street to the new National Museum of African American History and Culture, which opens its doors in September of this year. It would be a very appropriate "resting place" for our Confederate soldier and it would be only a few Metro stops away for those who care to visit him.

In his place, however, the City might wish to consider another statue of a Confederate soldier -- one who exemplified values of equality, tolerance and inclusion, following his service to the Confederacy. I speak of General James Longstreet, who was a member of Robert E. Lee's inner circle, but, according to Charles Lane ("A better subject for a monument", Washington Post, January 28, 2016) "a rare ex-rebel" who after Appomattox "urged fellow white Southerners to support the federal government and help rebuild their region on the basis of greater racial equality." Moreover, according to Lane, "In the 1870s, he commanded a biracial state militia loyal to Louisiana's Reconstruction government, aggravating an old war wound while fighting alongside his troops against violent white supremacists in the streets of New Orleans."

Richard E. Merritt
Alexandria, VA

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Richard

Last Name

Merritt

Title

Organization

Street Address

2729 Franklin Ct.

Apt/Suite/Office

City

Alexandria

State

VA

Zip

22302

Email Address

merrittapprais@aol.com

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 11, 2016 15:41:59 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov

1. Public Feedback for Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Confederate Memorials and Street Names

1. Please provide your feedback:

AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH

BY

Alton S. Wallace, Ph.D.

In 2006, former Vice President Al Gore released a documentary on the environment entitled "An Inconvenient Truth". Without addressing the validity of the claims, it is the title of the documentary that we find most intriguing.

Whenever we are offering up any theory, position or narrative, it helps if we have facts and 'truth' on our side. However, occasionally, the facts and truths that surround our position are at odds with what we are trying to prove or postulate in the first place. We find that having such 'truths' getting in the way of our theory or narrative somewhat annoying—we call such 'truths', INCONVENIENT TRUTHS.

And so it is with the history of the City of Alexandria when we want to view it through the lens of the CONFEDERACY. Some of our citizens relish Alexandria's position as part of the Confederacy, and proudly tout its Confederate heritage. They indicate that we should not remove the Confederate statue from Washington Street or rename streets, for doing so would remove or diminish our Confederate heritage. However, the problem is, the 'facts' don't support the notion that we have much of a 'rich' Confederate heritage.

THE FACTS

According to all published research on Alexandria's role in the Civil War, we find these irrefutable truths:

1. On 22 May 1861 (Wednesday), Alexandria was still part of the Union, as the State of Virginia contemplated joining the Confederacy
2. On 23 May (Thursday), the State of Virginia adopted the Article of Secession and left the Union (Along with Alexandria, VA) to join the Confederacy. The vote was mid-afternoon.
3. On the very next day, 24 May (Friday) around 10:00 AM in the morning, Union troops captured Alexandria, returning it to the Union.
4. Alexandria remained in the Union for the remainder of the Civil War.
5. Alexandria NEVER rejoined the Confederacy, as it dissolved in April 1865 with the surrender at Appomattox and the subsequent escape of President Jefferson Davis to Danville, Greensboro and then further south.

So the facts (or 'truth') is this: Alexandria spent less than 20 hours as part of the CONFEDERACY! Really? Yep—look it up!

Throughout the Civil War (1861-1865) the Union flag flew in Alexandria from Market Square. Ships docking daily in the harbor near the Chart House Restaurant, were Union ships. The grain and supplies they off loaded were Union grain. The hay the horses ate here was Union hay. The oysters citizens ate up and down King Street at bars and restaurants were Union oysters. On Sunday when we held worship services throughout the city, the worship services were Union worship service. And the God we worshipped was the Union God.

So the facts (the inconvenient truth) is we have NO RICH CONFEDERATE HERITAGE!! We may wish for it, or even make it up, but Alexandria was UNION THROUGHOUT THE CIVIL WAR. We never got to rejoin

the Confederacy.

THE MYTH

How can that be 'true'? We all 'know' that Alexandria was a Confederate town and our Confederate statues and memorials and street names all speak to this heritage. How can you claim we were not part of the Confederacy?

Most of what we 'know' about the Civil War came not from the war itself, but from the LOST CAUSE narrative perpetuated on the Nation's conscious some 25 years after the War around 1890. It was then that the Daughters and Sons of the Confederacy began the 'Lost Cause' movement that essentially 'flipped' what had actually happened on its head. What was bad and horrible, was now made good and noble. It was in 1889 when Alexandria's statue was placed; it was about this same time that Monument Row in Richmond was begun. So it was not the War, but the 'rewrite' of the War that most of us 'know' about.

The Lost Cause narrative had six key postulates, but the top three were:

- Slavery wasn't really that bad
- And even if it was, the War was not about slavery, anyway
- And oh by the way, all those good Confederate sons who fought were brave, heroic, noble figures, worthy of a statue, and a street named for them and flowers placed on their grave every year at Confederate Memorial Day.

This was the myth perpetuated upon the American people, and subsequent books, movies (Gone with Wind) have engrained these notions into the American psyche, to the extent that we think they are 'true'.

RECOMMENDATION

Those who have studied the Civil War know both the 'facts' and the 'myths'. The 'myths' have been discredited by scholars around the world EXCEPT for those in the South who 'wrote' the Lost Cause narrative in the first place

With truth on the side of Alexandria being a UNION Town, perhaps the on-going debate affords us an opportunity to do 'what is right' based on 'truth' instead of continuing to do what is 'wrong' based on myth. About a year ago, Governor Nikki Haley in South Carolina when faced with a choice between 'right' and 'wrong' became a hero by doing what was 'right', and taking down the Confederate flag. A month ago when the State of North Carolina was facing a similar difficult decision (e.g., LGBT rights) they did what was 'wrong' and have become the laughing stock of the nation, with Fortune 500 companies fleeing the state.

What do we in Alexandria want to do? Do that which is 'right' and become a hero, or continue doing what is 'wrong' and become the laughing stock of the nation? The latter would be all the more troubling, when you realize it is being done in the presence of irrefutable (but 'inconvenient') truths.

.....Al Wallace, Ph.D. 11 April 2016

2. Please provide any contact information you would like the Advisory Group to receive. All fields are optional.

First Name

Alton

Last Name

Wallace

Title

Organization

Street Address

Apt/Suite/Office

City

State

Zip

Email Address

awallace@ida.org

Phone Number

2.

Confirmation Email

Apr 11, 2016 17:46:46 Success: Email Sent to: craig.fifer@alexandriava.gov