



**MEMORANDUM**

August 27, 2015

**TO:** Montgomery County Planning Board

**VIA:** Michael F. Riley, Director of Parks *MFR*  
 John Nissel, Deputy Director, Department of Parks *JN*  
 John E. Hench, Ph.D., Chief, Park Planning & Stewardship Division *JH*

**FROM:** Joey Lampl, Cultural Resources Manager, Park Planning and Stewardship Division *JL*  
 Jamie F. Kuhns, Senior Historian, Park Planning and Stewardship Division *JFK*  
 Shirl Spicer, Museum Manager, Park Planning and Stewardship Division *SS*

**SUBJECT:** County Council Request Concerning Relocation of Confederate Statue

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1) Relocate Confederate Statue to Beall Dawson House, home to the Montgomery County Historical Society, in Rockville or to private entity.
- 2) Transmit a letter from the Chairman to the County Executive and County Council President supporting staff's recommendation.

**BACKGROUND**

**Origins of the Monument**

Maryland was part of the Union during the Civil War, but Maryland was a slave-holding state. As a border state, its citizenry was divided. The majority of enlisted men fought for the Union (estimated 60,000), and a minority opted to fight for the Confederacy (estimated 25,000). Although the statue is a memorial to Confederate soldiers who fought during the Civil War, it was dedicated in 1913, fifty years after the Battle of Gettysburg, during the Jim Crow era. It was subsequently relocated in 1971 to the courthouse during the eras of Urban Renewal and the Civil Rights Movement. These contexts and the perceptions they evoke are relevant to today's conversation. A recent poll in *The Washington Post* found that on the issue of Confederate flags being removed from government spaces, 49% are in favor, 43% are opposed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [http://www.masslive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/08/i\\_pass\\_a\\_rebel\\_flag\\_almost\\_dai.html](http://www.masslive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/08/i_pass_a_rebel_flag_almost_dai.html)



**The Confederate monument on the grounds of the Historic Red Brick Courthouse, Rockville, Maryland**

As noted, the Confederate statue that stands in Rockville today was erected in 1913. Built by the Washington firm of Falvey Granite Company, its construction was paid by the E.V. White (Poolesville) and Ridgely Brown (Rockville) chapters of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) and the Ridgely Brown (Rockville) Camp of the United Confederate Veterans (UCV).<sup>2</sup> The 16-foot tall statue includes a life-sized bronze cavalry private atop a granite base with the following inscription:

*To  
Our Heroes  
of  
Montgomery Co.  
Maryland  
That We Through Life  
May Not Forget To Love  
The Thin Grey Line  
Erected A.D. 1913*

The small parcel on which this monument sits is owned by Montgomery County, Maryland. When originally dedicated, the statue stood in a triangular park across East Montgomery Avenue from the Red Brick Courthouse. Eighty years later, when downtown Rockville was redesigned in 1971, the statue was moved to its current location.

The parcel is included within the Rockville Old Courthouse Historic District, under the purview of the Rockville Historic District Commission. The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) holds a preservation easement on the “Red Brick Courthouse,” but has determined with its legal counsel that removal of the statue from the courthouse grounds would not require MHT’s approval.

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<sup>2</sup> The \$3600 necessary to construct the statue was secured through charity events sponsored by the two local UDC chapters and the Ridgely Brown Camp of the UCV, and also through public subscription.

### **National Context of Controversy Surrounding Confederate Symbols**

The subject of Confederate statues and symbols close to public seats of power has spurred a national controversy. Brought to the forefront after the tragic murders in Charleston, South Carolina, the current controversy has come down to two predominant approaches:

- 1) Leave the symbols in place, and enact further legislation to prevent future removal without approved consent.
- 2) Approve measures to relocate these symbols as these matters come before councils, historic district committees, or mayors.

If relocation is chosen, the next step is identifying an appropriate receiving site. Some local governments have chosen to place Confederate symbols in private hands, including museums dedicated to interpreting the monument in context and to cemeteries where soldiers are buried. Although measures are approved at the local level, in some cases relocation is being delayed or even reversed because of judicial intervention and/or state legislation.

Maryland Governor Larry Hogan has stated to the press that, in the case of Baltimore City, he believes city officials have the right to conduct a review of Confederate monuments, but there will be no further state assessment of Civil War related-symbols.

The Sons of the Confederacy has suggested that removal of Confederate monuments or graves breaks federal law, specifically U.S. Public Law 85-425. Sec. 410 (approved 1958). Their interpretation of the law gives Confederate veterans a full pardon (from treason) and provides for the same protections granted to all American veterans. Legal experts have cautioned that this reading of the law is incorrect in that the 1958 legislative measure was a means to extend pension benefits to spouses and children of Confederate veterans.

In 2002, the Tennessee Division of the UDC sued Vanderbilt University for breach of contract when the school sought to rename Confederate Memorial Hall, a building constructed with \$50,000 of UDC's contributed funds in 1935.<sup>3</sup> The Tennessee Chancery Court sided with the UDC, suggesting the school either retain the name or pay the money back plus inflation.

### **Critical Timeline Since June 2015**

(See Attachment A for a More Complete Timeline Since June 2015.)

On June 17, 2015 a tragic shooting of nine people at the Emanuel African American Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina ignited a vigorous national debate on Confederate symbols.

On July 14, 2015, County Council President George Leventhal stated that the County has the authority to move the statue if the public desires.

On July 17, 2015, Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett announced plans to relocate the Confederate statue off the courthouse grounds and that he was not opposed to storage.

On July 20, 2015, the City of Rockville held a public meeting on what to do with the statue. 55 citizens spoke.

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<sup>3</sup> "Vanderbilt Sued Over Hall's Name Change," *Washington Post* 18 October 2002.

On July 27, 2015, the statue was spray painted with “Black Lives Matter” and on July 31, 2015, the statue was boxed up to prevent further vandalism.

On July 30, 2015, Council President Leventhal sent a memorandum to his fellow councilmembers regarding the confederate statue. Therein he reminded them that he had previously asked Marlene Michaelson to convene a group of interested stakeholders to meet and discuss the future of the statue. He also indicated that he supported the County Executive’s recommendation to relocate the statue and believed that it should be placed in an appropriate location with new interpretive information that would fully tell – from all perspectives – what happened in Montgomery County during the Civil War as well as at the time the statue was constructed. He also offered a number of potential next steps including: 1) a request that Council staff (i.e., Ms. Michaelson) work with historic preservation staff in the County and City of Rockville and other interested parties to identify viable sites to relocate the statue, and 2) determine how public input could be solicited once viable sites have been identified to determine which one is preferable.

On July 31, Marlene Michaelson wrote to Commission staff in both the Department of Parks and Planning Department indicating that she was moving ahead with the steps outlined in the Council President’s memorandum. She asked for M-NCPPC’s assistance with identifying options for relocation. And on a more specific note, she asked for help assessing whether or not Woodlawn Manor Special Park might be an appropriate site for a new Civil War display that would include the statue. In response to Ms. Michaelson’s request, Director of Parks Michael F. Riley and Planning Director Gwen Wright assigned staff to assist with the effort.

The first meeting of the stakeholders occurred on July 27, 2015. Participants were asked to voice their opinions on three choices regarding the statue: 1) destroy it; 2) retain the statue at its current location with additional interpretive information; or 3) relocate it. Commission staff was not invited to this meeting. (See Attachment C, Minutes of the July 27, 2015 stakeholders meeting.) The stakeholders met a second time on August 11, 2015. Commission staff was present at the second meeting, and recommended that the statue remain in Rockville based on historic preservation best practice. Staff also suggested looking at private sites, explained constraints of park sites, and noted that staff’s participation did not constitute an endorsement of park sites nor an official Department or Commission position. Given the importance of this discussion, minutes of the meeting are included below.

## **SUMMARY OF MEETING REGARDING POTENTIAL SITES TO RELOCATE THE ROCKVILLE CONFEDERATE MONUMENT**

August 11, 2015

In July 2015, Council staff met with a group of individuals to discuss options related to the Confederate statue in Rockville. Based on the group's discussions and other information received from County constituents, the Council President indicated in a memorandum to his colleagues the following:

I support the County Executive's recommendation to relocate the statue. I further believe it should be placed in an appropriate location with new interpretive information that fully tells – from all perspectives – what happened in Montgomery County during the Civil War and at the time the statue was constructed. Our goal should not be to erase history, but to gain a better and deeper understanding that reflects a variety of perspectives.

The Council President asked Council staff to convene additional meetings to discuss potential locations for the Confederate Statue and Staff invited the following individuals, each of whom was able to attend a meeting on August 11, 2015:

Timothy Chesnutt, Director of Recreation and Parks, City of Rockville

Anthony Cohen, President, Menare Foundation and Button Farm

Bonnie Kirkland, Assistant Chief Administrative Officer, Office of the County Executive

Jamie Kuhns, Senior Historian, M-NCPPC

Joey Lampl, Cultural Resources Manager, M-NCPPC

Matthew Logan, Executive Director, Montgomery History

Joy Nurmi, Special Assistant to the County Executive

Nancy Pickard, Executive Director, Peerless Rockville

Anita Powell, President of the Montgomery County Maryland Branch NAACP and Lincoln Park Historical Foundation

Laurie-Anne Sayles, President, African American Democratic Club of Montgomery County

Scott Whipple, Supervisor of Historic Preservation Unit, M-NCPPC

Lisa Mandel-Trupp, Chief of Staff for Councilmember Sidney Katz attended the meeting as an observer. Attendance at the meeting did not mean that the individuals supported relocating the statue; representatives of historic groups indicated that they still preferred that it be maintained at its current location with new interpretive information. Staff from the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) identified potential park sites in response to a request from Council staff to do so, but this does not mean they support relocation of the statue to any of these park sites. Rockville and M-NCPPC staff were speaking as staff and not representing the Council or the Commission.

### **Group Comments**

The group agreed with the recommendation of the earlier working group that, once relocated, the statue should be placed in a display that would fully tell the story of the County's history from all perspectives, including those of both Confederate and Union supporters, as well as free blacks and slaves. Such a display should span the years from the Civil War through 1913, when the statue was constructed.

The group generally discussed whether the statue should be relocated on public or private land and Executive Staff indicated that the Executive preferred it not be on County land, but he has not reached any decisions regarding potential locations. The group identified three potential problems with private sites:

- there do not appear to be many options,
- it is possible that a private owner would choose not to provide public access (and those who wish to teach/learn about the County's history would no longer be able to use the statue for those purposes), and
- the government would lose control over how the statue is displayed and it is possible that it could be displayed in a way that some people would find offensive.

Group members recognized that it might be difficult, but not impossible, to find a private site that would provide public access and display the statue in an appropriate manner, but that it would worthwhile to continue to explore options.

In the course of discussions about different sites, group members agreed that interpretive signs in Rockville needed to be updated (regardless of whether the statue is still there) and those who had visited the Darnestown Heritage Park complimented M-NCPPC on the quality of the interpretive signs at that park and suggested they could be a model for new interpretive signs in Rockville.

Some group members wanted to revisit whether there was an appropriate way to retain the statue at its current location with better and more comprehensive interpretive elements. Some suggested transferring the land it is on to one of the historical non-profit organizations so that it is no longer on County land. Since the Council President had already recommended that the statue be relocated (and no other Councilmember advocated retaining it at its current location), Council staff tabled that conversation and indicated that those who hoped to change Councilmembers minds on this issue should contact them directly representing their organizations and/or groups. They will also have the opportunity to testify before the Rockville Historic District Commission.

### **Sites Considered**

Options considered by the Group include the following sites:

1. Beall-Dawson Historical Park
2. Rockville Veterans Park
3. Rockville Civic Center
4. Woodlawn Manor Cultural Park
5. Darnestown Square Heritage Park
6. Joseph White House

7. Calithea Farm
8. Jesup Blair Local Park
9. Battery Bailey/Westmoreland Hills Local Park
10. Dickerson Conservation Park
11. Blockhouse Point Conservation Park
12. Monocacy Cemetery
13. Returning the statue to the United Daughters of the Confederacy or a similar organization (e.g., Sons of Confederate Veterans)
14. Donating the statue to the new National Museum of African American History and Culture on the mall.

The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of different sites and potential criteria that could be used to decide among sites. Although the group did not endorse a specific list of criteria, suggestions for potential criteria included space to allow a full display that would present history from all perspectives, the ability to allow active interpretation (e.g., tours), existing historical displays, a connection to historical events, along/near a historical trail, designation as a site for a future historical interpretive facility, proximity to other displays/museums, retaining it in Rockville nears its current location, a location close to a busy area with significant foot traffic and the opportunity for many people to see it - or the opposite – a remote location so that only those who make a conscious effort are likely to see it.

#### **Potentially Viable Sites**

The group narrowed the list of options to five alternatives and ruled out each of the other sites as being an unsuitable location for the statue. The five locations are as follows:

1. Beall-Dawson Historical Park
2. Darnestown Square Heritage Park
3. Calithea Farm special Park
4. Jesup Blair Local Park
5. Returning the statue to the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) or a similar organization (e.g., Sons of Confederate Veterans -SCV)

Although the concept of donating it to the new National Museum of African American History and Culture was not ruled out, this appeared to be a less feasible option and therefore was not included in the list.

#### **Next Steps**

Before making this list publicly available for comments, group members will tell Council staff what additional information they believe is important to include with any descriptions of the sites to be publicly circulated. In addition, Anthony Cohen agreed to contact representatives of the UDC and SCV to determine whether they might be willing to accept the statue and if they would have a suitable location for it. The goal is to continue to compile information that can be made public no later than the last week in August.

For the public's benefit, Council staff summarized the outcome of the stakeholder's process in tabular form. Note that the stakeholder's agreed on five options for further consideration – and that three of the options involve M-NCPPC parks: Darnestown Square Heritage Park, Callithea Farm Special Park, and Jesup Blair Local Park. Council staff intends to post this chart on the Council's web-site during the week of August 24, 2015. Interested parties – including private individuals, elected officials, organizations, and representatives of public agencies – will be invited to provide comments to the County Council on the various options. The table appears below.



<b>POTENTIAL SITES TO RELOCATE STATUE WITH A CIVIL WAR DISPLAY</b>						
<b>Site</b>	<b>Size (acres)</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Historical Connection/ opportunity for active interpretation</b>	<b>Parking</b>	<b>Other Issues</b>
Beall-Dawson Historical Park	1.4	103 W. Monument St., Rockville	City of Rockville/ portions leased by Montgomery History	Would be adjacent to existing museum and Montgomery History (historical society), providing opportunity for active interpretation and proximity to related primary source materials.	Small parking lot and street parking should be sufficient.	Only option to keep statue in Rockville near its current location and at a site people are otherwise visiting for historical museum and displays. In a residential neighborhood. Would require HDC review and approval.
Calithea Farm Special Park	72.96	River Road, Potomac	M-NCPPC	The Blockhouse Point Conservation Park Master Plan (2003) identifies it as the location for a future Civil War Interpretive Center.	Would require additional parking and may require new access/entrance separate from equestrian activities.	Plans would need to accommodate existing equestrian activities. A new interpretive center would require significant capital investment and is not yet funded.
Darnestown Square Heritage Park	0.7	14019 Darnestown Rd., Darnestown	M-NCPPC	Heritage park with 9 interpretive signs about the Civil War and the town's history.	No parking exclusive to park; only has pedestrian access. Adjacent to Harris Teeter with large parking lot.	Along Maryland Civil War Trail. Constrained site both due to size and because it has a burial ground and champion trees.

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Jesup Blair Local Park	24.2	Silver Spring	M-NCPPC	Site has 5 existing Civil War interpretive signs. Site was location of both Union and Confederate movements and Blair family has ties to the Civil War and President Lincoln's Cabinet.	15 designated spaces and an adjacent college parking garage.	Adjacent to Montgomery College campus. Historic Jesup Blair House on site is vacant at this time and may be an appropriate location for a historical museum, but it requires additional funding for rehabilitation.
Edgehill Farm	198 acres	Gaithersburg/Unity	Privately owned in same ownership for 9 generations	220-year old farm includes historical buildings from Civil War period. Current owners are descendants of Confederate soldiers and one is a member of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC), the organization that built the Rockville statue. Farm has received historic preservation awards for maintaining historic buildings on the property.	Owners would create temporary parking area for visitors on lawn or gravel lane on days it is open to the public.	Private ownership means the County would not have oversight over any display, but owner is willing to consider allowing the County or historical groups to add interpretive information. Owner indicated a willingness to allow visitors to come to the farm to see the statue a few times each year (e.g., Heritage Days), but it would not be open as often as public sites.

### **Practical Considerations for New Relocation Site**

The County Executive has offered to pay for the cost of relocating the monument and preparing the ground to receive it, however there are additional hard costs that must be secured by the County and paid to whatever entity receives the statue. These include:

- Access (if driveway, path, parking, trail, etc. are needed or to achieve ADA compliance)
- Fencing
- Lighting (depending on which site is selected)
- Security
- Conservation
- Interpretive Signage and other Historical Display Items

The County and stakeholders should explore the use of collaborative in-kind services that any receiving entity will need, such as assistance in research and design of interpretive displays to represent a more complex analysis of the Civil War and its aftermath. M-NCPPC is willing to assist with this effort.

### **Discussion of Three Non-Recommended Park Sites**

Park staff believes the statue should not be relocated to an M-NCPPC park. Detailed descriptions of the three park sites follow.

### Calithea Farm Special Park

This 91.24-acre park on River Road in Potomac just east of the Ag Reserve was purchased by the Commission between 2003 and 2006. It is currently leased until 2025 to an equestrian center. The park features pasture land for horses and designated areas for horseback riding. To the west is the C&O Canal National Park. In between River Road and the Calithea Farm proper are two privately owned parcels, one improved and fenced in with a large house and the other, unimproved.

The Civil War connection at Calithea comes from the immediately adjacent Blockhouse Point Conservation Park. That park contains the site of “the Camp at Muddy Branch,” a Union camp that also features the remains of a blockhouse built in 1862 by the 19th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry. On July 11, 1864, Colonel John Singleton Mosby of the 1<sup>st</sup> Virginia Partisan Rangers, which included a number of recruits from Montgomery County, crossed the Potomac River to support General Jubal Early’s strike on Washington, D.C. At Blockhouse Point, Confederate raiders found the deserted camp of the 8th Illinois Cavalry, which they then burned.

Because Blockhouse Point is a designated conservation park, manmade improvements to such a park are purposefully avoided. Blockhouse Point features several natural surface trails throughout. The following language in the final approved Blockhouse Point Conservation Park Master Plan (December 2003) explains the interpretive vision:

*While the primary purpose for the acquisition [of Calithea Farm] is to preserve and maintain the farm as an equestrian facility, it will also provide the opportunity to develop an interpretive center that would focus on the role of Montgomery County in the Civil War. Building such a center in Blockhouse Point Conservation Park proper would not be compatible with the approved uses of a conservation park as noted in the Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Master Plan. A separate plan for Calithea Farm should be prepared at some future date. The plan should focus on maintaining the property as a publicly owned horse farm and consider the possibility of developing an interpretive center that would focus on*

Calithea Farm Park (91.24 acres)



Aerial Map of Calithea Farm Special Park

*the role of Montgomery County in the Civil War.*<sup>4</sup> Should Calithea Farm rise to the top of public opinion, the County would be asked to store the monument temporarily until such time as a proper display can be created. A less desirable outcome would be to place the Confederate statue outside on the grounds of Calithea Farm in the near term in an area approximate to the master-planned, future interpretive center. Public access to the statue and an interim Civil War display would have to be via Blockhouse Point because the existing equestrian center driveway puts the public and horses into close contact. If Calithea receives the statue, it would need to be fenced in in order to separate people from pastured horses. It also would be important that an exhibit there remain unlit to discourage flying insects that cause horse disease.



**View of possible future natural surface trail that could lead from Blockhouse Point Conservation Park to Calithea Farm.**



**Existing equestrian facilities at Calithea Farm**



**View to Calithea Farm from Blockhouse Point Conservation Park showing approximate area of master planned location for future Civil War interpretive center.**

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<sup>4</sup> The following language was included in the September 2003 Staff Draft version of the Blockhouse Point Conservation Park Master Plan (page 24): “Facilities could include: an interpretive center including areas for displays, an auditorium, classrooms, a laboratory, a parking lot, and stormwater management facility. The complex would encompass approximately 3 acres.”

### Darnestown Square Heritage Park

Darnestown Square Heritage Park is a 0.70 acre tract on Route 28, near its intersection with Seneca Road (Route 112). It is adjacent to the Darnestown Village Center on the west side where an expanded upscale grocery store, Harris Teeter, operates. There are private residences on the east side of the park, but these homes are buffered by large evergreen trees. The park property was received in dedication from the Darnestown Limited Partnership in November 1995. Area residents represented by the Darnestown Civic Association requested that M-NCPPC develop this pocket-park into a focal point for their community to provide contemplative seating areas and space for community gatherings and also to showcase aspects of local heritage, including the on-site graveyard.

The Civil War connection at Darnestown comes from the presence of 18,000 Union soldiers stationed in this small town in 1861. The town served as a natural point of defense for Washington, D.C., as Federal leadership knew that if Confederate troops crossed the Potomac River they could invade the Nation's Capital from the North. While in Darnestown, Union soldiers guarded all fords across the Potomac River, protected the C&O Canal, searched all travelers moving through the area, and established a provost guard. In addition, a Signal Corps School was established about 1.5 miles southwest of Darnestown at the Magruder Farm. An especially large Chestnut tree was fitted with platforms for signalers. Using signal flags and telescopes, information was relayed in a chain from Harper's Ferry to Georgetown, including a signal at Darnestown. As the war progressed, the Union presence in Darnestown decreased, but movement by both sides continued through this tiny town for the duration. The area sustained heavy damage to crops, livestock, buildings, and fences as the result of occupation by so many troops.

The Darnestown Square Heritage Park Facility Plan (2007) set the stage for the current interpretive program. Existing interpretive signage focuses on the town's history, the cemetery, and Darnestown during the Civil War. Elements of original art sculpture are found in the pergola and the park includes several benches and landscaped features.

Should Darnestown Square Heritage Park rise to the top of public opinion, the challenges will be: Darnestown Square is the smallest of the park options with limited open space for a monument and additional signage. The site already accommodates nine interpretive signs. Although there is artwork interspersed in the park, local residents were told no monuments would be installed at Darnestown Square during a 2007 public meeting. There are only two zones available for additional improvements: 1,917 square feet in the middle and 1,307 square feet in the rear (see photos below). There is a cemetery within this park that contains an estimated 30 graves, potentially the final resting place for members of the William Darne family, his slaves, as well as Union soldiers. According to state law (Criminal Law §10-402 and Criminal Law §10-404), this archaeological feature must remain undisturbed.

Darnestown Heritage Park (0.70 acres)



Aerial Map of Darnestown Square Heritage Park

Furthermore, no construction equipment should be allowed to travel on and/or rest on this portion of the park. The monument also cannot be placed on the northeast corner of the park because it could disturb the root zones of two Champion trees that stand in the adjoining privately-owned property. Currently, there is pedestrian access only. Harris Teeter has rights to all the surface parking spaces in the adjacent lot. Any change would need to be approved by the Planning Board. The community will be asked to reconcile a new feature to their Town Square and the established interpretation.



**View of Civil War Display area**



**Site of a burial ground that cannot be disturbed**

## Jesup Blair Local Park

Jesup Blair Local Park (14.14 acres)



Aerial Map of Jesup Blair Local Park

This 14.14-acre park sits at the district line with direct frontage on Georgia Avenue and Blair Road. It is also adjacent to Montgomery College Cultural Arts Center, and the northern and eastern part of the park acts as a de-facto part of the campus. Its central feature is the 1850 historic house of James and Mary Blair of the Blair Family, the founding family of Silver Spring. “The Moorings” is the only Blair House that still stands, but the others were in close proximity.

The Civil War connection at Jesup Blair comes from the Blair family’s role in Lincoln’s government and from Union and Confederate forces in the immediate area during the course of the war. Francis Preston Blair attempted to broker a deal wherein Robert E. Lee would become commanding officer of the Union Army. Blair also acted on behalf of President Lincoln when he traveled to Richmond, Virginia on January 12, 1865, for a meeting with Confederate President Jefferson Davis, seeking a peace settlement to end the war. His older son, Montgomery Blair, served as Lincoln’s Postmaster General in his cabinet, and Montgomery Blair’s House, the Falklands, would later be occupied and burned by Confederate General Jubal Early’s troops.



View of loop drive and the historic house, The Moorings, at Jesup Blair Local Park.

The park’s Facility Plan (completed in 2000) noted its role in the community as an expansive green space with an open setting for passive recreation and a view shed to the historic house. The park has received over 100 newly planted trees within the past decade and a half.

Should Jesup Blair rise to the top of public opinion, the park is designated on the Montgomery County *Master Plan for Historic Preservation* so a monument would have to be located and any accompanying exhibits approved by the Montgomery County Historic Preservation Commission. The Silver Spring Historical Society has been an ardent supporter of the house and grounds and its archives are intended to be located in some space within the restored house.





Paths behind the historic house feature Civil War signage on the right, and lead over the railroad to Montgomery College's Takoma Park Campus on the left.



View from the historic house to adjacent buildings of the Montgomery College Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus.

## NEXT STEPS

### Public Comment

As previously noted, the County Council website -- where the public can provide comments on the relocation options -- is expected to "go live" by the week of August 31, 2015.

Any citizens and/or park patrons who call the Commission or Department of Parks regarding non-recommended parks being on a chart of potential relocation sites will be directed to the Council's web site.

### Recommendations and Conclusions

1. Relocate Confederate Statue to the Beall Dawson House, home to the Montgomery County Historical Society, in Rockville or to private entity.
2. Staff recommends that the Board transmit the attached letters to both the County Executive and the County Council President.

Attachments

Attachment A: Confederate Monument Timeline since June 2015 for Information Purposes

Attachment B: Minutes of July 27, 2015 Meeting Called By County Council Staff

Attachment C: Memorandum of July 30, 2015 from George Leventhal, Council President, to the County Council

Attachment D: Letter from Chairman to the County Executive and the Council President

**cc:** Gwen Wright, Director, Planning Department  
Rose Krasnow, Deputy Director, Planning Department  
Scott Whipple, Supervisor, Planning Department  
Mitra Pedeem, Acting Deputy Director, Department of Parks  
Kristi Williams, Chief, Department of Parks  
Marlene Michaelson, Senior Legislative Analyst, Montgomery County Council

## **Attachment A: Confederate Statue Timeline Since June 2015 for Information Purposes**

17 June 2015: Tragic shooting at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in downtown Charleston, South Carolina

7 July 2015: Facebook group "MoCo, Take Down the Confederate Statue. Stop Honoring Treason and Racism" created. Has 287 likes currently.

10 July 2015: Maryland Historical Trust states for record they have no stake in the relocation debate.

14 July 2015: County Councilmember George Leventhal announces the County has the authority to move the statue if the public so desires. <http://www.bethesdamagazine.com/Bethesda-Beat/2015/Rockville-Montgomery-County-Debating-What-to-Do-with-Confederate-Statue/>

17 July 2015: County Executive Ike Leggett tells the press he wants the Confederate Statue moved off the Courthouse grounds and is not opposed to storage. [http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/md-politics/leggett-wants-rockville-statue-of-rebel-soldier-off-lawn-near-courthouse/2015/07/17/2cfc9e72-2c8f-11e5-bd33-395c05608059\\_story.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/local/md-politics/leggett-wants-rockville-statue-of-rebel-soldier-off-lawn-near-courthouse/2015/07/17/2cfc9e72-2c8f-11e5-bd33-395c05608059_story.html)

20 July 2015: The City of Rockville (jointly by Mayor and City Council) held a public meeting. 55 people attended. <http://www.bethesdamagazine.com/Bethesda-Beat/2015/Rockville-Montgomery-County-Debating-What-to-Do-with-Confederate-Statue/>

24 July 2015: U.S. Representative Chris Van Hollen urged the immediate removal of the statue to the Rockville City Mayor and City Council. <https://vanhollen.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/van-hollen-urges-immediate-removal-of-confederate-statue-in-rockville>

27 July 2015: Statue vandalized by spray paint with wording "Black Lives Matter."

27 July 2015: County Council staff Marlene Michaelson meets with a group of stakeholders who discussed three options for the statue: 1. removal/destroy, 2. removal/relocation and signage, or 3. leave as-is. <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/Summaryof7-27-15meetingFINALREPORT.pdf>

28 July 2015: Council staff contacts Parks staff for assistance as she has been tasked with relocating the statue from the Courthouse and Woodlawn had been identified as a potential site.

30 July 2015: George Leventhal writes a letter to the County Council supporting relocation but only to an appropriate site with adequate interpretation/signage <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/Resources/Files/CP%20Leventhal%20memo%20to%20Council%20150730.pdf>. Because the Council has no meetings in August, Leventhal proposes that Council staff move forward to identify appropriate sites unless he hears differently from Council members.

31 July 2015: Statue boxed up to prevent any further vandalism.

3 August 2015: The press states that County Executive, County Council and other County officials held a meeting to discuss the statue. The press also states a work session has held in late July.

6 August 2015: Council staff asks Parks staff to tour potential relocation sites throughout the county including several parks and one privately owned cemetery.

11 August 2015: At her request, stakeholders are asked again by Council staff to meet to discuss possible relocation sites. See Meeting Minutes.

20 August 2015: Candidate relocation sites due to County Council staff for posting on Council-run website.

By the week of 31 August 2015: Council chart goes live on its website. Public comment period begins.

3 September 2015: Parks staff briefing before Montgomery County Planning Board.

17 September 2015: The County Executive will appear before the Rockville Historic District Commission

**SUMMARY OF MEETING ON CONFEDERATE STATUE**  
**July 27, 2015**  
**Council Office Building**

A small group of individuals, most of whom were representing organizations interested in County decisions regarding the Rockville Confederate statue, met with County Council staff on July 27, 2015 to discuss options related to the statue. This document presents a brief summary of their discussion and recommendations.

**GROUP MEMBERS**

The individuals were chosen with input from Councilmembers to represent a broad spectrum of views regarding the statue. Four of seven of those attending represented organizations directly interested in the statue, two were historians with different points of view regarding the symbolism of the statue, and the seventh person represented the City of Rockville as an observer, but did not participate in the discussion. Members were chosen who were known to have a range of different views including some members with completely conflicting views on certain issues, such as the intent of those who constructed the statue and its symbolism at that time and in the present. No elected officials were present, but staff from Councilmembers Leventhal's, Katz's and Rice's offices attended as observers.

In attendance:

Anthony Cohen, President, Menare Foundation and Button Farm  
Jim Loewen, Historian and Sociologist  
Linda Moran, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Rockville  
Nancy Pickard, Executive Director, Peerless Rockville  
Anita Powell, President of the Montgomery County NAACP and member of the Rockville  
Historic District Commission  
Laurie-Anne Sayles, President, African American Democratic Club of Montgomery County  
Susan Soderberg, Historian

Elizabeth Hughes, Acting Executive Director of the Maryland Historical Trust, was invited but declined to participate.

While individuals were associated with different groups, they were expressing their own opinions and did not (as of the writing of this summary) have the opportunity to seek support from the groups they represent.

**CONSENSUS RECOMMENDATIONS**

There were three critical recommendations that the group was unanimous in endorsing. First, the story of Montgomery County's participation in the Civil War must be told, but it must be fully told from all perspectives, including those of both Confederate and Union supporters, as well as free blacks and slaves. Regardless of the County's decision regarding the monument, the County should determine how to best share and educate its citizens on its history in public spaces accessible to all.

Second, the group agreed that the County must take some action because the status quo (leaving the statue where it is without any change) does not fully tell the story of the County's history from all perspectives. The group did not believe the option of accepting the current situation without change should be considered further.

Finally, the group agreed that **if** a decision is made to move the statue, an appropriate location with a willing recipient must be identified. This should be done with broad public input from a variety of individuals/organizations interested in the future of the statue.

## **KEY FACTS**

The group began the meeting by addressing key facts and points of agreement that are important to any discussion regarding the statue:

- The statue is on County land and is therefore the property of the County.
- The County Executive is responsible for the management of County owned property and therefore will make decisions regarding the future of the statue. The Council will be responsible for any actions that require budgetary approval.
- The statue is designated historic by the City of Rockville and therefore the County needs to apply to the Rockville Historic District Commission for a "Certificate of Approval" before making any change to the statue, including moving it.
- A historical artifact is representative of its time and the people who created it.
- Historical symbols (and the Confederate Statue specifically) can be interpreted in different ways by different people at different times.
- Whatever is done with the statue will become a part of the history of the statue and will be interpreted by historians of the future.

## **OPTIONS**

The group identified all known options as to what the County should do regarding the statue:

- The group unanimously agreed that the status quo – i.e., to leave the statue in its current location with no additional interpretive information – is not acceptable and that something should be done.
- The group focused on three potential options: destroying the statue, leaving it in its current location with additional interpretation to put it in context, and relocating it.
- There are several sub-options for each of the three main options:

### **Destroy the Statue**

1. Destroy the statue and discard the remains.
2. Destroy the statue and reuse the remains to create another symbol of the County's history.

Retain the Statue at its current location with additional information/interpretation.

3. Retain the statue at its current location and build another statue or structure that would represent other parties in or impacted by the Civil War.
4. Retain the statue at its current location and add interpretive elements (such as a plaque or kiosk) explaining the history of the statue and why it is there.

Relocate the statue

5. Put it in storage and identify options for relocation at a later time.
6. Move it to another location with input from a variety of different people/organizations to determine the right location.
7. Donate the statue to a historical organization or return it to the United Daughters of the Confederacy and have them decide where to place the statue.
8. Create a Montgomery County Historical Museum and place it there.

### **CONSEQUENCES OF EACH OPTION**

The group discussed the consequences of each of the three main options.

#### **Comments Regarding the Option of Destroying the Monument**

The group members discussed the option of destroying the statue and some members were strongly opposed to this, while others thought it is a potential option. Those opposed felt that destroying it would destroy a primary source and evidence of this time in our history, removing the ability to learn from it and interpret it. Some believed that destruction would further polarize the community. It was also suggested that destroying the statue would be seen by some as an act of vandalism.

Those who supported continued consideration of this option believed that it would imply to those who oppose the statue's presence that they have been heard and that it would eliminate a symbol of racism it implies to some and a symbol of slavery.

#### **Comments Regarding the Option of Adding Interpretative Elements**

Those supporting keeping the statue where it is and adding interpretative elements believe this would provide an opportunity to educate the public and tell a fuller, more accurate story of the history of the County's involvement in the Civil War, reflecting all viewpoints, including those of slaves, and the history of the statue itself. (Group members all agreed that it would be critical to have right sources prepare these materials.) Appropriate interpretative materials would provide a better chance to tell the story of slavery in the County and allow for an evolving understanding of history over time.

Those opposed to retaining the statue at its current location, even with interpretative elements, believe its location implies that the courthouse does not represent equal justice for all. Having it stay there would indicate that a part of the community was not heard.

As they discussed this option, the group realized and was in complete agreement that additional interpretive measures were necessary, regardless of whether the statue is moved.

## Comments Regarding the Option of Relocating the Statue

Those opposed to moving the statue believe it changes the historical placement and meaning of the statue and also changes the historical context of the place in which it is located. They believe it bends the historical decisions of the past to suit present perspectives. Some believed it downplayed the extreme importance of this issue, particularly if the statue is put into storage with no specific timeframe for relocating it. The statue could be damaged during a move, particularly if it is moved twice (once into storage and a second time to a permanent location).

Those who supported moving it believe the act of moving it is itself a teachable moment, ensconcing the statue with interpretive context. It preserves the statue itself, allowing interested individuals to learn about it in a more appropriate environment. Some believe moving it helps to remove the bias its existence implies. Moving it also allows the creation of a new historical context for the statue in a new location. Moving it would also allow the addition of a historical marker at the courthouse telling that the statue had been there, when it was erected, and when and why it was moved.

## PREFERENCES AMONG OPTIONS

**Each member of the group was asked at the end of the meeting to indicate which of the three options they preferred.**

Three members indicated that they supported either relocating the statue to a place where it will be displayed with accompanying information to add historical context or destroying it. They did not believe that adding interpretive elements alone would be sufficient. Their main reasons for this choice were as follows:

1. The statue should be removed from its current location or destroyed because it does not display a real truth about history as it pertains to the equality, civil and human rights as a true balance. It only depicts one side (commemorating the battle fought over the enslavement of black people) and that is not acceptable. Although it was constructed 102 years ago, it is a different time today with a different agenda.
2. The statue represents a symbol of resistance to the Civil Rights era
3. If the County does not move or destroy/transform the monument, it tells those who raised the issue -- not only African Americans but many others, that they have not been heard. They are to trust that the statue, left in place, will eventually get adequately contextualized, but for two reasons, this trust is unlikely to develop. First, they know that putting the monument at the courthouse in the first place symbolized the hold that neo-Confederates had on political power in Montgomery County during the Nadir of race relations. Leaving it there now implies that they still do. Second, it is unclear whether new historical context would counterbalance the negative emotions elicited by the statue to any significant degree.
4. The statue symbolizes black suffering rather than communicating the unity and progress reflective of the present day Montgomery County, especially given its placement on the lawn of our Courthouse

Two group members supported having the statue remain where it currently is but with additional interpretation to more deeply explain its history, that of slavery and the Civil War. They indicated that they would also be willing to support an option for relocating the statue if it could be done properly and



moved directly to a suitable location where it will be protected and interpreted (and not placed in storage). They strongly opposed destruction. Their main reasons for this choice were as follows:

1. The Confederate Soldier Statue is a local example of a custom designed “common soldier” monument, proudly erected in the City of Rockville by the citizens of this County more than 100 years ago. And as such, it is an important vestige of our City and County history and a unique historical artifact of its time.
2. It sets a dangerous precedent to remove or banish long-standing historical artifacts, objects that were created in a very different cultural context but are judged on the basis of contemporary standards and political climate. Destroying or erasing historical artifacts pretends that the past does not exist or can somehow be changed to better suit our current sentiments.
3. Rather than remove this historical artifact the County can use it as a powerful tool to educate current and future generations in a way that will foster unity. New art could draw on, interpret, and challenge the past in new and inventive ways and it can provide a forum for public education and a setting for private and collective reflection.

One group member only supported adding interpretive elements and would not support destruction or relocation of the statue. Her main reasons are as follows:

1. The monument is an artifact of the past and a primary resource for the interpretation of the past. It tells the story of the history of Rockville and Montgomery County and of all of the inhabitants, black and white, free and enslaved, Union and Confederate. If it were moved, the historical context would be lost and with it part of the story, which is on-going.
2. The group member supporting this option believes that the monument is currently being totally misinterpreted.
3. The statue is an individual and unique work of art relating specifically to Rockville and Montgomery County. Destroying it would be an act of vandalism.



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

OFFICE OF THE COUNCIL PRESIDENT

MEMORANDUM

July 30, 2015

TO: County Council

FROM: George Leventhal, Council President *GLL*

SUBJECT: Confederate Statue

As I previously indicated to you, I asked Marlene Michaelson to convene a group of interested stakeholders to meet on the future of the Confederate statue. A summary of their meeting is attached, and this memorandum proposes my suggestions for next steps.

First, I want to thank the group members for their helpful participation. Our staff indicates that it was at times a difficult conversation, but that group members listened to each other's points of view and most were open to considering alternatives that they may not have initially thought were acceptable. I have confidence that we are an enlightened community that can address challenging issues in a responsible manner through civil discussions. We may not be able to identify a solution that achieves unanimous agreement, but I hope we can identify one that gains broad acceptance, and Monday's meeting was an important first step.

**The report includes three important points on which the group was able to reach consensus, summarized below:**

1. The story of Montgomery County's participation in the Civil War must be told, but it must be fully told from all perspectives, including those of both Confederate and Union supporters, as well as free blacks and slaves.
2. The County must take some action because the status quo (leaving the statue where it is without any change) does not fully tell the story of the County's history from all perspectives.
3. If a decision is made to move the statue, an appropriate location with a willing recipient must be identified with broad public input.

Having read all the comments received by the Council, listened remotely to the Rockville public forum on this issue, and read the report from the working group, **I support the County Executive's recommendation to relocate the statue. I further believe it should be placed in an appropriate location with new interpretive information that fully tells – from all perspectives – what happened in Montgomery County during the Civil War and at the time the statue was constructed.** Our goal should not be to erase history, but to gain a better and deeper understanding that reflects a variety of perspectives.

Potential next steps are as follows:

1. Ask our staff to work with historic preservation staff in the County and City of Rockville and interested parties to identify viable sites to relocate the statue.
2. Determine how public input can be solicited once viable sites have been identified, to determine which site is preferable.
3. The County should apply to the Rockville Historic District Commission to obtain a Certificate of Approval to relocate the statue. County Executive Leggett has tasked Bonnie Kirkland with assembling this application and presenting it to the Commission.
4. Task the historic preservation staff in the County (and City if it is located in the City) with developing appropriate interpretive information that can be placed with the statue at its new location and determining how to more comprehensively share information regarding the County during the Civil War and in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
5. Ask the County Executive to take whatever action is necessary to protect the statue from further vandalism until it can be relocated.

Because the Council will not meet again until September, we will not have the opportunity to discuss this in a public forum. Unless I hear differently from you, I will ask Marlene to work with the executive branch to carry out the steps suggested above. Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

**ATTACHMENT D: Letter from Chairman to County Executive and Council President**

August 25, 2015

The Honorable County Executive Isiah Leggett  
Executive Office Building  
101 Monroe Street  
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett:

The Planning Board met to discuss potential relocation of the Confederate statue on September 3, 2015. The Board supports your efforts to relocate the statue from the grounds of the historic court house in Rockville to a different location. We recognize that our elected officials may not be able to identify a solution that achieves unanimous agreement, but we hope you can identify one that is acceptable to a majority of our citizens. That said, the Board does not believe that placing the statue in one of M-NCPPC's parks is the proper solution.

We would support the statue's future association with an historical society or museum that can best interpret the complicated story of Montgomery County's participation in the Civil War from the perspective of Confederate and Union supporters as well as free blacks and slaves. We also would have no objection returning the statue to those who created it, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, or to another appropriate private entity.

Below are our preferences, stated in order:

1. Place the statue at the Beall-Dawson House in Rockville, home to the Montgomery County Historical Society, as part of a new, more balanced interpretation of the Civil War and its legacy; or give the statue to the United Daughters of the Confederacy or another appropriate private entity.
2. Only showcase the statue at Calithea Farm Special Park if it can be housed in a true Civil War visitor center as envisioned in the Blockhouse Point Master Plan. Such a scenario would mean that the statue would need to be stored temporarily until Parks receives a CIP appropriation for such a center, and can develop a comprehensive, balanced display.
3. Only place it at Darnestown Square Heritage Park if the above sites do not work. The park in Darnestown is highly constrained, lacks public parking, and includes a burial ground that cannot be disturbed. If Darnestown is supported by the public, consider acquiring additional, adjacent land to make this park bigger, if it comes down to immediate relocation being the only option the County will consider. Otherwise, there will be no opportunity for a balanced display.
4. Remove Jesup Blair Local Park from further consideration. Although Jesup Blair Local Park contains a mid-19<sup>th</sup> century house identified in the County's Master Plan for Historic Preservation, the principle purpose of this park is not the interpretation of the Civil War, but the opportunity, instead, to provide green space, athletic fields, and walking and passive recreation opportunities to the community and adjacent college.

Sincerely,

Casey Anderson  
Chair

**ATTACHMENT D:** Letter from Chairman to County Executive and Council President

August 25, 2015

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President, Montgomery County Council  
100 Maryland Avenue  
Rockville, MD 20850

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3. Only place it at Darnestown Square Heritage Park if the above sites do not work. The park in Darnestown is highly constrained, lacks public parking, and includes a burial ground that cannot be disturbed. If Darnestown is supported by the public, consider acquiring additional, adjacent land to make this park bigger, if it comes down to immediate relocation being the only option the County will consider. Otherwise, there will be no opportunity for a balanced display.
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Casey Anderson  
Chair