

Town of Windsor

Memorandum

January 12, 2021

TO: The Honorable Mayor and Town Council

FROM: William G. Saunders, IV, Town Manager *WGS IV*

SUBJECT: Confederate Monument Relocation to Windsor Town Cemetery

Background

As you are aware, Isle of Wight County has been exploring options in regard to the controversial Confederate Monument on the courthouse grounds; the first option being relocation, the second being contextualization in place. A task force was assembled to look into these options, whose top option was the relocation of the monument to the Windsor Town Cemetery, out of seven relocation areas that they identified. Subsequently, the Isle of Wight County Board of Supervisors has reached out to the Town of Windsor to determine if they would accommodate such a relocation.

Specifics

Obviously, there are a number of issues to be considered by the Town Council in regard to a decision such as the acceptance of the monument into a publicly-owned cemetery. A few are outlined here:

Public Sentiment

Monuments such as this have become lightning rods of controversy of late, which is why the relocation of this monument is proposed. While a cemetery may be a more fitting location for such a monument than the courthouse grounds, consideration should be given to the fact that the cemetery in question is owned by a public body and how the citizens of the Town may feel about the relocation; particularly those who own plots or have family members interred there.

Economic Development

If the monument were relocated to the Town Cemetery it would not be displayed in a prominent location in town; however, there will certainly be numerous articles in the press regarding the Town's acceptance of the County's monument, which will be available by an online search indefinitely. Consideration should be given to how current business owners, as well as those who may potentially explore Windsor as a future business site, may feel about this.

Location within the Cemetery

The cemetery is made up of three phases, referred to locally as, the original (Historic) section, the old side, and the new side. The original section is where several Confederate Veterans have

been laid to rest, which would seem the most fitting location of the monument if it were to be relocated there. Unfortunately, this phase was acquired by the town after its development and the town has no plat of the plot locations or ownership there. A potentially suitable location for the monument has been identified by Town and County administrative staff on the fringe of the original phase of the cemetery, which is near the Confederate Veterans; this should minimize the probability of their having been plots recorded or bodies interred there. However, consideration should be given to having probing or ground-penetrating radar used there to ensure that there would be no encroachment on the interred.

Context within the Cemetery

While the proposed location identified by Town and County staff seems to be the best for the contextualization of the monument, being near the Confederate Veterans, the height of the monument in its current configuration does not fit with the aesthetics of those monuments which currently exist in the cemetery. Consideration should be given to the removal of the two center pillars and relocating only the monument's base and statue to reduce the height.

Cemetery Policies

As previously mentioned, the cemetery has three phases and some of the policies are phase-specific. However, if the monument were to be located on the fringe of the original section, as mentioned above, the land dedicated to placement of the monument would not technically be a burial plot, but a land transfer approved by the Town Council; thereby not being regulated by those policies that strictly apply to the cemetery plots.

Future Maintenance Costs

Currently, the town is not responsible for the maintenance of headstones or monuments in the Town Cemetery, only grounds maintenance. Consideration should be given to dedicating the property upon which the monument would be placed to another group who is willing to maintain the monument in perpetuity, such as the Sons of Confederate Veterans or a Historical Society. While the monument has cost the County relatively little to maintain, it is currently in a prominent location and enjoys a large law enforcement presence; it is an unknown whether once placed in a more remote location if it would be more of a target for vandalism, which would be unsightly for the rest of the cemetery and costly for the Town.

Future Liability

A consideration similar to the potential for vandalism of the monument, is the potential for vandalism to spill over onto other monuments and headstones in the cemetery; particularly those of the existing Confederate Veterans. While the Town is not responsible for damage to headstones or monuments under normal conditions, would this change with the introduction of the monument?

Another consideration of potential future liability is that of public sentiment in the future. The public's reactions to and feelings about these monuments have changed over time since their installation in many towns across the South. It is possible that this shift could continue to grow in the future to the point that the Town would have to incur costs to remove the monument from the cemetery at some future time.

Cost to Town Taxpayers

Given the controversial aspect of the monument, consideration should be given to minimizing, or eliminating, potential costs to the taxpayers of the Town. One option that has been presented by Mr. Volpe Boykin, of the County's monument task force, is the trading of cemetery plots that are currently in private ownership for the land upon which the monument would be placed; these plots could be resold by the Town, thereby eliminating the cost of the land to town taxpayers. Consideration should also be given to potential costs related to surveying the plot, creating a deed of transfer, probing or the use of ground-penetrating radar, future maintenance, potential future vandalism, and potential future relocation.

Enclosures

- Isle of Wight Monument Task Force Report Slideshow
- Photo of Isle of Wight Confederate Monument
- Map of potential site in Windsor Town Cemetery
- Photos of potential site in Windsor Town Cemetery
- Windsor Town Cemetery Policy

Recommended Action

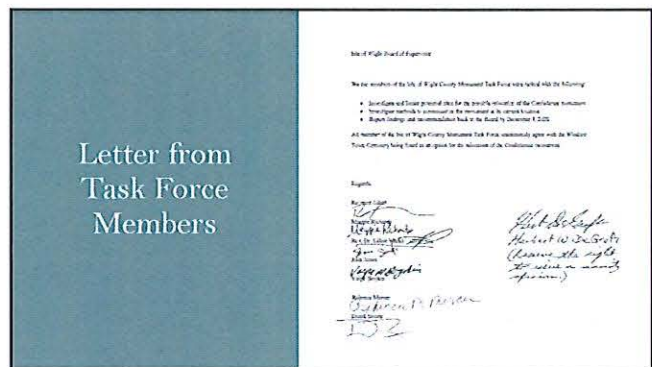
For your consideration

Monument Task Force Report

November 19, 2020

- ## Directions/ Timeline
- Investigate and locate potential sites for the possible relocation
 - Investigate ways to contextualize the monument in the current location
 - Report findings/recommendations by December 1, 2020

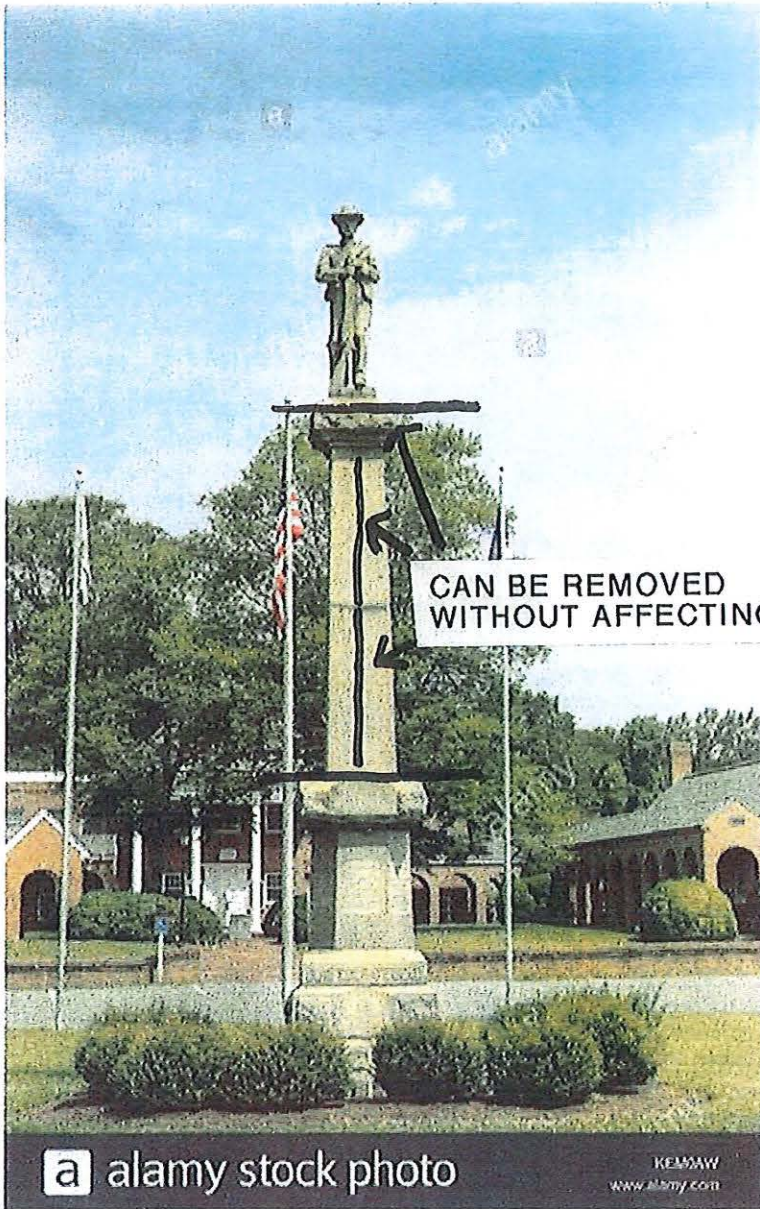
- ## Relocation Options
- Town of Windsor Cemetery
 - Walters Site (Boykin's property) on Rte 258
 - Water Tower site @ Courthouse Complex
 - Ft. Boykin (parking area)
 - Bottom of Wharf Hill (parking area)
 - Ft. Huger
 - Shenandoah Valley Battlefield




- ## Contextualization Options
- Erect another monument of equal size and equal height be erected to memorialize all who died in war
 - Erect a statue in recognition of the 36th United States Colored Infantry Regiment
 - Make the current monument all-inclusive
 - Erect granite monuments in a semi-circle with each portion of granite providing historical information
 - Erect additional statues of other notable individuals (such as Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.) of the same height and size as the current monument
 - Add simple signage around the current statue with QR codes with historical information visitors could read on their own electronic devices

Contextualization Options

The proposed methods of contextualization are listed, but there was no consensus or agreement as to the preferred method for contextualization.



CAN BE REMOVED
WITHOUT AFFECTING INSCRIPTIONS

 alamy stock photo

KEMMW
www.alamy.com



Parcel Viewer

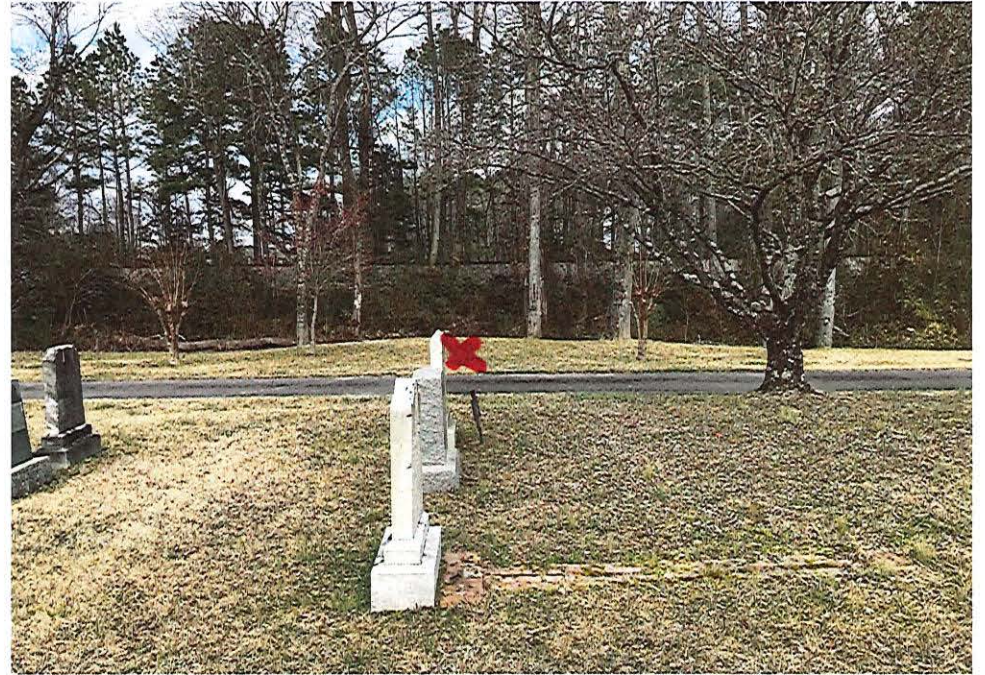
Please select the "Information" tool in the left margin for additional assistance

Parcel #, Name, or Address

36 40 39 54B-01-207 54B-01-208

0 50 100ft 36.8038 -76.7358 Degrees

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CEMETERY POLICIES

SALE OF LOTS BACK TO THE TOWN OF WINDSOR NEW RATES TEMPORARY GRAVE MARKERS NEW AREA – NO STONES ABOVE GROUND LEVEL

The policy which has been stated on the cemetery deed for many years is for the Town to buy lots back for the price at which they were purchased. Due to the fact that the price per lot has changed many times and there are no records available as to purchase price at a particular time, Council set the following policy on February 14, 2006.

Purchase of Cemetery Lots by the Town When Original Cost is Unknown:

The new policy states that the Town of Windsor will purchase back cemetery lots for a price of \$200 each, or the cost of the lot if it can be determined, whichever is greater, and the Town will pay legal costs associated with the purchase. As has been the policy in the past, cemetery lot owners may give away their lots or deed them back to the Town. They may not deed them to anyone else.

Moratorium Lifted on Sale of Lots to Non-residents:

The moratorium was lifted on February 14, 2006.

New Rates for Cemetery Lots:

Beginning February 14, 2006, the purchase price of a cemetery lot for a town resident is \$600. The price for a non-resident is \$1,200. This price will be noted on the cemetery deed effective immediately and any lots sold from February 14, 2006 forward will be purchased back by the town at the price stated on the deed. Lot owners wishing to sell will be responsible for any legal fees.

New Policy Regarding Rates for Existing Section of Cemetery: (Revised 3/13/07)

Any existing lots in the cemetery are to be restricted to town residents only, at the price of \$1,000 per lot.

New Policy Regarding Temporary Grave Markers

Included in this new policy, temporary grave markers that are placed by funeral homes must be removed after one year.

Grave Markers in New Cemetery Section: (Revised 5/8/07)

- All grave markers must be flush with the ground. Flower holders are permitted as long as they can be lowered back below ground level to allow for maintenance of the property.
- For a single grave site, the marker including the base can be no larger than 3 feet by 2 feet. For a double grave site, the marker including the base can be no larger than 6 feet by 2 feet. There must be at least a 6 inch base surrounding the marker for both a single or double site.

- The installer of the site marker shall be responsible for maintenance of the marker for a period of one (1) year after installation. This maintenance is to include, but not limited to, any issues dealing with the levelness and/or overall condition of the marker.

New Policy Regarding Order in Which Lots are Sold: (Revised 12/11/07)

Cemetery lots in the new section will be sold one section at a time starting with the lots next to the old cemetery.

POLICY FOR MAINTENANCE OF TOWN CEMETERY

Maintenance of the grass and weeds in and around the Town Cemetery is the responsibility of the Town of Windsor. Maintenance of flower arrangements and headstones on individual gravesites is the responsibility of the plot owner, next of kin, or other person who otherwise decorates and visits the gravesite. In the event live flower arrangements are left at a gravesite for an extended period, allowing them to deteriorate and die, Town maintenance personnel have the authority to dispose of such flower arrangements as they deem appropriate. Although care will be exercised to avoid damaging these items while maintaining the grass and weeds, the Town of Windsor will not be responsible for flower pots, artificial arrangements, flower or wreath stands, or other ornamental displays left on a grave site.

TOWN OF WINDSOR
CREMATION BURIAL POLICY

Cremation

Not more than two cremations may be buried per gravesite within the Town cemetery. A grave liner is necessary.

Adopted by Windsor Town Council