
From: victoria havard [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday, June 27, 2021 11:55 PM
To: City Clerk's Office
Subject: Citizen Participation Comments for June 28th Meeting
Attachments: Conferderate Monuments.docx

ATTN: Candice D Reid, City Clerk

FROM: Victoria Havard

RE: Citizen Comments for 6/28/2021 Council Meeting

Please see my attached comments regarding the Confederate Monuments on Monument Avenue.

To the Richmond City Council:

My comments today are regarding the Confederate monuments; General Robert E. Lee, the only one currently remaining on Monument Avenue. My children and I reside in Kentucky and are visiting family here in Richmond as we do every Summer. I was born in Richmond and resided in the great state of Virginia for 30 years before a job relocation.

I must say that I am appalled and disgusted at what I saw, driving down Monument Avenue. The complete and utter desecration of a statue that has proudly stood watch over the city for over 100 years. Filthy graffiti, disgusting epithets, and the word "FUCK" painted onto Traveller's belly. It follows that the same fate befell the other Confederate monuments; Stonewall Jackson and Jeb Stuart among them; now empty slabs of stone with a name. My understanding is that these statues have been relegated to a city lot and shamefully discarded as if their lives and sacrifices meant nothing. I have even heard of a hideous proposal that the statues should be melted down. Is this the new legacy that the City of Richmond wants to bequeath to future generations? A legacy of hatred and destruction?

To those who know nothing of history, are ignorant of its importance to democracy, and who want to erase the past, these actions may seem justifiable. But this is not so. Winston Churchill once said "when the present sits in judgment of the past, it will lose its future." Confederates during the Civil War gave their lives for what they believed to be just at the time. It makes no sense to judge them by present standards. Consider that in the justification of the horrible treatment and defiling of these statues, you have become the very thing you purport to condemn.

At the very least, the statues deserve to be relocated to a place of distinction so that those who wish to study and learn history may do so honestly and truthfully and without hatred. My hope is that the City of Richmond will set a better example for others to follow and heed President Lincoln's address when he spoke the following words: "with malice toward none and charity for all, with a firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."