

Item 15

John Peters Letter to the Editor - Published in Sunday September 2, 2018

It is with sadness that I read Michael Paul Williams ' column entitled "Memorial ill-served by park project." (August 28, 2018) This should be a time of great rejoicing by the community about the renovations that have taken place in Monroe Park. Countless dedicated citizens have given of their time and treasure to make the work possible. Williams says that Todd Woodson, an Oregon Hill activist, believes that the World War II monument has endured "a defacing, if not a downright desecration." Like Mr. Woodson, I served as a member of the Monroe Park Advisory Council, and I am proud of the plan that was developed.

The sad truth is that it is easier to tear down than to build up. To accuse people of defacing or desecrating a World War II memorial is a serious charge. It should not be made lightly. By definition, "desecration" is "to divert from a sacred to a profane purpose; treat with sacrilege." Defacing is generally considered to deal with the surface of the monument. In my opinion, that is not what has happened here, and to suggest otherwise is irresponsible. I believe the people who have attempted to deal with this unanticipated situation have acted in good faith to resolve the issue in a responsible manner. The memorial was never intended to be viewed from the back, but there is room for debate. That debate should not take the form of vitriolic criticism. I would have much preferred that the critics allow time to see whether the planned screening proves attractive. That was not in the cards for Messrs. Woodson and Williams. That is unfortunate. There is much to be admired about what has taken place in Monroe Park. Nothing should detract from that.

612 W. Franklin Street

(804) 644-0980

John O. Peters

August 29, 2018