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To: [Dandridge, Alex - PDR](#)
Subject: UDC 2021-32: Final location, character, and extent review of the removal of a monument and pedestal; 1900 Stuart Avenue
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UDC 2021-32:
Final location, character, and extent review of the removal of a monument and pedestal; 1900 Stuart Avenue

To the Urban Design Committee:

As residents of 1834 Park Avenue overlooking Meadow Park for the last almost thirty-seven years and as residents of an adjoining block of Park Avenue for the previous nine years, my wife and I are providing for the Committee's consideration the following email which expresses our concerns and opinions regarding the disposition of the statue and pedestal honoring the First Virginia Regiment at Stuart and Park Avenues. We have also shared this email with Councilwoman Katherine Jordan and several of our neighbors in the Meadow Park Area.

It is our opinion that the statue honoring the First Virginia Regiment should be returned to its pedestal at Park Avenue and Stuart Avenue and that the proposal to remove the pedestal be abandoned. The soldier of the statue itself clearly is dressed as a pre-Revolutionary militiaman (not in Confederate gray) and represents a military unit formed in 1754 that fought for our freedoms bravely and honorably in major military endeavors of our country since its inception. As its inscription states, it was "Erected to the imperishable memory of the valiant fallen of the First Regiment of Virginia Infantry who through seven American wars endured hardships with patience, met defeat with constant courage, did not vaunt their victories and steadfastly kept the faith with God and their country." These words appear most appropriate these days and needed to temper all the forms of extremism that seem determined to destroy anything and everything that various mobs and individuals don't like or don't agree with. In addition to the wars mentioned above, the Confederate Army did call up a Virginia regiment to fight in the Civil War. This brief period of engagement for a "Virginia" regiment in a regrettable conflict and cause, while understandable in terms of regional and family loyalties, cannot with any type of justice be used to define the character and history of the regiment as a whole. It cannot with any justice be used to negate the integrity and bravery of the soldiers' service over a much longer and more diversified period of activity. Justice for all needs to prevail, and the First Virginia Regiment soldier needs to be returned to the pedestal on which he has stood for decades and has provided recognition for a unit important to the history of our Country and Commonwealth. The statue has also served as a memorial for the sacrifices of later troops of the same regimental lineage, some giving their lives for their state and country in Iraq and other engagements.

In addition to the opinions we express in the email above, we wish also to emphasize the importance of maintaining a cultural/aesthetic perspective in the deliberation of this subject.

In essence: An urban environment speaks to its inhabitants in multiple ways, and one of these ways is how it introduces and reminds its citizens of their past

and heritage through the visual and physical association with architecture, monuments, street names and the like. The linkage of personhood with place and thing is humanistically enlightening and confirming in the ideal sense and disorienting and alienating at other times.

Richmond, as a city with a presence and particular consciousness of the past, as well as a diversity of symbols and responses thereto, understandably speaks with a variety of voices. In removing the soldier's statue in Meadow Park, the City wantonly took away something that has been an object of learning, respect, and aesthetic appreciation for many decades. This ignorant act affected citizens, tourists, historians, people with specialized interests and even children. The Fan District's charm and beauty, with which the City at large takes pride, are nurtured and enhanced by Fan residents' respect for the past and historic preservation. This includes residents' recognition of the importance to our country and Commonwealth of preserving historic artifacts, such as that of the statue honoring the First Virginia Regiment in Meadow Park at Stuart and Park Avenues.

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