

From: [Susan Cameron](#)
To: [WebMail - CCD](#)
Subject: Public comment regarding war memorial in Central Park
Date: Sunday, March 20, 2022 4:53:06 PM

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Dear Mayor Vinatieri and members of the City Council,

I wish I could speak personally at this meeting, but I am no longer able to do so. Although members of the City Council can now participate in meetings remotely, members of the public are no longer allowed to do so. I am immunocompromised, and am advised by my doctors to avoid crowded spaces like the City Council chambers. Because I am excluded from participating in live public comments, I am making this comment in writing. If possible, I request that this letter be read aloud during the upcoming meeting, since I am unable to be there and you have stopped allowing citizens such as myself to speak remotely.

As a resident of the Central Park Historic District, I looked out on Central Park this week to see a concrete wall built within view of my front porch and directly blocking my neighbors' view of the park and its statue of famous poet, abolitionist, and pacifist Quaker John Greenleaf Whittier. Upon inquiry, I learned that this wall is intended to be covered with a depiction of a violent combat scene.

This project may be appropriate for some other location, but will be an eyesore not at all in keeping with this District. Central Park is the heart of a neighborhood dedicated to preserving the atmosphere of Ye Friendly Towne of 100 years ago.

The construction came as a surprise to me because there has been no public hearing before the Historic Resources Commission on its appropriateness for our Historic District. Why did the city not follow the law and hold a hearing?

Three years ago, at the insistence of my insurance agent, I purchased new garage doors for my home. I believed I did not need a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) because the garage faces the alley, not the street. After the contractors had removed the old doors and hardware, a Code Enforcement officer issued a stop work notice. I was required to pay over \$1000 and board up my garages for several months because my contractors had started work without obtaining a COA first. My mistake about what the law required was no excuse. Had I not ultimately received a COA for the doors I had purchased, I would likely have had to pay many thousands of dollars to restore the old carriage doors, which were completely rotten, largely held together by 100 years' worth of paint, using hardware that is no longer available. I followed the procedure, and the HRC recognized my efforts to be as historically appropriate as was economically feasible, and in keeping with what other property owners had done in the alleyway. I was finally allowed to complete the work several months later.

The City needs to abide by the same laws as citizens when erecting highly visible structures in a historic district. Please order your employees and/or contractors to stop work immediately until a proper Certificate of Appropriateness has been applied for and approved by the Historic Resources Commission after a duly noticed public hearing. Alternatively, remove the concrete

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wall and locate it somewhere more appropriate to its design, scale, and subject matter.

I understand this is not on your agenda for this meeting, but you can certainly direct city staff to agendaize this for a future City Council or HRC meeting, and in the meantime, to follow the law, can't you? The alternative is to complete the project at the risk of having to relocate it at even greater expense if and when it is found not to be appropriate by the legal body charged with the determination.

Please see that your own employees and contractors follow the law, just as they have required other property owners in the District, such as myself, to do.

Thank you for reading my comments.

Susan Cameron