

State Capitol African American Memorial Committee
Public Hearings, Spring 2016
DRAFT Summary

Abstract

The objective with this report is to summarize the findings to date reached by the advisory committee and to outline the ideas presented at the public hearings. On several points there is clear **consensus** while on other points there remain **choices** to be made.

Audience and Objective: **Schoolchildren**, it should be remembered, are a prime audience, as they constitute a major segment of the visitors to the Capitol. The monument should make an **impact** on all visitors, young people included. The monument is intended for **all citizens**, not solely for African Americans. The monument should present a public face to newcomers and should encapsulate the African American experience in North Carolina. It is the intent of the sponsoring bodies that the monument should be **historical and commemorative** in nature. While it must be aesthetically pleasing, it should complement other monuments on the grounds and be grounded in North Carolina history.

Location: As initially suggested by the committee and shared at public hearings to widespread approval, the site for the **central element** is the southeast corner of Union Square. The site affords the necessary space, has no archaeological impediments, and has historical significance to the African American community, given its proximity to southeast Raleigh and First Baptist Church. The location also makes possible the siting of a **bas relief timeline** on the bank adjacent to the sidewalk alongside Wilmington Street extending to and including the adjacent steps that offer visual sightlines and approach to the State Capitol. The location also provides the artist the opportunity of using multiple elevations in the monument, including a lower wall, that space above, and the steps that connect them.

Design and Materials: The materials to be used will be **bronze and granite**, those used on all monuments on Union Square. Bronze and granite have proven to be easily maintained over the course of time. No fire or water elements will be included because of maintenance and safety issues. The South Carolina monument's use of bas relief to illustrate the sweep of history and multiple narratives received nearly universal approval from those attending the public hearings. In scale the central element should complement the Vietnam Memorial. Consideration might go toward similar use of landscaping, sidewalks, and benches for contemplation.

Choices: A difference of opinion arose in the hearings as to whether the central element should be a 1) **literal depiction** of one or more persons or 2) a depiction of an **anonymous "common" man/woman/family**. While many spoke up for statues of extraordinary individuals, many others stressed the need for a monument that would

reflect multiple individuals, events, and themes from the North Carolina African American experience.

Themes: A broad consensus was heard for a theme or themes that focus upon **public life**, in keeping with the other monuments. One speaker called the Capitol grounds a “theater of participatory democracy.” Others voiced preference for military themes. Additional voices were heard for the inclusion of the related themes of **education, religion, and the arts**. Lesser support was voiced for sports themes. One potential theme, referenced by more than one speaker, is “A Rising People,” to play off the **phoenix metaphor** central to Congressman George White’s speech in 1901 through Maya Angelou’s well-known poem “And Still I Rise.”

Breadth: A consensus developed that the monument should treat all periods of history, that is, that **slavery and discrimination** (the slave trade, Jim Crow legislation) should be included but that **achievement** (entrepreneurship, artistry) also should be a focus.

Background

In 2015 Governor Pat McCrory and Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources Susan W. Kluttz endorsed the placement of a memorial on the Capitol grounds dedicated to African Americans. Within the Department the project was charged to the North Carolina Historical Commission and the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission. Both bodies unanimously endorsed the effort. Seven members were assigned to the study committee, four from the Historical Commission, those being Millie Barbee, Valerie Johnson, David Dennard, and Perry Morrison, and three from the African American Heritage Commission, those being Philip Henry, Lavonda Daniels, and Louise Toppin (in addition to Dr. Johnson, who serves on both boards, the latter as chair). Ms. Barbee chaired the study committee, and Michael Hill, Research Supervisor, and Michelle Lanier, executive secretary of the African American Heritage Commission, were assigned as staff to the study committee. All members of the two larger Commissions were invited to the hearings. Terra Schramm, manager of the State Capitol, assisted with planning and logistics.

In 2010 the North Carolina Historical Commission undertook a study of existing monuments on Union Square (Capitol Square) in Raleigh. In February 2010 public hearings were held in Raleigh, Asheville, and Greenville. As a part of the process the three committees assigned to study commemoration of American Indians, women, and African Americans produced a set of recommendations. Significantly, the Historical Commission voted to lift the moratorium on new monuments on Union Square. Late in the year the Commission sponsored the placement of plaques in the west wing of the Capitol dedicated to the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Nineteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, that is, on the extension of voting rights and other civil rights to African Americans and to women. Progress on exterior monuments lagged and other report recommendations went unheeded.

These efforts followed in the wake of the work of the Freedom Park initiative (formerly the Freedom Monument Park <http://www.ncfmp.org>). Since the inception of the initiative in 2004 the organizers have identified a site in downtown Raleigh at the corner of Lane and Wilmington Streets and are presently working on a redesign. Appended to this report is a statement about the Freedom Park plans.

Preliminary Planning

The present study committee convened for its inaugural meeting in the State Capitol on January 12, 2016, beginning with a recap of the 2010 monuments study. Discussion moved to the North Carolina Freedom Park and Lanier explained that the original idea was to create a singular monument on the Capitol grounds, but permission was not granted due to the moratorium in place at the time. The Freedom Park committee leased the space between the Governor's Mansion and the Legislative Building to create Freedom Park and has gone through a public art process to create a plan for the park. Fundraising continues to be an issue for that project. Lanier stressed that the Capitol's new African American monument is meant to complement, not compete with or replace, Freedom Park.

Hill expressed his desire that the committee work closely with artists to ensure the committee's vision is carried out. Space constraints on the Capitol grounds will limit the scope, and the committee will provide artists with guidelines with respect to materials and location. The desire is for the new monument to fit in with the current landscape and other monuments on the grounds, those limitations likely being that it is constructed of granite and bronze, has no water or sound elements, is similar in scale to the others, etc. Committee members agreed to these parameters in general but expressed a desire to seek more public input. Johnson emphasized how important it will be to find the right artist who can tell the story of the African American experience while fitting the monument into the project parameters and presenting a clear message.

The conversation then moved toward determining a location on the square. Hill said that ideally the new monument will echo the scale and landscaping of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. A number of factors indicate that the best location would be on the southeast corner of the square. The area is the only space that would avoid disturbing underground archeological features. Additionally, the location has plenty of available space and would position the monument toward the historically black part of Raleigh. The bank alongside Wilmington Street and the adjacent steps offer other design opportunities. Committee members agreed on the location in a general way but decided to wait for a formal decision following public input.

Committee members all agreed on the importance of seeking public feedback on the project. The committee then took a brief walk outside to view the current monuments on Union Square and look at the southeast corner in particular as a potential location. A followup meeting was held on February 23 to coordinate planning for the public hearings.

Public Hearings

A series of public hearings were all held on Tuesdays at 6:30 P.M. and lasted approximately ninety minutes each. The initial round of four meetings, it was agreed, offered insufficient opportunity for outreach and an additional four meetings were set, for a total of eight. Secretary Susan W. Kluttz attended all eight meetings, speaking at each about the Governor's interest in the project. Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry attended six of the eight meetings, welcomed attendees, and spoke about the process by which an artist and designer would be selected. One or more of the Commissioners attended each meeting with Valerie Johnson present at five of eight. The Rocky Mount hearing drew eight Commissioners. Michelle Lanier attended six of the eight meetings, and Michael Hill a like number. Each meeting opened with a PowerPoint program (Appendix).

Hearing #1
International Civil Rights Center and Museum
134 South Elm Street, Greensboro
March 1, 2016

John Swain, director of the International Civil Rights Center and Museum (ICRM), welcomed the twenty-three attendees. Secretary Kluttz extended her greetings and offered her best wishes for the project. Commissioners Valerie Johnson and Lavonda Daniels listened to the comments and shared their thoughts. The low numbers notwithstanding, the discussion was lively and each person in the audience had the opportunity to address the group. Comments from and about artists constituted a central focal point of the discussion.

Sallie Hays Williams, a board member of the ICRM, recommended a bas relief sculpture depicting the struggle of African Americans from slavery to the Jim Crow era.

Dara Coulter, a Raleigh artist, also affirmed that the monument should reflect the broad black experience. Her personal interest was in Raleigh, she noted, describing the Capital City as a "place of hope" for African Americans given the strong Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) presence. She took note of the Confederate monument on the west side of the Capitol, indicating that "it can't be taken away" but needed some counterbalance.

Earl Jones, a co-founder of the ICRM, extended his thanks to the Governor for prioritizing the project and noted that he is a longtime friend of Commissioner Philip Henry. This project, he suggested, should be a nonpartisan issue. He held up the South Carolina monument in Columbia as a model but suggested that African American participation in both the Revolutionary War (he noted the graves of period soldiers in Harlowe) and the Civil War should be incorporated. He encouraged planners not to overlook slavery.

Damian Clinton of Mocksville (but a Raleigh native) bemoaned the loss of places and neighborhoods in the Capital City significant to the black experience. The monument should start conversations that push the present-day debate about "Black

Lives Matter” forward, he said. The key, he argued, was memorializing the people who sacrificed their lives to make North Carolina better.

Jerome Bias of Burlington said that people in North Carolina, like elsewhere, take their history for granted and, if not reminded of that history, are in danger of forgetting it. He contended that the traditional narratives (chains broken, civil rights, etc.) leave out so much, such as agricultural contributions and the work of tradespeople. He pointed to other themes such as the HBCUs, musicians, and the Phoenix speech of George White.

Frachele Scott, manager of the Charlotte Hawkins Brown Museum at Sedalia, also stressed the importance of the HBCUs, of land ownership, and of black entrepreneurship. She noted the power of language in suggesting that the texts for the monuments be selected with much care and thought.

Bob Pleasants of Greensboro spoke briefly and introduced his friend Jim Barnhill, a sculptor responsible for the “February 1” statue on the campus of North Carolina A. & T. State University, suggesting the retention of the latter’s service as the monument’s designer. Barnhill shared the model of a sculpture in-progress that he entitled “A Future and a Hope,” depicting individuals looking toward the horizon. He suggested that it would be a complement to a bas relief with more topical elements.

David Wilson of Durham described himself as an artist accustomed to working in public venues, pointing to his participation in African American Music Trails and Gantt Center projects. He looked for a monument that will be inspirational.

Hearing #2

Harvey B. Gantt for African-American Arts + Culture

551 South Tryon Street, Charlotte

March 8, 2016

The second hearing took place in the center of uptown Charlotte, in the cultural center named for the Queen City’s first African American mayor, architect Harvey B. Gantt. Twenty-two people attended with almost all speaking. Commissioners Philip Henry, Valerie Johnson, and Richard Starnes attended. Press coverage included representatives of the *Charlotte Observer* and Time Warner Cable News. As in Greensboro, a number of questions arose about the selection of the artist. Kennitha Wyatt was among those curious about the process. Secretary Kluttz handled these inquiries adeptly.

Brenda Tindal, staff historian at the Levine Museum of the New South, attended along with two of her colleagues. She said that she had visited the DCNR website about the monument and that she had read the 2010 report. She expressed her support for the proposed White-Baker memorial presented as an alternative in that report.

Tindal described the State Capitol as a “theater of participatory democracy” and said that any new monument should be consistent in theme with existing monuments.

For that reason, she expressed a preference for depiction of political advances including civil rights over depictions of cultural life and artists. She held up Ella Baker as a prime representative of that theme.

Discussion centered in part on the site, that being the southeast corner of Union Square. Questions arose about the dimensions of the tract. “Accessibility is very important,” one speaker insisted. Commissioner Valerie Johnson responded that, done right, the monument will be universal in its appeal, that it will serve all audiences. An attendee suggested the inclusion of benches to allow visitors to take it all in.

Two employees of Duke Energy spoke on their own behalf, not as representatives of their employer. They asked whether the thematic elements will be restricted to North Carolina or have a broader regional or national focus. Commissioners Philip Henry and Richard Starnes responded with the former pointing to the need to reach schoolchildren and the latter sharing student concerns about monuments raised in his classes at Western Carolina University.

A visitor to Charlotte from Washington, D.C., said that she knows what she likes. She argued that the whole gamut of contributions by African Americans should be included. She spoke of “fierce fan devotion” to particular artists. In the end, she suggested, the monument should be a figurative bouquet, a gift to travelers.

A question arose about the impact of the South Carolina memorial. Those present, several of whom had seen the Columbia monument, spoke of its power to reach audiences. Another attendee voiced support for including black inventors. Another spoke about family reunions and suggested that the family unit might be a unifying theme. Commissioner Henry said that the monument should be “something ageless.”

Three by five cards were made available to those in attendance. One respondent suggested the names of artists who had worked on similar projects in other states: James Drake, responsible for a Birmingham memorial; Erik Blome, who worked on a Rosa Parks monument; and Maya Lin, who conceived a Southern Poverty Law Center artwork in Montgomery.

The following comments were among the others received on notecards: “the more inclusive the better,” “a long, rich history deserves a monument that fully envelopes that history,” and “simplicity is good.” Finally, one suggested a water feature and another stressed that the interplay between quotations and the timeline would be key.

Hearing #3
Braswell Memorial Library
727 North Grace Street, Rocky Mount
March 22, 2016

The Rocky Mount public hearing, the first of the three hearings in the eastern region, was held in the Braswell Memorial Library. Approximately twenty community

members were in attendance. The Department of Natural and Cultural Resources was represented by Secretary Susan Kluttz, Kevin Cherry, Terra Schramm, and Michelle Lanier. Members of both commissions, eight total, were also in attendance

The first person to speak was Doris Stith, who represented the Phoenix Historical Society. She read an impassioned and well-researched offering about the significance and importance of the Reconstruction-era congressman and North Carolinian, George Henry White. White's famous "Phoenix Speech" serves as the inspiration for the Society's name, as well as the name of an annual congressional award. Stith, representing her group, suggested that a statue be erected to honor the last African American lawmaker to serve in Congress during the Reconstruction period.

The remaining of the hearing was more conversational in tone with much support for including George Henry White as a key character in any monument design. Darrell Stover offered, as focal points, the history of North Carolina's United States Colored Troops, as well as musicians from the region, notably jazz legend Thelonious Monk. Also mentioned were Nina Simone, Max Roach, John Coltrane, Billy Taylor, Abraham Galloway, David Walker, John Chavis, and Maya Angelou.

In a dialogue mode, several attendees emphasized the need to include black scientists and inventors. There was also the suggestion of a "Mount Rushmore" approach, which would allow for the inclusion of a multitude of African American leaders. Another design concept was a "tree of life" with faces carved into the trunk.

When Kevin Cherry posed to the audience a questions about the emotional tone of the monument, the consensus was for a celebratory approach to the state's African American history and heritage. In addition to celebration, there was also a strong emphasis placed on the themes of education, youth, pride, and self-determination.

There was consensus that the scope of the monument, chronologically, should be broad and expansive.

Hearing #4
Shaw Auditorium, Fayetteville State University
1200 Murchison Road, Fayetteville
March 29, 2016

The public hearing at Fayetteville State University (FSU) included thirty-two participants and sixteen speakers ranging from FSU faculty, staff, and students to interested citizens from across the state.

Linda Miller was the first to speak. She emphasized the importance of education to African American history in North Carolina, particularly with the state being the home of the most 4-year HBCUs of any state in the nation. Miller reminded those in attendance that FSU is the "second oldest state school," after UNC-Chapel Hill. Miller also referenced the importance of the local Orange Street School Association. Miller

closed by referencing the importance of cultural themes, military history, and spirituality, specifically the significance of historically black churches.

Fred Whitted spoke to the importance of black athletic contributions and also emphasized education, spirituality, and the state's HBCUs. In terms of design, he referenced the Vietnam wall, the use of bas relief, statues, and stairs.

Joe Holt of Raleigh affirmed the importance of the proposed location of the monument and identified himself as a proud member of the First Baptist Church that sits across from the proposed site. He shared his thoughts about the importance of including black political history, including black legislators and North Carolina's pivotal role in desegregation of schools. Holt also emphasized the importance of the birth of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) at Shaw University. He referenced African American accomplishments in the field of medicine, notably at Shaw University and St. Agnes Hospital. He closed by mentioning the importance of the Montford Point Marines.

Alex Rodriguez emphasized the importance of North Carolina's United States Colored Troops (USCTs). Lisa Greathouse illuminated the North Carolina connections of two African American congressmen—Hiram Revels and George Henry White. She also advocated for there to be a statue of a singular figure, with a long-term plan to include more significant figures over time.

Tamara Holmes Brothers of FSU advocated for a strong intellectual component and curricular development in both K-12 and college classrooms. Latoy Coffield of Roper spoke passionately about the sacrifices of African Americans. She shared the image of a black woman holding a lantern. Coffield also identified entrepreneurial contributions from barbering and banking to agriculture as important. She hopes for a comprehensive and multifaceted approach.

Sharon McCrimmon identified HBCUs as an important focus, as a parent of HBCU graduates. She also sees the monument as a way to connect people more intimately to history. Carolyn McLaurin asked for an inclusion of black newspapers and writers, particularly poets. She also asked for entrepreneurs and inventors to be included.

Earl Ijames, curator with the North Carolina Museum of History, spoke to the importance of the founding of churches in brush arbors. He suggested that this story could be reflected physically. Ijames also offered up that 124 black men served in the state legislature during Reconstruction. He emphasized the significance of George Henry White. Ijames shared the names of several women who should be included: Harriet Jacobs, Pauli Murray, and Ella Baker.

Nicholle Young focused her remarks on the intersection of education and politics and how important it is to inspire the next generation through the monument. She suggested involving HBCUs in the design process, particularly art and history departments. Young saw the design of the monument as an opportunity to "pass the

torch” to the next generation. She also mentioned the renowned writer Charles Waddell Chesnutt.

Kelli Walsh, history professor at FSU, shared her thoughts around the prioritization of education, religion, and military history as key themes. She mentioned E.E. Smith as an important figure in Fayetteville. She also suggested the themes of water and flame, and hands lifting higher and higher. This last image was inspired by the National Association of Colored Women’s theme, “lifting as we climb.” Walsh also mentioned the importance of Revolutionary War participation and abolitionism.

Jim Greathouse, a parks and recreations professional, described a possible design inspiration of a Roman spiral, with one generation “handing off” to the next. Meghan Maxwell, of the Museum of the Cape Fear, shared her desire to see women well-represented in the monument. Jeffrey Womble emphasized literary notables, specifically Charles Chesnutt, Maya Angelou, and Zora Neale Hurston.

The remainder of the hearing was in dialogue format and included the mention of historical figures Charlotte Hawkins Brown, Mary Jane Patterson, Anna Julia Cooper, John Copeland, and Lewis Leary. While the group’s consensus was for the inclusion of symbols of breaking free of oppression, several attendees asked that there be no depiction of picking crops or racial violence, such as lynching.

Hearing #5

**St. Philips African Moravian Church, Old Salem
911 South Church Street, Winston-Salem
April 12, 2016**

A meeting in Winston-Salem on April 12 opened the second round of public hearings. The scene was St. Philips African Moravian Church, constructed in 1861, the oldest African American house of worship in North Carolina. A signal event in the church’s history was a meeting on May 21, 1865, where a Union Army chaplain announced to those gathered that they henceforward were free people.

Reporters from the *Winston-Salem Journal* and the *Winston-Salem Chronicle* were among the fifteen people in attendance. The preliminaries followed the procedure used in the previous four hearings, with the PowerPoint intended to spur discussion. Commissioner Valerie Johnson attended and facilitated the discussion.

Conrad Mitchell was the first to step to the microphone. He regretted the proximity of the proposed site to the Supreme Court building, voicing his concern that the juxtaposition of the memorial to the apex of the justice system would be jarring and inappropriate. Raleigh-based staff members in attendance made clear that the image was misleading and that space, indeed a street, divided one from the other.

To bolster their point, they recalled a story that, in part, had propelled the effort to build the new memorial. The same story was shared with attendees at most, if not all, the

hearings. Patricia Timmons-Goodson, then Associate Justice of the North Carolina Supreme Court and the first African American female to sit on the state's high bench, officiated at the swearing-in ceremony on February 27, 2009, for the members of the new North Carolina African American Heritage Commission.

In the course of the brief program, the Justice took note of the fact that the monuments on the grounds of the State Capitol, visible from her office window, are lacking in terms of inclusiveness. The situation, she pointed out, is especially regrettable in light of the fact that schoolchildren visit the Capitol and its grounds every day and a high proportion of those students do not find reflected in the statuary or other memorials faces like their own. She expressed her personal hope that the new board would be of assistance in making the representations more inclusive.

Daphne Johnson introduced herself at the board chair of Delta Fine Arts and said that she was attending to represent the interest of African American artists. She posed the question that was central to the hearings, that being how do you tell the story of African Americans in North Carolina. She argued for the inclusion of the broad spectrum of experiences and advocated for the mention of the contributions of artists.

Margaret Graham, an elder citizen, argued that the story must begin with slavery, that "we don't want to lose that history." The memorial, she said, should depict the "struggle that we overcame."

Donna Benson, history professor at Winston-Salem State University, commended to the group the South Carolina monument with its timeline and multiple elements. Her list of topics was a lengthy one and included HBCUs, the church, the arts, the abolitionist movement, basketball coach John McLendon, the Greensboro sit-ins, and Julius Chambers. Benson commended to the group as a theme the sentiments expressed by poet Maya Angelou in her poem, "Still I Rise."

Roy Doron, also of Winston-Salem State University, said that the monument, instead of avoiding issues related to the Supreme Court, should embrace the opportunity. The story he commended to the group was that of Marielle Zuma (sp?), who traveled from Winston-Salem to South Africa and founded the African National Congress's Women's League.

Cheryl Harry of Old Salem, the host for the evening, agreed that the memorial should begin with slavery but added that stories of individuals central to the story of African Americans in North Carolina such as those of David Walker, Abraham Galloway, and Harriet Jacobs.

Walter Beeker recalled his visit to Birmingham and his impressions of the civil rights memorial in that city. That artwork, he said, is noted for its simplicity. He encouraged the planners of the Raleigh monument to integrate the new work with the planned Freedom Park and with exhibits at the North Carolina Museum of History.

Leo Rucker posed the question: How do we talk about slavery? He observed that the traditional means has been to use the metaphor of the breaking of chain but encouraged the planners to look beyond that stereotype. He suggested that reaching up and the draw of education should be part of the plans.

Fleming Ed-Amin said that he had visited sites in Africa related to the history of slavery. He noted the “incomparable persistence of the human spirit.” Furthermore, he recalled his visit to Somerset Place and pointed out that the owners, the Collins, has imported slaves directly from Africa. Yesterday, today, and tomorrow, he said, all should be part of the monument, which should differ from others at the Capitol in that it will be an expression of life rather than of war.

In the ensuing open discussion, other persons and topics arose. Among those were John Hope Franklin, Anna Julia Cooper, Thomas Day, and the hymns “Lift Every Voice and Sing” and “Down by the Riverside.”

Hearing #6
Young Men’s Institute Cultural Center
39 South Market Street, Asheville
April 19, 2016

On April 19 the new round of public hearings returned to the Young Men’s Institute (YMI) Cultural Center in Asheville, site of one of the original hearings in 2010. Twenty people attended. Commissioners Valerie Johnson and Millie Barbee, chair of the study committee, were in attendance.

Sasha Mitchell of the Buncombe County African American Heritage Commission was the first to speak. She expressed a preference for literal, rather than abstract, depictions. She inquired as to whether the twenty-five-year waiting period applied with respect to persons and Deputy Secretary Cherry indicated that it did not. Mitchell said that it is indeed important to include slavery. Prominent in her mind as to topics were civil rights and the Greensboro sit-ins. Lastly, she said that it is important that all regions of the state be represented.

Deborah Miles of the UNC-Asheville Center for Diversity Education commended the use of the bank alongside Wilmington Street as the site for a timeline element. She asked that planners keep in mind that students will be a prime audience. Finally, she recommended the book *Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson as source material.

Marilyn Bass expressed a preference for the inclusion of black entrepreneurs and, beyond that, suggested that one or more people from Asheville or western North Carolina be included, mentioning civil rights leader Floyd McKissick as a possibility. Above all, she recognized, those included should be people whose impact affected the whole state.

Stephanie Simpson-Twitty joined others who suggested that the topic of slavery be a focus and commended planners for the public process. Deputy Secretary Cherry

said that the decisions would involve what not to include as much as what to include. Mitchell concurred and recommended that abstract art be avoided.

Jim Colvin concurred that the monument should take in the “whole sweep of history” and that slavery should not be minimized. He mentioned the contemporary “Black Lives Matter” movement as an example of how issues carry across time.

Angie Chandler, coordinator of the Blue Ridge Natural Heritage Area, described her experience with projects such as regional music trails. She mentioned the African American influence on the development of the banjo. Phyllis Utley, an educator at Asheville-Buncombe Tech, suggested that the very design of the monument should include African-related elements, such as an obelisk.

Jim Abbott asked the planners to give priority to the story of Harriet Jacobs but also to include the story of the civil rights movement, especially that of SNCC, given its North Carolina connections. He mentioned HBCUs, Anna Julia Cooper, and advocated artists such as Nina Simone. He rated sports as a low priority.

Dewayne Barton suggested that teachers and schools should extend the story told by the monument. He advocated that an African American artist be retained. He reminded the group that African American businessmen had built their own communities during the era of Jim Crow. The monument should encourage those of a new generation to be builders as well. He saw the former “chitlin’ circuit” as deserving of memorialization.

Sarah Carballo and Sarah Colvin spoke briefly, the former commending the effort and noting that there is “so much to learn” and the latter advocating changes to the Vance Monument on Pack Square. In particular she wished to see installed a plaque about slave sales on the Square.

Roy Harris traced his ancestors to Hyde County around Lake Mattamuskeet and counted migrant workers among those relatives. He expressed an interest in artists including Roberta Flack and Nina Simone and said that he looked forward to visiting the Capitol and the monument someday with his grandchildren.

To close, committee chair Millie Barbee spoke briefly as did Commissioner Richard Starnes, who described a special affinity for Asheville, his hometown. Secretary Kluttz invited further comment as the process unfolds.

Hearing #7
St. Stephen African Methodist Episcopal Church
501 Red Cross Street, Wilmington
April 26, 2016

Rev. Wayne A. Johnson welcomed twenty-two attendees to the seventh public hearing at the historic St. Stephen AME Church. Rev. Johnson shared the historic significance of the church as a “mother” church within the state of North Carolina.

Richard Everington, a veteran, shared that he would like the monument to honor two African American sergeants—Eugene Ashley, Jr. and Lawrence Joel. His hope was for a stainless steel design of the two soldiers, which would be covered in bronze and be standing and in salute.

Deborah Diggs Maxwell called for the story of the 1898 Wilmington Massacre to be included as well as a quote from Ella Baker, that being “Show the way!” Maxwell appreciated the South Carolina design shared in the staff PowerPoint. In such a design she would include the Pea Island Life Savers, the Wilmington 10, the High Point Children, Abraham Galloway, and David Walker. She preferred a literal/figurative approach, rather than metaphorical. She called for on-site signage with contextualization and explanation of the monument. She also suggested a website with curricular materials.

Madafo Lloyd Wilson, professional storyteller and musician, proposed an accurate and inclusive historical narrative. He strongly advocated for a clear connection to African ancestry and culture in the story of African Americans in North Carolina. In his words “these were African people.”

Eulis Willis, mayor of Navassa and commissioner on the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission, advocated for Gullah culture to be represented through Cape Fear region rice cultivation and the significance of longleaf pine and shrimping. Willis emphasized the naval stores industry as significant.

Beverly Smalls, writer, emphasized the importance of Reconstruction-era legislators with a particular emphasis on their roles in creating educational opportunities for African Americans. Smalls also encouraged some use of WPA slave narratives as a potential link to the African continent.

Sylvia Ezelonwu, former North Carolina African American Heritage Commissioner and current member of the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission, highlighted the importance of maritime culture—docks, ports, nets, slave ships.

Willie Sloan, founder of Town Creek Vision of Leland, shared that he did not believe the whole story could be told through a monument. He encouraged prioritization. For Sloan the priority is the black dock workers and watermen of North Carolina.

Hearing #8
State Capitol, Raleigh
May 3, 2016

The eighth of eight hearings took place in the Senate Chamber of the State Capitol on May 3, 2016. Thirty-six people attended. Commissioners Marvin Arrington, Pierre Crawford, Lavonda Daniels, Valerie Johnson, and Philip Henry attended. As usual Secretary Kluttz welcomed those present and invited comments. Michelle Lanier then presented the statement by the organizers of the Freedom Monument Park, as she had done at previous meetings.

Winifred Tillery described the project as one “of great interest” to her and said that the time was right to create a great memorial that “all can be proud of.” She commended the Department for the work to date and complimented the 2010 report. She suggested the inclusion of John Hope Franklin, give his North Carolina connections, and his national stature. She hoped to see legislative buyin to the project and some emphasis on December 6, 1865, the date the Thirteenth Amendment was formally ratified.

Bill McNeill, former superintendent of Wake County public schools, said that his thoughts, naturally enough, involved children. He recalled the words of Patricia Timmons-Goodson calling for such a monument. He pointed out that the legal system made “free and appropriate education” possible. Consequently, he recommended that the monument has as its central focus Julius Chambers, noted for achievements in both law and education.

Linda Edwards, artist and former teacher in Granville County, suggested that the monument should represent all African Americans, not a single individual. She recommended sculptor Benny Bagwell as the potential artist and suggested that a female artist also be considered.

The Reverend Bernard Holliday envisioned a monument featuring four emblems, those being the sun, an eagle, a dove, and a lamb. Furthermore, he identified twenty-five topics to be treated, among them Native Americans, religious denominations, agriculture, aviation pioneers, civil rights groups, craftsmen, fashion designers, educators and HBCUs, law enforcement, lawyers, and elected officials.

Frank Scuiletti outlined his concept (described below under “Responses Received by Mail”). Ella Blalock suggested that an attempt should be made to connect the racial violence in Wilmington in 1898 to Raleigh and to the state.

Demetrius Hunter suggested the “multitude of that that happened” be covered and commemorated, mentioning the military, businesses, Black Wall Street in Durham, and Raleigh leaders John Chavis, James Young, and Manassas Pope.

Major Eure, a mail clerk, described his own French Huguenot ancestry and said that an African American monument remained a commendable goal and that those of other heritage should view the project with “no animosity.”

Edward Harris, a documentary filmmaker and graduate of North Carolina Central University, talked about the importance of the Hayti community in Durham. Further, he mentioned noteworthy figures such as James Shepard and Julius Chambers.

The Capitol hearing closed with Deputy Secretary Cherry's review of next steps and Commissioner Valerie Johnson's noting that everyone, not just African Americans, has a stake in the project.

Responses Received by Mail and by E-mail

The website dedicated to promulgating word of the hearings also included a portal by which citizens could file comments. Over the course of four months, February-May 2016, a total of forty-eight responses were filed. Roughly two-thirds (or thirty) were positive, either commending the effort or offering specific suggestions. One-third (or eighteen) were negative. Of those three were abusive, offering particular criticisms of Secretary Klutts or of the process as a whole. Others objected to "pandering" and dismissed or objected to a monument to African Americans, depicting the effort as a "waste of time and money." One writer contended the such a monument would "separate us" rather than "heal the divide." Another denounced a "politically correct agenda."

Most of those who filed comments on the website nominated particular individuals for depiction or inclusion, naming Maya Angelou, Eugene Ashley, Ella Baker, Harvey Beech, Anna Julia Cooper, Maizie Ferguson, Abraham Galloway, James Walker Hood, Harriet Jacobs, Lawrence Joel, Nelson Johnson, Parker Robbins, Goldie Wells, George H. White, and Robert Williams.

Multiple parties (two) nominated groupings, those being the Greensboro Four, Tuskegee Airmen, and the U.S. Colored Troops. Groups with a single mention included Buffalo Soldiers and Pea Island Lifesavers. Two nationally prominent people without North Carolina connections who were nominated were Colin Powell and Condoleeza Rice.

Themes suggested included participants in the Revolutionary War, slavery, the 1865 Freedmen's Conventions, 1898 racial violence in Wilmington, Rosenwald Schools, the sit-in movement and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, women, builders, education, and musicians.

General comments filed on the website included an encouragement to remove other monuments from Union Square before any is added, the depiction of "nameless" people, and the need for an area for rest and reflection.

At the Raleigh hearing and by e-mail Frank Scuiletti, an employee of the community colleges system, described his conception of a 3' X 6' bronze tabletop containing thereon an outline of the map of the state, with individuals depicted around the perimeter, as if sharing a meal together.

Elvin Birth of Raleigh by U.S. mail promoted his idea of a monument specifically dedicated to slavery with depiction of anonymous working people. As a model he pointed to a statue of John Henry, the steeldriving man, in West Virginia.

Clyde Overcash, a Salisbury artist, conceived an artwork entitled “Out of Slavery,” depicting a group of people with intertwined, upstretched arms and the breaking of chains.

Richard Everington of Wilmington at a hearing and by e-mail suggested the installation of a monument dedicated to Medal of Honor recipient Eugene Ashley Jr., honored for his service in Vietnam.

African American Heritage Commission member Nelson Arrington, after attending the hearing in Rocky Mount, shared his thoughts via e-mail. He recommended that the monument be designed in such a way so as to impart to young people a desire to learn more about the black experience via nearby museum exhibits and historic sites, and from books. He envisioned a boy and girl in the center of a monument with surrounding statues, or rather those persons depicted, imparting via scripted messages their wisdom.

N.C. House member Duane R. Hall, via his legislative assistant Leigh Lawrence, shared his recommendation that Revolutionary War patriot Ned Griffin be the focal point. Griffin was an enslaved person from Edgecombe County who served as a substitute for his owner in the Continental Army. In return for services rendered at the Battle of Guilford Courthouse Griffin gained his freedom. Staff members at Guilford Courthouse National Military Park assisted with the research on Griffin.

David Cecelski, independent scholar and biographer of Abraham Galloway, recommended that the monument have a singular focus, preferably the depiction of a single person, rather than attempting to encompass the broad sweep of history and events.

Flora Wadelington, adjunct professor at N.C. A.&T. State University and former Archives and History staff member, used the monument proposal as a classroom exercise for her students. One of them, Nathan Hart, presented an idea that appealed to the larger group. He proposed that the monument represent the black family in slavery and in freedom. Secondary, but still vital, themes would be religion and education. As a depiction he suggested a black male father figure holding a Bible as the central image alongside a female holding the hand of a child who in turn is holding a book.

Members of the Phoenix Society, who advocated George Henry White as the central focus, forwarded a copy of a booklet produced for a banquet held at Duke University on January 29, 2016, to honor the former congressmen.

Lorraine Robinson of New Bern advocated in an e-mail for a memorial “to honor and celebrate an entire population, rather than a few individuals.” Her concept was derived from the crucible of the past, that being a depiction of the hold of a slave ship, from which arises a “triumphantly emergent population.” This concept included the

planks and ribs of the hold of a ship from which arises “an enormous pile of huge, outsize links of chain jumbled in a mass that morph into feathers, ascending and ascending.”

Artist Selection and Next Steps

At each of the public hearings, Deputy Secretary Kevin Cherry informed those in attendance of the next steps in the monument process. This process was informed by staff of the North Carolina Arts Council, which regularly works with public arts projects across the state and it was accepted by the joint committee of the African American Heritage Commission and North Carolina Historical Commission charged with this undertaking. The process:

- 1) Following the public hearings, staff will prepare a draft document summarizing the thoughts shared by members of the public and others at these meetings, through the online portal, and by direct mail and email.
- 2) This draft summary document will be reviewed and initially accepted or rejected and asked to be edited and re-submitted by the North Carolina Historical Commission at its July meeting.
- 3) Once the draft document is accepted, it will be posted for public comment on the Department of Natural and Cultural Resource’s Website until one week before the joint meeting of the North Carolina Historical Commission and North Carolina African American Heritage Commission to be held in fall 2016. At this time, any comments upon the draft summary document will then be taken into consideration. Staff may then choose to redraft or edit the document based upon any comments received.
- 4) Staff will report any comments received on the draft document to the joint meeting of the North Carolina Historical Commission and North Carolina African American Heritage Commission and note any changes made to the document as a result of comments received upon the posted draft. The potentially re-drafted summary document will either be accepted or rejected by the commissions. If rejected, these bodies shall request edits of the document and resubmittal.
- 5) Once the summary document is fully accepted by both commissions, it will be used as the basis for a “Request for Qualifications” process wherein artists will be asked to submit resumes, portfolio materials, and references among other relevant information to the monument committee for selection of a slate of finalists.
- 6) All finalists selected by the committee will be asked to make a presentation to the African American Heritage Commission and the North Carolina Historical Commission. The North Carolina Historical Commission, consulting with the African American Heritage Commission, will choose the artist for the project.
- 7) This being a monument commissioning and not a public art project, the artist will then work closely with the committee in an iterative process to develop a conceptual design for the monument.
- 8) Once the conceptual design is chosen, fundraising for the project will proceed. The Secretary of Natural and Cultural Resources will be the chair of the fundraising committee for this project.

- 9) All funds will need to be in place before going forward with any related construction.

Interplay with Freedom Park

It is imperative the close cooperation be maintained with the organizers of the Freedom Park developers. The following statement was read at each of the public hearings:

STATEMENT from the BOARD of the NORTH CAROLINA FREEDOM PARK regarding the African American Monument Project on Capitol Grounds (February 2016)

- Let us clarify some of the confusion in the media about how the Capitol Grounds statutory monument plans fit with the plans for another major public memorial to the African American heritage that will be constructed next to the State Legislative Building a few blocks away, called the **North Carolina Freedom Park**.
- The ongoing **Park project was initiated 12 years ago** as a grassroots non-profit effort to create a large public gathering place to tell the inspirational story to school children and other visitors about the “tragedy and triumph” of the African American struggle from slavery to freedom and to be a “beacon of optimism about our future,” inspiring visitors to continue the work toward freedom and justice for all.
- Three renowned Design Teams are competing to **re-design the Park** to reflect today’s heightened awareness of racial progress and to serve as a vibrant public activity space.
- **In July 2016** the Park will announce a **dramatic new design** for the Freedom Park site and will commence steps toward the pre-construction phase and the public fundraising of \$5 million. The Park will be completed by 2020 and then gifted to the State.
- **The two projects have been moving forward in close communication and mutual cooperation to recognize the African American contributions to our state.**

For further information, please contact Goldie Frinks Wells or David Warren, NC Freedom Park Co-Chairs at info@ncfmp.org.

Press Coverage

African-American Monument at State Capitol – States News Service

DATES FOR COMMENTS ON AFRICAN AMERICAN MONUMENT AT STATE CAPITOL EXTENDED INTO APRIL AND MAY

News Date: 4/4/2016

Outlet: States News Service

The following information was released by the office of the governor of North Carolina:

Governor Pat McCrory is encouraging citizen participation in four additional public hearings in coming weeks to offer feedback on a new **monument on State Capitol grounds** to commemorate the achievements of African Americans. Governor McCrory's recommendation to construct the monument was endorsed by the **North Carolina Historical Commission** and the **North Carolina African American Heritage Commission**. The sessions will take place over four Tuesdays in Winston-Salem, Asheville, Wilmington and Raleigh.

"The construction of this **monument** has already garnered widespread support and feedback from throughout the state," said Governor McCrory. "These additional hearings will allow more people to play an active role in helping the state recognize the contributions African Americans have made to North Carolina."

"We have had such wonderful, passionate input from citizens across the state," said **Secretary Susan Kluttz** of the **N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources**. "The ideas have been varied and inspiring. We realized we needed to extend the public hearings to even more cities to ensure we were giving everyone the opportunity to give their input."

Earlier this year, Governor McCrory and the **Department of Natural and Cultural Resources** announced four public hearings that occurred throughout the state during the month of March. The additional public hearings that have been added will take place at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesdays at the following locations:

April 12 at St. Phillips African Moravian Church and Heritage Center in Old Salem, 911 South Church St., Winston-Salem;

April 19 at the Asheville YMI Cultural Center, 39 Market St., Asheville;

April 26 at St. Stephen AME Church Sloan Chapel Annex, 501 Red Cross St., Wilmington;

May 3 at the **State Capitol**, One E. Edenton St., Raleigh

"This is a first in the history of our state and I am proud of Governor Pat McCrory for his support of an idea that is long overdue," added **Secretary Kluttz**.

The **Historical Commission** joins the **African American Heritage Commission** in seeking to fully represent the diversity of North Carolina's history. Those backing the proposal

commend the work of the North Carolina Freedom Monument Project and seek to complement, not supplant, its ambitious plan for a public art project two blocks northeast of the **Capitol**.

The planning committee will consist of three members of the **North Carolina Historical Commission** and three members of the **African American Heritage Commission**, and led by Historical Commission Chair Millie Barbee.

Individuals or groups wishing to voice opinions or support the new monument are invited to the four public hearings or can visit ncdcr.gov/monuments-feedback to provide feedback.

TUESDAY APRIL 5 2016
NEWSOBSERVER.COM

Capitol monument subject of hearings

BY RICHARD STRADLING
rstradling@newsobserver.com

RALEIGH

The state has decided to hold more hearings to solicit feedback on a plan to build a monument to African-Americans on the grounds of the State Capitol.

The new hearings, to start next week, include Raleigh, which was left off the original schedule, as well as Winston-Salem, Asheville and Wilmington. The state held four hearings in March in Greensboro, Charlotte, Rocky Mount and Fayetteville.

Gov. Pat McCrory recommended in late October that the N.C. Historical Commission endorse the idea of a new monu-

ment to commemorate the achievements of African-Americans in North Carolina. The plan, supported by members of the historical commission and the N.C. African American Heritage Commission, would end a 25-year moratorium on the construction of statues on the State Capitol grounds.

"The construction of this monument has already garnered widespread support and feedback from throughout the state," McCrory said in a statement Monday.

"These additional hearings will allow more people to play an active role in helping the state recognize the contributions African-Americans have made to North Carolina."

At the hearings, mem-

bers of the two commissions will describe possible locations, materials and themes for the monument, then listen to what people think about it. The hearings will begin at 6:30 p.m. on the following Tuesdays:

- April 12 at St. Phillips African Moravian Church and Heritage Center in Old Salem, 911 South Church St., Winston-Salem.

- April 19 at the Asheville YMI Cultural Center, 39 Market St., Asheville.

- April 26 at St. Stephen AME Church - Sloan Chapel Annex, 501 Red Cross St., Wilmington.

- May 3 at the State Capitol in downtown Raleigh.

Anyone wishing to voice opinions about the new monument can also visit www.ncdcr.gov/monuments-feedback.

Richard Stradling:
919-829-4739,
@RStradling

March 7

The *Burlington Times-News* on honoring North Carolina's African Americans:

North Carolina's **secretary of natural and cultural resources, Susan Kluttz**, wants some advice.

Her **department** and **two state historical commissions** have decided that the Tar Heel State needs a **monument** to the contributions of the state's African Americans on the **Capitol grounds** in Raleigh. It's a good idea, one we endorse.

Now, they're seeking suggestions on what that **monument** should be. Public hearings have been scheduled around the state this month to solicit ideas.

It is altogether fitting and proper that the state do this. African Americans did help build North Carolina often, by back-breaking labor for which they went unpaid or poorly paid.

The monuments at the **State Capitol** now are an odd assortment. There are statues to the three U.S. Presidents born in the state - Andrew Jackson, James K. Polk and Andrew Johnson - all of whom moved to Tennessee for greater opportunity. Johnson was impeached.

There are already monuments to veterans of World War I, World War II and Vietnam, two Confederate monuments (one of them to the women on the home front) and statues of assorted characters in state history.

Some are a bit obscure. Ensign Worth Bagley had the bad luck to be the first American killed in the Spanish-American War. (It probably helped, in getting his statue installed, that his brother-in-law ran Raleigh's biggest newspaper.)

So, an **African-American monument** is long overdue. But what should it be?

Against great odds, black Tar Heels have striven hard and achieved much. Perhaps their accomplishments are too great to be embodied in a single individual.

It would be nice if the state could set aside a generous cash prize (perhaps some of our business leaders and philanthropists could contribute) and call on the state's finest artists to compete to submit a design concept, which would be beautiful, imposing and would give these strivers the memorial they deserve.

We're sure there are a lot of great ideas out there and we urge people to come forward with them. Unfortunately, the public hearing scheduled to be held closest to Alamance County has come and gone. But three more remain: 6:30 tonight in Charlotte at the Harvey B. Gantt Center for African American Culture, 551 S. Tryon St.; 6:30 p.m. March 22 at the Braswell Memorial Library 727 N. Grace St., Rocky Mount; and 6:30 p.m. March 28 at Shaw Auditorium, Fayetteville State University, 1200 Murchison Road, Fayetteville.

Those who can't make the public hearings can make their opinions known online by going to www.ncdcr.gov/monuments-feedback

Online:

<http://www.thetimesnews.com>

State Capitol Memorial Study Committee

Public Hearings

Greensboro; March 1, 2016; 6:30 PM
Charlotte; March 8, 2016; 6:30 PM
Rocky Mount; March 22, 2016; 6:30 PM
Fayetteville; March 29, 2016; 6:30 PM

State Capitol Memorial Study Committee

Public Hearings

Winston-Salem; April 12, 2016; 6:30 PM
Asheville; April 19, 2016; 6:30 PM
Wilmington; April 26, 2016; 6:30 PM
State Capitol; May 3, 2016; 6:30 PM

Committee Members

North Carolina Historical Commission:

Millie Barbee, Chair
Valerie Johnson
David Dennard
Perry Morrison

North Carolina African American Heritage Commission:

Valerie Johnson, Chair
Philip Henry
Lavonda Daniels
Louise Toppin

Charge to the Committee

To examine opportunities for improving the diversity of experiences represented in the Capitol and on its grounds, specifically the merits of a memorial dedicated to African Americans in North Carolina.



Quick Facts About the Capitol

- The State Capitol was built in 1840 by enslaved men, contracted workers, and international artisans.
- The State Capitol serves more than 100,000 visitors per year; half are school children.

Quick Facts About the Capitol

The Capitol and grounds house 15 monuments, 13 plaques and 4 busts; three feature contributions of women and one features American Indian and African American soldiers.



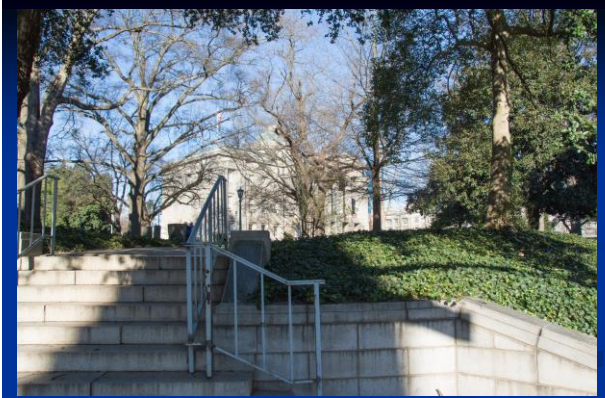
South Carolina

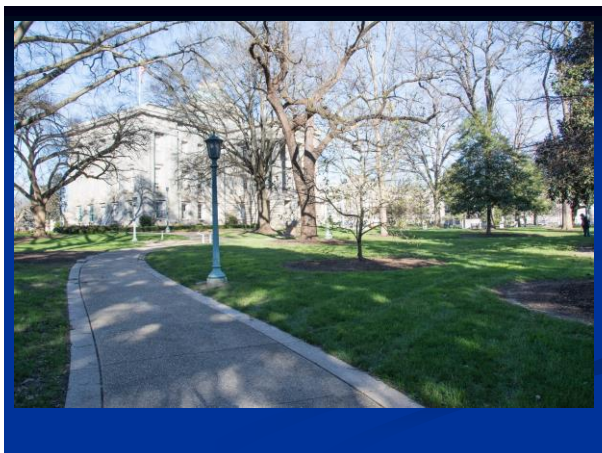


South Carolina

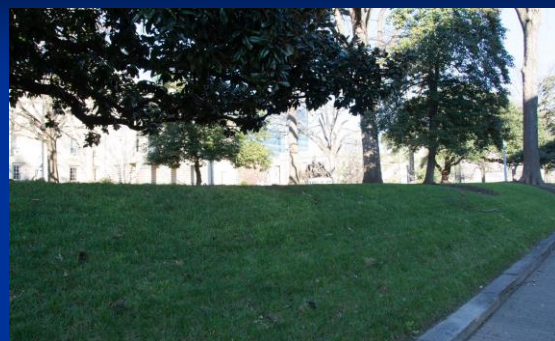


Vietnam Memorial

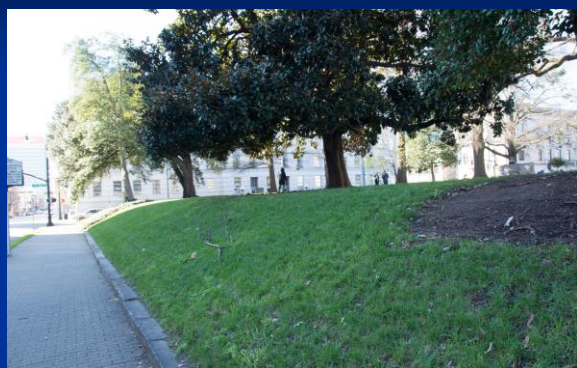




Facing north



Facing south




Questions to Consider

- How might we honor the contributions of African Americans on Union Square?
- Do you wish to see literal depictions?
- What constitutes meaningful visual representation?
- Are there landmarks or significant events that should be included?
- What story are we telling?

Thematic Elements

- Slavery to Freedom (through Emancipation)
- Civic Life (Jim Crow through Civil Rights Movement)
- Cultural and Artistic Contributions and Achievements
- Other themes



State Capitol Memorial Study Committee
Public hearings scheduled for:

Tuesday, March 1, 6:30 PM
International Civil Rights Center and Museum
341 S. Elm St., Greensboro

Tuesday, March 8, 6:30 PM
Harvey R. Gantt Center for African American + Culture
301 E. Tryon St., Charlotte

Tuesday, March 22, 6:30 PM
Brennell Memorial Library
727 W. Grace St., Rocky Mount

Tuesday, March 29, 6:30 PM
Shaw Auditorium, Fayetteville State University
1500 Northside Road, Fayetteville


A memorial can serve to recall the past, to commemorate people and events that brought us to the present moment, to create a cause for contemplation or a sense of awe.

At the request of Governor Pat McCrory, the N.C. Historical Commission and the N.C. African American Heritage Commission will examine alternatives with respect to diversifying the memorial on the State Capitol grounds to address the underrepresentation of African Americans.

Governor Pat McCrory and the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources invite you to join the process to help determine how to proceed with this project.

For more information, please call 919-807-7290

NC
NORTH CAROLINA



State Capitol Memorial Study Committee
Public hearings scheduled for:

Tuesday, April 12, 6:30 PM
St. Philips African Methodist Church, Old Salem
911 South Church Street, Winston-Salem

Tuesday, April 19, 6:30 PM
YMCA Cultural Center
39 South Market Street, Asheville

Tuesday, April 26, 6:30 PM
St. Stephen A.M.E. Church
501 Red Cross Street, Wilmington

Tuesday, May 3, 6:30 PM
State Capitol
Raleigh

A memorial can serve to recall the past, to commemorate people and events, to create a cause for contemplation or a sense of awe.

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