

Good evening Commissioners, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this evening. My name is Howard Fifer and I live in Chatham County. I am here to introduce Chatham For All, a group of County residents who values liberty and justice for all, and shares grave concerns about the continued presence of the Confederate monument at the entrance to our courthouse. We are also here to present petitions signed by over 900 Chatham residents, young and old, Republicans and Democrats, lifelong residents and newcomers, white, black, Latinx and others - a group as varied as the County itself - and who all request that you remove the monument, as required by the law and the facts.

We are here because you, the Commissioners, have the legal authority to rescind the 1907 license agreement granted to the United Daughters of the Confederacy by your predecessors. The Daughters, not the County, are owners of the monument. North Carolina general statutes Section 100-2.1, which governs the County's actions with respect to removing the monument, does not apply because the monument falls under one of the exceptions written into the law (section c-2). It is private property on county land under a license agreement, which is revocable by the County. This is not a loophole in the law. This is the design of the law.

We do not come here to try to erase history. Through the clamor created by those opposing its removal you should remain focused on facts not in dispute:

- 1)- The monument celebrates the Confederate States of America, as stated right on the pedestal.
- 2)- The Confederate States of America were created to defend slavery, requiring the continued enslavement of African Americans. See section IX of the permanent Confederate Constitution.
- 3)-The Confederate States of America were intended to defy the rule of the laws of the United States and maintain a hierarchy without regard to equality and natural rights of all human beings.

Just listen to the words spoken in 1909 in Granville County, by Governor William Walton Kitchin at the unveiling of the monument there, when he said it is not within "the power of all the armies ever drilled or of all the constitutions ever written to make the white man and the black races equal."

Certainly, no one here in Chatham County, regardless of point of view vis a vis the monument, would use those appalling words today. At the same time, that true historical context of the

monument must be acknowledged. That message, uttered back in 1909 still is, and always will be, linked to Confederate monuments.

You should also be aware of your legal obligation to remove this monument. Because it occupies our town center in front of our historic court house on County property, as a matter of law as determined by the U.S. Supreme Court, it constitutes government speech. Because it is a monument celebrating the Confederacy, it celebrates the enslavement of African Americans, and therefore violates the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States constitution and Article 1, Section 19 of the North Carolina Constitution.

Any monument in the center of our community, any government speech, should voice our best shared values. Please tell the Daughters of the Confederacy to retrieve its property.

Thank you for the work you do for all of the people of our County.

Our first speaker is Chris Kaman.