



CAPITOL AREA ARCHITECTURAL AND PLANNING BOARD

CAAPB

Exhibit 7

Media on CAAPB Commemorative Works Review Process

STATEMENT OF NEED AND REASONABLENESS

Proposed Revisions to Minnesota Rules Chapter 2400,
governing Commemorative Works on the Minnesota
Capitol Grounds

Revisor ID No. 04720

Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board
February 2020

NOTE:

The articles in this exhibit are excerpts from a sample of press articles published between 2018 and present. The articles include discussion about how decisions for commemorative works on the Minnesota Capitol grounds are made, by who, how, and when.

The articles are presented in reverse chronological order.

This symbol [...] within the articles notes where portions of the article were omitted for the sake of brevity. Full versions of each article are available in links provided under the article headline.

This press summary was prepared by staff of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board.

Contents

The fate of Minnesota's toppled Christopher Columbus statue still undecided more than a year later (Kare 11)..... 2

Lt. Governor Flanagan Announces Appointments to Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board Advisory Task Forces..... 2

These Confederate statues were removed. But where did they go? (NBC News)..... 3

Fate of Columbus statue pulled down at Minnesota State Capitol will not be decided until 2021 (Star Tribune) 4

Panel will create new process for moving statues (Kare 11) 5

Panel begins debate on removing statues from MN Capitol (MPR News)..... 5

Officials mull charges — and public art policies — after Capitol's Columbus toppled statue (Star Tribune) 6

Minnesota, we need to talk about our Columbus monument (MinnPost) 6

The fate of Minnesota's toppled Christopher Columbus statue still undecided more than a year later (Kare 11)

Date: October 11, 2021

URL: <https://www.kare11.com/article/news/local/breaking-the-news/fate-of-minnesotas-toppled-christopher-columbus-statue-still-undecided/89-18f67015-7a99-40b7-bc45-fa7c6aa671d3>

... Last year the Christopher Columbus statue on the State Capitol grounds was pulled down in protest. And now, more than a year later, the fate of this statue is still up in the air.

"It's been well over a year, there's no reason why that can't be replaced," Minnesota Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen says. Ingebrigtsen and a few of his Republican colleagues wrote a bill to get the statue restored and re-installed outside the Minnesota State Capitol, but the idea was turned down, at least for now. "It's really unfortunate. That statue was put up for historic reasons actually acknowledging the Italian immigrants, way back, many years ago," Ingebrigtsen says.

"Obviously there was some bad history with Columbus and indigenous folks, but that's what it is, it's history and we should all be learning from, to not be repeating ourselves, but instead we're just going to block out history it seems like."

The Columbus statue is currently being stored in a secure location while the Capitol Area Architecture and Planning Board decides its fate.

The board is in the middle of a two-year review process to decide how they want to handle removing statues and monuments moving forward.

The board is scheduled to show this plan to an administrative law judge in January of next year. So, until that time, the Columbus statue will stay in storage as the debate continues.

Lt. Governor Flanagan Announces Appointments to Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board Advisory Task Forces

Date: October 15, 2020

URL: <https://mn.gov/governor/news/?id=1055-450181>

[ST. PAUL, MN] –As the Chair of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB), Lieutenant Governor Peggy Flanagan today announced appointments to the Decision Process Advisory Task Force and Public Engagement Advisory Task Force, commissioned to provide recommendations to the CAAPB on developing a process for public input into the monuments, memorials, and works of art at the Minnesota State Capitol. All recommendations will then be considered by the CAAPB at public meetings before any final decisions are made.

"The Minnesota State Capitol should be a place where all Minnesotans are seen, heard, and valued," said Lieutenant Governor Flanagan. "These task forces will inform the CAAPB so that our work can be more inclusive, engaged, and reflective of what it means to build a Capitol that is truly the People's House."

“The Minnesota State Capitol is a place where we honor the history of Minnesota and imagine our future together,” said Governor Tim Walz. “These task forces bring together leaders from across Minnesota to guide this important work.”

The Decision Process Advisory Task Force will conduct a comprehensive review of CAAPB policies and procedures that relate to the addition, alteration, or removal of monuments, memorials, and works of art on the Capitol grounds and in the State Capitol and provide a report to the CAAPB on how to best develop a decision-making process regarding these procedures.

The Public Engagement Advisory Task Force will develop a process for the public to share experiences about what the Capitol means to them and provide feedback on the monuments, memorials, and works of art on the Capitol grounds and in the interior of the State Capitol. After receiving public input, the Task Force will prepare a report to the CAAPB including key themes that emerged from this public input.

These Confederate statues were removed. But where did they go? (NBC News)

Date: September 20, 2020

URL: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/these-confederate-statues-were-removed-where-did-they-go-n1240268>

Reporter: Erik Ortiz

After the death of George Floyd in late May, more than 130 Confederate statues and tributes to divisive historical figures have come down in a flurry of protests, acts of vandalism and government decrees.

But no matter how and why the monuments were removed, most communities remain stuck in a common struggle: what to do with them.

A review by NBC News of monuments that were ripped down or are slated to be pulled from public spaces found that most governments and agencies with oversight have no clear road map for what will happen next and have placed the statues and markers into storage for the foreseeable future. [...]

Sarah Beetham, the chair of liberal arts and an assistant professor of art history at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, said some communities must wrestle with whether a statue is worth preserving if it is only going to be relegated to storage or was already damaged or weather-worn. [...]

The sweeping changes are spurred by a larger demand for the nation to confront a long history of racism and oppression. [...]

Some government agencies are using public task forces to determine what should happen to contentious monuments.

At the Minnesota Capitol in St. Paul, protesters in June used a rope to topple a nearly 90-year-old statue of Christopher Columbus — one of about 30 of the Italian explorer across the country that were either vandalized or removed in support of Indigenous people.

The Columbus statue's removal has forced a discussion of what monuments and artwork are most appropriate for the capital grounds, and it could be four to six more months before a task force decides

the next steps, said Paul Mandell, executive secretary of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, which has oversight of the property.

"It's not 1492 anymore, and we know a lot of things about Columbus now that wouldn't merit him getting placed here," Mandell said. [...]

The expedited removal of monuments, particularly on courthouse and government grounds, is a beneficial step toward the nation's healing, said Geoff Ward, a professor of African and African American studies at Washington University in St. Louis who has mapped out visual symbols of racism.

But he worries that necessary conversations about racial injustice that people of color are asking for in their communities are failing to happen each time a statue is taken down.

"This is a familiar U.S. scenario," Ward said, "seeking to quickly move on and declare matters settled rather than dealing with issues and really processing traumas."

Fate of Columbus statue pulled down at Minnesota State Capitol will not be decided until 2021 (Star Tribune)

Date: July 23, 2020

Type: Article

URL: <https://www.startribune.com/fate-of-columbus-statue-pulled-down-at-minnesota-state-capitol-will-not-be-decided-until-2021/571884692/>

Reporter: Shannon Prather and Leila Navidi

... The Capitol Arts and Architectural Planning Board (CAAPB) decided Thursday to postpone deciding what to do with the [Columbus] statue, instead creating two task forces to help guide deliberations and public input around the controversial task of adding and removing public art and monuments.

"Today we will not discuss the future of the Columbus statue," said Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan, who chairs the CAAPB. "The public deserves a robust, transparent and accessible process."

The CAAPB has oversight over the art and architecture on the Capitol grounds and shares authority with the Minnesota Historical Society for artwork inside the Capitol. In the 115-year history of the State Capitol, memorials have only been added, not removed. [...]

At a news conference Thursday, Flanagan said the statue will remain in storage until the new task forces have completed their work and the CAAPB has decided whether to reinstall the statue. [...]

One of them, the Decision Process Advisory Task Force, will develop a process to add, modify or remove monuments, memorials and works of art on the Capitol grounds. The Public Engagement Advisory Task Force will forge a plan to engage citizens in the debate. The task forces will shape the process for future decision making, Flanagan said, and take up to eight months to bring back their recommendation to the CAAPB. "We won't rush it because we need it to be done right," she said. [...]

"This is something that is probably long overdue," said Rep. Raymond Dehn, D-Minneapolis, who sits on the CAAPB. "We are going to start running out of space. There may come a time where we

decommission works on the Capitol not because of what they necessarily signify [but because] there might be something more important that comes along.”

Panel will create new process for moving statues (Kare 11)

Date: June 26, 2020

URL: <https://www.kare11.com/article/news/politics/panel-will-create-new-process-for-moving-statues/89-da396066-8eaa-4032-9a8f-7f4a8f72fac6>

Reporter: John Croman

The toppling of the 1931 Christopher Columbus statue sparked a search for new ways for citizens to formally object to monuments on the Minnesota Capitol grounds.

That was the main topic Thursday when the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, or CAAP Board, met for the first time since June 10 when protesters used ropes to pull the bronze likeness of Columbus off its pedestal.

"Folks have been wondering why nobody followed a process. And the honest answer is there is no CAAP Board process for if and how commemorative works on the Capitol Grounds can be removed," Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan, the Democrat who chairs the board, told colleagues.

There is a set procedure for lodging complaints about the displays found inside the 1904 architectural marvel, but no real avenue for people to pursue an orderly removal of art outdoors.

"We decided to focus today's agenda on exactly how this board can engage in a conversation that our state is having about representation, is about community and a shared vision of our future together."

[...] The CAAP Board is comprised of lawmakers from both sides of the aisle, experts and representatives of MNHS, which operates the National Historic Landmark as a museum. There's also a Capitol Preservation Commission that meets once a year, and handled the controversy over paintings that had been in the Governor's Reception Room for many decades.

Essentially, the CAAP Board must sign off on any changes in the Capitol complex with special attention to preservation and aesthetics. Even simple additions, such as special netting to prevent pigeons from roosting in the Capitol's loggia area, had to get the green light from the board.

Panel begins debate on removing statues from MN Capitol (MPR News)

Date: June 26, 2020

URL: <https://www.mprnews.org/story/2020/06/26/panel-begins-debate-on-removing-statues-from-capitol>

Reporter: Brian Bakst

... "Today's focus won't be on the Columbus statue but instead taking a step back and figuring out what is missing from our current process," said Lt. Gov. Peggy Flanagan.

What's missing, it seems, is any clear direction about how people can petition to have long-standing historical markers reevaluated and potentially removed. The Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board will embark on crafting a policy that defines that process and invites thoughtful discussion.

“Who are we hearing from? Does everyone know how to be heard? How are we listening? How can we be responsive to the many different visions of our Capitol that we know are out there?” Flanagan asked. “And how can we provide the space for those visions to be shared, understood and realized?”

There’s no question the discussion is occurring during fraught times with monuments to political leaders, military generals and other figures falling almost by the day, board member Sen. Carla Nelson said.

“It’s not just Minnesota,” Nelson, R-Rochester, said. “These things are happening across our state and nation. It is imperative that we update our laws accordingly.”

But Nelson said unlawful removal of statues and commemorations shouldn’t be tolerated. Even if modern values and sensibilities don’t match those of the past, she wondered if erasing landmarks all together is the way to go.

“And I don’t believe that we can remove our history by tearing down statues or removing paintings,” Nelson said. “But we can and we should, I believe, reinterpret that history.”

Board member Alicia Belton said just putting up a new plaque next to a questionable monument isn’t the right solution.

“We shouldn’t willingly do things that we know are hurting people. When people are coming to see these monuments, peoples’ hearts are breaking,” Belton said. ...

Officials mull charges — and public art policies — after Capitol’s Columbus toppled statue (Star Tribune)

Date: June 25, 2020

URL: <https://www.startribune.com/officials-mull-charges-and-public-art-policies-after-toppling-of-columbus-statue-at-capitol/571474412/>

Reporter: Pat Condon

The toppling of a statue of Christopher Columbus at the State Capitol, one in a spate of attacks on historic monuments around the nation, has prompted state officials to revisit their policies on public art even as they investigate the activists involved in the incident in St. Paul. [...]

It’s a debate likely to echo around the country, as protesters target more and more statues for removal or defacement. In some cases, even the likenesses of historical figures like Ulysses S. Grant who supported the abolition of slavery have been pulled down. [...]

The Minnesota architectural board has responsibility for the statues and art displayed around state government’s St. Paul campus. [...]

Under current law anyone could request the removal of a statue, but there’s no clear criteria for the board to evaluate such requests. The board never received a formal request to remove the Columbus statue before its toppling, said [Paul Mandell, executive secretary for the board.] ...

Minnesota, we need to talk about our Columbus monument (MinnPost)

Date: October 18, 2018

Type: Article

URL: <https://www.minnpost.com/politics-policy/2018/10/minnesota-we-need-to-talk-about-our-columbus-monument/>

Reporters: Peter DeCarlo and Mattie Harper

As Indigenous Peoples' Day is celebrated across Minnesota with parades, powwows, and feasts, it is worth revisiting the fact that a memorial to Christopher Columbus stands on the grounds of the Minnesota State Capitol enshrined by the power of the state.

Some who know of the memorial, most prominently Native American activists and their allies, have called for its removal. This call has never gained enough steam to prompt such an action, but has been vital to shaping a dynamic dialogue about public memorials and inclusion.

The story of how this memorial to Columbus, a historical figure separated by time and geography from Minnesota, came to be located on the State Capitol Grounds adds an important dimension to this ongoing discussion. So how is it that there came to be a statue of Columbus erected by Italian-American Minnesotans on the grounds of the Minnesota Capitol? And should the statue remain there today?

A monument of inclusion, a monument of erasure

Between 1880 and 1920 more than 4.1 million Italians immigrated to the United States, the highest of any ethnic group in the history of the country. Of those millions, very few chose Minnesota as their new home. In 1910 the Italian-born population of Minnesota peaked at 9,688 and then began to fall as Italian immigrants continued to pour into other Midwestern states. The Italian immigrants gathered in four main areas of the state: St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, and towns across the Iron Range.

In this era of mass immigration, migrants faced discrimination and hostility from those Americans who were considered white. From early in the nation's history, to be white meant access to social, economic, and political opportunity and power. "White" as a requirement for citizenship dated back to a 1790 naturalization act, and from that time forward the racial order and citizenship were defined by the state. By the beginning of the 20th century, powerful corporations utilizing immigrant labor also influenced the definition of white. "Whiteness" was an invented and constantly changing category, in flux as the racial order reshuffled with the introduction of new people.

Starting in the 1890s a racial ideology of Anglo-Saxon, Germanic, and Nordic superiority held sway in America and served as the basis for "whiteness." This ideal of Northern European ancestry excluded many immigrants, including Southern Europeans, from full-fledged participation in American society.

For example, on Minnesota's Iron Range, employers referred to Italians and other Southern Europeans as "black." Iron Range officials called southern Italians, "inefficient and worthless ... fit for but the lowest grades of work in the open-pit mines." Whole towns were disqualified from being white if too many Southern Europeans lived there. Although Italian-American Minnesotans faced discrimination throughout the state, it was most prominent in the Iron Range region.

The Immigration Act of 1924 marked a crescendo of national anxiety about ideas of race and American identity. Fears of racial degradation to the American population were circulated as those deemed "non-white" were identified as being inherently inferior. The act severely limited immigration, especially of southern Europeans, and had the effect of banning virtually all Asians as strict quotas were put in place.

It was in the wake of the 1924 Act that the Italian-Americans of Minnesota conceived of a Christopher Columbus Memorial.

The idea of a monument to Columbus came from a meeting of the Italian Progressive Club of Duluth in 1927. It was endorsed by the Minnesota Federation of Italian-American Clubs at a meeting in Hibbing that same year. Shortly thereafter, the Christopher Columbus Memorial Association was established with chapters across the Iron Range and in the Twin Cities. In the midst of the Great Depression, Italian-Americans contributed money to the cause and the memorial was erected in 1931 across from the Minnesota Historical Society building. That same year, in conjunction with the memorial dedication, the state proclaimed Columbus Day an official state holiday.

On Oct. 12, 1931 — a cold clear day — more than 24,000 people gathered for the unveiling of the Columbus Memorial. It was a grand affair. Italian-Americans from the Midwest, local Minnesotans, and political officials from across the nation thronged to the Capitol grounds in St. Paul. The federal and state governments fully embraced the memorial and helped to craft its meaning. Gov. Floyd B. Olson and other dignitaries spoke from a platform erected on the steps of the historical society building. President Hoover sent a telegram lauding Columbus.

For the Italian-Americans who fought to create the memorial, the representation of Columbus in stone affirmed their pride and unity as a people. Yet, the monument was mostly about becoming American and being included in the political, economic, and racial orders. It was also about being viewed as “white.”

Members of the memorial association made it clear that they considered Columbus to be the first American and that Italians as a people had helped found and shape the United States. The memorial, embraced by the power of the state and federal governments, and accepted by the state historical society, affirmed Italians’ place in the nation’s history. By 1931, with immigration restrictions in full effect, nativist anxieties had dissipated, and politicians, along with cultural leaders, were eager to assimilate immigrants into the American fold in a move toward white hegemony. For the state officials present, the memorial represented a symbolic acceptance of Italian immigrants as Americans.

By proclaiming Columbus the “first American” and making no mention of Indigenous people, either nationally or locally, the memorial association perpetuated the myth of Indians as “savages.” In effect, history on the continent of North America was stated to begin only with the first appearance of Europeans. Indians were viewed as existing in a frozen and timeless past, and Europeans as driving the progress of the continent toward its historic and manifest destiny.

There is no evidence that the paramount importance of Native American people was ever considered among the histories and cultural expressions celebrated at the statue’s unveiling. In fact, Native American history was deliberately erased and the violent histories of colonialism and genocide perpetrated by Columbus were not acknowledged.

Monuments are not history, they are public memory: Remove or reinterpret?

Monuments are mortal. Though we may naturally perceive them as innate, and as given, they are not permanent. They are erected, modified, and eventually fall. Monuments tell us more about the time in which they were erected than they do about the past they claim to interpret. Memorials are designed to convey memory — not history.

They are, however, traces of the past and should not be removed without nuanced discussion. Still, to remove them is not to erase history as some argue, for a memorial's previous existence can be documented through other means.

People have made clear arguments about why monuments to Columbus should be removed from public places. Columbus did terrible things and he did not "discover" America — Native people were already here. Many argue that honoring Columbus in our public spaces is legitimizing the myth of "discovery" and his legacy of genocide and colonialism.

The Columbus Memorial could be removed or replaced. Perhaps the movement to celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day could be mirrored in our commemorative landscape with monuments to Indigenous Peoples taking the place of those depicting Columbus.

If, however, the Columbus Memorial remains on the State Capitol Grounds it seems that it certainly cannot stand as it is. Currently, an inscription reads, "To Christopher Columbus Discoverer of America." An additional plaque, added in 1992, credits Columbus for initiating "the merging of the cultures of the old and new worlds; Thereby changing forever the course and history of mankind." It makes no mention of how violent that change was or why it matters today. The memorial appears as a state endorsement of Columbus and his legacy. At the very least, additional interpretation should be added to give the perspectives of Native Americans and provide contemporary views on the memorial.

There is also the option of reinterpretation in conjunction with creating a new monument to recognize the public embrace of Indigenous Peoples' Day. Maybe it would tell a better story to keep the Columbus Memorial up, so it can be viewed alongside the new memorial or art piece. This would help give an impression of how settler narratives first claimed this public space, and the subsequent growing inclusiveness of the grounds.

It would tell a social justice story of hard-fought inclusiveness gained through activism. Maybe this broader story of change and activism needs to be told. Taking down the monument would not do that. Adding a new Indigenous monument may prompt viewers to reconsider their previous ideas about who the first Americans were and the role of Columbus' legacy.

The recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day indicates a growing number of Minnesota's political leaders are starting to believe that ignoring the historic and ongoing presence of Native Americans while championing Columbus is indefensible. Installing a new monument to contextualize or counter the Columbus Memorial should be done in a way that puts them in conversation, rather than as dueling parts of a "dual heritage."

This discussion matters

Examining the story of the people who were at the core of the efforts to erect the memorial reveals a struggle with race and inclusion in the state narrative. As a marginalized group, their interpretation of the past, now set in stone, was designed to serve their present. But does this interpretation continue to represent a history Minnesotans wish to commemorate?

Many Native Americans might identify with the struggle that Italian-American immigrants faced during this period as they grappled with racial regimes and their place in society. Native people were also subjected to the repression of a settler-colonial ordering of society that viewed "whiteness" as superior,

albeit through different policies. Native people faced widespread pressure to disappear, for example, by way of becoming “Americanized” in boarding schools. Considering the experiences of these two groups in tandem, it becomes possible to find a commonality of racial subjugation between those who erected the monument and Native Americans in Minnesota whose history was subsequently marginalized.

If we are aware of this history, we can stay vigilant in keeping its return at bay. This is more important than ever during an historical moment when the U.S. government moves toward ever-repressive immigration policies, white supremacist groups have become emboldened, and Native people continue to fight marginalization in myriad ways.

If our State Capitol and its grounds belong to all Minnesotans, should it not be a place of inclusion, where all feel welcome? Should it not be a space that the public feels free to reimagine and reshape? Could it not be a place of healing if it generates conversations about our dark chapters as a nation, so we can learn from them and prevent them from reoccurring?

These are questions for the state’s citizens to take up when considering the important matter of how they want their civic identity represented on the State Capitol grounds.

Note: The views and arguments presented in this piece do not represent the official positions of the Minnesota Historical Society.