

2
10-19-19

submitted by
Jack Sullivan

Statement to Council Oct. 19, 2020

Mayor Wilson, Members of Council

I am here today with three points.

First, to thank the three members of Council, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Chapman, and Mr. Safreidein, for standing up for with thousands of residents of the West End and voting against a road diet for Seminary Road. You will not be forgotten for your courage.

Second, to ask that the City **on a quarterly basis** provide the affected neighborhoods with accurate statistics — no more phony numbers please — on the following:

1. Numbers of accidents on the shrunken lanes
2. Affect of the changes on “cut-through traffic” in our neighborhoods.
3. Actual traffic delays including the effects of no turn on red at Quaker and Howard Streets.
4. An accurate count of how many bicycles are using the protected area daily.
5. How many EMS vehicles have been impeded, as counted by the drivers and the Fire Department.

Collecting bonafide figures on these points is the very least T&ES can do.

Third, Mayor Wilson, I was fascinated to see you quoted in the newspaper about the Seminary Road dispute. Saying: *"Big picture process-wise, we can't do this again, we can't do this again."*

I beg to differ. Section 5-8-6 of the Transportation Ordinance provides that a matter considered by the Traffic & Parking Board can be considered again after 12 months. Thus an appeal could be brought back to the Board next year for a hearing. Inevitably the issue would come back to Council.

You can be sure that if the Seminary Road diet fails to live up to the rosy scenarios from you and your City staff, you will be seized with the issue again and, I would hope, face the same passion from citizens that heretofore has been expressed.

And oh, Mr. Mayor, you can be sure any attempt to change the ordinance to preclude an appeal would be met with similar citizen vigor.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Pay it Forward, Pay it Back.
Statement to the Alexandria City Council October 19, 2019
By Gary J. Carr

Mr. Mayor, and members of City Council my name is Gary J Carr. I rise in support of the Freedom House and its Museum, located at 1315 Duke Street in Alexandria, Virginia.

I view this building is one of the most important structures in all of Alexandria, if not all of Virginia, and the entire United States. Why? It holds such importance by what it represents more than its physical structure. It was once the site of several slave trading businesses. These types of enterprises represented a prime source of America's economic prosperity, fostered by the trafficking in human suffering. It could provide a significant window into the many problems of society today.

More than that, it exposes a fact that is not well understood. Slavery was not one crime, it was two. The first crime was the transatlantic slave trade, and the whole world is indicted in that transgression. The second crime was a domestic slave trade, of which the United States is uniquely complicit. It was that second crime, which threatened to rend the nation in two, that the Freedom House is one of the few representative surviving examples.

In order to completely heal, we must understand that building is a vehicle for greater learning. It must be accessible for for generations. It must be expanded in institutions able to foster a greater community dialogue. It must be open and available to the public.

In the interest of full disclosure I am the immediate past president of the Guild, an auxiliary of the Northern Virginia Urban League, the owner of the building. As a result I have a greater familiarity with the building than most. I have been alone in that building in the quiet of the night. I have been in the dungeon of a basement, where it is so dark that when your eyes are open, it seems as if they are closed. Visitors have stopped by and are humbled, and sometimes moved to tears, by being in the building that is the site of such pain.

The City of Alexandria cannot, and should not, absolved of complicity in this violation. The condemned souls were marched through the City and down Duke Street in "coffles" to their woeful fate. But the larger story cannot be missed, which the Freedom House helps expose. These souls were being forced, even kidnapped from their homes, for the Northeastern States and sold to untold suffering in the deep South.

These slaves could have been allowed to live free in the North, but were like animals, sent to a fate next to Hell. The Freedom House could provide so much learning, so much understanding, and so much healing. It must be preserved.

My favorite biblical verse is "many are called but few are chosen". You were called to public service. You were chosen to address the fate of the Freedom House. I hope that you choose to do the right thing. *Pay it forward, and pay it back.*