

# Confederate statues reviewed

Broadwater, Luke

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## ABSTRACT

The seven-member commission -- appointed by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake -- is analyzing four monuments on city property: the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument on Mount Royal Avenue, the Confederate Women's Monument on West University Parkway, the Roger B. Taney Monument on Mount Vernon Place, and the Robert E. Lee and Thomas.

## FULL TEXT

A task force deciding what to do with Baltimore's four Confederate monuments began its review Thursday, agreeing to meet three more times before making recommendations to the mayor in January.

The seven-member commission -- appointed by Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake -- is analyzing four monuments on city property: the Confederate Soldiers and Sailors Monument on Mount Royal Avenue, the Confederate Women's Monument on West University Parkway, the Roger B. Taney Monument on Mount Vernon Place, and the Robert E. Lee and Thomas. J. "Stonewall" Jackson Monument in the Wyman Park Dell.

Three of the monuments date to the early 1900s or late 1800s, during the so-called Lost Cause era when Confederate sympathizers were attempting to "reinterpret" the Civil War as a battle over states' rights instead of slavery, said University of Maryland law professor Larry Gibson, a member of the task force.

"Clearly, three of them were a part of the 'Lost Cause' movement," Gibson said.

The monument to Lee and Jackson was erected in 1948, officials said.

Rawlings-Blake announced she was creating the task force in June, after the shooting of nine African-Americans in a South Carolina church by a white man whose photograph with the Confederate battle flag was widely circulated online. The shooting led to the removal of the Confederate flag from the grounds of the South Carolina State House and calls for other changes, including the possible renaming of city-owned Robert E. Lee Park in Baltimore County. That proposal is before the City Council.

On Thursday, task force members said they were considering four options for the four monuments: leaving the statues in place, adding signage or additional art to provide context, relocating them, or getting rid of them.

Task force member Elissa Blount-Moorhead asked whether the city would set aside money to fund proposals to add art or move statues. She said she didn't want the task force's recommendations to be purely "academic."

Gibson said the commission shouldn't worry about money and should make the best recommendations regardless.

The board plans three other meetings before issuing its recommendations. They are scheduled for: Oct. 29 at 9 a.m.; Dec. 15 at 5 p.m., when the public can testify, and Jan. 14 at 10 a.m.

lbroadwater@baltsun.com

twitter.com/lukebroadwater

Credit: The Baltimore Sun

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