

RESOLUTION #5-R-19 Amended on

Rededication and revitalization of Soldier's Square

WHEREAS; Monuments have long been used by civilizations as a way to commemorate a common history and to visualize a shared future, and have historically been incorporated into the fabric of civic life through the formation of public spaces which embrace them, just as they were on Market Street in Appleton from 1851 through 1937, and;

WHEREAS; For the bereaved, military comrades, and the public at large, public memorials function as virtual graves for those who often died far from home on foreign soil and serve as permanent reminders of the steep price our nation, and our City, has paid for the preservation of its security and freedoms and the events that have helped shape our common history, and;

WHEREAS; a one-block long plaza 80 feet in width between South Morrison and South Oneida streets, was deeded to Appleton in the 1850's by Boston philanthropist Amos Adams Lawrence, the namesake of Lawrence University, with the deed restriction that it continue to function as a "Public Highway", in perpetuity, lest it be returned to the Lawrence family, and;

WHEREAS; Market Street, as it was known from the early days of Appleton, was renamed in 1911 as 'Soldiers Square,' precipitated by the dedication of a monument erected to honor soldiers who fought in the Civil War, a monument created by Italian sculptor Chevalier Gaetano Trentanove and presented by Appleton industrialist A.W. Priest in memory of his brother, James Priest, who died in the Civil War, and;

WHEREAS; In 1915, in response to a national call to honor those who served in the Spanish-American War, the City of Appleton petitioned for and received one of the one thousand "Remember the USS Maine" memorial plaques cast from the salvaged metals of the infamous warship before it was permanently sunk off the shores of Havana Harbor, dedicating it, along with two Napoleon cannon from the same conflict, on the East end of Soldier's Square, and;

WHEREAS; In 1922, The City Planning Survey recognized the importance of Soldier's Square, its newly established memorial reflection space, as a primary element in its first attempt to create a bold new vision for downtown, ~~calling for an expanded monument boulevard to encompass what is now the Soldier's Square parking ramp footprint as an anchor to its proposed civic centre on the bluff site,~~ and;

WHEREAS; In the late 30's, to make way for parking, the Spanish American War Memorial was relocated to Pierce Park where it was subjected to vandalism and the metal scrap drive of 1943 which resulted in the loss of the cannon and memorial plaque, and has since deteriorated beyond recognition while the Civil War memorial, which remains in Soldier's Square, has, over time, forfeited its prominence in the square, and;

WHEREAS; More recently, the veterans of the Middle East conflicts, but also including those who served in Viet Nam, Korea and others conflicts over the last half century, have NEVER been formerly recognized in the common public space of Soldier's Square or elsewhere in Appleton and are well-deserving of the same recognition and honor afforded all veterans of foreign wars, and;

WHEREAS; Soldier's Square, was meant to provide a place of solace and contemplation, where our memorials could be appreciated for their aesthetic and symbolic value beyond their intrinsic commemorative purpose, and complement the mission of the civic spaces in which they reside by connecting us and causing us to reflect on something larger than ourselves;

WHEREAS; the City of Appleton's updated Comprehension Plan of 2016 included a concept for an expanded civic space, ~~essentially envisioning the same expansion of Soldier's Square suggested in 1922, and presented a grand concept of same which included a multi-use development,~~

and providing for intentional connectivity between Houdini Plaza and Soldier Square, prioritizing walkability and usability; and

~~WHEREAS; the City of Appleton, presently vested in and in the midst of a grand redesign of its downtown core and bluff sites, including multi-use development proposals adjacent to Soldier's Square, is being afforded a rare opportunity to re-embrace its lost history and reverence for our veterans and all who have served since the foundation of the City by righting this long-standing violation of the spirit of the Amos Lawrence deed restriction and the public trust;~~

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED;

That "Soldier's Square", for the purposes of this Resolution, shall be defined as that portion of right of way approximately 80' by 365' in size, bounded by the following: South of College Avenue, West of Morrison Street, North of Lawrence Street, and East of Oneida Street; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED;

That the City of Appleton will commit to an effort to revitalize Soldier's Square and make ~~every attempt an effort~~ to recapture the former function of the space as ~~an open and inviting pedestrian-malla public highway~~ without ~~any restrictions on potential utilitarian or accessibility needs as determined necessary by any adjacent development, save the following;~~ prohibiting any future ancillary development and without unduly impacting parking and traffic movement; and that the City accommodate the relocation and restoration of the Spanish-American War Memorial in ~~any foreseeable future redevelopment plans of Soldier's Square and delay its the~~ proposed restorations in its current location in Pirece Park of the Spanish-American War Memorial, as well as the planned restoration of the and Civil War Memorial Memorial, in its current location until a determination can be made to the relocation of the same, ~~as well as accommodate the placement of more recent conflicts' memorials within Soldier's Square to be funded by the citizens of Appleton and a number of local non-profits and veteran and veteran services organizations.~~ afford the opportunity to have other recent conflicts memorials recognized without any direct cost to the City of Appleton.