

Ken Schoniger March 26, 2025

The Monument was created “ to honor those that served the cause of freedom.”

Americans sustain our freedom by respect for policy and law duly created and ratified by our elected representatives. The Veterans Alliance has consistently violated Monument policy and law with the acquiescence of the VAC. Until recently, the VAC not only neglected to report violations to the BOS, they helped cover them up.

Asking the VAC or the Veterans Alliance to participate in a process to change the criteria and ordinance that they repeatedly violated is problematic. No policy or ordinance is worth the paper it is written on unless it is enforced, and consequences are administered to consistent violators by appropriate authority.

In 2007 an enforcement and management organizational structure coupled with Ordinance and Policy designed to preserve monument culture and quality for future generations was negotiated with a non-VAC veterans committee, the CAO, and select members of the BOS and staff. The results were ratified by the BOS and successfully followed by The Friends of the Veterans Monument for a decade. The structure and the process allowed Veterans to influence, not dictate, policy in a manner exemplified by the Vietnam Veterans Monument in Washington D.C. Their 501C3 has successfully prohibited commercialization for 44 years. Why has EDC supported private organizations determined to accomplish the opposite?

We hope that the current BOS will provide an injunction against any further violations of policy and law and provide consequences for those that do. The Alliance has tried for years to justify claims that language of current policy and law and stare decisis justified persistent violations by a private contractor. Hopefully our BOS will not show that kind of dirty laundry to the world.

HHSa and the current VAC have made considerable progress with clarification of policy criteria. Missing are recommendations for restoration of the monument and administration of justice for past violators of policy and law.

Bud Sweet March 26, 2025

The direct involvement of the Veterans Affairs Commission in the Management or policy generation related to the monument is redundant and dysfunctional. As an example, consider the Veteran's Alliance unilateral decision to mount plaques on the honor wall in spaces specifically reserved for the nation's top two awards for valor by policy approved by the Board of Supervisors in 2007. The Commanders of the County's Federally chartered veterans organizations were misled into thinking that the Alliance selections were equivalent to the six EDC natives in our 175-year history who had been awarded military crosses by the President of the United States. Listening to a great sales pitch caused the commanders to agree; but when we realized that we had been misled we wrote letters to the Board of Supervisors asking that our Votes be reversed. It was too late. The Board of Supervisors heard the same sales pitch and allowed the Alliance to usurp the decisions of the individual services, joint chiefs of Staff, Congress, and the President. The Veterans Affairs Commission staffed by veterans selected by the Board of Supervisors should have known better, but did nothing. Now we have a monument containing a plaque for our last Navy Cross awardee mounted under a plaque for an airplane crash near Placerville. This kind of thing should never happen in any one of the 3,144 counties that comprise America. Sometimes the President, Congress and the Joint Chiefs actually know what they are doing. Our Board of Supervisors and our VAC were not likely present in the South China Sea in 1975.

My name is Seth Culver, I am currently the Commander of VFW Post 2680, a Trustee on the Veterans Memorial Building house council and the District 3 Alternate for the Veterans Affairs Commission. I retired from the USAF as an E-8 after 26 years of service.

I am asking the commission to recommend supporting the agenda item marked as "Merged Veterans Monument Criteria Proposal 1". Both documents are well reasoned and have cleared up some prior issues and only differ slightly in my opinion. Both documents have provided a nexus to the county before someone can be honored and both now recognizes the accomplishments of reservists.

1. The biggest reason I support the first proposal is it is a more streamlined and less cumbersome with the overall application process. The Veterans organizations **should only** be included in the objecting process not every application for a brick or stone. My understanding is there have been well over a thousand bricks and stones placed in the monument without any objections. Notifying the veterans groups of each application is time consuming to say the least, especially since they only meet once a month and it could be 45 days or more before the application is even seen or discussed.
2. I also endorse the documentation reference in the application process in the first proposal. A family member may not necessarily have "official" documentation, but they may have photographs, or memorabilia from their family member in the military. And the VSO still reviews the application to ensure the veterans status. Now of course if they are claiming Uncle Bob was a 2 time MOH winner, some documentation maybe necessary for that...

3. And finally, it is a small thing but I feel the term "Plaza" is more sacred than "Grounds" I am sorry but when I hear term grounds, the word "prison" or "coffee" pops into my brain.
4. Thank you.