

Damaged Confederate Monument May Be Relocated



(Reidsville, NC) – Officials, with the City of Reidsville, have determined that the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) owns the statue of the Confederate Soldier that stood in the downtown area for 101 years, but that the land underneath it belongs to the City of Reidsville.

State UDC President Aileen Ezell has indicated to the City that her organization will not ask that the statue be put back up at the intersection of Scales and Morehead Streets. Ezell attended the Reidsville City Council meeting on June 8th when several people stood up and spoke on whether or not the statue should be returned to the original location. She informed City Manager Michael Pearce by letter dated July 21 that “While we much prefer the monument to remain in the location it has occupied for the past 100 years, we do not wish to be a factor in any unpleasantness that may occur if the statue is allowed to remain in its present location.”

Mrs. Ezell is currently working with Travelers Insurance on replacement costs as curators, the UDC hired have determined that the statue can not be repaired. The other question for the UDC is where the statue should be placed when and if it is replaced. Ezell and Pearce have discussed the possibility of placing a statue in an alternate location, such as the Confederate area of the City-owned Greenview Cemetery or a museum. Pearce has offered the services of City workers to help move the base of the statue, which still remains in the intersection. However, no firm decisions have been made by the UDC as they are still working with the insurance company.

The placement of the statue as well as its ownership has been in question since a motorist hit the monument in the early morning hours of May 23. The UDC had raised the funds to erect the statue in 1910, but present-day City leaders assumed the statue had been gifted to the City. However, a review of public records by City Attorney William F. McLeod Jr. did not show any evidence that the statue had ever been donated to the City of Reidsville. Council minutes dated

April 5, 1910 do reflect that a request was made by the UDC to place the soldier in the intersection, but they did not indicate the statue was a donation to the City. The September 2 1924 minutes showed that City officials requested instructions from the UDC when planning to replace the fence around the monument with a wall, which also indicates the UDC may have been the owner.

Mayor James K. Festerman said the Council is currently researching other alternatives for the intersection. “We anticipate putting in the roundabout something that will be a source of identification for the City’s downtown area for future generations,” he said. “We will be asking for community input to erect a landmark for all of our citizens and visitors to enjoy.”

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