



VANCE MONUMENT TASKFORCE

Joint Resolution & Scope of Taskforce

On June 9th & June 16th | Asheville City Council & Buncombe County Commission, respectively, passed a joint resolution to remove two confederate statues located at the Buncombe County Courthouse and Pack Square Park, and to establish a jointly appointed task force to recommend action regarding the **removal, relocation or repurposing** of Vance monument.

A jointly appointed task force shall be established by the Asheville City Council and the Buncombe County Commission, consisting of not more than 12 members whose appointments will be made in equal numbers by the two governing boards. This task force shall, within three months of all appointments being made, provide a report to the City Council and the County Commission with a recommendation regarding the removal and/or repurposing of the Vance Monument. Once the report is presented, the task force shall perform such other duties as requested by the governing bodies. When no further action is requested, the task force shall dissolve.

Project Timeline

August 20 –
November 19
2020

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- African-American figures and events that shaped Asheville & Buncombe County*



Designing the Process & Team

Following a rigorous community-wide application and interview process, the City of Asheville & Buncombe County both appointed (6) members and (2) alternates who were to provide recommendations regarding the Vance Monument. The appointing bodies expected the work* to be carried out over a period of 90 days. The appointed members representing the City of Asheville & Buncombe County included:

Oralene Simmons - Co-chair

Deborah Miles - Co-chair

Katherine Calhoun Cutshall

Dennis A. Fagnant, Jr.

Savannah Gibson

Lawrence Gilliam

Elizabeth Harper

Esi Hutchinson

David R. King

Bernard Oliphant

Andrea Olson-Alternate

Ben Scales

Shirley W. Whitesides

**The work was additionally supported by joint staff team and community facilitator, Cortina Jenelle Caldwell.*



Scope & Value of Community Facilitation

In order to allow the taskforce members, Co-Chairs, and staff support to show up in their designated capacities, while also acknowledging the neutrality needed of a non-voting, and non-appointing individual to help guide the process and ultimately deliver on the timeline established, the need for a community facilitator was identified, and a community wide search process ensued. The facilitator began responsibilities September 3rd.

As outlined by the respective staff teams of Buncombe County & the City of Asheville, the role of the community facilitator existed to: facilitate all sessions with the task force over 12 weeks.

Overall, the facilitator aided in the discussion surrounding the Monument; established ground rules for listening, engagement, and response; guided the discussion towards consensus; supported the needs of the Co-Chairs; worked closely with the staff support team, especially CAPE team on communications and announcements; and perhaps most importantly, the facilitator will asked guiding questions, or provided guidance to advance the conversation while allowing the perspectives and opinions of task force members to hold true.

As a final word, noting the overview and scope of this role is important to name as a critical component of this process, not only due to the neutrality it offers amongst others appointed or employed by the governing bodies, but also due to the necessary leadership, compassionate objectivity, and pre-existing community relationships that were major factors in the process moving forward as planned, and staying on time. It would be our recommendation that future processes such as this one involve facilitation rooted in community & relationships in order to best serve the appointed members, but also the overall equity + inclusion goals of Buncombe County & the City of Asheville. Additionally, it adds value to the community and all those observing and learning from our example, nationwide as many across the country are engaging in conversations about reparations, authentic community engagement, and the removal, relocation or repurposing of confederate monument(s).



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Taskforce Timeline + Scope of Work | Aug 20 – Nov 19, 2020

- ✓ **August 20th | September 3rd | September 10th** | Taskforce members undergo orientation, outline timeline, strategy and needs in order to complete the scope of work to gather citizen input, particularly those most impacted by the history and meaning of the monuments; participate in public dialogue; and will present the governing boards a final report of recommendations within three months of all member appointments.
- ✓ **September 17th | September 24th | October 1st** | Taskforce members undergo a period of historical analysis and community education, hearing from community leaders, historians, and educators from the African-American community, and Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian community. Additionally, Taskforce members were presented with untold history of Pack Square Park, Zebulon Vance, and most especially the historical African-American neighborhoods and experiences in Asheville & Buncombe County, including East End Valley, Shiloh, Southside, THE BLOCK, Burton Street, Stephens-Lee, and YMI Cultural Center.
- ✓ **October 8th | October 15th** | Taskforce members undergo period of community engagement planning, developing a list of 30+ local community organizations and groups for direct outreach. Planning and designing of virtual town halls, with intent to provide support to those with barriers to technology or internet by way of public libraries or laptop checkout. Decorum also established.
- ✓ **October 22nd | October 29th** | Taskforce members host virtual town halls to further engage public input, hearing from elders, students, parents, Vance family descendants, and African-American community members actively working toward resolve.
- ✓ **November 5th** | Taskforce members work in small groups to conduct due diligence on remove, relocate, repurpose options.
- ✓ **November 12th | November 19th** | Taskforce members present findings from small group work, research, and public input in comprehensive pro's and con's lists as well as public statements about process, and outcomes. Final recommendation voted.



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Community Engagement

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Virtual Town Halls

We want to hear from you! Call In! Lift up your voice to remove, relocate, or repurpose the Vance Monument.

October 22 & 29 from 4:45 - 6 p.m.

Call (855) 925-2801 and enter code 9722 to join. If you can't make the meeting, leave a voicemail. You can also text "avlvancemonument" to 73224 to provide public input, or email VanceMonumentTaskForce@PublicInput.com.



Visit PublicInput.com/VanceMonumentTaskForce to watch the meetings and keep up with the progress.

Would you like to watch the meeting but don't have online access, a computer, or phone?

Call (828) 250-4102 for info on public spaces where computer access has been arranged.



Examples of community engagement that took during the 12-week process.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The Vance Monument Task Force (VMTF) was created by joint resolution by the City of Asheville and Buncombe County. The VMTF is tasked with gathering citizen input, particularly from those most impacted by the monuments, and will make a recommendation to the governing bodies in November 2020 to remove or repurpose the Vance Monument within legal requirements.

Chime in!

We want to make sure our community is included in this process. Visit publicinput.com/VanceMonumentTaskForce to tune in to the meetings and keep up with the progress.

Send your feedback, comments, and suggestions to VanceMonumentTaskForce@publicinput.com

2020 PROJECTED TIMELINE

July/August

BEGINNING STAGES

Asheville City Council and Buncombe County Commissioners appoint six members each to the Task Force. Weekly meetings begin.



September 3

PROCESS REVIEW

Task Force begins review process.

October 1

COMMUNITY INPUT

Task Force begins seeking community engagement and public input.



October 22

DRAFTING

Task Force begins drafting recommendation for Vance Monument.

November 12

RECOMMENDATIONS

Task Force presents second draft of recommendations.



November 19

FINAL REPORT

Task Force presents final report to the public.



publicinput.com/VanceMonumentTaskForce



VANCE MONUMENT TASKFORCE

Public Input Data Summaries

In order to provide information on the Vance Monument Taskforce process, and engage the community in sharing input, central location of <http://publicinput.com/VanceMonumentTaskforce> was established as a means for those most impacted, and other residents, to make sure their voices are heard. Some snapshots:

Vance Monument Taskforce				
VIEWS	PARTICIPANTS	RESPONSES	COMMENTS	SUBSCRIBERS
4,997	729 <small>ⓘ Details</small>	156	707	708

While input was received from many community members, and also some interested parties outside of Asheville-Buncombe in other parts of the United States, the weight of the final recommendation from the Taskforce was based on those most impacted by the Vance monument.

Referral Traffic Sources

Count	Domain
418	m.facebook.com
280	publicinput.com
149	www.buncombecounty.org
93	t.co
64	l.facebook.com
61	www.foxcarolina.com
39	www.google.com
35	accounts.google.com
33	www.facebook.com
30	www.ashevillenc.gov

1,202 Total



Final Recommendation

On November 19th | Asheville City Council & Buncombe County Commission, respectively, passed a joint resolution to remove two confederate statues located at the Buncombe County Courthouse and Pack Square Park, and to establish a jointly appointed task force to recommend action regarding the **removal, relocation or repurposing** of Vance monument.

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Taskforce members
voted to remove
Vance Monument
with a vote of 11-1.



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APPENDIX |

Additional findings for further resource