

Veterans approve compromise to build Vietnamese Memorial

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WICHITA, Kansas - It was originally designed to sit inside Veterans' Memorial Park as a tribute to the South Vietnamese who fought alongside the U.S. during the Vietnam war. However, it was a plan that quickly drew fire from some veterans.

"That park is for American, United States veterans that protected our country so that you and I could be here today," veteran Bob Pinkstaff said back in June. (Why use a comment from Pinkstaff? He wasn't at the meeting and doesn't represent us.)

Despite the fact the Vietnamese-American community had already raised the money to build the monument (Really? My last source on this is that they have raised about 60% of the money needed and that was reported during the Sunday meeting.), and had already received city approval (They have? News to me, they have received approval from the Park Board in 2006 but the whole deal going on for the last 5 weeks has been that they are trying to get City approval.), the city council south (sought?) a compromise.

That compromise would not place the monument in Veterans' Memorial Park, but instead along the Arkansas river. The monument would be surrounded by a berm (berm?), so it could not be seen from the park. The monument would also be renamed the South Vietnamese Community Memorial.

"I think, again, what they are doing is rubbing it in the face of our Vietnam veterans," veteran Dick Weston said. (I can I can understand reporting on conflict but was saddened that this reporter chose to. There were two people in the meeting Sunday who attempted to use the meeting for their own sounding board and were reminded that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and explain the proposal and finally asked to sit down. How about reporting that two disgruntled veterans tried to disrupt the meeting but were quickly silenced after warning them to stick to the purpose of the meeting?)

Despite that feeling, an overwhelming majority of veterans approved the compromise Sunday.

"We've achieved everything we set out to achieve," veteran John Watson said. (Who is John Watson? While I don't personally care that he got my name wrong, if you're going to quote somebody you should at least try. Most people familiar with this issue know who I am.)

The achievements include not only keeping the memorial out of the park, but making their voices heard to city leaders.

Still, some veterans fear what this debate may mean for future relations between veterans and the Vietnamese community.

"Many of them lost everything to come here, and we just need to love and honor them as U.S. citizens, which they are," veteran David Robbins said. (Again with the negative comments from one of the disgruntled. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the City's proposal. If the reporter wants to quote this then how about our response to it? Like "This isn't about the Vietnamese being US Citizens, it's about whether they served in the US Armed Forces.")

The city council is expected to approve the compromise at Tuesday's meeting.

END ARTICLE

Just thought I would edit this reporter as I do not find it to be a very good piece. The number of errors, both spelling and factual, in such a short piece is a bit alarming. I realize that with time deadlines and news space available sometimes it is hard to present a finished piece of work but still find this a bad piece of journalism. Both KWCH & KAKE did a better job although KWCH also used valuable time of their piece with one of the disgruntled veterans. The Wichita Eagle story brought up the disgruntled veterans but also reported how they were reminded to stay on topic and then told to sit down when they tried to persist voicing their own agenda.

Maybe you'll or the reporter will find my critique useful.

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