

Constitution Avenue and from the sides, and in order for them to be able to experience the totality of the memorial, which is what we all readily want, in order for them to have the opportunity for the paralyzed veterans to have the opportunity to see this all at once, and I have spent time in a wheelchair and I understand how difficult it is to come up a four degree incline and then back down again, so it would be best to go with Option "B".

With that, if you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them, and I will also give you a copy of the poll.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

Other individuals?

We have Harry Robinson.

MR. ROBINSON: Mr. Chairman, members of the Commission I thank you for the opportunity to testify on the matter of symbolish and aesthetics of the issue before you.

I am presently Dean and a professor for urban design at the Howard University School of Architecture and Planning. I hold degrees in architecture and planning and urban design from the Howard University, the graduate School of Design at Howard University.

Equally important for purposes of my testimony, I am a combat veteran of the war in Vietnam. I received an

ROTC commission in July, 1966, and after graduating from the Engineers Officer's basic course in the U.S. Army's Ranger School, I volunteered for duty in Vietnam, and was there from April, '68 until I was wounded the following June. I was platoon leader in the Army Engineer Patrol Battalion, 1st Division, and operated in the area between Xuan Loc and Loc Ninh. I received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart medals for my service.

The proposal "A" to integrate the entry plaza element consisting of a sculpture and flag staff in a grove on the site is at once both aesthetically desirable and a patriotic symbol of very much strength. This solution maintains the integrity of the memorial and its environment, while establishing another important precinct that provides the essential images that are associated with testaments to the sacrifice that the nation makes in a time of war. The relationship of the proposed entry plaza to the meadow is an appropriate antecedent to entering the immediate site of the memorial. This encounter with familiar artifacts is a fitting introduction to the more emotional and personal experience of the walls. The majesty of the walls and overwhelming tribute that they represent cannot be understated and it should not be brought into conflict with other symbolism. Every entree and the

sequence of approach to and movement past the wall is a highly individualized, spiritual, visual, and tactical experience. The magnetism of the mirror-like surfaces, ever changing with one's position in the light of day, is a timeless statement that deserves its own unencumbered domain.

I acknowledge and respect the thinking of those who felt that a specific patriotic symbol and realistic interpretive elements were needed. I think the sculpture is a handsome work of art. However, were it to be placed before the walls, it would impose an imagery upon the visitor's experience and weaken the impact of the reflective planes. The sculpture deserves its own special place, and will receive that environment under the canopy of the trees.

I can also respect the thinking of those who would locate the flag on top of the walls, near the vortex, as a way of affirming patriotic values. Yet the focus for the visitor is the walls and his/her personal association therewith. A flag flying far overhead would have little positive impact. From an aesthetic point of view, the flag staff would be an intrusion into the tranquil horizontal space of the meadow and the awe-inspiring quality of the walls. The actual relationship of the walls and the Lincoln Memorial and Washington Monument, and the shear density of names is, in my opinion, a

truly patriotic statement that stands on its merits and speaks eloquently to the enormity of the effort and sacrifice of all who served.

I thank you for this opportunity.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Thank you very much.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is getting on. We have a long agenda ahead of us. I have a few more people who have submitted these. Naturally we are here to hear various opinions. Is there anyone who has something to say that has not been said before, who feels that what they have to contribute is a real contribution to the discussion and deliberations.

MR. GROWER: Mr. Chairman and members of the Commission, I will be brief.

CHAIRMAN BROWN: Give your name for the record.

MR. GROWER: My name is Scott Grower, and I am a Vietnam veteran. I have previously spoken before you. I am here to speak briefly in strong support of Proposal "B"; specifically the location of the flag at the apex, along with the statute, which was the consensus of the compromise meeting in March of '82, chaired by Senator Warner.

I think, to be specific in terms of how my views differ, but to add to others, for those who were present during the parade and dedication the visibility of the American