



Alexandria's EJI Community Remembrance Project



Alexandria's Social Justice Journey

As our nation observes the 400th anniversary of the first enslaved African people to arrive in Virginia, Alexandria and other cities across the nation have been grappling with the legacy of slavery, and the acts of discrimination and violence....

Mark Jinks, City Manager

The City has added an additional \$20,000 of support to this initiative, with a total of \$40,000 committed to programming and marker installation.



Vision

Denied justice in life, voices of the lynching victims speak through us as we pledge that the City of Alexandria stands for equity, diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation.

Creating a Road Map

Through seven public committees:

1. Public Outreach
2. Education & Programming
3. Marketing
4. Marker and Soil Collection
5. Research
6. Fundraising
7. Public Pilgrimage to EJI

Public Outreach

Through Community outreach and civic engagement, broaden the exposure and reach of the ACRP.

- *Engage the arts community, civic associations, community associations, museums, and city agencies to increase public outreach*
- *Engage public officials in discussions concerning social justice*
- *Offer town meeting(s) to discuss appropriate corrective actions and measures*

Education and Programming

Provide educational and informational programming and resources for Alexandria's youth and families about racial equity and social justice.

- *Organize commemorative events to be celebrated annually.*
- *Partner with ACPS and other city agencies and nonprofit organizations to ensure an understanding of this part of our history. (Equity Committee, ACT, PLTI, ACPS, and others)*
- *Develop programs through the faith-based community that encourage reflection and discussion.*
- *Offer/sponsor workshops to increase community knowledge of lynching.*
- *Plan and create programs utilizing authors, speakers, book clubs, exhibits, art, etc.*



Marketing

Create and implement a comprehensive marketing plan to increase visibility of the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project.

- *Brand all events to be easily identified as a part of the ACRP*
- *Ensure fliers and press releases are available to support all programs and events*
- *Establish a social media presence*
- *Improve public awareness of the ACRP by promoting events and meetings*
- *Investigate ways to inform the community about EJI events (articles in newsletters, publications, etc.)*
- *Communicate and collaborate with other communities and jurisdictions*

Marker and Soil Collection

Investigate proper procedures and requirements to obtain the historical markers and recommend a process for the soil collection. Organize public ceremonies.

- *Interact with community and families to provide recommendation to the Alexandria City Council for placement of all markers*
- *Work with researchers, historians, and other partners to write draft text for all markers*
- *Work with city staff on the location suggestion, marker creation, and marker installation*
- *Hold a marker dedication at an approved site*
- *Establish process for soil collection from /near location of the two lynchings*
- *Interact with EJI concerning proper display of soil collection*
- *Hold a soil collection ceremony*

Research

Conduct research to establish facts pertaining to each lynching.

- *Research known lynchings, search for potential victims*
- *Provide other committees with content*
- *Use documentation to correcting errors in public records*
- *Engage the families of the victims and perpetrators*



Fundraising

Pursue funding for ACRP programs, trips, and activities.

- *Raise funds through individual donations, local organizations, and merchandise sales.*
- *Recruit sponsors for programs, speakers, events, and the pilgrimage.*

Public Pilgrimage to EJI

Lead trips to EJI's Legacy Museum and National Memorial for Peace and Justice in Montgomery, Alabama.

- *Coordinate event with all interested members of the community*
- *Work out transportation and lodging logistics*
- *Promote trips to the community*





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Equal Justice Initiative



The Legacy Museum:
From Enslavement to
Mass Incarceration

National Memorial for
Peace and Justice





State Political Benchmarks:

Virginia

Sen. Jennifer McClellan (D-Richmond) sponsored a Senate joint resolution asking the General Assembly to “acknowledge with profound regret the existence and acceptance of lynching within the Commonwealth and call for reconciliation among all Virginians.”

Maryland

April 28, 2019, the State of Maryland passed historic bill HB307, Maryland Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the first one in the US. The state will set up a commission to investigate documented lynchings as cold case murders.



Alexandria's EJI

Endorsed by Alexandria City Council on February 26, 2019

City Council authorized the City Manager to:

- Establish an ad hoc committee to provide recommendation for the placement of the Alexandria's Equal Justice Initiative pillar and markers
- Maintain a dedicated website with information on the initiative
- Seek community input to discuss the project
- Develop and hold a series of public programs
- Research descendants of McCoy and Thomas
- Hold a public ceremony to collect soil from/near the location of the two lynching sites
- Hold a marker dedication at/near lynching sites
- Plan public pilgrimage to the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, Alabama to claim pillar and donate soil collection
- Hold public ceremony in Alexandria to install the pillar



Steering Committee Member Organizations

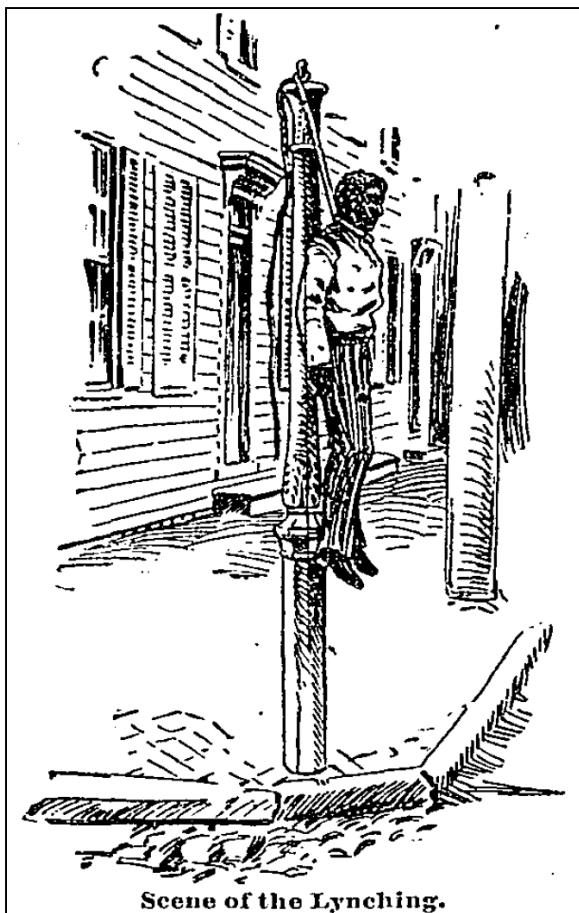
- Representatives from the **Faith Community**
- Representative from the **Human Rights Commission**
- Representative from the **NAACP**
- Representative from the **Northern Virginia Urban League**
- Representative from the **Society for the Preservation of Black History**
- Representative from the **Alexandria City Public Schools**
- Representative from the **Historic Alexandria Resources Commission**
- Representative from the **Alexandria Public Library**
- Staffed by the Director of the **Office of Historic Alexandria** and the Director of the **Alexandria Black History Museum**



Mission

Alexandria as a community rejects racial inequality and all incidents of racial terror. As restorative justice for the City's 1890's racial terror lynchings, we commit ourselves to acknowledging this shameful past by educating our community about social injustice. This is done through commemorative events, marker placement, public programming, and research that acknowledges the extent of past crimes to create a climate where compassion rules over hatred.

Alexandria's Social Justice Journey

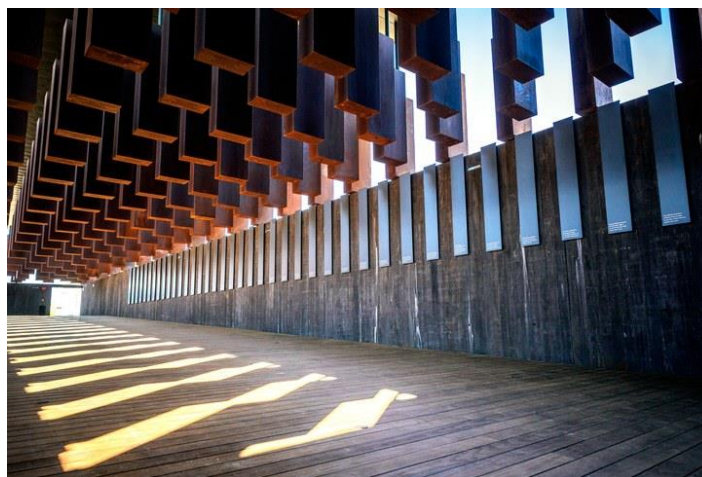


Joseph McCoy
April 23rd, 1897

Benjamin Thomas
August 8, 1899

Image:
Washington Post, page 3.
April 24, 1897

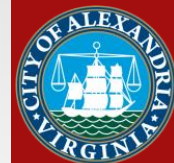
Goal: Claim Alexandria Pillar





Goal: Connect the dots of racism and social justice

- Slavery
- Lynching, Jim Crow
- Segregation, poverty, resistance to civil rights, voting rights
- Mass incarceration, presumption of guilt



Draft Timeline

- Year 1 Community Dialog and Outreach Begins
“Summer of Social Justice”
- Year 2 Application to EJI, Marker Text, Ceremony for
Soil Collection, Continued Public Programming,
Trips to EJI
- Year 3 Continued Community Dialog, Public
Programming, Trips to EJI, Approvals from EJI for
Marker and Pillar installation, Site Location
Approvals from City, Installation Ceremonies

- Beyond... Continue the community dialog and hold
Annual Remembrance Event(s)

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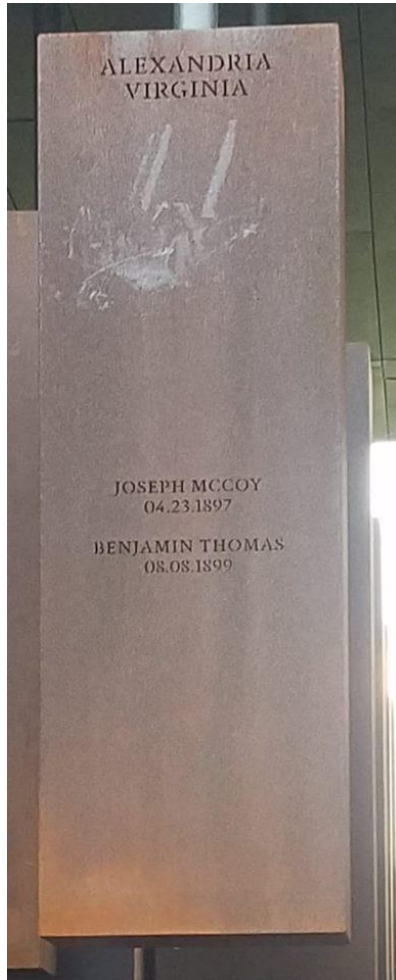
Upcoming Public Meetings

January 15, 2020
7:30 p.m.
City MLK Program
Beth El Hebrew
Congregation

Feb/March 2020
4-part lecture by
Susan Strasser



Thank you for your participation!



To learn more.

To sign up for meeting notices.

To join a committee.

To donate funds.

Alexandriava.gov/historic



Presentation

Navigating Everyday Life in Jim Crow Alexandria

Krystyn R. Moon, PhD

Professor of History and Director of
American Studies at the University of Mary
Washington



Presentation Questions?



Break Out Session Discussion Questions

- *In addition to Alexandria claiming its lynching pillar, what is the 2nd most important thing you want to see the Alexandria Community Remembrance Project accomplish during this process?*
- *After listening to the presentation at the start of this meeting, what is your biggest question and the timeline for this initiative?*



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