



Stone Mountain Park Board to Discuss Historic Changes to Country's Largest Confederate Memorial

Stone Mountain Action Coalition Presents Proposal for the Park's Healing, Transformation and Progress.

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STONE MOUNTAIN, GA - The [Stone Mountain Action Coalition](#) (SMAC) is an advocacy network of concerned citizens, political leaders, community organizations, faith-based groups, and businesses who are dedicated to supporting constructive solutions for a new, inclusive, and appropriate vision for Stone Mountain Park.

SMAC has confirmed that the [Stone Mountain Memorial Association](#) (SMMA) will soon discuss and potentially vote on historic changes to Stone Mountain Park, the country's largest Confederate memorial. The SMMA board meeting is open to the public and is scheduled for Tuesday, October 6 at 1:00 p.m. EST. The meeting will take place at the Atlanta Evergreen Marriott Conference Resort (Rhododendron Meeting Room) located at [4021 Lakeview Dr. Stone Mountain, GA 30083](#). SMAC plans to [stream and record](#) the meeting for anyone that is unable to attend in-person. All community members and stakeholders are encouraged to attend.

On September 14, 2020, SMAC members presented stories of impacted individuals and organizations, the legal groundwork authorizing the SMMA to enact changes, and a proposal for immediate and near-term changes. As a good-faith starting point for change, SMAC proposes to change street and Park feature names that currently honor Confederate and Ku Klux Klan figures, remove all of the Confederate flags flown in the Park, provide appropriate historical contextualization, and end maintenance of the Confederate carving. The full proposal can be [viewed online](#) along with a form to provide additional input and ideas.

"We're not looking for trinkets or token additions to the park," said Ryan Gravel, one of SMAC's co-founders. "We believe that substantive, large scale changes at the park, including to the Confederate carving, are required to rid our mountain of its ugly history of hate and the violence that it emboldens. Only through a comprehensive transformation of the park can we make it safer and more welcoming to people and events that currently avoid it, realize the mountain's potential to heal, and allow new social and economic opportunities to blossom."

The SMMA board's decision to take up this issue represents a historic turning point for Stone Mountain Park. While Confederate monuments continue to be removed throughout the country and the Confederate flag has been banned by both NASCAR and the United States Military, no significant changes have been made or

discussed by the SMMA board. It is SMAC's position that Georgia law affords the SMMA board the authority to make changes at Stone Mountain Park consistent with the values of the citizens of the State of Georgia in 2020.

SMAC Co-Chair Meymoona Freeman has been engaging with the SMMA Board for years. "The time for change has come. We are here to enact a divorce between the Confederacy and the State of Georgia. The sole purpose of this 1958 marriage was to rebuke the emergence of the Civil Rights Movement, to deny the humanity of people of color and keep racism alive. The American people have a distaste for hate. In 2020, the citizenry of Stone Mountain, the good people of DeKalb County and Georgia tax payers are demanding that divorce."

The Confederacy is bad for Stone Mountain Park. Since 2015, the Park has rejected permits from groups wanting to demonstrate at the Park because of the danger to public safety such rallies and counter protests present. On August 15, 2020, the Park decided to close after rejecting a permit to a hate group which resulted in the Georgia National Guard being deployed to protect the Park. The [heavily armed militia](#) was then diverted to the nearby community of Stone Mountain Village, which endangered residents, caused businesses to shut down, and required a significant law enforcement response, including the Georgia National Guard. This event also necessitated the City of Stone Mountain to issue a [public notice](#) warning its residents about the safety risks and concerns, encouraging them to refrain from traveling within their own city that day. Controversy surrounding the Park has also had a negative economic impact on the Park and the surrounding area. This is especially harmful given the compounding effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

SMAC has launched a [campaign](#) to capture stories from individuals and businesses that have been negatively impacted by the Park's Confederate symbols and the associated protests and rallies.

About the Stone Mountain Action Coalition

The Stone Mountain Action Coalition is an advocacy network of concerned citizens, political leaders, community organizations, faith-based groups and businesses who are dedicated to supporting constructive solutions and ideas that reflect a new, shared vision for the Stone Mountain Park. The Coalition is advocating for short and long-term changes to help build a path forward by developing a community-driven approach to transform the park into a more inclusive, and economically sustainable destination.

For more information visit www.stonemountainaction.org

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Resources to better understand the history and context of Stone Mountain Park:

- NBC (8 minute video): ["Is time up for the world's largest confederate memorial?"](#)
- Smithsonian: [What Will Happen to Stone Mountain, America's Largest Confederate Memorial?](#)
- Atlanta History Center: [A Condensed History of the Stone Mountain Carving](#)
- PBS (11 minute video): [History of the largest Confederate monument: Georgia's Stone Mountain](#)

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