

Letters to the Editor

Can we restore memorial so it is used as intended?

To the editor:

Following the Second World War, communities throughout the country deliberated on the type of memorials to build to honor those soldiers who served. On Sept. 12, 1945, the Kansas City Times wrote, "Any memorial must be one of utility, with resistance to anything that appears to have even a slight aesthetic touch."

In Manhattan, instead of a fountain or statue, it was decided to build a facility to serve the community as a whole. The Times article had warned that the danger of going such direction is one of losing the significance of a memorial. That seems to have happened today.

It is sad that this very significant memorial was allowed to deteriorate while so many of us were asleep at the switch. But perhaps this can be viewed as a wake-up call — an opportunity to restore Peace Memorial so that it can be used and enjoyed as intended. This does not necessarily mean as it was, but

as it can best serve the needs of the people of Manhattan today and tomorrow.

This calls for bringing thoughtful and knowledgeable people together to study the issues and make recommendations. We urge commissioners to take the time to appoint such a group prior to beginning any renovations.

It is important that we honor the memory of Manhattan's soldiers who so honorably served our nation in the past, but also, as they did, recognize our responsibility to address the needs of our people today and those of us yet to come.

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