

**Linda Fisher Thornton**

## **Leading in Context**

**Phone: (804) 270-4088**

**Email: [Lind@LeadinginContext.com](mailto:Lind@LeadinginContext.com)**

**Website: [LeadinginContext.com](http://LeadinginContext.com)**

# **Women's Community Conversations Commission**

**Report to the Virginia Women's Commission:**

**Public Feedback from the Community Conversations**

**October 12, 2011 to November 6, 2011**

Linda Fisher Thornton, Facilitator

November 21, 2011

## Report Contents

<b>About the Community Conversations</b>	<b>Page</b>
Community Conversations Public Forums Held	2
Additional Ways to Submit Feedback	2
Conversation Framework	3
Conversation Ground Rules	4
How the Feedback is Presented in This Report	4
<b>Community Conversation Results</b>	
<b>What Virginians Want the Monument to Be:</b>	
<b><i>An Overview Of Themes and Frequently Mentioned Symbols</i></b>	<b>5</b>
<b><i>Detail That Illustrates Each Theme</i></b>	<b>6</b>
1. <i>Comprehensive, Diverse and Inclusive</i>	6
2. <i>Elegant, Uncluttered and Connected</i>	7
3. <i>Engaging, Welcoming and Approachable</i>	8
4. <i>Thought-Provoking and Inspiring</i>	8
5. <i>Authentically Representing Virginia Women and Their Unique Qualities</i>	9
6. <i>Balancing Nurture and Achievement</i>	12
7. <i>Representing Change Over Time and Generations (and Into the Future)</i>	12
8. <i>Representing Nature, the Cycle Of Life and Hope</i>	14
9. <i>Interactive, Connected and Updatable Using Today’s Technology</i>	17
10. <i>Different and Also Consistent With Capitol Square Tradition</i>	18
11. <i>Sustainable With a Diversity of Textures and Tones</i>	19
12. <i>More Than a Monument - Uniting and Teaching the State’s History</i>	20
13. <i>Reflecting Current, Vetted and Well Shared History</i>	22
14. <i>Portraying That We’re Not Done Yet</i>	23
<b>Stories and Notable Roles</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Bringing the Monument to Life</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Facilitator Observations</b>	<b>29</b>

## Community Conversations Public Forums Held

- October 12, 2011      Southside Virginia  
7:00 PM Danville Community College Regional Ctr. For Advanced  
Technology and Training Auditorium, Danville, Virginia
- October 17, 2011      Hampton Roads  
2:00 PM Christopher Newport University, Freeman Center, Room 202,  
University Place, Newport News, Virginia  
7:00 PM Hampton Roads, Norfolk City Hall, 810 Union Street, Norfolk,  
Virginia
- October 19, 2011      Southwest Virginia  
7:00 PM Radford University, Heth Hall, 801 East Main Street, Radford,  
Virginia 24142
- October 20, 2011      Central Virginia  
2:00 PM University of Richmond, Tyler Haynes Commons, Room 305, 28  
Westhampton Way, Richmond, Virginia 23173  
7:00 PM Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Lecture Hall, 200 North  
Boulevard, Richmond, Virginia 23229
- October 24, 2011      Valley/Western Virginia  
7:00 PM James Madison University, Festival Board Room, 1301 Carrier  
Drive, Harrisonburg, Virginia 22807
- October 26, 2011      Northern Virginia  
2:00 PM Fairfax County Government Center, Conference Rooms 9 and  
10, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035  
7:00 PM Fairfax County Government Center, Conference Rooms 9 and  
10, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, Virginia 22035
- November 6, 2011      Special Session with University of Richmond Students at the  
Westhampton Deanery, Organized by Dean Landphair

## Additional Ways to Submit Feedback

Email: [WomensCommission@virginiacapitol.gov](mailto:WomensCommission@virginiacapitol.gov)

Mail: Virginia Women's Commission, Post Office Box 396; Richmond, VA 23218

## Conversation Framework

### Framework for the Community Conversations Based on Senate Joint Resolution No. 11

Agreed to by the Senate, March 11, 2010

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, March 10, 2010

#### **The Need for a Tribute:**

From the Founding of the Commonwealth, the genius and creativity of women and their presence and contributions have been evident in every aspect of Virginia history and the life of people in the Commonwealth; however, they have received little appreciation, recognition, or official acknowledgement.

**The Purpose of the Monument is:** *History, Education, Importance, Appreciation*

A Monument to Virginia Women That

- Signals the importance of their contributions and achievements
- Honors them and expresses appreciation
- Teaches the history of their important contributions

**The Monument is to Honor:** Virginia Women who Contributed to Virginia's History Over Four Centuries

*Through Individual, Collective and/or Symbolic Interpretations That May Include:*

- *Their ideals, visions and spirit of sacrifice that illuminates the path today for all those who follow them*
- *Their accomplishments in spite of restrictions*
- *Their legendary achievements in many fields*
- *Their noble and heroic deeds indispensable to the founding of the Commonwealth (and the nation)*
- *Their vital role in public and private life*
- *Their unique contributions in nurturing and protecting their families and contributing to the quality of life in their communities*

*This session may be audio taped for the purpose of capturing the feedback from participants accurately.*

*Photographs may be taken to chronicle this event and may be published in print news publications and/or in publicity published on the internet. If you do not wish to be photographed, please alert the photographer.*

## Conversation Ground Rules

1. Keep our time and discussion focused on the planned Monument honoring Virginia women
2. Explore possibilities and listen to ideas without trying to make choices
3. Treat everyone in the room with respect
  - Listen to each other
  - Be respectful and calm
  - Share the microphone. Take turns so that we can be sure that others are heard
  - Be open to the ideas and points of view of others
  - Be fully engaged in the conversation (Turn off smart phones and other personal devices)

## How the Feedback is Presented in This Report

In order to provide the feedback from the Conversation participants in a meaningful context, comments and ideas are grouped into **14 broad themes** that represent wishes for the Monument that were heard around the Commonwealth in multiple sessions (an example is *Engaging and Approachable*).

**“What Virginians Want the Monument to Be”** starts with an *Overview of Themes*, or what Virginians want the Monument to represent, and a list of *Frequently Mentioned Symbols*. The pages that follow this *Overview* provide the *Detail That Illustrates Each Theme*.

The themes overlap in many cases, and the feedback is not always consistent within each theme. Items that appear in **bold type** were raised around the Commonwealth in multiple sessions. Where conflicting opinions were heard around the Commonwealth in multiple sessions, they will both appear in bold.

**“Stories and Notable Roles”** includes individual women, types of women and groups of women named by Virginians as ones that they would like to see honored.

**“Bringing the Monument to Life”** includes suggestions, questions and ideas about the process of designing the Monument and bringing it to life.

## ***What Virginians Want the Monument to Be***

### ***Overview of Themes***

- 1. Comprehensive, Diverse and Inclusive*
- 2. Elegant, Uncluttered and Connected*
- 3. Engaging, Welcoming and Approachable*
- 4. Thought-Provoking and Inspiring*
- 5. Authentically Representing Virginia Women and Their Unique Qualities*
- 6. Balancing Nurture and Achievement*
- 7. Representing Change Over Time and Generations (and Into the Future)*
- 8. Representing Nature, the Cycle of Life and Hope*
- 9. Interactive, Connected and Updatable Using Today's Technology*
- 10. Different and Also Consistent With Capitol Square Tradition*
- 11. Sustainable With a Diversity of Textures and Tones*
- 12. More Than a Monument - Uniting and Teaching the State's History*
- 13. Reflecting Current, Vetted and Well Shared History*
- 14. Portraying That We're Not Done Yet*

### ***Frequently Mentioned Symbols***

<i>Circles</i>	<i>Connecting</i>	<i>Hands</i>	<i>Tree</i>
<i>Upward</i>	<i>Garden</i>	<i>Path</i>	<i>Benches</i>
<i>Moving Water</i>	<i>Time, Timeline, Generations</i>		<i>Into the Future</i>
<i>Infinity</i>	<i>Light</i>	<i>Reflection</i>	<i>Table</i>
<i>Voices</i>	<i>Quilt</i>	<i>Stairs</i>	

## ***What Virginians Want the Monument to Be***

### ***Detail That Illustrates Each Theme***

#### ***1. Comprehensive, Diverse and Inclusive***

- **Representative of the diversity of Virginia women throughout Virginia's history**
- All the voices are important. Be as inclusive as possible
- Reflect the diversity of the women in the state over time. Native women who lived here thousands of years, African Americans who were forced here, and whose granddaughters were Civil Right Leaders and Europeans. Today's Virginia diversity also includes Hispanics and Asians
- Diverse ethnicity and timeframe
- Encompass pre-color, color, Civil War, Suffrage, Civil Rights. Find the key Virginia players- the first, the loudest voices, the deepest footprints. **Shouldn't exclude certain women just because they're recognized on other monuments** like the Native American and Civil Rights monuments
- Diversity – represent Virginia women who are here now and were here in the past
- Stories and quotes from different times, genders and races about Virginia women
- **Representing generations and time periods** – working woman today, slave woman, child, factory worker
- **Representational, not individual**
- Not busts of some individuals – people have different opinions on who is most "important." Don't want to alienate people by representing a few
- Should not be one person or one type of person
- I first thought of actual women but maybe it should be representational. Names, landmarks, **aspirations for the future** could be carved on it
- Not only one woman. **Allow for future women**
- Every name gets equal space - Equality
- Does not necessarily identify individual women by name on the monument
- **Not an individual or group of individuals**
- No a specific person. So many women who helped out were not recognized in textbooks
- Not one person, that constrains it to one time period
- Not just one woman. That lumps all women into a certain height and race.
- **One figure, but it's not a particular person.** It represents the ideals linked to the Statue of Liberty and not linked to any particular time period. Fountain with Caucasian woman and small child representing the first women who arrived from Jamestown. Plain dress, long hair, holding symbols (sheet of music, gavel, needlework, book. One **hand reaching**

up and one hand hovering over the head of a young female child (facing down). Young girl is looking the other way

- **Statue of a notable Virginia woman** (*SEE the women named by Virginians in the section called "Stories and Notable Roles" on page 24*)
- Sometimes individual people can be inspirational
- Stay away from statues. People may not appreciate being pigeon-holed by a statue. A Civil War era statue in a Southern Belle dress would not include the ones who didn't look like that. It would be exclusionary based on the stereotype of that era
- Avoid tokenism and just "checking off" groups of women
- **Honor individuals and groups on a timeline at the Visitor's Center**
- We have to go symbolic. It needs to be abstracted. Otherwise if you use categories, why this one and not that?
- You can't be anything if you try to be everything
- Saying less can say more – draw your own conclusions
- We need a **comprehensive educational component** to undergird whatever's being done to honor Virginia women. Could get 10 Universities involved as a consortium, using interns and history majors, not a big expensive thing
- It would be hard to portray every possible profession. **Virtual museum** could have broader imagery with details under each. Education, conquering the frontier, teachers, starting schools, by woman across the spectrum

## 2. *Elegant, Uncluttered and Connected*

- **Elegant**
- Simple, classic design. Light and graceful
- **Inclusive** without being cluttered
- **Connected.** Have a center to it. Focal point. Elements should not be separated from each other. Make sure we're connected.
- **Not cluttered or busy**
- Avoid "Capitol clutter" – do it so that it doesn't get in the way
- Simplicity of design, **with meaning** (like Vietnam Memorial)
- Women work collaboratively. It's hard to pick out one to recognize because they work with others. Doesn't have to be a Monument to a particular woman. Portray **collaboration**
- Being in **community**, working with other women, they were enabled to do more together. Think of a way to engage around this – standing **together**, looking together
- Make it so that **women seeing it feel like they're part of it too.** "Community, collaboration, groups of women working together, family." Include these words in the

Monument's mission statement to get your gears turning (for example – being inspired to teach other women in rural communities how to raise healthy families)

### 3. *Engaging, Welcoming and Approachable*

- Should catch your eye and not let you look the other way, like a good painting
- **Approachable**
- **Welcoming**
- **Touchable**
- Should have a tactile feeling to it – rub it, put a ribbon up, add a name
- Objects used by women at the base could be touched
- **Engaging, participatory, interactive**
- People with low vision who need to touch to be able to see should find it within reach.
- **Generate feeling of “coming home” – homey in a formal setting**
- Generate feeling of pride and admiration in the accomplishments of women. We've come a long way
- **Inviting space**
- **Something children would like**
- Should be handicap accessible
- A place to gather as a community
- Space that is a nurturing environment
- Lovable, Snuggable
- Encompassing
- **Not imposing**
- Masculine monuments are huge and “third person,” a woman's should be interactive, with materials you can be close to, that draw you in, first person
- People could gather there for small events
- For engagement, people could put up what they plan to do for change or brainstorm where there's a need for change
- Interactive – wishing well

### 4. *Thought-Provoking and Inspiring*

- **Inspirational**
- Want it to be specifically inspirational in a global way. Honesty about the past and hope for the future
- Should **inspire and challenge** the next generations
- Inspire women of the future and women of other states

- **Should inspire men and women, boys and girls**
- An experience that makes you want to go find out more. Should engage you physically and intellectually (timeline and dates)
- Include name, bio, picture of women who changed something they felt needed to be improved on, even with personal issues and personal responsibilities
- Provide a framework that says “there’s some history here.” It has to hit you emotionally and have a **tactile element**
- **People take their time, sit,** and get their picture taken with the statues. They speak to people on many different levels
- **Mind-blowing quotes that are accurate**
- **No words engraved on a statue.** It’s difficult to try to agree on a phrase (controversy over MLK engraving)
- **Balanced. Not always stoic or happy.** Balanced through time, representative of the tone of the time
- Happy expression, not serious (but also in keeping with the history)
- Should make you happy and make you think real hard
- The Liberty Bell conveys liberty and is iconic. Even with the crack, we revere it for what it means, not for what happened to it
- Include something for the less heady tourist and the deep thinker

5. *Authentically Representing Virginia Women and Their Unique Qualities*

- **Show the qualities of Virginia women.** Individual women exemplify each of these values/traits over a period of history:

<b>Caring</b>	<b>Perseverance</b>	<b>Adaptable</b>
<b>Collaboration</b>	Grit	Independent
<b>Community</b>	<b>Strength</b> , Spunk, Steel	Stable
Compassion	Hardworking	<b>Resourceful</b>
Love	Steadfast	Passionate
Grace	Loyal	Articulate
<b>Service</b>	Principled	Creative
<b>Humility</b>	<b>Sacrifice</b>	Survivor
<b>Holding Families Together</b>	Integrity	<b>Leadership</b>
Family Values	Work Ethic	Cooperation
Organization	Protecting	<b>Resilience</b>
<b>Intelligence</b>	Volunteerism	<b>Warmth</b>
Generosity	Philanthropy	<b>Optimism</b>

**Bravery**  
Welcoming  
**Together**

**Connecting**  
Nurturing

**Inclusion**  
Supportive

- **Write adjectives that describe Virginia women, with quotes and stories of specific women for each. Include all past and future women**
- Include the story of this Monument – this is how it was realized
- Use words – “integrity” “nurture” and have each one linked to women who embodied those words
- Our state is diverse. We need to incorporate those many populations in a concept that represents women. Triumph over adversity, freedom to vote, own land, have careers, not be a piece of property, women’s triumphs through the ages, women’s rights movement during the Suffrage movement. About the ongoing process over 400 years – no beginning and no end. Should be a challenge to women and girls, to encourage them to do whatever they want to do
- It was hard for them and they accomplished it anyway
- Include ordinary women
- Write the qualities on the Monument
- Plaque with stories and quotes
- Show how women have uplifted the State
- Young people need to know about women who have gotten women today to where we are
- **Represent what is unique to Virginia women**, not national themes and stories. This is the first monument for women here (The “vein of iron” (Ellen Glasgow) running through the Blue Ridge Mountains, Steel Magnolias, backbone and strength, The mother of Presidents, the mother of slavery). *SEE the women and groups named by Virginians in the section called “Stories and Notable Roles” on page 24*
- Virginia women braved unknown dangers, bore children in isolation, provided for children during long periods of separation from their spouses, found ways to be resourceful and independent in a world with fewer opportunities and less power than women enjoy today, and contributed passion and enthusiasm in the process of forming the “new republic”
- Coping roles of Virginia women during wars (Indian uprisings, colonial unrest, Revolution – Yorktown, Civil War, WWI and WWII)
- Make sure the **information is accurate** (concern about Virginia textbook not being accurate). Do not sanitize it. Don’t celebrate pieces of it – be **authentic** to the whole
- Not a teacher, Suffragist and housewife linking arms – too limiting and stereotypical, represents some concepts but not others

- **Keep features realistic** – wrinkles, frazzled hair, not airbrushed and flawless
- Stories of present and past, famous and unfamous women
- Role Virginia women played in the birth of the nation
- There are plenty of Virginia Monuments. This one needs to be unique to women
- This is the only Monument to women over 400 years
- **Not manly (no male symbols)**
- Monument Avenue statues are so very male. I hope the Monument is the exact opposite
- **Not warlike**
- Not any dismembered body parts, not a floating hand, not cut off at the waist
- “The **light**” as a symbol. Light and shadow. They operated in the shadow of men and accomplished a tremendous amount
- Artist-depicted figures would “catch the light” and “elicit memories”
- Light and highlight in different ways for gatherings, shows, commemorations. A center for future gatherings that people can continue to relate to. “I know the perfect place to hold this – at the Women’s Monument.”
- Like light and sound shows. Have this work with sound and light show for special occasions. Semicircular wall and portable lighting equipment
- Small bronze **round table** with for chairs, memorial to “**working together**”
- Sense of community – working in community, **creating community**
- A number of communities – the power of numbers. (example - one woman’s progress stitching versus a whole group)
- Kitchen table down 1 foot or two with a half wall around it with faces/scenes in relief
- Table with place settings each telling a part of the history. Could be multi-use
- Symbol for female
- Recognize the unrecognized. They endured greater hardships than men. Mary Ingles only had land because her husband left it to her when he died. She could not pass it on to her children
- We tend to value education/degrees/status. This Monument is trying to say that women’s contributions were not in a “man’s” world. It should exemplify what needs to be done
- There’s nothing women have not had to do alone, without men. Would like to show that
- There are brilliant women in all walks of life
- About what goes on in the background
- How should men be included? Include examples of where a man or men made moves that positively impacted the lives of women (in the virtual museum)

## 6. *Balancing Nurture and Achievement*

- **Symbolizes achieving and nurturing at the same time**
- Many of the important women over 400 years were married and were parents. They had to consider the historical impact of their actions AND how their families would be impacted. Those women paved the way for the professional women of today to have equal wages and the opportunity to vote. Now women are leaders of companies and own small businesses
- Not just about motherhood (not all notable Virginia women were mothers)
- Ability to take on **various roles – workplace and home**
- Women have been the invisible part of whatever is happening
- Many have done something in order to be a better person, not to be recognized, they should be honored
- Suffrage and Equal Rights balanced with family and family life
- Family, collaborative, community, Freedom to do and be what you want, own property, live
- The woman's work is never done

## 7. *Representing Change Over Time and Generations (And Into the Future)*

- Remembrance and fluidity in time
- Not just honoring failures and successes from the past
- Fluid, ongoing, able to change. Tomorrow will become history.
- Going forward – has been travelled by women and continues on
- **Ongoing, circular.** Future women can fill that piece
- **Circular, never-ending**
- The future depends on what we have learned from the past
- Milestones from 1607 to the present and into the future. A path that's going somewhere. **Think inclusively about all of those milestones**
- Rather than names, use milestones and firsts
- Incorporate qualities of women for future generations. **See yourself as part of the history**
- North, South, East, and West stairs all coming up to together to the center – at top you see yourself – **you are the future**
- Each women that steps in should be as much a part of the Monument as the Monument itself
- **Multiple women in a circle showing women throughout history**

- Women in a **circle, reaching up with their hands**, forming the shape of a tree, fingers expanding. Base of tree is made of the backs of women in different garb, from different walks of life and different times in history. Circle could be empty so you could walk in. There could be rabbits under the tree. Circle could also represent eternity and the life cycle
- **Hands lifting**, thrusting the state forward
- One woman **reaching** down, 1 reaching out, 1 reaching up to show how supportive women are, especially to each other
- **Many hands** that keep the state (and county) moving
- Hands – warm, loving, caring, holding up tablets with famous names
- Hands together in prayer - touching
- Multiple women in a circle with a child
- From the beginning of **time** – wardrobe starts as Colonial, **over time the garb changes**.
- Women showing various stages of Virginia, from Native American to Colonial to modern day
- Evolution – Could portray the **progression** of accomplishments of Virginia women instead of names
- Symbolically represent **generations** – show an older person, a child, show the history
- Grandmother (older woman) with hand on the mother's shoulder with hand on the child's shoulder, child reaching **arms upward** (or child in the middle)
- Women's history – help us understand the **voices** we wouldn't understand otherwise
- Conceptually represent the invisible voices. Social voices, social change
- Walk into a room and hear voices – a woman reading a paragraph of her story. Inside a mini-museum and Monument that draws them to it
- So much of the work that got done was by women. Represent **how they contributed to real change**
- **Tree** of life represents generation after generation (Roots – past generations, Trunk represents today's generations, new sprouts in the leaves represent the new generations, could use the leaves to represent the years in history)
- **Future** - Add women to the timeline in the future. (Keep this open – hopefully the next President from Virginia will be a woman). Incorporate women who will lead and contribute in Virginia in the future in future generations. People will still want to gather to hear the last chapter in the story
- Room to add on in the future – a blank panel?
- Link to the future
- Not fixed, can move

- Children notice other **children**. A little girl imagining a representation of all of the things available for women to do. A third to fifth grader, holding her mother's hand
- **Timeline** of Virginia history showing places where women were responsible for the social changes that occurred
- Three parts – History, symbols and where women have contributed
- Timeline with carvings of something that happened in that timeframe. Can feel what occurred in that timeframe
- Raised round open space up two steps with a semi-circle of traditional columns interspersed with busts of notable Virginia women, with figures of individual women and bas-relief of symbolic women above and below the busts
- Timeline in the Visitor's Center shows dates, women and their stories
- I like a timeline. Things have changed. When we got machines, it meant more work for mothers
- Time capsule
- Leave a note like at the wall in Italy in Letters to Julia" movie. Someone answers the letters
- A place to write down your dream and story and leave it at the Monument, like throwing a penny in the fountain or rubbing the shoe of the statue of the founder at Harvard. Nudge the public
- "Virtual wall" where people can **write** – danger is what they might write. Advantage is that if inappropriate comments are written, they are quickly responded to – "this doesn't represent who we are."
- See your own **reflection** in the stairs
- Stairs – woman standing on podium and child climbing up the stairs
- **Stairs** – physical women going up the stairs, using a solid face, coming up in a spiral, not steep, etched with names and stories
- Stories, ascending the staircase (but not in particular order – implies building up to "the best"). Show progression without judging

#### 8. *Representing Nature, the Cycle of Life and Hope*

- **Incorporate the land**
- Use the land. Statue in the land. Women had to adapt to the land.
- **Garden** that you walk through has **seating, water moving**, native Virginia flowers always blooming (note: cost to maintain flowers?)
- Garden with meandering space, strolling **pathway** smooth to walk on, safe for all ages
- On a path, there's always the possibility of discovery. Show the past, present and most of all the future. What if it's a path of our hopes for what the future will be?

- **Path** with small paving stones or something creative with the names of dozens of women
- **Path and water**
- Don't have anyone walk on the women
- Symbol for eternity
- **Water** - Importance of life-sustaining water sharing its beautiful gifts. Used for baptism, beginning of life
- Water, fluidity. Audience can interact with and **touch** the water
- A bridge over moving water, with **concentric circles** inside the center of the bridge, a Van Gogh bridge (arc shaped like a rainbow). The water would **reflect** the image of the arc and make it a **circle**. **See your reflection** – you too are part of the history. You see it and it sees you
- 24 hour **fountain**
- **Not a fountain with no message, no history**
- Perpetual waterfall over glass – **infinity pool**, keeps on going. **Landscaping is important**. Unconventional, portray hopes for the future
- Infinity pool with ecological or recycled glass, a pool that is continually filling
- Corner or half-circle suggesting an **enclosure** with some shelter or protection
- Concentric circles representing infinity as in mazes, with something in the center. Make a voyage to the center
- **Multiple women in a circle, holding hands** (center space is open, empty space)
- Women's round shape, abstract, earth mother
- Shapes associated with the image of a female
- Women holding canisters of **water in a circle**, with flowers around it
- Semi-enclosed space where a small group could gather and a larger group could fan out on the lawn. The borders of the space are not exclusive – could spread out
- Facing the slope – with group around. Conducive to any size group
- Place it so that **gatherings** are quite possible
- Could add to the scenery
- **Open space you can go into**
- **Circle** - fluidity, **continuity**
- Doing things in perpetuity, **timelessness without changelessness**
- Not a fountain with horses in the middle. **No horses**
- Children could walk through the garden on markers in the ground that tell signature moments in the history of Virginia women from the timeline

- Garden could have 2-4 **benches** that each seat 2-3 people (larger groups gather at the Bell Tower). Ones that last without much upkeep, with arms at the end to help people get up
- Different flowers planted every year, different colors, the Monument changes
- Bricks on a **walkway** with names on them
- Natural – it's a garden
- A variety of flower colors
- **Tree** (Dogwood tree or Willow tree – bends but doesn't break)
- **Represent all women as a tree** – strong, always there, supporting everything else
- **Hands** nurture. Old worn hand, young girl's hand
- Foundation and **hands supporting** – **steps** incorporating footprints or made out of women's hands
- **Woman with female child**
- **No woman holding a baby, but don't exclude the idea of children**
- Nothing wrong with honoring women as mothers
- Not a woman holding a baby
- Not a woman carrying a baby
- **Outstretched arms**
- Holding a child
- Arms stretched up to God
- **Could be below ground**
- The ground is higher at the Circle and lower at the Bell Tower
- Could go down into the ground, 3-4 feet down, rising up 1-2 feet above ground, representing going into the future
- **Steps** up to a Monument raised off the ground to symbolize rising up
- Women usually work **together**. Boys make something go fast. Girls create an enclosure and play "house." We take whatever we are given and make it into a habitable space
- **Quilt** – patchwork of stories and ideals
- May resemble a patchwork quilt. Each square represents a different woman. Could be virtual
- **No columns**
- Not terribly linear
- No obalesques
- Symbol of what women were doing while men were out fighting Indians. We've had to do it all. Lift these things up instead of official titles – rocking the cradle, teaching, running farms, managing slaves, care giving, holding the family together, culture/fine

art/needlework passed on by women, family values – we were there telling goodnight stories

- Animals are associated with women's creativity and nurturing – rabbits, chickens
- Life and birth
- Gates, Gateway. Virginia as the Cradle of America
- Footprints show your path
- Put your feet into the footprints
- Pond with fence around it

### 9. *Interactive, Connected and Updatable Using Today's Technology*

- **Relevant and Updatable (QR Codes, Apps, Website)**
- **Interactively pull up timeline and stories** while at the Monument (kiosk, electronics)
- Stand near it and **access information with a PDA, iPad, etc.**
- Use the educational component to tell the story rather than individual mention
- Interactive aspect – in a group, they can share if they have a family member who has made a contribution, they can “tell their story, “search for keywords, record their story
- Could all go the same app and chat about it together there
- Are there other interactive style monuments? Virginia should pioneer this
- **“First interactive monument” App** – How people communicate with the Monument worldwide – see it in 3D on the internet
- Have the Monument be an adjunct to the exhibit inside the Capitol and accessible with Smartphone apps. Make the exhibit specific – give lots of information there. It doesn't have to all be on the Monument
- **Monument is a “virtual Museum”** with continuation in the Capitol Building/website through technology
- You can gear the virtual museum to so many audiences; you don't need a big Monument. Document the major obstacles and issues of each era and how they affected the women in each era, what changed and how
- **History of Virginia Women detailed in the Welcome Center to go with the Monument.**
- Create a **virtual museum** that schoolchildren can come see and we keep the technology current. Technology is an important component of this
- 20 years from now the “virtual museum” concept could be dated. Counter that with timeless architecture around the Monument and update the screen design and virtual museum
- **App** – “400 Years of Virginia Women” accessible with a Smartphone
- Do we need the most up-to-date technology for this to be accurate? Yes if we are to inspire we do

- Virtual technology that is sealed to keep it clean. Get technology that lasts in outdoor structures
- Play your portable device and listen to the voices of women. "I raised 18 children. I lost 10 of them." Farmer's wife, slave woman, first women elected to Congress
- **Use it anywhere – while travelling** (Virginia General Assembly virtual tour for students)
- Using Wi-Fi you can hear an endless track of varied paragraphs to hear it as they saw it, and it would set you to thinking
- Could use **QR codes** read by smartphones to hear the **voices**. For example, a petition from slave women who were freed but had to leave the state and who wanted to stay close to their children and families
- Not sure about voices outside
- Have some aspect of it interactive to encourage you to confer with others there
- Have **links to all the women you want to refer to in history** and their history
- Access the information from anywhere in the world
- For those that don't have access to apps, a solar powered digital picture image could be displayed day or night, powered by the sun. No batteries or generators needed
- Could hear stories and learn history, but those would not necessarily be depicted
- Could use a podcast (for example, download a William and Mary module). History professors talking about fully vetted information, incorporating it into our educational system
- **Interactive** would be more appealing to young people than a statue
- Accessible to special needs kids
- Incorporate whatever the **emerging technology** is (use Wi-Fi to reduce internal wiring, and whatever comes after Wi-Fi)
- Design it in sections to carry it into the future – Monument, behind the scenes power, electronics
- Take the story to the young people and ask them
- Could display stories on a screen. Always new when you walk by
- Could represent every notable woman throughout Virginia history. Could also select a region and find out about that region
- Remember our audience is the world
- Kiosk will be a great asset to the Monument

#### *10. Different and Also Consistent with Capitol Square Tradition*

- The sun has set on traditional monuments. Look at the success of the Vietnam Memorial versus traditional monuments

- Match the other buildings. Keep authenticity of the common theme on Capitol Hill. Match whatever else is on the Square
- **Innovative and different.** Mother nature is not innovative enough
- Women's definition of success is not male-oriented. Women bring something different. **The story cannot be "traditionally" told** with as much depth and clout
- We want **something different.** Something not quite the same as any other monument we have
- Do something more unique than a statue. A statue of a woman is too clichéd, except the Statue of Liberty, and that's been done
- **It's important to note that this is the first of its type – uniqueness. Make it set the bar high so other states can follow**
- State that this is a Monument to Virginia women. Have a brief and engaging mission statement of the purpose of the Monument
- **Consider the relation to the Capitol Building.** People will visit the Monument before or after visiting the Capitol. When viewing the Monument, what's behind it?
- What draws people onto that walkway? (The Square, public park, getting visitor information)
- **Think outside the box**
- Not one statue, place or timeframe
- **Not a figure on a horse**
- **Not on a pedestal**
- Not a huge chunk of marble (too cold and distant)
- Not dramatically smaller than the ones of men. At least as big as George Washington
- Not a wife of somebody
- I don't want to see a lady with a baby on her hip or a Greek goddess
- A human form fits in. Surround it with a tree. Blends in and innovative and looks a bit different
- Passing along strengths that women found that aren't traditionally honored. Women were in charge in a velvet way
- Not larger than the other Monuments in the area but can handle people gathering
- **Keep tradition** with the other things that are there *and* hear a story
- Want tradition to bring something to the Monument
- Not modern art
- Not Stereotypical (walk a mile in our shoes)

#### 11. *Sustainable with a Diversity of Textures or Tones*

- Organic elements

- Use a **variety of tones** to represent diversity
- Use **different materials** to represent different kinds of women
- Something **neutral and environmentally friendly** – Virginia clay, Terra cotta, recycled glass
- Material that won't age
- **Different textures** to capture diversity of women, **not a single color of texture**
- Use many small items making up part of the Monument – round iridescent things, seashells, buttons. Suggest the **complexity** of who we are and what we do. Women take the materials at hand, the leftovers and make them work (quilts from scraps)
- Taking homely materials and making them useful or beautiful. Use common inexpensive material – to represent homespun
- **Complex and beautiful** like women working together
- Not all one material – that creates distance (example Martin Luther King Memorial)
- Use materials that can withstand the elements, earthquakes, floods
- With pieces easy to replace (panels?). Make sure if one piece goes wrong the whole thing doesn't have to be redone (cables inside marble structures became obsolete in 5 years)
- Use Virginia materials
- Looks like marble but not sensitive to the elements, white granite, bronze, limestone
- White, pure
- Glisten and attract the eye without being flashy
- Lit at night with solar lighting. Still lit in a power outage
- Something that symbolizes strength – metal? oak? Willow?
- Human scale or slightly larger
- Something that could be changed yearly – a rock that can be repainted?
- Metal?
- **Not shiny**. A matte finish
- Not black, not green, not brilliant bronze
- Not brightly painted - continuity with materials on Capitol Square

## *12. More Than a Monument - Uniting and Teaching the State's History*

- **Monument should not be lacking a learning experience**
- Teach Virginia history
- **Collaborative, regional approach**. Working together to invite the world to Virginia
- Collaborative consortium of groups. There's no "Center for Public History" in Virginia. At a Conference I attended, other states had interactive displays and information accessible through a website

- A Center for Public History (Virginia History Exchange?) could support small museums and communities, offer workshops, develop a website, provide leadership and guidance for the design of statues, exhibits and educational materials, lead in the formation of a cooperative network of colleges and universities and launch a statewide oral history project
- **We need an infrastructure in Virginia** that allows for connecting the museums, gets us access to technology and the ability to do everything (There is a Grant – National Endowment for Humanities \$50,000 – digital innovations in history)
- Capitol Square Preservation Council – could they supervise spreading the history? Or the Capitol Foundation. It needs to be a non-profit
- **Make the rest of the state as much a part of it as Richmond through a massive women's history website**
- The Monument on Capitol Square can be virtual, and the others it links to around the state real (of individual women)
- How can we share and make points of connectivity that are mutually beneficial for all?
- Connecting people to the history
- Have a statue, then have the **Visitor's Center with detailed information about women's history in Virginia**
- Incorporate letters to/from husbands, sisters reflecting the depth of social history. We don't have a plan. Now we save events but don't write stories in letters. Protests in NY stem from Twitter and Facebook – that 's where we're recording history now
- **Timeframe** - What are the **hallmarks** in those 400 years? The right to vote, the right to have property, use historians to determine the hallmarks
- Consider a regional approach to celebrating Virginia women. There is a precedent with the success of the tourist trails throughout the Commonwealth. Best known is the "Crooked Road" which had a \$24 million economic impact on our state and created 765 jobs
- This could be the first Monument in Virginia to "women" collectively in history. It could catch on in every state. Put Money toward a national women's history museum
- Women of Virginia Historic Trail recognizing over 50 women with markers
- There could be an **app** about Virginia women that helps plan a trip to visit the monuments you're interested in around the state honoring Virginia women
- There is great beauty and elegance in doing single monuments. **This Monument could be a "launch platform"** for the statewide monuments to Virginia women in the places of their hearts (where they lived or died)
- Make sure the Monument fits together with historic signs and markers
- Historic markers for Virginia women combined with the "trail" concept

- Specific women and specific places with an overarching theme to pull it all together
- We have Civil War trails grouped around the state and locally focused. This concept helps the local communities
- **Each woman had a tie to a community**
- Identify a collection of Virginia women and erect monuments in the **communities** where those women were most associated during their lives (Tourism Adv. Commission)
- List the “she-roes” of Virginia. Go into **Visitor's Center, Museums** and sell history. Tie it in with women's history month. Add to it each year
- To simply talk of statues drives me crazy. I'm glad we have the Monument, but we need to teach better, to pass on the history to our kids
- Affiliated with an ongoing **oral history project** to collect women's stories
- Have a **professional history exhibit** in a Richmond museum supporting the Monument in Richmond. Have it opened at the same time the Monument is revealed. Have it go on tour around the state
- Lecture series coordinated with the Virginia Library in Women's History Month
- Richard Bland College Library travelling **exhibit**
- The regional museums feel unrepresented. Having a traveling and teaching exhibit does more than a statue – classes, workshops, channels to engage
- Get the schools to buy into it
- Historians decide who to recognize. That's their business
- State highway markers – white/black
- Map of counties, showing Virginia women in each county
- Incorporate the history of the land before there was a Virginia. In the museum component, show how the roles of women have changed as the land changed at the same time
- Incorporate the State tree, the dogwood
- Shape of the state made of marble with names/faces chiseled in it
- Multiple symbols in a mural/timeline

### *13. Reflecting Current, Vetted and Well Shared History*

- PhDs have written books about women's history. Look to those for themes
- The importance of the correct, thorough narrative
- We need a foundation of professional research for sharing the history. Could have some entity use teenagers to research, write, share research on the internet
- For research support, could create regional internships and ask state Universities to recommend Juniors and Seniors. Have an application process and recommendations

- The Radford City website's blurb on history was written in 1960. Keep the history current
- Select it well. Write it well
- Empower clubs in each community. Set up a Wikipedia type approach to get in there and fix the history. Just starting to work on what we know. You don't have to have a PhD to do that. Feed it back to whatever Monument goes up in Richmond

#### *14. Portraying That We're Not Done Yet*

- **Keep this open** – hopefully the next President from Virginia will be a woman
- While there, think about and talk about how far we've come, but the fight for equality for women isn't over. **We need to keep working**
- **This is national recognition from a state that doesn't recognize that we're equal (ERA not ratified yet)**
- **Women still don't have equality in Virginia.** If you want to be seen as something better for women, you need to do something for us
- Have a statue of a woman holding up a copy of the passed ERA in Virginia. It lost by one vote in Virginia
- We need to make it clear that it was a citizen's drive that got this started. A citizen's drive can fix the other
- Virginia women get one of the last two monuments. This is a golden opportunity. It could be a stepping stone toward progress on the other issue
- **Acknowledge that we still have a ways to go**
- **Stairs** – at top leave it unfinished to imply we still have a ways to go
- We refuse to be limited anymore by laws and customs
- The door is ajar – young women need to walk through it and claim whatever they want to claim
- The nature of women's role in society is changing – our achievements and what hasn't been done yet – this is about the future
- The young people we heard from really know to imagine it and put it into words
- There's nothing that talks about the larger story, and how the Monument fits into that story
- Celebration in 2020 of the Centennial of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment (women's right to vote). Another significant opportunity for change. It's different from this effort, but in the same larger context

## Stories and Notable Roles

*These individual women, types of women and groups of women were named by Virginians as ones they would like to see honored:*

- Slave women (they were supporters of civilization)
- **Enslaved women** and all of the children they raised
- We certainly need a slave woman, working all day in the fields, raising children, runaway slave leadership
- **Pocahontas**
- Most significant badge of citizenship was **gaining the vote**
- **Virginia Suffrage League** (led to the founding of the League of Women Voters of Virginia). They suffered when trying to win the right to vote
- **Dolly Madison**
- **Mary Draper Ingles** (Radford/W.Va. History). Ingles Farm in Radford. She escaped from captivity and returned to her family in the New River Valley. They started Ingles Ferry, which aided in the Great Migration
- **Henrietta Lacks**. Born Henrietta Pleasant in Roanoke Virginia, she was a wife, mother and a tobacco farmer. A humble woman, her contributions to medical science has saved lives across all lines. Soon after the birth of her fifth child, she was diagnosed with cervical cancer. Her cancer cells (nicknamed He-La cells) were replicated into over 20 tons of cells that helped 11,000 patients. It was noted that The Library of Virginia honored her and the author who wrote about her in February, and Henrietta's family came
- **Nancy Witcher Langhorne Astor**. Born in Danville. Became first woman elected to serve in the British Parliament in 1919. Champion for women's rights and early childhood education. She and her family turned their home into a hospital during WWII
- Edith Bolling Wilson, President Woodrow Wilson's second wife. She is a national historical figure and can bring economic value to Wytheville/SW Virginia
- Maggie Walker
- Garden Club of Virginia has been beneficial to state
- Wives of Virginia's Presidents, Pocahontas with Appomattox and Pamunkey women, women of achievements, symbolic women
- Include women historians – Patricia Gibbons Johnson, biographies
- **Women who didn't know they were making a contribution to history**. Humble women, making everyday contributions to the welfare of family and community, having a ripple effect
- Strong education for women has done a lot for Virginia women

- Teachers, scientists, medicine - Women doctors (Susan Comstock, Georgian Jones at the Jones Institute – first in-vitro fertilization)
- Nursing, teachers, secretaries (working extremely hard in traditional female professions for lower wages, but with great impact)
- Women as mothers – past and future (woman with a child by her side and with a test tube)
- Women writers (Glasgow)
- Women in the arts, military
- Laborers, bankers, educators
- Spies, sports figures, entertainers
- Unconventional roles – women military leaders, admirals
- Women in strong positions rather than nurturing roles
- Women breaking the mold, like Van Lew, Union spy
- Reluctant to support a group of women because you'll always leave someone out.
- Those who kept people going during the Depression (Cold Mountain book)
- The bravery of pioneer women
- Women Authors
- College Presidents
- Women's groups who volunteered and supported different things in the community
- Singular figure would be more profound than a collection of individual people
- Brides arriving at Jamestown were mothers of the nation (women pioneers helped establish Jamestown)

## Bringing the Monument to Life

*This section includes suggestions, questions and ideas about the process of designing the Monument and bringing it to life:*

### Other Monuments/Approaches Discussed

- Virginia

State Seal is poignant and representative

- On Capitol Square

Public Safeties (Planned in Darden Garden)

Native Americans (Planned in Capitol Square)

Civil Rights (Existing)

- Beyond Capitol Square

Mount Vernon – monument to George Washington's slaves is set into the ground with steps up to it, rising. Place to reflect

Vietnam Veterans Memorial with collections of sayings, stories, writings, famous and not known

Vietnam Veterans Memorial – hope the Commission does not go in this direction

Convention Center – shows people throughout time and you have to figure out who each one is. Use portraits and apps to figure it out. Children looking at the portraits of different nationalities and different times

Apartheid Museum in S. Africa, Titanic Museum and Holocaust Museum – you get a piece of paper about your character and then find out your "fate"

Holocaust Museum in D.C. is most compelling

Bronze couch in a public square. The feet were all different, a working man's sinewy foot and a well-heeled businessman's foot

9/11 Memorial (Mentioned in discussion about a Garden)

Oklahoma City has empty chairs representing the people who died

Venus DeMilo is representative of women

Disney World's Hall of Presidents

Korean Monument

FDR Memorial

VCU rings mounted around campus

### *This is the Time*

- Having a Monument is fruitful, reasonable and overdue
- **So pleased about the project.** Wonderful project that is much wanted.
- I hope we'll **take the time needed for this to be a first class project.** It deserves to be given the time frame and money frame to achieve the goals we've talked about today.
- The Governor's Council on the Status of Women should be involved
- The Fairfax County Commission for Women (Arlington) (Petersburg) Represents 700,000 women

### *The Conversation Format and Decision Process*

- I like the Conversation format. It's efficient and it's a woman's thing to do
- The process is critical
- How will it be decided? (The Commission will make a recommendation to the General Assembly. The Joint Rules Committee would probably decide, led by Senator Whipple)

### *The PR Process*

- **Good PR work is needed on the Monument.** Better coverage than these Community Conversations got in the media. It's part of the acceptance, so people feel a part of it, and not divisive about it
- **Make people feel included.** Incorporate outreach with this whole idea
- Hope some Commission Members will make appearances throughout Virginia to excite the public
- Hope the Commission will keep the public informed
- **Involve elementary children, high school children in our public schools.** Get them excited. Boys as well as girls
- Spell out "Virginia." Some may have thought Va. Women meant Veteran Women in the press coverage

### *Selecting Artists/ The RFP Process*

- Use a similar process to the one used for the successful Civil Rights Monument. Used a consultant. Told artists what we want to convey, the feeling or emotion to convey. Artists could self-submit or be asked to submit or both, seed funding provided to artist, professionals review the submissions (Dean of School or Arts at VCU). Use the model to raise funds for the Monument. Bipartisan support
- **A female artist who is a Virginian** would be ideal
- Don't limit the design/architect to a woman. We prefer a woman and a Virginian though

- Could have a **national competition** for the Monument design and the educational component
- Could have a national competition – include the guidelines from these meetings
- Could have a **competition in Virginia**, Ideally the designer would be a woman (like Maya Lin who designed the Vietnam Memorial)
- Have a competition rather than having it designed by a committee (a camel is a horse designed by a committee)
- Incredible artists in this community could give us visuals
- Need to select a design team/ artist of real stature so that the eyes of the nation are focused as it is built and dedicated. It becomes nationally known. We have that kind of quality in the back of the Commission Members minds
- An artist team representative of the Women in Virginia would be ideal
- Please put the site photos and site plans that were posted at the Community Conversations up on the website (for artists and the public)
- Questions that will need to be answered:

What will be the lead time after the RFP goes out?

Will an architect be required?

Will a site plan book be required?

What will be the specifications?

Is there a drop in the grade of the land?

### Fundraising

- How much more expensive will this Monument be over time than other monuments?
- How will the money be raised?
- Plan now to commit the funds to keep the technology current, have an endowment with it. Plan for staffing and maintenance with this
- Get as many women's organizations as we possibly can involve in the fundraising. It will take publicity
- Contributors will want feedback about how much of the expenses are for the architect, etc.
- The Governor and the distinguished Commission Members together have the attention-getting power to get this on the agenda in our public schools

## Facilitator Observations

### ***Connecting and Teaching the State's History***

Attendees at the Community Conversations were very excited about the possibility of using apps, websites, displays and other means for linking the Monument with a rich collection of history about Virginia women. Visitors to the Monument could access an "app" that would allow them to follow their curiosity and learn more about the state's notable women in history.

Technology and more traditional means (such as travelling exhibits and lectures, and a "Virginia Women's History Trail") could connect visitors to a broad array of historical information and a level of detail that could not be included on a Monument.

### ***Listening To and Building on Each Others' Ideas***

Some Virginians came to a Community Conversation with the name of a woman to honor, then listened with interest to the possibility of a way to inclusively honor many women whose contributions have been important to Virginia, and even those who will be important to Virginia in the future.

People remarked after the sessions that they appreciated and enjoyed the conversation format more than people giving individual speeches, and that they thought that it brought out interesting ideas as people built on what others had said.

### ***Connecting The Monument With Other Ways the State Can Honor Women***

Virginians were very pleased about the Monument honoring the contributions of Virginia women, and see this project as visible progress for the State. They would like to see Virginia added to the list of States that have ratified the Amendment granting Equal Rights to women. They believe that ratifying the Equal Rights Amendment would be a historic way to honor the many contributions by Virginia women and would signal a new chapter for women in the Commonwealth of Virginia.