

Letter: 9/11 Memorial was no walk in the park

We read of the appointment of Joe Daniels as the new CEO of the National Medal of Honor Museum Foundation. As 9/11 family members, we know all too well how we were steamrolled with the most expensive and abstract memorial-museum complex ever constructed, not a simple, dignified and patriotic memorial that honored the victims who were murdered at the site of the World Trade Center in New York.

Daniels was recently quoted in The Post and Courier stating: "We would like to work much more openly, much more transparently, with council and the community."

In New York, we experienced very little, if any, real degree of openness or transparency in dealing with Daniels or the 9/11 Memorial-Museum Foundation he led. Indeed, what we encountered for the most part was a confrontational and adversarial discourse.

The vast majority of 9/11 family members never wanted a \$700 million Memorial Museum (MM) with two gigantic waterfall structures. Additionally, we were ignored on a variety of issues pertaining to the MM, when we requested that:

The ages of all of the victims as well as the ranks of all uniformed personnel be placed on the memorial; American flags be flown across the entire sacred site; the photos of our loved ones be placed at eye level; the unidentified human remains be placed in an above-ground repository, akin to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery.

Instead, we ended up with a city park where local office workers eat their lunches, children run about and tourists take selfies.

Visitors must search for the single American flag on the plaza, as well as any references to the events of 9/11 itself.

The names on the edge of the waterfalls tell visitors virtually nothing about the victims. If you want to see photos of them, you must pay \$24 to descend into the basement-level museum, only to find that in some cases the photos are 12 feet above floor level.

To add insult to injury, the photos of all the terrorists have a place of prominence at eye level. Visitors must pay \$24 to pay their respects at the repository of the unidentified remains that is part of the museum, 70-feet below the plaza level.

It is our hope that the citizens of Mount Pleasant and Charleston do not find themselves in a similar situation. Please learn from the \$700 million mistake in New York.

Create a museum that is focused solely on honoring the heroism and sacrifice of the Medal of Honor recipients, not some abstract monolith.

We only wish we could have such a memorial in New York.

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