

May 16, 2018

Earl A. Powell III, Chairman  
U.S. Commission of Fine Arts  
401F Street NW  
Washington D.C.20001

Dear Commissioner Powell:

The World War I Memorial is intended to honor those who fought to preserve our being together without fear or harm. This intention has been served well by the design of Pershing Park, which opened in 1981.

After reviewing the WWI Centennial Commission's latest submission (dated May 2, 2018), I cannot understand why this successful park has to be destroyed in order to serve as a tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for this country. The proposed designs by the WWI Centennial Commission continue to insist on the insertion of a large sculptural wall into the heart of the park, despite repeated respectful suggestions by members of the Commission of Fine Arts that a more sensitive approach be taken.

In my view the design avoids the real issue. The sculpture wall, in its present location, is an alteration that communicates a somber experience, an alter. Is this who we are? Where does the design engage or embrace the visitor? What is the humanistic experience? What remembrance does a person take away?

A wonderful opportunity is being missed to advance the concept of "a living memorial" displayed on the nation's Main Street.

To support and assist this effort I am offering my experience in the form of suggestions and dialogue, pro bono, to the design team to achieve a memorable memorial that is a model for others to build on.

I hope that rational voices will prevail. We do not have to destroy to create.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Paul Friedberg', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

M. Paul Friedberg

**M. Paul Friedberg**

---

116 West 88th Street, New York, NY;10024 tel.212-580-7761 cell 917-226-6750; MPFANDP@GMAIL.COM