

USS Jacob Jones Memorial Monument Public Forum

Meeting notes from 29 May 2025

Nine members of the public attended this meeting in City Council Chambers from 11:30-1:00, along with Myles Martel and John Boecker.

The following summarizes comments expressed by members of the public:

1. The Cove site does not constitute a dignified or reverent enough location for the Memorial, as it is too commercial and has potential for being vandalized: Reverence is the key for an appropriate site.
2. The Cove is a harsh site; concern for destruction from storms, wind and high winds here, particularly the predominate winds from the northwest.
3. The Cove site has been becoming less and less peaceful with increasing levels of activities that appear incompatible with the monument's reverent quality.
4. The proposed pool at this location may present challenges with regard to sand collection, maintenance, and potential use as a "foot bath".
5. The Cove should remain a living, unobstructed, open space with no additional "clutter" or structure, allowing for visitors to create their own memories that serve as their personal "memorials".
6. If education is an important aspect of the memorial's purpose, perhaps consider consolidating this with other monuments in one location.
7. Consider a location near the World War II Tower where a current exhibit includes a tribute to the USS Jacob Jones.
8. Also consider another option north or west of the parking lot behind the gift shop at Sunset Beach.
9. Attendees found the current conceptual design desirable as both a tribute and a piece of art, but it needs a different site, which will influence further design iterations.
 - Consider naming all crew members, including survivors designated as such

The meeting concluded with an understanding that this design process should include the exploration and thoughtful evaluation of alternative sites for meeting criteria and align with the project's Purpose.

Project Purpose statement:

To co-create and curate the design, construction, ceremonial use, and national awareness of an impressive, accessible, and poignant public memorial for the fallen of the USS Jacob Jones that connects us to and amplifies Cape May's role in America's history,

In a way that moves all participants to deeply value with humility, gratitude, and reverence the loss of these particular lives here,

So that engaging this memorial serves to help all of us reflect upon, appreciate, and be inspired by how the loss of the Jacob Jones symbolizes all conflicts and forgotten heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice to defend America's fragile freedom.