



Artist Suse Lowenstein would like to donate her memorial, "Dark Elegy," to East Hampton Town to place at Kirk Park in Montauk.

SHAYE WEAVER

REFLECTIONS: Artist's Private Sculptures Portray The Agony Of Loss To Terror

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peace and dignity for all victims of the senseless vengeance called "terrorism."

In a circle 65 feet in diameter, the larger-than-life figures

are made of synthetic stone and fiberglass and shaped over wire and a welded steel armature.

Ms. Lowenstein said if added to Kirk Park, the figures would be a bit more spaced out so visitors could more easily walk among

them, but would remain within a 75-foot-diameter. She said she would cast every sculpture in bronze with money she and her family received in payment from the Libyan government, and coat it with wax to make

maintenance virtually unnecessary and so that the sculptures could be washed easily if they were vandalized.

"Montauk is our home, a community we love, and our son, who was murdered and we loved

above all else, was part of the surfing community," she said. "It seemed the most natural place and at this point we know the administration might give a bit friendlier reception."

She said Kirk Park, which is owned by the town, is accessible and that parking is not an issue. The park could become the "culture corner" of Montauk since the sculptures would sit next to the Second House Museum and the planned Native American museum. Ms. Lowenstein said the sculpture would help bring more visitors to that part of Montauk.

"No matter when I drive by that pretty little spot, frankly, nobody is ever in there," she said. "The memorial would change that drastically."

Some have called the monument too raw and emotional for such a prominent display. In 2008, the National Capital Memorial Advisory Commission voted against taking it on and suggested a more benign memorial be made.

Ms. Lowenstein was upset because a generic memorial would not suffice in her eyes.

"There's nothing generic that terrorism leaves in its wake," she said. "You can't water down what is portrayed in this memorial."

Ms. Lowenstein said she would work with the town to landscape the park to screen the sculptures.

Town Councilman Peter Van Scoyoc admitted last week that he was initially a little apprehensive about the idea of putting the work at Kirk Park, but then relented.

"It struck me as very emotional, very raw, and I have to say I wasn't so sure a public location would be appropriate because it is so powerful," he said. "But after I spoke with Suse and toured the memorial, I felt completely different—a 180-degree turn-around."

Other community members like Connie Kenny from Springs,

who witnessed the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center from her classroom window, said it's right for Montauk.

"It's not a matter of choice," she said. "It has to be done. We have to do this."

Like Ms. Kenny, Montauk resident and Montauk Historical Society member Lawrence Cooke witnessed the terror of the same attack in person and said that the memorial evokes a "humaneness."

A firefighter for Engine 313 in Queens back in 2001, Mr. Cooke was one of the many emergency workers who spent weeks at Ground Zero, recovering what they could.

"Looking at [the memorial], knowing what it represents, brought home that terrible day," he said. "The memorial is a way to deal with grief because it takes time. There's nothing left of the person and so it's something to look at and a way to feel and deal with the loss, with the separation."

He said Kirk Park is a great place for such reflection, especially given that Montauk has become a destination for clubbing and partying.

"Montauk is lacking in culture," he said. "With all that in mind, I think any place that affords [a chance] for people to stop and think about this life, about this country and everything that's changing not for the better is a good thing. If it gets somebody to care a little bit about somebody else, it's a good thing."

Town Supervisor Larry Cantwell said he is on board with the idea, noting that the memorial brought tears to his eyes. He did say that the public should have one month to comment on the donation before the Town Board makes a decision.

For those who would like to see the work, visiting hours are from 10 a.m. to noon, daily, at the Lowenstein home at 11 East Lake Drive.

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