



April 28, 2022

PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES FOR THE FUTURE OF THE GATEWAY PILLARS

For the past few months, a Mitigation Working Group composed of roughly a dozen civic, veterans, and historic preservation groups from across the Boulder County have engaged in a dialogue with our local community regarding the future of the Gateway pillars located on Arapahoe Road just west of its intersection with US 287. Scores of ideas have been discussed, investigated, and debated.

The Working Group now has narrowed the list to the following alternatives which appear to be potentially feasible and have some community support (in order of distance from current location):

1. Current Location
2. Proposed Intersection of Arapahoe Road and Aspen Ridge Drive
3. Forest Park
4. Cross Ridge Park
5. Legion Park
6. US 36 Overlook

A more detailed description of each of these alternatives is attached. Over the next few weeks, the Working Group will continue to seek community input concerning, and investigate the viability of, these alternatives. Members of the community are encouraged to offer their comments and suggestions concerning these alternatives through the portal at 9milecornerpillars.com.

The goal of the Working Group is to finalize a list of one to three alternatives, and present them this summer for final public discussion.

The Gateway Pillars at the Current Location

One alternative for the pillars' future is that they remain in or near their current location. Two approaches have been suggested:

1. *Leave the pillars where they presently sit, undertake necessary repairs and reinforcement of the structures, and add signage to identify the pillars to passing motorists.*

This approach reflects the view that though the setting of the pillars has been substantially eroded over the years, the pillars in their current location remain a significant East County landmark and must be preserved *in situ*. Relocation, according to this view, destroys “what makes the pillars the pillars.” This approach also would be less expensive than any relocation options.

The primary disadvantage of this approach is that it discounts the recent findings by CDOT that the 2021 widening project severely impacted the physical integrity and historic significance of the pillars, and added a new and serious vehicular hazard for eastbound traffic. To somewhat mitigate these concerns, the following steps could be undertaken:

- Repairs and additional buttressing of the pillars and their footings could reduce the impacts of the recent construction on their physical integrity.
- The “pork chop island” where the south pillar is located could be redesigned to remove utility fixtures, add landscaping and signage, and replace the guardrails with well-designed knee walls or other more attractive protective structures. Similar changes could be made in the vicinity of the north pillar to improve its visibility and appearance.
- Removing the steel guardrails and replacing them with attractive but carefully engineered protective structures could reduce the dangers to vehicular traffic.

The net result would be a mitigation, but not elimination, of the issues reflected in the recent CDOT survey. The pillars would remain enmeshed in a complex, busy intersection with all of the impacts noted by CDOT. They are likely to be further impacted by additional construction at the intersection within the next two decades. Indeed, a Traffic Impact Study commissioned in November 2019 by the developer of Nine Mile Corner concluded that an additional left turn lane at that intersection will be required on eastbound Arapahoe Road by 2040, necessitating a further widening of that road at the current location of the pillars. Nonetheless, if keeping the pillars in their current location is deemed to be of primary importance, then these steps could moderate some of the impacts of the recent construction.

2. *Same as prior approach, but also reconfigure the intersection in some unspecified way to better protect and display the pillars.*

Recognizing that the prior option does not resolve the serious impacts of the 1983 and 2021 widening projects on the Gateway's historic setting, it has been suggested that the intersection be reconfigured to somehow restore the original appearance of the pillars and the surrounding area. Multiple, additional objections to the current intersection design – many of which have nothing to do with the pillars – also have been raised.

Unfortunately, after lengthy discussions, no alternative design has been proposed that is compatible with the pillars' historic setting, while at the same time providing a safe and efficient

intersection for current and anticipated traffic flows. Even if one could design the intersection on a blank sheet of paper, with the only requirements being that (a) the pillars be kept in or near their original locations, and (b) the intersection safely and efficiently handle the anticipated volume of traffic, it seems unlikely that a viable alternative configuration could be developed. Nonetheless, parties are encouraged to propose any designs that meet these criteria.

Relocation of the Gateway Pillars to the Intersection of Arapahoe Road and Aspen Ridge Drive

A major challenge in finding a solution to the current situation with the Gateway pillars is developing plan that (a) maintains some semblance of their original setting, (b) is feasible, and (c) provides for their future. The following are two proposals that might meet these goals.

Background

Many community members have commented that the original location of the pillars – which was preserved for nearly a century – both marked the symbolic entrance to the City of Boulder and formed a visual gateway to Arapahoe Road framed by open farmland and the mountain backdrop to the west. Much of that character has been lost with the two intersection widening projects in 1983 and 2021. Arapahoe Road west of the current location, however, retains some of its original 1928 character. That is, it is a narrow two-lane road predominantly flanked by open land, which still offers sweeping mountain vistas to the west. Moving the pillars a few hundred feet to the west could recapture much of their original character.

But the nature of that portion of Arapahoe Road will soon change. The City of Lafayette has approved construction of a development currently known as the Silo subdivision on the south side of Arapahoe beginning about a quarter mile west of the pillars' current location. Another commercial development is being planned by the Tebo Partnership, LLP for the land on the south side of Arapahoe between the pillars and the Silo site.

To accommodate those two developments, a new arterial – to be known as Aspen Ridge Drive – is planned for the south side of Arapahoe Road along the boundary between the properties. Current plans call for installation of a new traffic light at the Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection, roughly ¼ mile west of the Arapahoe Road – US 287 intersection.

Moreover, it also appears probable that traffic flows soon will require that Arapahoe Road be widened. A Traffic Impact Study commissioned in November 2019 by the Nine Mile Corner developer predicts that traffic on Arapahoe between US 287 and 95th Street will increase by 35% 2021 and 2040. Such increased traffic flows presumably will increase the pressure to widen that portion of Arapahoe Road to four lanes.

At the same time, both Boulder County and the City of Lafayette are taking steps to preserve the semi-rural character of many of the properties along Arapahoe. Even the planned developments, though obviously changing the appearance of those tracts, include setbacks, open space, and other features adjacent to Arapahoe Road that will temper the urban feel of the area. As a result, Arapahoe Road will retain some of its rural character and most of its mountain views for westbound traffic coming from the US 287 intersection.

Because the reconstruction of Arapahoe Road in the vicinity the new developments has not yet begun, there may still be time to influence the design of the Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection to incorporate a new home for the Gateway pillars. Below is a proposal for such a redesign, which recreates some semblance of the pillars' original setting in a location unlikely to be impacted by additional future changes to Arapahoe Road. In addition, a less ambitious option for placing the pillars in a park near the intersection is discussed.

Proposal A – A Traffic Circle at the Intersection of Arapahoe Road and Aspen Ridge Drive

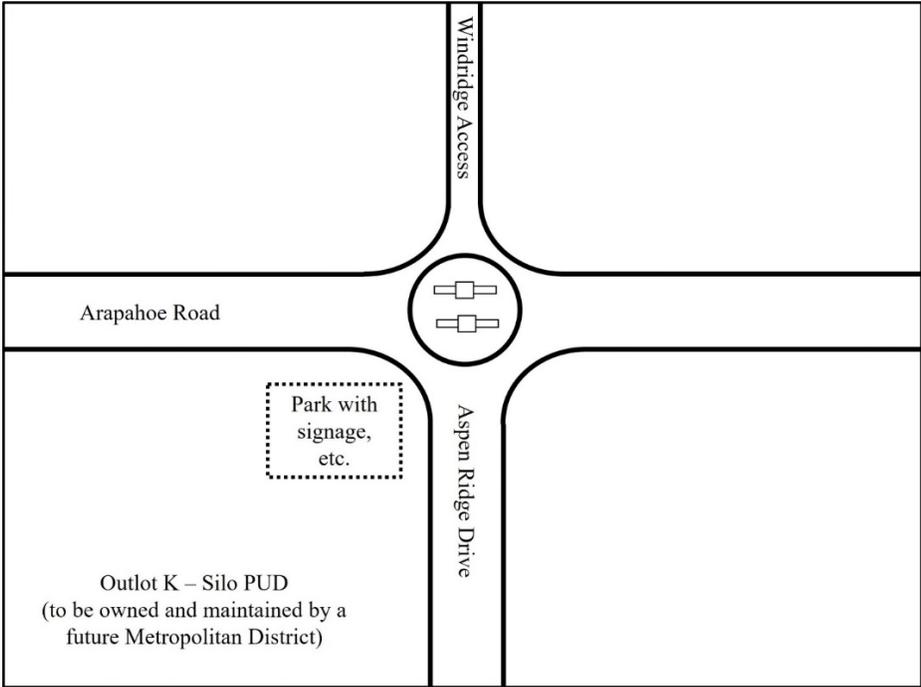
The primary stumbling block to recreating a new “gateway” using the pillars on Arapahoe Road is the likelihood that the highway will be widened so that (a) the pillars must again be moved, and/or (b) their gateway character will be lost. One answer to that obstacle is to route Arapahoe Road around the pillars. In that fashion, if Arapahoe Road is again widened in the future, the new width could be added to the outer lanes without impacting the pillars.

This design could be accomplished by constructing a traffic circle at the intersection of Arapahoe Road and Aspen Ridge Drive, with the pillars relocated in the middle of the traffic circle. Simple signage identifying the pillars for drivers could be placed on the circle, with perhaps some landscaping, lights, or other features.



Exemplar traffic circle – Erie Parkway and 119th St.

While the traffic circle would not be readily accessible by foot, a small park could be constructed on the SW corner of the intersection with more detailed interpretive signage, historic photos, etc. This park could be accessed on foot from either the Silo or Tebo developments.



Concept for Relocation to Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive Intersection

Advantages

The proposed design, if adopted, would have several advantages:

- Those in vehicles approaching the traffic circle on Arapahoe Road would see the pillars directly ahead, not off to the side. While vehicles would not pass between the pillars, the view from the east and west would preserve and highlight their historic gateway character.
- Approaching from the east, the pillars' backdrop would be open land with mountains in the distance, approximating the view down a Road of Remembrance planned in 1928.
- The pillars will be enjoyed by thousands of motorists each day since they are squarely in view, not relegated to a side venue where special effort is required to see them.
- Passing motorists primarily will be the same Boulder County residents who currently enjoy the pillars, many with an attachment and appreciation for their history.
- The adjacent park would provide space and opportunity to erect signage to explain the pillars' history and significance. If appropriate, the park could be used to expand the memorial purpose of the pillars to honor veterans of other wars.
- Compared to a traffic signal, a traffic circle would enhance the appearance of Arapahoe Road and the entrance to the two developments.
- The current status of the intersection of Arapahoe Road and Aspen Ridge Drive presents an opportunity to design and build such a configuration from scratch, rather than retrofitting or squeezing into an existing site.
- By including the traffic circle in the initial construction of the intersection, the expense of some of the sitework could be included in the cost of the highway improvements.
- The pillars and park could potentially be owned by a governmental entity, thus providing for perpetual care and maintenance.
- Removing the pillars from the Arapahoe Road – US 287 intersection will permit engineers, if appropriate, to reconfigure that intersection to address safety concerns. While those decisions are beyond the scope of this project, such a discussion can proceed without the constraints imposed by those historic structures.

Disadvantages

As one might expect, there also are obstacles inherent in the proposed design:

- The project is ambitious, requiring the consent and cooperation of multiple parties.
- The timeline for completing the new Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection is uncertain, but may be several years away.

- The new Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection will be located at the top of a slope on a highway currently with a 50-mph speed limit. There may be concerns about placing a traffic circle in such a location. On the other hand, those same issues will arise regardless of what design is adopted for the new intersection. The expertise of traffic engineers will be needed to determine the nature and extent of any additional danger posed by a traffic circle.

- There may be concerns about whether a traffic circle would interfere with traffic flows on an already congested Arapahoe Road. On the other hand, a traffic circle might improve the efficiency of traffic movement compared to the currently planned signal. These relative efficiencies should be addressed by traffic engineers to determine the feasibility of the proposal.

- No pedestrian access to the pillars will be provided. However, the original Gateway was designed to be viewed from passing vehicles; even the signage (plaque, cornerstone) was designed to be seen from a passing vehicle. This design retains that concept, plus the adjacent park will have pedestrian access, where explanatory signage or memorials can be placed.

Discussion

Though multiple details of this plan need addressing, some are discussed below:

Land acquisition for the traffic circle: Ownership of the land needed for a traffic circle, put mildly, is a complex issue:



Land Ownership at Proposed Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive Intersection

A traffic circle would be built principally on the right of way for Arapahoe Road (CO 7), which is owned by CDOT. But regardless whether the pillars are relocated to the Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection, it appears probable that some additional right of way will be required for that intersection and/or a widened Arapahoe Road. If the proposed traffic circle can be constructed within the existing and already planned right of way, then no additional land will be required.

Until the final design of the intersection is completed, it is impossible to know if additional land will be required. Nonetheless, while it appears that much of the traffic circle and surrounding traffic lanes can be accommodated in the existing right of way, the geometry of the proposed traffic circle and surrounding traffic lanes probably will require that small amounts of additional right of way be acquired from each of the four landowners bordering the new intersection (see map above).

The southwest corner. The land on the southwest corner of the new intersection is currently owned by Hearteye Village Land Company, which in 2017 entered into a PUD for the Silo development with the City of Lafayette. That PUD includes a plan for the construction of Aspen Ridge Drive along the eastern boundary of the Silo subdivision where it will intersect with Arapahoe Road.

In addition, that PUD designated Outlot K on the northeast corner of the Hearteye property – some of which might be needed for a traffic circle – to be used as a park. According to the PUD, this park will be owned and maintained by the Weems Neighborhood Metropolitan District (WNMD), a quasi-governmental entity encompassing the Silo subdivision (see above diagram). However, Hearteye has not yet transferred Outlot K to WNMD.

Hearteye later agreed to sell the Silo subdivision to Cornerstone Homes Development Company. Hearteye and Cornerstone subsequently entered into a Development Agreement with the City of Lafayette on May 2, 2019. That Agreement provides that the Silo project would be developed in two distinct phases, with each phase occurring over an approximately ten-year buildout period. Phase 1 would develop the southern portion of the property, leaving the northern portion abutting Arapahoe Road for Phase 2.

In addition, the Development Agreement made specific reference (§27b) to the installation of a traffic signal at the Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection. That Agreement provided that Cornerstone would install a traffic signal at that intersection in accordance with CDOT specifications. The precise timing of the construction of the new intersection is not stated, since it depends on other factors specified in that Agreement.

The Agreement further provided that Cornerstone would be responsible for 50% of the cost of the traffic signal, while the owner of the adjacent Tebo Partnership property should be responsible for the remaining 50%. However, if CDOT required construction of the traffic signal before the contribution by the owner of the Tebo Partnership property could be secured, Cornerstone would be responsible for 100% of cost, subject to a right of later reimbursement. The Development Agreement also contains a number of other specific provisions related to the development of the land in Phase 2 adjacent to Arapahoe Road.

On May 3, 2019, Cornerstone sold the land for Phase 1 to Lennar Colorado, LLC, and assigned its rights and obligations under the Development Agreement to Lennar. At the same time, the various parklands, open space, and other land designated on the PUD for WNMD in Phase 1 – but not Phase 2 – were transferred to WNMD.

Accordingly, at the present time, it appears that:

- Hearteye remains the legal owner of the land for Phase 2, including Outlot K on the northeast corner of the Silo development. However, per the PUD, when Phase 2 is developed, Hearteye is obligated to transfer Outlot K to WNMD. With the agreement of the parties, any land needed for the traffic circle and/or the memorial park could be set aside prior to that transfer.
- Lennar, as assignee of the Development Agreement, is obliged to construct the traffic signal at the Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection. Since work on that intersection has yet begun, funding earmarked for the signaled intersection could be used to construct a traffic circle.

The southeast corner. The Silo PUD and other City of Lafayette planning documents anticipate that the Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection will be a primary access for any development on the Tebo Partnership LLP property. The Development Agreement for the Silo subdivision accordingly anticipates that the Tebo Partnership LLP or its successor will contribute 50% of the cost of the intersection improvements. However, it appears that no agreement has been reached between the City of Lafayette and the Tebo Partnership LLP concerning those matters. Again, if the parties agreed, funds required to construct the signaled intersection could be repurposed to construct a traffic circle.

The northeast corner. The land on the northeast corner of the new Arapahoe Road – Aspen Ridge Drive intersection is owned by Stephen Tebo, an owner of Tebo Partnership LLP which owns the property directly south across Arapahoe Road. Though the plans for the northern parcel are not known, it seems possible that an arrangement might be negotiated with Mr. Tebo to acquire a small amount of additional land for the traffic circle from that parcel, if needed.

The northwest corner. The parcel adjacent to the northwest corner of the new intersection includes a substantial residence and agricultural operation. The driveway for that property is directly across Arapahoe Road from the planned entrance and traffic signal at Aspen Ridge Drive (see above diagram). The property was owned by Richard P. Miller, who recently passed away and it appears that the property is currently controlled by his estate while his affairs are being wound up. Though any discussions concerning the acquisition of land for the proposed traffic circle could be complicated by the estate proceedings, Mr. Miller's estate also has some incentive to have the intersection plans finalized prior to any transfer of the Miller property.

Moreover, the Miller property is subject to what was known as the Windridge PUD, which required the landowner to execute a conservation easement in favor of Boulder County on the land adjacent to Arapahoe Road. While the County cannot unilaterally transfer a portion of that land for intersection improvements, its easement rights lessen the value of the land for the Miller estate.

Conclusion: Assembling the land for a traffic circle would be a complicated, time-consuming process. On the other hand, that amount of land at issue for each landowner should not be significant, and would include land already significantly impacted by the planned signaled intersection. Further, the adjacent landowners may embrace the new design, since replacing a traffic signal with a traffic circle could benefit their properties.

Land acquisition for the Park: The proposed park on the SW corner of the intersection would not be located in the CDOT right of way, but would be developed on a portion of Outlot K in the Silo subdivision. Since the PUD designates Outlot K as a small park to be owned and maintained by WNMD, the placement of memorial signage or other similar items relating to the Gateway pillars in that park would seem to be compatible with those plans.

Design: If the traffic circle proposal is pursued, community input should be solicited regarding the various design elements. One appealing design envisions the pillars situated on an east-west axis and standing parallel, similar to their original configuration, but only a few feet apart. A paved, brick, or stone path could run between them on the traffic circle, representing the Road of Remembrance. Signs on the traffic circle could identify the pillars and their memorial purpose. If appropriate, the originally planned external and internal lighting could be reworked to highlight the pillars at night.

Careful engineering will be needed to provide footings, structural reinforcement, and other design features to mitigate any damage from the vibrations from passing vehicles. Similarly, a knee wall or other low, unobtrusive barrier – similar to those used on many other traffic islands (see photo, above) – may be needed on the circumference of the traffic island to provide protection from errant drivers. Since the pillars presumably would be erected on slightly elevated footings for drainage purposes, such a wall should not obstruct the view from passing vehicles.

There are countless possibilities for the adjacent memorial park. Various signs, historical photos, plaques, or memorials could be installed. Like the original Gateway park, the new park could have a flagpole and perhaps even a replica canon. Depending on community sentiment, the park could honor only those who served in WWI or a broader segment of the veteran community.

Ownership and future maintenance: Under this proposal, the Gateway pillars would be located on a traffic circle on a CDOT-owned right of way, and the adjacent memorial park would be on property owned by WNMD. Both the City of Lafayette and Boulder County also have interests in the Gateway pillars and the area.

Logically, the maintenance obligations for both the pillars and the adjacent park should be consolidated under one governmental entity. While WNMD is a possibility, the precise contours of such an arrangement will need to be negotiated between the relevant authorities and memorialized in an intergovernmental agreement or similar instrument.

Proposal B – Memorial Park at the Intersection of Arapahoe Road and Aspen Ridge Drive

A less ambitious alternative would be to relocate the pillars to the planned park on Outlot K of the Silo subdivision on the southwest corner of this intersection (see diagram, above). As previously discussed, that land is currently owned by Hearteye but, under the terms of the Silo PUD, Outlot K is slated to be transferred in Phase 2 to WNMD for use as a park. Particularly since

that area is still in the design stage, it seems feasible to discuss relocating the Gateway pillars to the planned park.

Advantages

This alternative, if adopted, would have several advantages:

- The pillars would be visible to thousands of vehicles approaching the intersection on westbound Arapahoe Road, roughly ¼ mile from their original location.
- Passing motorists primarily will be the same Boulder County residents who currently enjoy the pillars, many with an attachment and appreciation for their history.
- The park should provide space and opportunity to erect signage to explain the pillars' history and significance, and pedestrian access to the pillars and the amenities. If appropriate, the park could be used to expand the memorial purpose of the pillars to honor veterans of other wars.
- The current status of the intersection of Arapahoe Road and Aspen Ridge Drive presents an opportunity to design and build such a park from scratch, rather than retrofitting or squeezing into an existing site.
- By including the park in the initial construction of Phase 2 of the development, the expense of some of the sitework could be included.
- The pillars and park could potentially be owned by a governmental entity, thus providing for perpetual care and maintenance.
- Removing the pillars from the Arapahoe Road – US 287 intersection will permit engineers, if appropriate, to reconfigure that intersection to address safety concerns. While those decisions are beyond the scope of this project, such a discussion can proceed without the constraints imposed by those historic structures.

Disadvantages

There also are obstacles inherent in the proposed design:

- The pillars will be used solely as a monument, losing their unique gateway character and with less visibility than the present location for westbound traffic on Arapahoe Road.
- The pillars will have little visibility for eastbound traffic on Arapahoe Road.
- The timeline for completing Phase 2 of the Silo development is uncertain, but may be several years away.
- Outlot K is traversed SW to NE by the Davidson-Highline Lateral Ditch, as well as planned stormwater and other easements. While smaller structures such as signage or benches likely should not interfere with those uses, significant engineering and planning would be required

to place structures the size of the pillars on that tract. A preliminary review suggests that the pillars would need to be relocated some distance from Arapahoe Road, decreasing their visibility from passing vehicles.

- Though Phase 2 has not been platted, under the design reflected in the PUD does not include an public parking in the vicinity of Outlot K, potentially raising conflicts with the residents of the development.

Conclusion

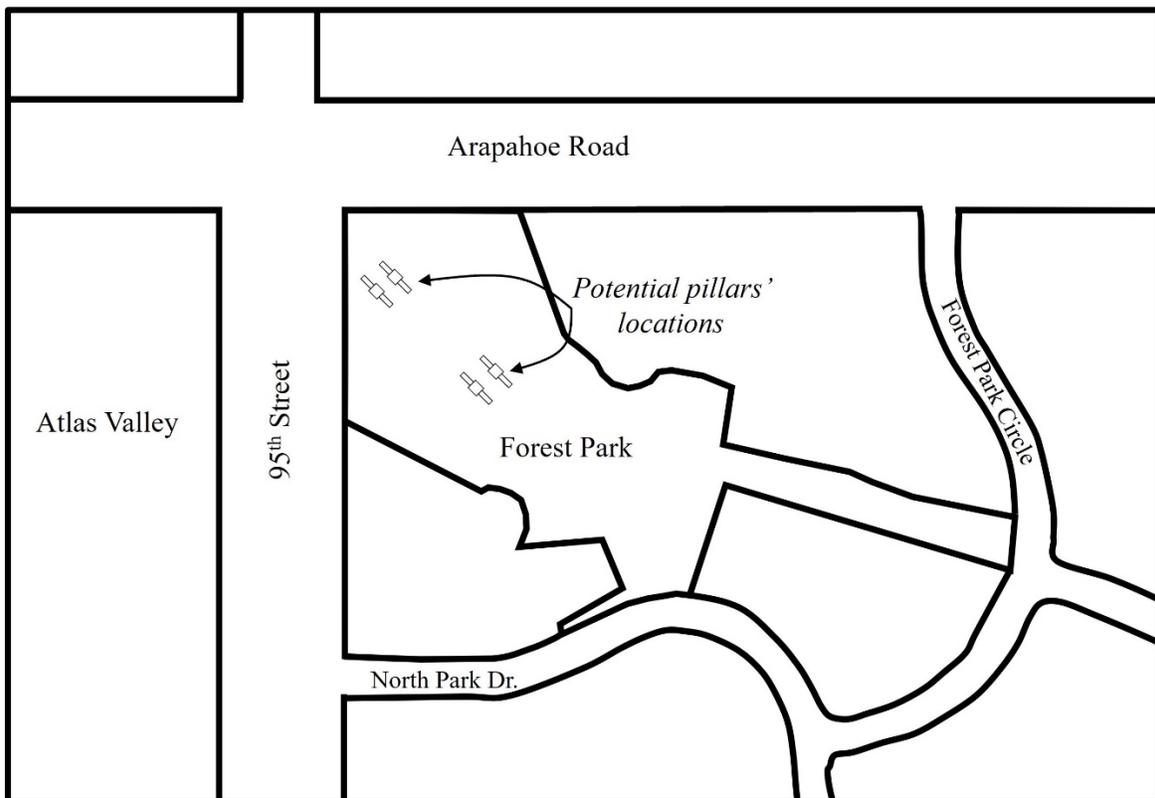
Decades of neglect have allowed the purpose and setting of the Gateway pillars – a community memorial to those who served in WWI – to be lost in the sprint for development. Proposal A cannot return the clock to 1928, but may offer a path for reclaiming at least part of the community’s vision and for honoring those who sacrificed during that horrible conflict. If that idea is not implemented, Proposal B may offer the opportunity to relocate the pillars to a park close to their original location.

Relocation of the Gateway Pillars to Forest Park

Recent community comments outlined a consensus that a future home for the Gateway pillars should be to a site (a) where they will not again be subject to further movement or disturbance, (b) which is governmentally owned, (c) where efforts can be made to enhance the pillars' visibility as a memorial, and (d) where both pillars can be located. Community members also have expressed a preference that the pillars be relocated to a site as near as possible to the current location, and with reasonable visibility for persons in vehicles passing by on a nearby highway or street. Relocation of the pillars to Forest Park at the southwest corner of Arapahoe Road and 95th Street generally meets these criteria.

Background

Forest Park is currently owned by the City of Lafayette. The parcel is slightly more than 4 acres in size, and was created as Outlot F when the Forest Park subdivision was approved in 1998.



Forest Park Location Map

Though the park is owned by the City of Lafayette, it is maintained by the Forest Park Village homeowner's association. The landscaping is mature with grass open spaces and numerous mature trees. The area along the north boundary of the park adjacent to Arapahoe Road is sunken below the grade of the adjacent roadway to serve as a catch basin for storm runoff.



Forest Park from the southeast corner of Arapahoe Road and 95th Street

The Proposal

The location and ownership of Forest Park make it a viable site for relocating the Gateway pillars as part of a memorial to soldiers who served in WWI, and potentially including those who served in other conflicts. While the relocated pillars likely would not be easily seen on Arapahoe Road, the park is within the general vicinity of the pillars' original location and provides ample space for creating a memorial featuring the pillars along with signage, landscaping, and other features.

Advantages

The proposed design, if adopted, would have several advantages:

- The park is situated on Arapahoe Road, the planned "Road of Remembrance," roughly 1½ miles from the pillars' original location.
- The park's location is most visible to eastbound traffic on Arapahoe Road and southbound traffic on 95th Street. Depending on the location of the pillars within the park, they may or may not be visible to this traffic.

- The park would provide ample space to create a memorial park among the mature trees in a pleasant setting, with the pillars as a centerpiece accompanied by explanatory signage and other amenities.
- The nearby parking lot for Forest Park Village provides public parking for those who want to visit the pillars.
- Compared to other alternatives, this site may be less expensive since the park is accessible with some infrastructure in place.
- Since the park is owned by the City of Lafayette, the process of reaching an agreement may be less complicated.
- Removing the pillars from the Arapahoe Road – US 287 intersection will permit engineers, if appropriate, to reconfigure that intersection to address safety concerns. While those decisions are beyond the scope of this project, such a discussion can proceed without the constraints imposed by those historic structures.

Disadvantages

There also are obstacles inherent in the proposal:

- Regardless where the pillars are sited in the park:
 - They will lose their unique gateway character, and
 - They will have little visibility for westbound traffic on Arapahoe Road.
- If the pillars are relocated to the interior of the park away from the northwest corner to create a memorial park, their visibility from the roadways is essentially eliminated.
- If the pillars are relocated to Forest Park, mature landscaping will need to be removed. The City and homeowner’s association likely would not be supportive of removing existing mature trees, and would require replacing them with trees of a matching caliper. The City probably also would require a formal landscape plan, prepared by a landscape architect, that would include a new irrigation plan to accommodate those changes.
- The commercial interests in Forest Park Village may object to (or may like) the possibility that the memorial park could bring additional visitors to park in the commercial spaces.
- The current arrangement for provides for the Forest Park Village homeowner’s association to maintain the park. If the pillars are moved to Forest Park, some modification of that arrangement may be required, and the City would need to agree to be responsible for the perpetual maintenance of the pillars and any amenities.

Discussion

If the decision is made to create a memorial park featuring the Gateway pillars in the general vicinity of the current location, then Forest Park is a viable option. Since the property is owned by the City of Lafayette, discussions for creating such a park could involve fewer parties and less legal complication. Moreover, though the presence of mature trees and landscaping may pose obstacles, they also could provide a peaceful setting for the memorial.

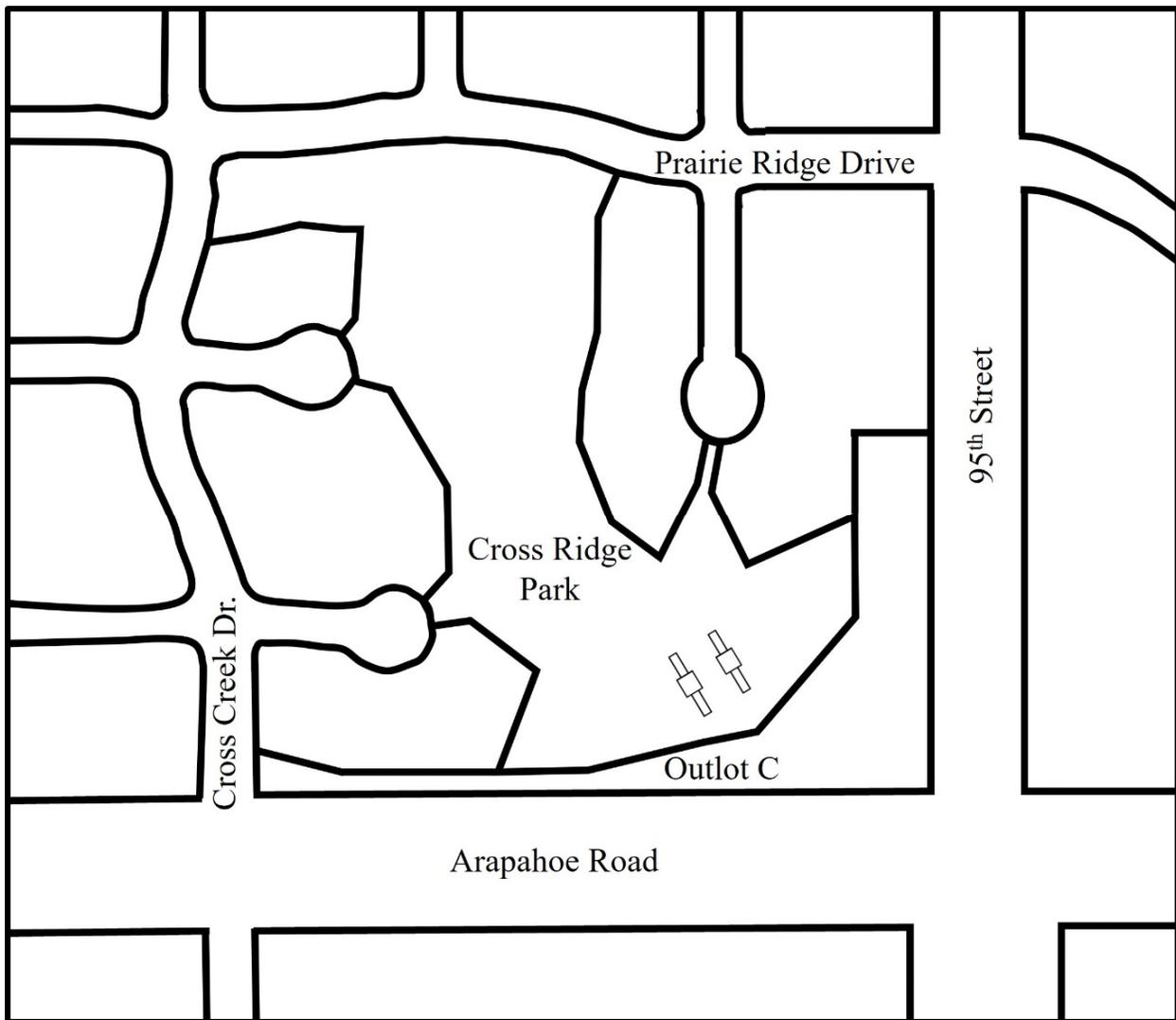
The primary decision for the community is whether to substantially change the nature of the pillars' setting, and use them as the centerpiece for a pedestrian-accessed memorial park rather than as a monument designed to be primarily viewed from a vehicle. If the former is selected, then Forest Park may be a good choice.

Relocation of the Gateway Pillars to Cross Ridge Park

Like Forest Park and some other alternative locations, Cross Ridge Park could serve as a site for relocating the pillars. The site (a) likely will not be impacted by future road expansions, and thus would avoid further movement or disturbance of the pillars, (b) is governmentally owned, (c) has space to add amenities to enhance the pillars' use as a memorial, and (d) can accommodate both pillars. Cross Ridge Park also is relatively near the current location, and with some visibility for persons in passing vehicles.

Background

Cross Ridge Park is a 4.74 acre neighborhood park managed by the City of Lafayette. The park was created in 1994 as part of the Cross Creek subdivision.



Concept for Relocation to Cross Ridge Park

The bulk of the park is an open, grassy area. The portion nearest to the corner of Arapahoe Road and 95th Street is significantly below the grade of the adjacent roadways, and serves as a catch basin for storm runoff.



Cross Ridge Park – view from NW towards Arapahoe Road – 95th St. Intersection

Between the park and the roadways on the west and south is a strip of land designated as Tract C in the Cross Creek subdivision filing, which is owned by the Ridge at Cross Creek Homeowners Association. The portion of this strip on the corner of Arapahoe Road and 95th Street is landscaped with mature trees and contains part of a path that circumnavigates the park.

The Proposal

The location, orientation, and ownership of Cross Ridge Park make it a viable site for relocating the Gateway pillars. While there are a number of possible locations for pillars in the park, one site would be at the southeast end of the park west of the mature trees and as close as feasible to the northwest corner of Arapahoe Road and 95th Street. In that location, the pillars could be oriented on a somewhat NW-SE axis so that the “gateway” between them is visible to westbound traffic. In addition to the pillars, there is ample room in that area of the park for signage, landscaping, and other features that would be somewhat visible to westbound traffic and accessible via the existing walking path in the park.

Advantages

The proposed design, if adopted, would have several advantages:

- The park is situated on Arapahoe Road, the planned “Road of Remembrance,” roughly 1½ miles from the pillars’ original location.
- The park’s location on the northwest corner of the Arapahoe Road – 95th Street intersection is somewhat visible to westbound traffic on Arapahoe Road, the original intended audience for the Gateway pillars. Depending on the location, the pillars could also be somewhat visible to north and/or southbound traffic on 95th Street.
- The motorists viewing the pillars primarily will be the same Boulder County residents who currently enjoy them.
- The park would provide ample space and opportunity to erect signage to explain the pillars’ history and significance. If appropriate, the park could be used to expand the memorial purpose of the pillars to honor veterans of other wars.
- The combined park and outlot contain open spaces and a walking path, reducing the amount of work necessary to prepare the site.
- If sited in the existing park, the pillars and park would be owned by the City of Lafayette, which would agree to be responsible for perpetual care and maintenance.
- Removing the pillars from the Arapahoe Road – US 287 intersection will permit engineers, if appropriate, to reconfigure that intersection to address safety concerns. While those decisions are beyond the scope of this project, such a discussion can proceed without the constraints imposed by those historic structures.

Disadvantages

The obstacles inherent in the proposal are as follows:

- If the pillars are relocated into the existing park, they would:
 - Be some distance from and substantially below the grade of Arapahoe Road, reducing their visibility to passing motorists, and
 - Lose their unique gateway character.
- Regardless of the siting, the pillars will have poor to non-existent visibility for eastbound traffic on Arapahoe Road.
- The siting of the pillars is complicated by the fact that it is a detention pond converted into a park. The park receives all the storm drainage for that neighborhood, so that the southeast corner of the park holds water during many weather events and even during snowmelt.

The flat area of the park has an engineered and installed drainage system. Any changes to that area likely would require that both the drainage and irrigation systems be re-engineered and rebuilt.

- To relocate the pillars close to the corner of the intersection, some agreement would be required to transfer a portion of Outlot C to the City of Lafayette.
- The siting of the pillars is complicated by the presence of mature trees on Outlot C close to the corner of the intersection. If the pillars are sited behind the mature trees, or west of the corner to avoid the trees, the pillars' visibility from the roadways will be further reduced.
- Cross Ridge Park was designed as a neighborhood park, with little adjacent parking. Residents in the Cross Creek subdivision should be consulted regarding the addition of the pillars and associated amenities to that park, and likelihood of additional traffic in the neighborhood.

Discussion

In comparison to some alternatives, relocating the Gateway pillars to Cross Ridge Park would involve fewer parties and less legal complication. If the City of Lafayette agreed to the proposal, the legal requirements and approvals would be significantly reduced, and the project simplified. Those issues could be more difficult if the pillars were moved partly or entirely on to a portion of Outlot C currently owned by the Cross Creek Homeowners Association.

Though the park is relatively open land, the site poses significant engineering complications given its use as a stormwater catch basin. The presence of mature trees on the corner, and the tract's use as a neighborhood park could inject additional issues.

Finally, relocating the pillars into a park, even if visible from a roadway, changes their character and the public's perception of them. While their history could be explained – likely better than it is explained now – the pillars would become more of a static memorial than part of the everyday fabric of the East County.

Relocation of the Gateway Pillars to Legion Park

Of all of the potential alternative sites for the pillars, Legion Park aligns most closely with the original memorial purpose of the pillars. Dedicated in 1934, Legion Park was created as “a memorial to the soldier dead of the World War.” Though never formally associated with the Road of Remembrance, the park accordingly shares the same memorial purpose as the Gateway pillars. Moreover, Legion Park meets other criteria identified by the community including that it is a site (a) where the pillars will not again be subject to further movement or disturbance, (b) that is governmentally owned, (c) where efforts can be made to enhance the pillars’ visibility as a memorial, and (d) where both pillars can be located.

Background

In 1917, a local Boulder businessman, John Howard Empson, deeded 28 acres to Boulder County, including Goodview Hill on the north side of Arapahoe Road overlooking the Boulder Valley. The parcel was later reduced in size to ~23 acres when the County dedicated a strip along the south boundary for the newly build Arapahoe Road.

In 1931, Boulder County commissioners requested the construction of a new scenic road to the top of Goodview Hill to provide a vantage point from which visitors will get an “unparalleled panoramic view.” When this opportunity arose, Post 10 in 1932 leased the Goodview Hill property from the County “for the purpose of beautifying said tract as a memorial to the soldier dead of the World War.” The lease, which bears a rent of 50¢ per year, expires on October 31, 2031.

Thereafter, the memorial was designed by Saco Rienk DeBoer, a noted landscape architect from Denver. His design for the memorial called for 2’ high rock wall, 382 feet long, and 100 feet wide with flagpoles located at each end, located at the top of Goodview Hill. Two captured artillery pieces (from the same source as the cannon at the Gateway park) were installed on platforms near the flagpoles. Two elaborate entrance gateways were planned for the entrance road off Arapahoe Road.

A crew from the Civilian Conservation Corps constructed the hilltop memorial, but the entrance gateways were never built. Legion Park was dedicated in late June 1934, and maintenance responsibilities were turned over to Legion Post 10. However, a later study concluded: “It is unclear what work, if any, occurred on the property after the American Legion signed the lease since the country was fast approaching the lowest point of the Great Depression.”

Over the years, the park fell into significant disrepair. Legion Post 10 told the *Daily Camera* that they tried for years to maintain the park, but the vandalism remained rampant. Visitors stole the flagpoles and plaques. The Legion provided garbage cans, but they were stolen. The legion Commander was quoted as saying “we put out trash bags, but some of the bums slept in them.”

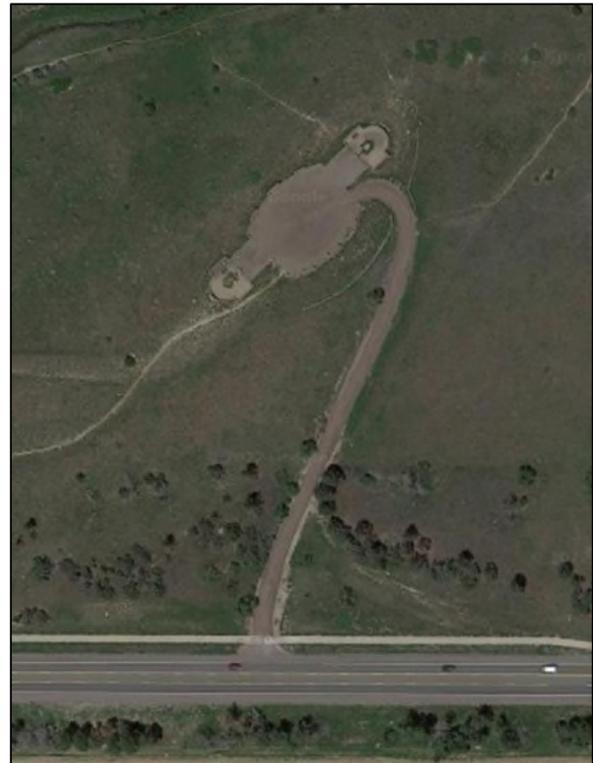
In early 1976, due to the County’s concern of the ability of Post 10 to properly maintain the park, Boulder County Parks and Open Space Department (BCPOS) took control of the park’s maintenance, though the Legion continued its sponsorship of the memorial. Toward that end, the County signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Legion confirming their March 1, 1933 lease, but providing that the County would take responsibility for the care of the park. In this same

MOA, it was agreed that the Legion would maintain all war memorials, flag poles, plaques, and signs, continue to conduct memorial services, erect fitting displays in memory of the war dead, install additional war memorial monuments at its expense. The Legion also was given the right to formally name the park.

On Memorial Day, May 30, 1977, the Legion rededicated the park as “Boulder Veterans Memorial Park.” However, the park continued to decline. One of two artillery pieces disappeared, apparently in the 1970s. In June 2005, the Legion arranged for the Colorado Air National Guard to remove the other artillery piece, which the Legion restored and now displays at its building on North Broadway in Boulder.

Though officially named “Boulder Veterans Memorial Park,” the site is now referred to Legion Park, and Goodview Hill is now called “Legion Hill,” by the County and on most maps. However, since the last artillery piece was removed in 2005, it does not appear that Legion Post 10 has conducted any activity or done any further maintenance or improvement to the site.

Instead, County publications list Legion Park as one of its “open space properties” managed by BCPOS. The memorial at the crest of Goodview Hill been reduced to the perimeter rock wall; all of the other memorial features (artillery pieces, flagpoles, plaques) have been removed. The interior space of the memorial now serves as a parking lot for those seeking to enjoy the view, with picnic benches, two Parks and Open Space interpretive signs, and trash and recycling containers maintained by the County.



Legion Park

The remainder of the 23-acre property is dryland, with a 0.9 mile loop trail used for hiking, mountain biking, and other recreational purposes. It is maintained as non-irrigated open space with native or invasive prairie vegetation. Apart from the access road from Arapahoe, a “Legion Park” sign, and the loop trail, the remaining property is vacant.

On October 8, 2019, the Board of County Commissioners approved a request from BCPOS to designate Legion Park as a Boulder County Historic Landmark. This designation covers the entire 23 acres of the park, and provides that “Any construction or alteration of the landscape or features within the site area will require review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness.”

The Proposal

During the community discussions concerning the future of the Gateway pillars, there has been significant discussion about relocating them to Legion Park. To date, however, there has been no consensus concerning the exact siting of the relocated pillars within the park. Among the locations that have been discussed are:

1. Flanking the entry drive at the bottom, set back a short distance from Arapahoe Road.
2. Flanking the entry drive about 100' – 150' up the hillside from Arapahoe Road.
3. Flanking the entry drive at the top of the hill at the entry to the memorial.



Entry to Legion Park from Arapahoe Road

4. On top of the hill, on the west side of the memorial's wall, adjacent to (or as part of) the existing wall.
5. On top of the hill, on the southwest corner of the memorial's wall, close to an existing wall, potentially moving up the hill.



Current Memorial at Legion Park

Depending on which location is selected, benches, interpretive signage, and other amenities could be installed.

Advantages

The proposed location, if adopted, would have several advantages:

- Legion Park was created at roughly the same time as the Gateway by some of the same individuals and organizations that created the pillars, and shares the same memorial purpose with the pillars.
- Legion Park is situated on Arapahoe Road, the planned “Road of Remembrance,” albeit 4½ miles from the pillars’ original location.
- If sited to flank the entry road, the pillars would be visible to traffic on Arapahoe Road and continue to serve as a “gateway.”
- If sited on top of the hill, the area would provide ample space for explanatory signage and other amenities.
- The existing space at the top of the hill provides public parking for those who want to visit the pillars.
- Boulder Legion Post #10 has indicated a willingness to work with the Mitigation Working Group if the decision is made to relocate the Gateway pillars to Legion Park. Since the park is owned by Boulder County, if an agreement can be reached, the County could assume responsibility for the perpetual care and maintenance of the pillars and the associated signs and memorials.
- Removing the pillars from the Arapahoe Road – US 287 intersection will permit engineers, if appropriate, to reconfigure that intersection to address safety concerns. While those decisions are beyond the scope of this project, such a discussion can proceed without the constraints imposed by those historic structures.

Disadvantages

There also are obstacles inherent in the proposal:

- Legion Park is situated several miles from the pillars’ original location, where they were an integral part of daily life in the East County.
- Legion Park is scarcely known in Boulder County, and predominantly is used by residents of the City of Boulder. While moving the pillars to Legion Park may increase the park’s use and visibility, the pillars will be seen far less at that location than at their current or some other relocation sites.
- The park has a history of vandalism, and increased security and/or maintenance may be required.

- If the pillars are sited to flank the entry road:
 - A significant amount of earthmoving and site preparation would be required due to the slope; and
 - Explanatory signage and other amenities likely would need to be located at some distance from the pillars.
- If the pillars are sited on top of the hill, they would not be visible from Arapahoe Road and would not serve as a gateway.
- The entirety of Legion Park is designated as both a Boulder County Historic Landmark and as Boulder County open space.
 - The landmark designation is particularly important with respect to the memorial, which is protected both as a representative project constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps and as a representative work of master landscape architect Saco Rienk DeBoer. The incentive to protect the historic integrity of the Legion Park memorial is significant, since that iconic landmark should not be degraded in the same way as the setting for the Gateway has been destroyed.
 - Boulder residents' well-known fierce protection of open space suggests that any relocation, particularly one that requires sitework which disturbs open space land, may encounter community resistance.
- If the Gateway pillars are relocated to Legion Park, they will lose their independent identity and simply become another structure in the park.

Discussion

Legion Park in many respects is an attractive future home for the Gateway pillars. The park's temporal, architectural, and commemorative symmetry with the Road of Remembrance's Gateway is obvious. But the two memorials were created to be, and have been maintained for nearly a century as, independent sites. One was an impressive destination shrine, while the other was specifically created to be observed from thousands of passing vehicles. Each has developed its own legacy and passionate supporters.

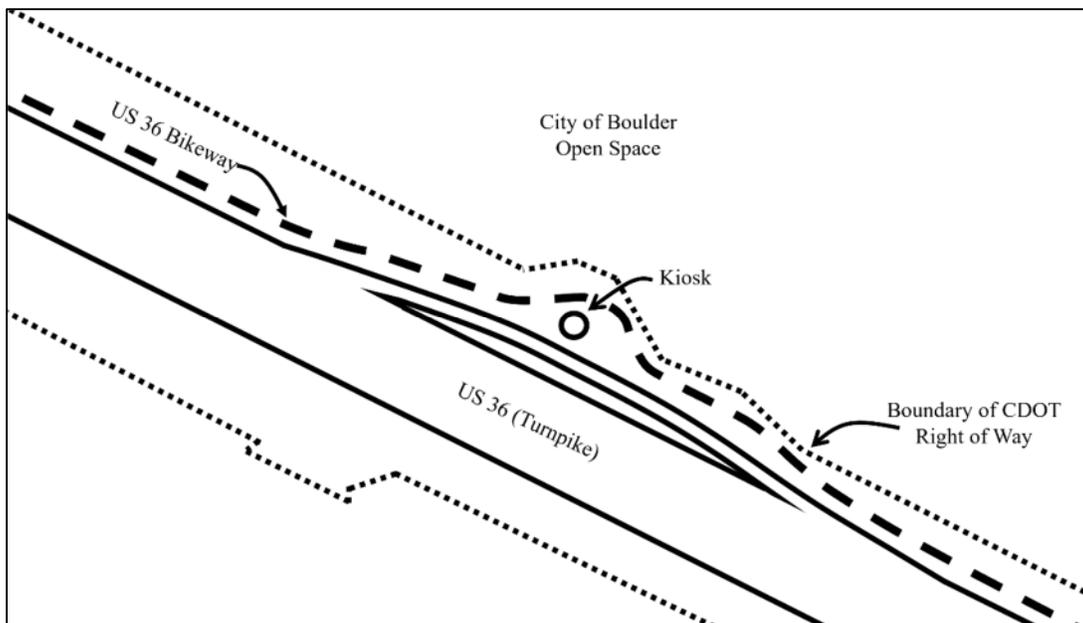
Another commonality is that both the pillars and the memorial at Legion Park have been overlooked for decades. Adding the pillars to the Legion Park site could simply exacerbate the decline of both monuments. Since the futures of the two memorials will be linked, a plan to relocate the pillars to the park should include revitalizing both and aggressively maintaining them in the coming decades.

Relocation of the Gateway Pillars to US 36 Overlook

Perhaps the most dramatic venue in the East County is the overlook on US 36, aka the Turnpike. The vista from the overlook is spectacular, with the Boulder Valley below and the Continental Divide stretching out in the distance. Relocating the pillars to the overlook would provide them with a superb backdrop at a spot looking out on the zealously protected “frontispiece” or new entrance to Boulder. Moreover, the overlook is a site (a) where the pillars will not again be subject to further movement or disturbance, (b) which is governmentally owned, (c) where efforts could be made to enhance the pillars’ visibility as a memorial, and (d) where both pillars can be located.

Background

The US 36 overlook is entirely located on the US 36 right of way owned by CDOT. The site is accessible only for westbound traffic from US 36 via a shallow turnout, where there is parking for approximately 8-9 vehicles. In recent years, a bikeway was built adjacent to the westbound lane of US 36, providing access to the overlook for bicyclists and walkers from both Boulder and Louisville.



Vicinity Map - US 36 Overlook

At present, the overlook site is small, bracketed by the turnout lane for US 36 and the bikeway. A small kiosk is the primary amenity, along with some interpretive signage, benches, and telescopes. The site has no trees or other formal landscaping, but instead is dryland prairie similar to City of Boulder open space to the north and west.

The overlook’s outstanding feature is the expansive view to the west across the valley to the Rocky Mountains in the distance. Over the past several decades, the City of Boulder spent millions of dollars protecting that view, which is often called Boulder’s “frontispiece.” Functionally, the overlook is the new gateway welcoming visitors from the east to Boulder.



US 36 Overlook

The Proposal

The original purpose of erecting the pillars at the intersection of the Lincoln Highway and Arapahoe Road was to create a gateway to a Road of Remembrance leading visitors to Boulder. The Road of Remembrance was never built, and Arapahoe Road has been supplanted by US 36 as the primary route for visitors from the east to Boulder.

By relocating the pillars to the US 36 overlook, they again can be part of a grand entrance to the City of Boulder. The views behind them would be striking, different but comparable to the background for the original pillars. Interpretive signage and other amenities can be added to emphasize and enhance the pillars' memorial purpose.

Advantages

The advantages of the proposed site are apparent:

- The background view behind the pillars on the overlook would be magnificent.
- The pillars would be visible and accessible to westbound visitors headed for Boulder, the intended audience for the original pillars.
- Though additional planning would be needed, the overlook could provide space for signage and other amenities explaining and enhancing the pillars' memorial purpose.
- The overlook provides some public parking, as well as bike access, for those who want to visit the pillars.
- Since the overlook is owned by CDOT, the process of reaching an agreement for the pillars relocation may be less complicated, and CDOT would take responsibility for the perpetual care and maintenance of the pillars and the associated signs and memorials.
- Removing the pillars from the Arapahoe Road – US 287 intersection will permit engineers, if appropriate, to reconfigure that intersection to address safety concerns. While those

decisions are beyond the scope of this project, such a discussion can proceed without the constraints imposed by those historic structures.

Disadvantages

There also are obstacles inherent in the proposal:

- The overlook is situated on US 36, several miles from the “Road of Remembrance” and the pillars’ original location.
- County residents would seldom visit or even see the pillars. Instead of being an integral part of daily life in the East County, the pillars would be primarily a collateral attraction for visitors to the County enjoying the views from the overlook.
- Few passersby stop at the overlook, either from the highway or the bikeway. While the pillars would be visible to westbound traffic on US 36, their location to the side of a high-speed, heavily-trafficked expressway makes it less likely that passers-by would observe them or understand their history and purpose. Bicyclists would be more likely to observe and perhaps stop at the pillars, but their numbers are small compared to the drivers who currently use Arapahoe Road.
- The pillars would not be visible or accessible to eastbound traffic on US 36, forcing all vehicular visitors to approach in the westbound lanes.
- Those stopping at the overlook will need to cope with the noise and activity generated by traffic passing by a few feet away on US 36.
- The overlook is small and there is no obvious place to relocate the pillars given its current configuration. Accordingly, significant sitework may be needed, both to find a place for the pillars and their amenities, and to relocate some of the existing infrastructure. Depending on the site design, it might be necessary to seek a small amount of additional land from the adjacent City of Boulder open space.

Discussion

In some ways, the US 36 overlook is both the best and worst alternative for the pillars. If the goal is to place the pillars in a stunning visual location where visitors can photograph them to great effect, the overlook is an ideal spot. Passersby might seldom appreciate them, yet the pillars could be publicly proclaimed to once again be the “Gateway to Boulder.”

At the same time, the pillars would lose much of their local heritage and become almost exclusively a tourist attraction. Signage and other amenities could be installed to explain their memorial purpose, but the pillars’ location alongside an expressway would make it unlikely that County residents would visit to reflect and honor those who served.