

Dear Friend of the New Winston Museum,

As the Managing Director of Riggs Ward – a museum planning and design firm - I am writing to provide my unqualified and full support for the efforts underway by New Winston Museum, under the leadership of Dr. Mike Wakeford, to create a community interpretive center in the former U.S. Bankruptcy Court facility located in downtown Winston Salem.

Having created a great many new museums, museum redesigns, and renovations, I cannot foresee any negatives to the New Winston Museum's move. The new pedestrian bridge envisioned by Walter Hood and the creation of additional greenspace next to the court building makes for an ideal location. The Peter Oliver site will draw thousands of visitors and the addition of the New Winston Museum as an adjacency will increase that visitation significantly by adding more critical cultural mass to the area.

Riggs Ward has worked with Walter Hood on several other projects, including one very similar what is planned for Winston-Salem. At the University of Virginia, Riggs Ward collaborated with Walter Hood to design an outdoor interpretive area on the site of a former free black family farm – the Kitty Foster homesite. The project won several awards and is now a historical highlight for the City of Charlottesville.

The former court building could easily be transformed into a wonderful museum, community exhibit space, and resource center where residents and visitors alike could explore Winston-Salem's history related to social issues, industry, and equity. The narratives could be woven among several themes that explore just how far Winston-Salem has come and how far it still must go to become a place for everyone no matter their race, religion, or economic status. Connecting Winston Salem's residents and visitors to stories that engage, excite, and bring people together as a community will drive better civic engagement and welcome more businesses and attract future residents.

With ample parking and the potential to create both outdoor and indoor event venues, the court building will allow the museum to generate life-sustaining revenue and host many wonderful community events. The interior spaces lend themselves well to adaptive reuse as exhibit space. However, these spaces will be more than your typical museum, they will live, breath, and grow with the City's events and development. We will create a museum that is as alive, active, and creative as your City has become.

By giving the New Winston Museum the chance to utilize the for U.S. Bankruptcy Court building, it is breathing new life into a useful structure and giving the community an indispensable resource that will inspire generations to come. We look forward to the New Winston Museum and the City of Winston-Salem becoming a major cultural scene in the Carolinas.

With best regards, I remain

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "L. Brent Ward". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

L. Brent Ward, Principal