

Group aims to raise thousands to restore Warner Park Statue of Liberty

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Residents interested in seeing Madison's own Lady Liberty restored to its original condition met Wednesday to map out a game plan for the Warner Park statue.

The 9-foot-tall Statue of Liberty replica is one of some 200 commissioned by the Boy Scouts nearly 60 years ago to celebrate the Scouts' 40th anniversary.

Madison's was raised in Giddings Park on the Near East Side in 1951 and moved to Warner in 1971. Two bids for the statue's restoration describe it as being cracked, split, discolored and pockmarked.

Karin Wolf, the city's arts program administrator, said the statue is second on a list of public statues she would like to see restored.

"I have about 15 pieces I want to fix," she said, "but I don't have the budget."

The volunteer committee met Wednesday at Warner Park Community and Recreation Center. Among the 10 people participating were at least two who had relatives who passed through Ellis Island.

Gerhard Pechmann said his father first came to the United States as a prisoner of war during World War II. Pechmann said the country left such a good impression on his father that he didn't want to leave, and when he was shipped back to Europe after the war "his memory of the Statue of Liberty was nothing but tears." He returned for good in 1952.

Such emotional connections could help move the statue's restoration forward, Wolf said.

On Wednesday, committee members appointed co-chairs, got assurances from the nonprofit group Historic Madison that it would oversee their finances, and circulated bids to do the restoration. They came in at \$21,000 and \$23,675.

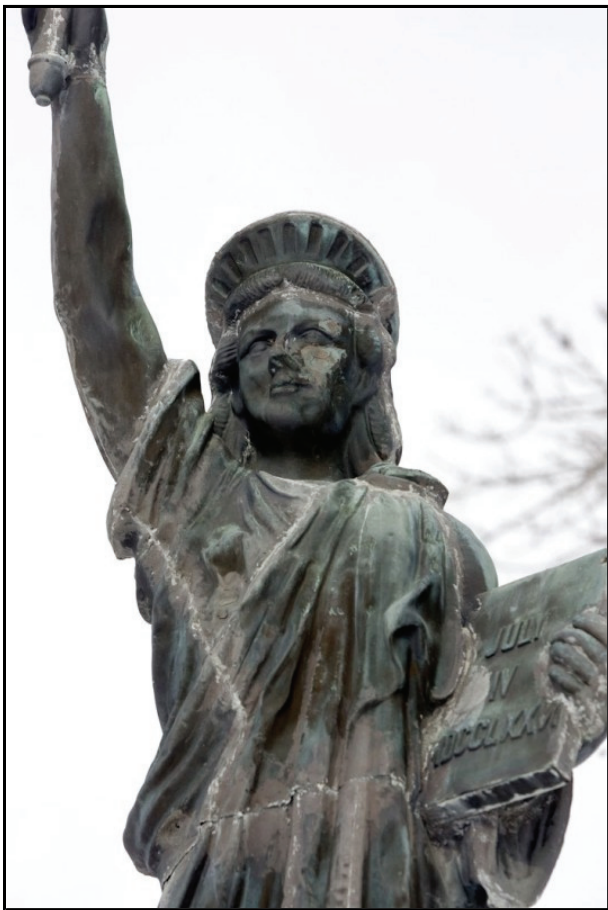
The group plans to raise money to do the work, but Wolf urged members to approach the Madison Arts Commission for an initial seed grant. The tentative plan is to rededicate the statue in October 2011.



The Statue of Liberty replica at Warner Park in Madison is cracked and deteriorating. Photo taken Sept. 3, 2009. (Published caption 9/6/09) RIGHT: In order to restore the Statue of Liberty replica in Warner Park, workers would have to build a stainless steel skeleton-type figure. Currently, it is made of copper sheets about the thickness of a penny and has no internal structure. Craig Schreiner -- State Journal



A group of volunteers is proposing to rehabilitate the Statue of Liberty replica in Madison's Warner Park. Craig Schreiner -- State Journal



The aging Statue of Liberty at Warner Park could be getting a face-lift. Craig Schreiner -- State Journal