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## **Teeboom wants Holocaust memorial for city**

By *MICHAEL BRINDLEY*

*Staff Writer*

NASHUA – It was during a visit to the Dachau concentration camp in Germany that Fred Teeboom started getting ideas for what a Holocaust memorial in Nashua would look like.

“It’s a memory that I will never forget. You smelled death going into that place,” said Teeboom, a former city alderman. “Walking through the gate, somehow it triggered something in me.”

Teeboom, who grew up in Amsterdam during the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands, estimates that he lost as many as 75 members of his extended family in the Holocaust. It’s a deeply personal issue for him and one he wants to memorialize with a structure in Rotary Common.

Planning for the memorial is in the very early stages. Teeboom is working with representatives from the city’s Parks and Recreation Department and the Board of Aldermen to get approval for the memorial to be built on city property.

Teeboom said there is also a great deal of fundraising necessary for the project, which he estimates will cost about \$100,000.

The design for the proposed memorial is finished, done by local sculptor John Weidman. Teeboom and Weidman believe this would be the state’s first Holocaust memorial.

The memorial design being proposed would have six granite walls with barbed wire engraved on the outside surrounding a brick stand with a black cube.

“I wanted to make sure it wasn’t a memorial you just look at, it was a memorial you actually experience,” Teeboom said.

“You see your reflection in the cube so you cannot be detached. You’re part of it.”

The small-scale version of the proposed memorial was unveiled at a Holocaust Remembrance Day at Rivier College earlier this month. Weidman, who is based out of Brookline, also did the sculpture that is in the rotary near Rivier College. He and Teeboom

has been collaborating on the design since last year.

"This moment in our history, it's always seemed very black. That's where I came up with notion of this black cube," Weidman said. "It's not a very exciting shape, but it creates a reflective surface that the viewer can see themselves in."

Wiedman said the six walls represent the six concentration camps originally built by the Nazis for the purpose of genocide: Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Majdanek, Sobibor and Treblinka. The names of the camps will be inscribed on the inside of each wall.

Recognizing that Jews were not the only people impacted by the Holocaust, Teeboom said it was important to keep the memorial free of any kind of religious aspects and focus on the historical significance of the event.

Teeboom said he has some seed money for the project but will be seeking donations as things move forward.

"I haven't done any serious fundraising yet," he said. "I want to make sure the aldermen have bought it into it."

Teeboom said Mayor Donnalee Lozeau has been very encouraging about the city's involvement with the sculpture completed. The timeline for completing the project is about two years, he said.

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