



**For Immediate Release**

**July 14, 2015**

**STATEMENT OF CHALMERS MCDUGALD**

**COUNCIL MEMBER DISTRICT 4**

First and foremost, I want to express, on behalf of the citizens of Fayetteville, our heartfelt sympathies to all members of the Emanuel Church Community, as well as the larger community in the City of Charleston. In the days since the tragic shooting, the people of Charleston and the State of South Carolina have displayed unparalleled unity and courage, and they have made all Americans proud.

As our own Governor McCrory said regarding the state issued license plates that carry the Confederate battle flag emblem, "the time is right to change this policy due ...to the tragedy in Charleston".

I believe the same is true here in Fayetteville.

Although the battle flag is not flown officially here in Fayetteville, the Market House has been the subject of considerable controversy, and is divisive and hurtful to many of our people.

Consequently, a few weeks ago I began having private conversations with a few members of City Council to address rebranding the City's official logo. My goal was to develop consensus among City Council about how we could move forward in unity on this sensitive subject. Unfortunately, the content of my private conversations was regrettably disclosed. This disclosure has now prematurely found itself in a letter to the city from a local attorney.

For many people in our city, the Market House stands for something that is noble and historic. At the same time for many others in Fayetteville, the Market House is a deeply offensive symbol of a brutally oppressive past.

We do not need to declare a winner and a loser here. The debate over the Market House can continue in private. However, whether the Market House continues to be the official symbol of the City of Fayetteville is different. The Market House, while an integral part of our City's past, does not represent the future of our City.

Fayetteville has become one of the most diverse cities in the country with people from all over the world. The symbol of our great City must likewise reflect the strength of this diversity and the many other positive aspects of our community.

Therefore, I intend to ask City Council to consider directing the City Manager to move forward with deliberate speed to rebrand the City's official logo by removing the Market House from the logo. In the meantime, I intend to meet with local leaders of thought, members of the clergy and others regarding this sensitive issue.

**-End-**

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