

Stonington creating interactive memorial to honor local veterans

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Stonington — The town and its partners are working to create a interactive granite memorial on the grounds of the police station to honor the estimated 7,000 residents who have served in armed conflicts since World War II.

The town along with Tony Lombardo from the Harley P. Chase Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1265 and Buzzi Memorials have developed some sketches for the octagonal, 100-square-foot memorial which will require them to raise about \$178,000 in grants and donations.

While the memorial will have etched drawings of some of the most significant conflicts over the past century, such as World War II and the Vietnam War, it will not contain the engraved names of the veterans.

Instead, visitors to the memorial will be able to use an app on their smart phone to view the names of the veterans, descriptions, photos and video. **The Cloud-based technology** (<https://eternaltimekeeper.com/>) will allow names to be added in the future.

First Selectwoman Danielle Chesebrough said she believes the interactive memorial would be the first of its kind in the state.

"This is a way we can show our respect and support for the people who served in war," she said. "I don't think we always show enough gratitude for their service. This is a small way we can show that gratitude."

Chesebrough said a veteran's name will be included if he or she served 90 days or more during a time of armed conflict. In addition to better known wars, those who served in armed conflicts such as the Gulf War, Grenada, Lebanon, and others will also be eligible.

As for when construction would begin, she said that depends on how fast the funding can be obtained.

Chesebrough said that the groups are looking for more people to help with the effort. Anyone who is interested can contact her office at 860-535-5050.

The project's advisory group is next scheduled to hold its first meeting April 12 at 4 p.m. at the police station. A virtual meeting option will also be available.