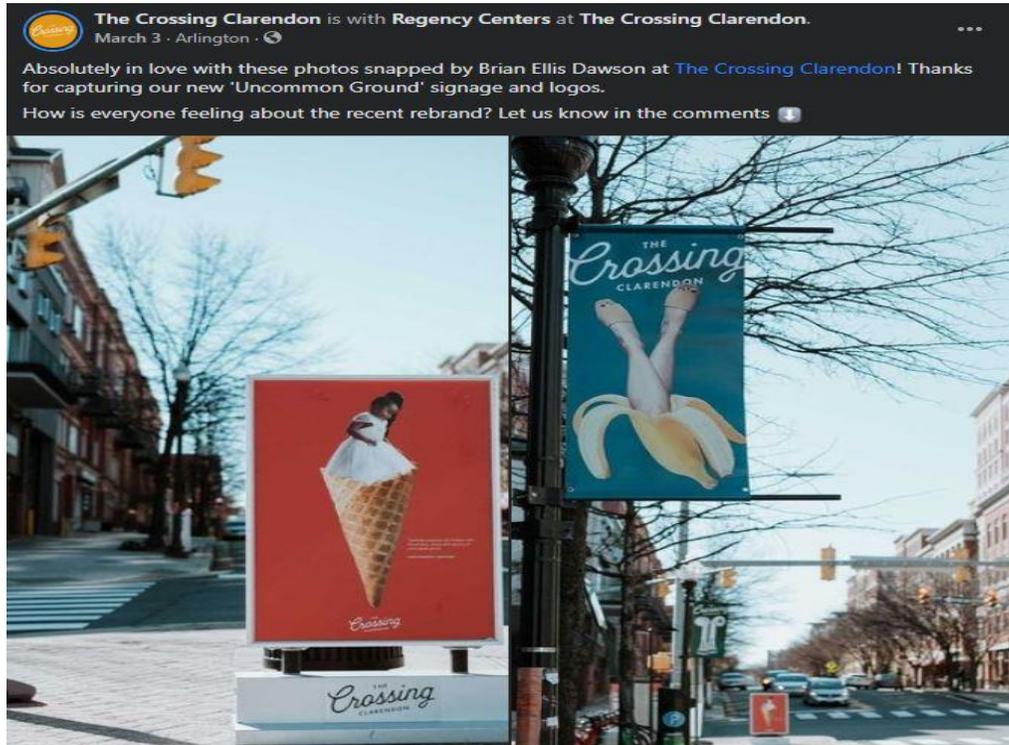


# Comments from NAACP Members and Allies

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Thanks for highlighting this. On first impression, I found the two Clarendon Crossing images disturbing but couldn't put my finger on why. After spending more time with them, I find them even more troubling and know why -- they express a sexualized oral fixation: Is a little black girl so sweet that she should be licked like an ice cream cone? Will peeling the banana reveal an even tastier part of the woman's body? Believe me, this is not the way I usually think, but these images are so in my face that it's hard not to go there.

I visited the Crossing's web site to try to get a clue about their intention. Apparently, the campaign theme is "what happens if you cross x with y" -- a bookstore with a furniture store, a women's clothing store with a grocery, an Apple store with a makeup counter, etc. Example images attached.

Could be clever if done well, as with the book covered sofa. But crossing people with merchandise? No thanks. That's crossing a line unless it's done with great humor and much more sensitivity.

Best regards,

Hello,

I think that the new signs to market the Clarendon Crossing are objectifying and given the opportunity, I would vote to have them removed.

The seemingly arbitrary use of an image of a black girl and the women's legs for advertisement is offensive to me. There is no logical reason for using these images in such a manner. If, for example the girl was depicted in a realistic manner as a patron of an actual ice cream store that exists in the shopping center, or the legs were used to advertise an actual product sold at the center, I might have different feelings about the ads. I might also have different feelings about them if they were works of art, presented in the context of an artist's expression. However, in this case a commercial real estate company has objectified and commodified a young girl and female body parts simply to sell their product.

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To be honest, aside from any social implications, just on a basic level, I don't even get the ads or understand why they thought that imagery would be effective advertising.

Thank you for continuing to encourage dialogue regarding issues that affect our community.

Best wishes,

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The image of the woman's legs in the banana peel is very offensive to me. To me it suggests that one should finish peeling the banana thus exposing the woman's genital area.

The little Black girl in the ice cream cone is a mystery to me. At first, I was happy to see a Black child depicted with something positive - ice cream. But I feel like there is something more to this that I am missing. I am sorry to admit that as a white person (with very little contact with Black people), I am not sensitive to images that may be offensive to Black people.

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“I find the signage super problematic and offensive. Both seem to be sexualizing the young girl and the woman in the banana. Did the company who produced the signs fail to consider that they're suggesting in some way that people are eating an ice cream with a young black girl on top and eating a banana of a woman's legs. It's beyond offensive when I think about it. I have no idea why Clarendon Crossing thought these were appropriate signs. “

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Hi,

I appreciate you taking this on. I find it incredibly racist, sexist and 1950-ish. Nibble on some legs? eat some chocolate? Very disappointed in everything the Commons is doing including their overpavement and propaganda

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Hi I am responding for the request for comment about the signage in Clarendon.

Honestly, I do not see what the issue is with the imagery. I tried to find an issue but I just do not see it.

Sorry. ˘\_ (ツ) \_/˘

Unless the suggestion is that the images should include pictures of man's legs in a banana and boys of every race as ice cream??? But if that is why some people find this controversial, I think there are more pressing issues for the NAACP to address.

Thanks!

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Hello,

To me the banana legs look vaguely sensual - kind of depicting women's legs as smtg to be savored like food, but only vaguely... the image also reminded me of summer at the beach because she's wearing sandals.

The little black girl in the ice cream cone reminded me of innocence and childhood... I didn't have any strong reaction to it. I just thought it was cute.

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Total nightmare.

County needs to take these down + teachable moment for their staff or whomever on racism, sexism, symbols, and consumerism.

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Thanks for sharing this. I'll start by saying I'm an ally (white 57 year old woman) for context. I find the 2 signs odd and uncomfortable to look at. While I'm glad there is a little girl of color in a sign (vs a little white girl), I'm perplexed by the message it is intended to send. I don't get any positive takeaways from it (is she supposed to be having fun standing in an ice cream cone? Should I too strive to be in a new fancy dress and step into a giant ice cream cone?). Rather, it seems like it's reducing her to a strange object.

The sign with a woman's legs coming out of a banana peel is a little more direct I think in presenting an overtly sexual image. I don't find it useful at all in communicating why I should want to visit this shopping center.

Thanks again for soliciting feedback.

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**From: Dr. George P. Banks,  
"I Help Leaders Use Effectiveness To Defeat Racism"**

**Be sure to visit my website:**

<https://georgebanks.wixsite.com/leadershipconsultant>

**"A Perspective" from Dr. George P. Banks:**

**A Direction for African American Freedom**

## Leading to Growth, Prosperity, Freedom and Longevity for All Americans

African Americans continue their “fight for freedom” in America that started before America began its “fight for freedom” from England. African Americans have struggled with a failure to receive freedom from America resulting in living in circumstances, such as enslavement, denial of equal rights and opportunities and systemic racism, in all segments of society in our country.

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Dear NAACP,

Both of these signs are bizarre and offensive, for different reasons.

A child in an ice-cream cone? A black child in an ice cream cone? A cone is to lick/eat. Not appropriate. If the intent is to show a child having an ice cream cone, than show that.

Female Legs out of a banana to indicate a crossing? Looks weird to me, a woman on her back, apparently with her legs coming out of the banana. If it was intended be playful, it is not. Weird, sexist, somewhat demeaning to women, downright stupid.

And I am guessing that good money was paid for these signs. Our tax money?

Yours,

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I find the imagery, while it may be intended as playful, to be disturbing. It implies that females and African Americans are to be consumed. I imagine it was created by white males. I had noticed the images earlier and was disturbed by them. Surely, they can do better! Thank you for raising the question.

Although these images may not be intended to offend, I just think they are WEIRD and don't make any sense. They are not clever or artsy or indicative of Clarendon. Bad marketing in my opinion.

These images send a negative message about their subjects. Why is that child not savoring the ice cream? Why a suggestive image of the female? Further, they say nothing about the Crossing or the Loop. Poor advertising.

Blatantly sexist and racist. I studied the art of montage and collage in college level art classes, and the Clarendon designs are not fit for marketing or public consumption. And I'm open minded when it comes to art and branding in general.

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I am a white woman, a senior citizen here in Arlington, and I haven't yet ventured out much to shop at actual stores. I only recently became aware of the changed name of the Commons to Clarendon Crossing. And I have not actually seen the signs. However, I agree that they are absolutely tasteless and demeaning. Thanks for bringing them to my attention. What could possibly be in the heads of the marketers when they created these images?

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So, yuck! Why are people (any people—no matter the race, sex, etc.) being presented as food for consumption? Why are females in particular being objectified? At best, these signs make me want to avoid the area. These signs for The Crossing Clarendon are crossing the line.

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Hi NAACP Board,

These images are bizarre, particularly the ice cream cone/young black girl.

The legs in the banana don't appear terribly dark-skinned, but it can only be an allusion to Josephine Baker.

Either way, they are both objectionable....twisted...

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Good morning,

As an English teacher, I appreciated your definition of symbol and these signs are not that. As a human, my first reaction was "What were they thinking with these signs?" Please keep us updated.

Thank you for all your hard work,

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I find these signs to be very disturbing, retro misogynistic and unacceptable. What is the plan to get them down?

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This is Shocking to me.

Yesterday I only saw the one of the legs emerging from the banana and was horrified.

I asked myself who on earth would choose that image for a public space?

Then this morning in your email I see the image of the ice cream cone.

What is going on??? I can only come up with two options.

Either total idiocy or out right racism and sexism.

T\*\*\*\* did lose the election but I shudder at the thought that he succeeded in bringing America back to the 50's. Shame, Shame and Clarendon Businesses.

These images should be removed immediately and a long conversation needs to be had with who ever was responsible for this. I am assuming it's the private sector that put up these banners. Would Arlington Co. have had an input? Heavens above will the struggle never end? I am afraid not. Constant and ongoing vigilance is a must. So exhausting. Thank you NAACP for keeping watch.

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What were they thinking!!! Would like to know who the creative team was.

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Dear Arlington Branch NAACP #7047

I haven't seen all of the Market Common signs. I think the (white ) women's legs in the banana are offensive. Bananas have sometimes been used as phallic symbols, and the placement of the peels could be construed as stripping clothing from someone.

And don't get me started on the little black girl with the ice cream dress in a ice cream cone. The girl in the dress bears a passing resemblance to Ruby Bridges in the famous Norman Rockwell painting. I don't know what the artist was thinking, but connecting a little black girl with something that gets held up and licked is not a good look.

I think the signage should not mix people and food.

For your demographic records, I am a white woman in the 55 - 64 age range.

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Worried about signs when our youth are being prosecuted, the educational system is removing opportunities for minority students all the while we are seeing an uptick in minority arrests.

But hey... signs let's focus on those issues first.

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Whoever authorized the photos and postings should have them removed. Everyone knows ice cream cones are licked and consumed. Why then create an image where a child is swapped in for and hence becomes something consumable? And as a black parent, I find the poster especially alarming. Our children, our girls deserve more care and respect than this. Like it or not, when people plant seeds like this there are triggers and outcomes we don't want.

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It's a disturbing image and whoever created it clearly didn't think it through. They need to remove it. Create a multiracial, multi-gender, multigenerational poster with people eating ice cream. That is an image welcoming to all.

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Good morning,

I have been saying to my husband for weeks how disturbing I find those images. They make me uncomfortable and the cropping off of women and girl's body parts is weird and objectifying.

I'm glad NAACP has raised this and I would support efforts to remove them.

Best,

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Hi NAACP,

Thank you so much for bringing this to your members' attention. I don't feel that the image of a Black girl in an ice cream cone is appropriate. I can't put my finger on why, overall it just seems ..not right. You tend to see child models used in an age appropriate context often with other models their age (eg kids clothing or an ad picturing a family). They may have wanted an image that invokes some kind of enthusiasm for summer activities with children like walking to a local ice cream shop? If that was the case they were way off given that my first thought was something like "this image is weird and I don't like it." Full disclosure I am white and there may be some old or current stereotypes against BIPOC that I am missing.

Honestly at first I couldn't tell that there were women's legs in the banana photo, I thought they were upside-down leeks. I don't love it in a community setting. I'm hardly one to try sanitize every image a child sees, but that image is much better suited to a bar then in an area where children frequent with parents or guardians.

Best,

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No problem.

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I immediately thought the lady's legs sticking out from a banana peel - was sensual and not appropriate for a shopping area where family will frequent with their young children.

I do not understand the imagery of the young Black girl standing in an ice cream cone. It seems rather odd to me.

Best Regards and remain safe,  
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