



Takoma Park City Council Meeting – March 21, 2018 Agenda Item 5

Work Session

Commemoration Commission Recommendation on Renaming Grant, Hancock, Lee, Sheridan, and Sherman Avenues

Recommended Council Action

Hear the recommendation and determine next steps.

Context with Key Issues

The City Council held a work session discussion on September 13, 2017 about names of City streets and parks that are associated with Civil War figures. Some options discussed include the following: 1) seek authority from the Montgomery County Planning Department to change the street names; 2) rely on the procedure already in place for residences and businesses on a street to petition the Montgomery County Planning Department for a street name change, or; 3) maintain the current street names but add commemorative names or markers to the streets to provide a historical context. Any of these options would require a community process to ensure that the decision reflects the views of the residents on the streets in question.

The Council tasked the Commemoration Commission to review options, engage the community, and provide a recommendation. The Commemoration Commission held a public hearing to gather comments and suggestions from residents, especially those living on the streets potentially named for Civil War generals: Grant Avenue, Hancock Avenue, Lee Avenue, Sheridan Avenue, and Sherman Avenue. For the hearing, the Commission requested comments and suggestions on the following options: 1) pursue renaming of the street(s) through the formal process with Montgomery County; 2) maintain the street names but add a commemorative name and signage to provide historic context for the existing names; or, 3) make no change.

Dick O'Connor, Chair of the Commemoration Commission, will attend the work session to present the Commission's recommendations.

Council Priority

Livable Community

Environmental Impact of Action

N/A

Fiscal Impact of Action

N/A - for information only.

Racial Equity Impact of Action

The subject of the street names was raised out of concern that having a street in Takoma Park named for Robert E. Lee (Civil War Commander of the Confederate States Army) glorifies the Confederacy and the legacy of slavery. Whether or not the name is changed, the community has had and continues to have an opportunity to discuss the issues in light of the Council's racial equity framework and the values of Takoma Park.

Attachments and Links

- Memorandum from the Commemoration Commission