

Support of the Resolution acknowledging Washington Grove's racially exclusionary past

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Dear Mayor and Councilors,

I am writing to express my strong support for the resolution proposed by RASEC. I understand that the resolution is simply being introduced at the upcoming Town council meeting on February 13 and that RASEC plans on hosting a forum which will include discussion of the past discriminatory policies and hopefully give residents a chance to ask questions and understand the process for acknowledging, apologizing, and healing/rebuilding relationships.

I participated in some joint walks/meetings between Washington Grove and Emory Grove Methodist church members; one of the gentlemen from Emory Grove told a story about how he received admonishments from his parents to stay on the far side of the road (Washington Grove Lane) when he was walking by Washington Grove because people in the Grove were unfriendly to people of color. When I saw the paragraph in the resolution that included the sentence about how, in the not too distant past between 1972 - 1980, Washington Grove would not allow the County to install a sidewalk on Washington Grove Lane, it turned my stomach.

The RASEC resolution is clearly written and documents factual information of actions and policies with racist undertones and actual racism but it does not call anyone out by name. Washington Grove is a town with its own government; it has a history of racist policies. All governments make bad decisions that they hopefully rectify over time - making decisions based on hurt feelings of Town founder descendants should not take precedence over acknowledging, apologizing, and working to rebuild relationships with our neighbors.

I strongly urge the Town council to vote in favor of the RASEC resolution.

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