

RE: Proposed resolution acknowledging the Grove's racist past

Marc Hansen <Marc.Hansen201@outlook.com>

Sat 4/8/2023 8:57 AM

To: Robert Gilmore <robertbrucegilmore@gmail.com>; Christine Dibble <christinedibble@outlook.com>
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 2 attachments (171 KB)

Statement of Town Councilor Robert Gilmore in Support of Resolution 2023-1.pdf; Proposed revision to RASEC resolution.pdf;

Dear Mayor and Council-

Councilmember Gilmore urges you to adopt Resolution 2023-1 (Resolution) without amendment—despite the flaws identified by Councilmember Dibble. The Resolution commits the Town to build “an antiracist Washington Grove”. I join Councilmember Dibble in wondering what “antiracist” means. Does it mean the Town should adopt policies that confer special treatment to individuals based on race—a practice prohibited by the US Constitution and federal law?

Councilmember Gilmore’s message states that “making Maple Lake inaccessible to the (overwhelmingly, black and brown) people whose neighborhoods surround and overlook it . . . reinforce[s] racial separateness.” So, how does the Council envision the discussion will unfold, under the Resolution, when Councilmember Gilmore proposes opening Maple Lake to residents of adjoining communities? Would the Resolution’s commitment to building an “antiracist” Town even permit the Town to weigh other factors relevant to opening the use of Maple Lake to non-residents given the imperative of “bend[ing] the moral arc of the country towards racial justice”—see Councilmember Gilmore’s message, p. 1? Under the Resolution, what role, *if any*, would the following factors (and there likely other factors as well) play in this discussion?

1. The operation of Maple Lake is wholly funded by the Town. Is it appropriate to ask the Town’s taxpayers to subsidize the residents of Gaithersburg and the County? The City operates an Aquatic Center at 2 Teachers Way and charges an annual membership fee of \$250 to City residents but an annual fee of \$400 to Washington Grove residents. The County operates an outdoor pool on Emory Grove Road.
2. What impact would opening the use of Maple Lake to non-residents have on the Town’s insurance premiums? What impact would opening the use of Maple Lake to non-residents have on the Town’s liability caps under the Maryland Local Government Tort Claims Act?
3. What impact would the likely intensification of use of Maple Lake have on the enjoyment of the Lake by Town residents?

4. Would opening Maple Lake to non-residents impose an acceptable administrative burden on the volunteers who operate the Lake?

Councilmember Dibble's proposed revisions to the Resolution has much to commend it for the reasons she articulates—especially the revisions she makes to correct the Resolution's "straying from the topic". Nevertheless, the revised Resolution uses terms whose meanings are as unclear as the Resolution's use of the term "antiracist". The 4th Whereas clause provides that the Town "is ready to embark on a journey towards racial equity", and the 6th Whereas clause provides that the Town is "committed" to "undo the effects of systemic racism". The meaning of "racial equity" and "systemic racism" are no clearer than the term "antiracism". How would these two Whereas clauses play out in the Council's discussion of opening Maple Lake to non-residents of the Grove?

All of this is to say, that the Council needs to be clear on what it is committing itself to do under any Resolution it adopts when taking government action. The Council should not approve a Resolution that could back itself into corners when addressing issues (like opening Maple Lake to non-residents) or approve a Resolution that may appear to promise action that it cannot take under the equal protection guarantee of the US Constitution.

Respectfully,

Marc Hansen

From: Robert Gilmore <robertbrucegilmore@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, April 2, 2023 12:22 PM
To: Christine Dibble <christinedibble@outlook.com>
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Subject: Re: Proposed resolution acknowledging the Grove's racist past

Mayor Compton, Town Councilors, and Concerned Citizens -

Attached is my statement in support of the proposed antiracism resolution, Resolution 2023-01. John and Kathy, please include on the Town website along with the other statements concerning the proposed resolution.

Best regards,
Rob Gilmore