

Recommendation to Consider Restoring the Name of Our Town Hall to ‘Town Hall’

Requires council action

Consider returning the name of Washington Grove’s community center from the 1957 rename of ‘McCathran Hall’ back to ‘Washington Grove Town Hall’ as it was often called after it was built in 1901. This process of consideration should include reviewing the included presentations, having educational discussions with town residents, gathering feedback, and engaging residents with the decision.

Importance

This recommendation furthers the promise in the Washington Grove Resolution, Acknowledging Washington Grove’s Racially Exclusionary Past and Committing to an Equitable and Inclusive Future:

WHEREAS the Town acknowledges the policies and practices directly imposed by the Town that have caused harm to residents of Emory Grove and our other neighboring communities, both historically and currently, including these policies and practices *[including]*:

- Selling properties with racially restrictive covenants and deed restrictions from 1929 to 1953, which prevented Black people (as well as Jewish people, Asian people, and people of other marginalized communities) from purchasing property in the Town.
- Producing annual parades and minstrel shows in which performers wore 'blackface' costumes, disrespecting Black people’s dignity and ignoring the damaging history of slavery

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE MAYOR AND TOWN COUNCIL OF WASHINGTON GROVE:

- Acknowledge, apologize for, repudiate, reject, and condemn all racially motivated, discriminatory, or exclusionary aspects of the Town's history, and deeply regret the pain, hurt, and suffering that has been caused; and
- Welcome all people; recognize the rights of individuals to live with dignity, free from discrimination based not only on race, but also on national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, religion, spirituality or belief, and immigration status; value inclusion, equity, and justice; unequivocally condemn racism and bigotry, whether in rhetoric or in action; and envision a Town that fosters diversity, equity, and inclusion; and
- Where they have authority and responsibility, will take steps that undo the effects of systemic racism, bias, discrimination, and inequities, which impact the quality

of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for Town residents and our neighbors; and

- To these ends, will... Further address any policies or practices that may have the effect of being racially biased or harmful, and foster an unbiased and inclusive environment free of discrimination and harassment toward any person or group

Purpose

- To ensure that we have an inclusive and appropriate name for our Town Hall that reflects the town's commitment to the approved resolution
- To ensure that the town is educated and involved in this important decision and that the decision reflects the perspective of the town residents

Suggested Actions

- Town Council review of the included presentations
- Holding education discussions with town residents
- Gathering feedback
- Engaging residents with the decision

To gain a deeper understanding of the Town's commitment, please review the approved [Town Resolution](#).