

RASEC committee's recommendation to rename McCathran Hall

Dear Mayor and council members,

This feedback is in regards to the RASEC committees recommendation to rename McCathran Hall.

It seems the town agrees that Washington Grove would not exist today in its present form but for the efforts of Mayor Roy McCathran.

In my opinion, the evidence that Roy McCathran was instrumental in writing or inserting restrictive covenants into Grove deeds is unclear. And certainly his motivations are even less clear. Based on what has been presented, I believe we must err on the side of presuming Mayor McCathran innocent of this charge.

The second charge leveled against Roy McCathran is that he wore blackface. Although we recognize today that this is something highly offensive, I don't think we should judge his actions nearly 100 years ago, by today's standards.

Dave Cossin posted the principles adopted by Yale in 2016 regarding a "Procedure for Consideration of Renaming Requests". I also found these very helpful for use in analysis of the RASEC recommendation.

In closing, I agree with Nan that the issue of renaming the Town Hall is not critical to our anti-racism goals. I also agree with many others that we should focus on the future and moving forward.

Thanks, Liz

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