



RECOMMENDATION FOR RENAMING OF STREETS

Commission for Women

Recommendation Number: 20180824-03b: Renaming of Streets

WHEREAS, the Commission for Women (“Commission”) of the City of Austin (“City”) serves as an advisory body to the City Council (“Council”) and city manager concerning the needs and problems of women in the Austin area and shall recommend programs designed to alleviate any inequities that may confront women in social, economic and vocational pursuits. The Commission shall develop goals and coordinate research for planning, programming, and action relating to opportunities, needs, problems, and contributions of women in the city; and

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2017 the Council passed Resolution No. 20170323-054 (“Resolution”), calling upon the Commission to offer recommendations concerning disparities in Austin between streets named after men and those named after women, and appropriate measures to eliminate those disparities; and

WHEREAS, the Commission twice responded to the Resolution, first on August 31, 2017 with Recommendation No. 20170831-002A (“First Recommendation”) and on October 11, 2017 with Recommendation No. 20171011-05A (“Second Recommendation”), both resolving that the Council and the City Manager’s Office should take all appropriate steps to address gender and racial disparities in the naming of public symbols and that naming preference should be given to individuals who have a positive relationship and history with the City; and

WHEREAS, on July 26, 2018, the City’s equity office revealed findings in a report related to Council’s Confederate Monuments Resolution No. 20171005-031 (“Report”), including a list of assets directly related to the Confederacy and/or the Civil War and recommended as a priority, including Littlefield Street, Tom Green Street, Sneed Cove, Reagan Hill Drive, Dixie Drive, Confederate Avenue and Plantation Road; and

WHEREAS, the Report also included a list of assets that require more analysis or were not directly tied to the Confederacy and/or the Civil War but do represent slavery, segregation, and/or racism, including (William) Barton Springs Pool, (Elisha M.) Pease Park and the future (Edwin) Waller Creek Park — all named for former slave owners;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Commission recommends:

1. As previously mentioned in its First Recommendation, adding Beauregard Circle in South Austin to the list of assets slated for initial review in the Report. It is presumably named for Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, whom the Southern Poverty Law Center identifies as a “Confederate General, Slave Owner, Deserter, [and] Traitor.” He is probably best known as the designer of the Confederate flag, the Southern Cross, in 1861; and,
2. Adding Shipe Park in Hyde Park to the list of assets slated for secondary review in the Report. This park is named for Monroe Shipe, who developed Hyde Park, and did not allow

African Americans to live there, and who also used the 1928 city plan to force segregation along the East-West divide in Austin, including forcing African Americans to leave neighborhoods such as Clarksville; and,

3. Council initiate a serious conversation around renaming primary and secondary assets named in the Report, citing previous moments where landmarks have been renamed in Austin, e.g., changing the name of the Congress Avenue Bridge to the Ann Richards Bridge in 2006 to honor former governor Ann Richards; and changing Town Lake to Lady Bird Lake in 2007 to honor former first lady Claudia “Lady Bird” Taylor Johnson; and,

4. Council use opportunities like Beauregard Circle and Shipe Park to address equity in street names and parks and continue to honor women, people of color, or other marginalized groups of importance to Austin and its citizens, such as the honorees of the Austin Women’s Hall of Fame; and,


5. City work with the Equity Office, the Parks and Recreation Department, or a proxy such as a conservancy group — many of which have had past financial exchanges with the City, to identify ways to tell the stories of women, people of color, or other marginalized groups at Barton Springs Pool (a formerly segregated pool) and at Pease (a former plantation) and Waller parks, through the naming of public symbols, the addition of historical markers or educational plaques, monuments or other means, to ensure that a diverse history of the City is told, and thus supporting the Austin Parks and Recreation Department’s mission to “create diverse programs and experiences” in public spaces; and,

6. The Commission would like to receive an annual report of public symbols that have been named or renamed during the prior calendar year. The Commission asks Council or the city manager to direct the appropriate parties to prepare and provide this information at the start of each year, including the entity that approved the re/naming, and where applicable, whether or not the public symbol was named for a person and any relevant biographical information.

Date of Approval: August 24, 2018

Record of the vote: Unanimous on an 8-0 vote, two commissioners absent

Attest: _____


Vicky Nguyen, Staff Liaison