



City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Fwd: Re Council File: 22-0290 - Support Letter for Renaming of Oakwood Park to Reese Tabor Oakwood Park

1 message

Office of the City Clerk <cityclerk@lacity.org>
To: City Clerk Council and Public Services <clerk.cps@lacity.org>

Thu, Sep 1, 2022 at 12:47 PM

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Margaret Molloy** <mmmolloy@earthlink.net>

Date: Thu, Sep 1, 2022 at 12:40 PM

Subject: Re Council File: 22-0290 - Support Letter for Renaming of Oakwood Park to Reese Tabor Oakwood Park

To: <cityclerk@lacity.org>

Cc: Rap Commissioners <rap.commissioners@lacity.org>

Please include this letter of support for the renaming of Oakwood Park to Reese Tabor Oakwood Park in Council File: 22-0290.

I submitted it through the Public Comment portal for CF 22-0290 on 8/29/22 but I do not see it posted.

Appreciatively,

Margaret Molloy

2 attachments



Screen Shot 2022-09-01 at 12.35.15 PM.png
1202K

Renaming of Oakwood Park to Reese Tabor Oakwood Park.pdf
37K

Date: 08/30/22

Subject: Renaming of Oakwood Park to Reese Tabor Oakwood Park

Hello Commissioners,

I am writing to enthusiastically support of the renaming of Oakwood Park to Reese Tabor Oakwood Park, for these reasons:

- **The Oakwood area of Venice was the first intentional Black coastal community on the entire west coast of the United States. It is the only remaining intentional Black coastal community on the entire west coast of the United States.**
- You have to recognize history, in order to preserve it.
- Arthur Reese and Irving Tabor were amongst the first Black residents to arrive in Venice in the early 1900's escaping the deep racism of the Jim Crow south. They created a pathway for others to do the same.
- Mr. Reese and Mr. Tabor worked for the Abbot Kinney Company developing "Venice of America".
- Mr. Reese became the "town decorator" and right-hand man to Abbot Kinney.
- Mr. Tabor was Mr. Kinney's chauffeur and confidant.
- These two young entrepreneurs helped to establish the area of a restrictive covenant known today as Oakwood that limited where Blacks could live and own property in Venice. It was the first intentional Black coastal enclave in California.
- In 1910, Mr. Reese was a founding member of the First Baptist Church of Venice (FBCV). In 1927, he donated the land at 688 Westminster Avenue, opposite the park, for construction of the second FBCV home designed by Paul R. Williams.
- On September 29, 2021, the Los Angeles City Council approved Historic Cultural Monument designation for First Baptist Church of Venice at 685 and 688 Westminster Avenue.

Yes, Oakwood became more culturally diverse over time, but at its inception it was a Black community. Today, it is the only remaining intentional Black coastal enclave in California, and on the entire west coast of the United States. As such, the City of Los

Angeles should do all that it can to rectify the white washing of history in the Venice community, and to safeguard the history and cultural legacy of the historic Black community. Renaming Oakwood Park to include the Reese and Tabor names is very fitting.

Some community members have expressed concerns that adding these two names to "Oakwood Park" diminishes Mexican and Indigenous history and contributions to this community, but this is adding to the name, not taking away from the Oakwood Park name or Mexican and Indigenous history.

The library on Venice Boulevard is named the Venice - Abbot Kinney Memorial Branch Library, but it is likely that most residents simply call it the Venice library. In the same way, adding Reese Tabor to the name recognizes Black history but many will still simply say "Oakwood Park". So, nothing is given up in order to achieve an important recognition.

For these reasons, I enthusiastically support the renaming of Oakwood Park to Reese Tabor Oakwood Park.