

Resolution # 18-04
Naming New Central Corridor Park Midway Peace Park

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The City of Saint Paul allocated 8-80 funding to help secure land for a park near Griggs Street and University Avenue. The rationale for the request for funding cited a neighborhood need for a park which has been referenced in the Central Corridor Planning, Parks and Recreation’s System Plan and Greening the Green Line report which was authored by Trust for Public Land (TPL). TPL worked with the city to acquire just over 5 acres that will be developed as parkland.

Since acquisition of the land, the city and TPL have continued a partnership to raise funds to develop the park. This partnership has culminated in the realization of nearly 2.5 million dollars to date to design and construct the park. TPL has begun an extensive engagement process which has had broad outreach generating excitement and ideas from the community on what they need and would like to see in the park. The initiative has also included the community’s ideas about naming the park. Over 115 names were suggested through the process. Of those, 15 were viable names per the Commission’s Policy #7 Naming Parks and Recreation Sites; 2012 update.

Ballots were created for a community vote to determine the top choice for the name of the park. 512 ballots were cast and the 3 most popular names included Peace Park, Unity Park and Midway Park.

STAFF COMMENTS:

City staff has been involved through the process receiving information from the various groups involved in the park naming process. The development of a recommendation for the Commission is the responsibility of the city staff upon the results of the ballots, input from TPL and Union Park with consideration of the overall community comments to date regarding the site and name of the future park.

It is staff’s recommendation that two of the top three names resulting from the cast ballots are combined in a way that respects the process and includes neighborhood identification and geographical reference. Staff has determined that this process has been through and inclusive and the name that we recommend is suitable for the site and the neighborhood.

REQUEST OF THE COMMISSION:

Adopt Resolution # 18-XX recommending the Naming of the land currently referenced a “Park on Griggs” and “Parkland on Griggs” as Midway Peace Park.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS:



UNION PARK DISTRICT COUNCIL

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January 12, 2018

Director Mike Hahm
Saint Paul Parks & Recreation Department
City Hall Annex
25 West 4th Street, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Director Hahm:

At its regular meeting on January 3, 2018, the Union Park District Council Board of Directors heard a presentation about the voting process to select the name for the future park at Griggs Street. The presentation outlined the top two names that came out of the 512 ballots cast at 14 locations between November and December of 2017. After the presentation, our Board President entertained discussion on the results, and asked the members to make a motion to endorse two names to advance to the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission.

The UPDC Board voted unanimously to advance Peace Park as one of two names to present to the Commission and then had discussions about whether to advance Midway Park or Unity Park. Several members expressed concern about Unity Park being too similar to Union Park. Others liked the idea of advancing Midway Park, which was a close third in the balloting and represents a different (geographic) theme than Peace Park and Unity Park. Ultimately, in a 8 to 6 vote, they recommended to advance Unity Park, in accordance with the community balloting.

We were pleased that more than 500 people cast their ballot for their favorite two names from the final selection of five that emerged from extensive engagement over the summer and fall of 2017. The process was conducted as outlined in the document presented to your office from the Trust for Public Land.

We ask that you present this letter to the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission for consideration at its February 2018 meeting, where we understand it will be voting on the final name for the park. I would be happy to present on the full community engagement process that has led us to endorsing these results.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael Johnson, Community Organizer
Union Park District Council



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January 17, 2018

Mike Hahm
Saint Paul Parks & Recreation Department
City Hall Annex

25 West 4th Street, Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Director Hahm:

As you know, The Trust for Public Land has been closely involved in the creation of a new park on Griggs Street, beginning with the land acquisition and conveyance to the City of St. Paul in January 2016. Since then, we have been leading -- in close collaboration with many community groups -- a creative community engagement process. As part of this, we have obtained input from community members about the name for the future park. We feel that the park will benefit from an officially recognized name as the City moves into the Design phase.

Per the Parks and Recreation Commission policy PC.9 re: naming parks and recreation sites (*"Any St. Paul resident, organization...may recommend names for new parks sites... as recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission for its review and comment"*), this letter is our request and recommendation for the naming of the future park at Griggs site. As we understand the Policy, you will forward this request and a staff recommendation to the Parks and Recreation Commission, where a final decision about the park name will be made.

We would like to share with you the community-engaged park naming process, which began with collecting 115 possible names through various activities in 2017, and then pared down to 15 viable names. Input on those names was gathered through Park Listening and an online survey, which a committee of community representatives utilized to winnow the list down to the top 5 names.

As a final step, paper ballot voting to ensure broad participation was conducted on-site at Skyline Tower, Gordon Parks High School, High School for the Recording Arts, Carty Heights, HealthPartners, Midway Central, Lexington Commons, Hamline Midway Coalition, Rayven and Landfill building, as well as voting opportunities coordinated by Union Park District Council and Lexington Hamline Community Council. To ensure participation by non-English speakers at Skyline Tower, we utilized translators for the kickoff of voting at that site.

This paper balloting process led to 512 ballots being cast. Voters selected 2 of the 5 possible names on the ballot.

On January 3rd, the Board members of Union Park District Council (District 13) reviewed those ballot results and voted to advance the top 2 names, ***Peace Park (251 votes)*** and ***Unity Park (220 votes)***, both of which meet the criteria contained in the Parks Commission Naming Policy, PC9. Both the top names fall under a prominent theme we heard throughout the community engagement – that of “inspiration”. Note that a third name also obtained a large number of votes: ***Midway Park (202 votes)***, which fits with another theme heard during community engagement – that community members are proud of the Midway area, and it serves as a geographical locator.

We ask that you add this topic to the February 2018 meeting agenda of the Saint Paul Parks and Recreation Commission for their consideration of the top names, and make a recommendation to City Council of the park’s final name. Both Michael Johnson from Union Park District Council and I would be happy to be present at that meeting to share perspectives on the full community engagement process that led to these results.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to call.

Respectfully,



Jenna Fletcher

Program Director

The Trust for Public Land – Minnesota Office