

Racial & Social Justice Special Committee: Town Council Recommendations Meeting Minutes: Sunday, July 19 at 10:00 am via Zoom

- **Attendees:** Joel Rubin & Irene Lane (co-chairs), Mo Orbach, Marta Alvira-Hammond, Lynne List, Bill McKinnon (SubGroup Members), Evie Altman (Town Resident)
- **Summary:** The Racial & Social Justice Special Committee: Town Council Recommendations sub-group met to discuss a variety of initiatives that could be brought before the Town Council including: removal of the Newlands plaque from Chevy Chase Circle, a paid day off for workers of the Town's waste management contractor, and improving the RFP selection process to expand access by BIPOC-owned companies. In addition, there were discussions about conducting an analysis of Town police presence, types of reparation options, potential process for updating the Town History pages on the Town website, and working with other area municipalities to share best practices and resources.
- **Agenda Items:**
 - *Town Council Recommendations*
 - *Reparations*
 - *Town History Updates*
 - *Use of Town Police*
- Town Council Recommendations
 - Briefly discussed recommendations for Town Council to pass proclamations to remove Newlands Plaque from Chevy Chase Circle; alternative might be to have the plaque placed in better context of Senator Newlands' Chevy Chase Land Company's covenants
 - Discussed whether Town should provide paid day off (on MLK Day and/or Juneteeth) to Town contractors (i.e. waste management company, Goode Companies, employees). There are questions about how to ensure that workers would receive benefit. How do we enact a policy where workers themselves receive a benefit? Is there an alternative to a day off? More education is needed so that residents understand that service changes might result in inconvenience
 - Discussed the process by which Town service contracts are awarded. What can the Town do to ensure that (more) BIPOC companies are alerted when an [RFP is listed](#)? Are there riders that can be placed so award companies that have racial and social justice policies in place? Would it be possible to conduct a forensic review of percentage of BIPOC companies that have submitted proposals and been awarded proposals?
 - Public Acknowledgement / Apology for past racial injustices (i.e. land covenants)
- Use of Town Police
 - Questioning whether police presence helps residents feel safe or not
 - Discussed whether the existing Police Advisory Board can be (better) utilized for community feedback (i.e. current Police Advisory Board member has not been engaged despite request to MoCo Police Department)
 - Discussed if a report could be prepared on the actual purpose/results of the police presence
- Reparations
 - Presentation on the types of reparation approaches and associated examples of application that serve as ideas for what Town may consider moving forward, including utilizing the Town reserves toward reparation efforts.
 - Initial steps may be to have a set of public discussions on reparations as well as community input the hiring of a Reparations Consultant
- Town History Updates

- The update of the [Town History](#) page (as all other efforts on the part of the larger committee) should be action-oriented and engage residents (themselves representing a wide continuum of awareness about racial and social justice issues)
- There is an opportunity to consider/recommend the hiring of librarian(s) of color to do research as well as possibly engage B-CC students
- Discussed the appearance of existing protectiveness/defensiveness on the ListServ and in conversations with Town residents. The committee will be watchful so that we will not reject proposals or recommendations for initiatives or changes in the Town History write-up in order to protect or defend Town residents who may excuse their present or past actions or those of others due to lack of knowledge or intention.
- *Proposed Process:*
 1. Engage outside historian to prepare Town History page update (looking at it through a racial and social justice lens) and prepare speaker sessions and public forums on the topic
 2. While history must be accurate, the more important aspects of the page must focus on a) How can our Town ensure that every resident is welcome and has a good quality of life? and b) What changes need to be made in policies, procedures, and culture to ensure that every resident has full access and equity?
 3. Full Committee must agree on top 6-8 initiatives to pursue; writeup of each initiative will be included on the page; additional initiatives will be added over time
 4. Before Town History page is updated/published, the Town Council to review content
 5. Group may want to also consider recommending a 2020- 2030 [Town Strategic Plan](#) with a preamble such as below (suggested wording):
 - "...Race and ethnicity impact the lives of residents, the policies and practices of organizations and institutions, and the level of inclusion and equity a community exhibits. We believe it is essential to raise awareness of racial and ethnic inclusion and equity and to focus intentionally on building the capacity of individuals and organizations to work for an inclusive, equitable community. We believe that providing compelling information to a diverse group of individuals and involving them in an intentional constructive process increases their capacity and commitment to influence others and to promote racial and ethnic inclusion and equity in the community and their own organizations. We believe that collaboration is critical to achieve racial and ethnic inclusion and equity. We believe that by developing and equipping a diverse group of leaders to work collaboratively we increase their individual and organizational capacity to build more inclusive and equitable environments."

- General

- Good idea to work with other CC municipalities, Maryland Municipal League, and MoCo Council to improve RFP access by BIPOC companies as well as share ideas
- Does this Special Committee need to be a Standing Committee?

- Next Meeting:

- Meeting concluded at 12:00 pm
- Friday, July 24 at 5:00 pm to discuss initial set of priorities that will be brought before the full committee on August 5