

Written Public Comments
October 29, 2020 Public Hearing on Renaming
Dino Drudi

Public edifices typically acquire their names at their time of construction. The names chosen represent the views and values of those responsible for designing, building, and for the most part funding these projects. They do not -- and need not -- represent our views *today* because they -- not we -- erected these edifices. By our changing these names now, we imply that we are the ones responsible for what others have done. Future students too young to know the previous names would, increasingly over time, associate the new names with the existing edifices, a sort of false witness against the generations responsible for their construction.

These edifices are legacies of their times, so their names should be likewise. To change their names now, so long after these buildings were constructed, implies that these buildings are something they are not. A new edifice will take the place of the MacArthur School, so it would be appropriate to rename the building once we have built a new one, but so long as the current buildings housing T.C. Williams High School and Matthew Maury Elementary School stand, they should keep their names because to change the names now, without changing the entities to which the names are attached, is a form of *ex post facto* law which the U.S. Constitution forbids.

History is whole. We receive it as it was, with both its achievements and its demerits. And the history which we make, we will pass on with both its achievements and its demerits. We will not have labored to erect and fund edifices honoring those we regard highly, for future generations to second-guess us and rename them, because these edifices and the names we attach to them are our message to the future. The future is not obligated to agree with our message, but neither should it censor it because censorship violates the spirit of free speech in our Bill of Rights.

In both a lifetime and a decades-long working career, individuals will experience and even cause hundreds of "microaggressions". Rather than insulating students from them, education should be preparing them for lives filled with microaggressions. The very fact that they are "micro" means they are, and should be treated as, *de minimis*, instead of being exaggerated to where they become debilitating. Long enough to be in Latin is the legal dictum, "*De minimis non curat lex*", establishing the due process principle to ignore such trifles.

The school board is obligated by its members' oath of office to honor these Constitutional principles -- not to override them with the politically correct sentiment *du jour*.

Respectfully submitted,

Dino Drudi

[example of sentiment *du jour* in usage www.hollencrest.com/the-sentiment-du-jour-is-one-of-suspicion/]