



## Martin Luther King Recognition Task Force

June 9, 2017

**Members Present:** Matt Suslovic, Merita McKenzie, Blanca Santiago, Regina Phillips, Dawud Ummah

**Staff present:** Troy Moon

**Public:** George Rheult

### Welcome and introductions

Councilor Ali welcomed everyone.

### Review minutes from 6/9

Quorum not present until later in the meeting. Did not return to review.

### Review scope of work as defined in Order 173

Councilor Ali – reviewed the Council Order. Recommends we focus on the task identified in the order to identify a place to name after Dr. King. He is interested in recommending that the Council create a subsequent group to continue efforts to recognize other individuals and perhaps expand efforts to recognize Dr. King.

Regina – perhaps there should be some criteria for recognizing an individual?

Matt – regarding criteria, this could be an ideal time to set the precedent for how to move forward.

Councilor Ali – Asks Troy to with Corp Counsel to see if there are any criteria.

Blanca – It seems like there may be some straight forward approaches. If we stick to the order we can get it done. Expanding it may make it a protracted process. Some places such as Longfellow Park have significant namesakes. Congress Square may work.

Regina – In 2008 they were developing Bayside Trail – thought it would be nice to have a park with statue of Dr. King along the trail. Then decided to an RFP for some art but then kind of disbanded. Not interested in fundraising at this time. If there is a process the City should be able to find money to implement. She doesn't feel the need to add more people to the committee.



Merita – Likes the idea to get something done. Do the work and then continue the committee. It would be nice to finish and then move on.

Councilor Ali – Continue with 2008 recommendation for Bayside Trail or consider other spots. Would like to name something very visible. How many people will see it?

Merita – not sure the trail is the best place at this time.

Councilor Ali recognizes member of the public -- George Rheault – who suggests the Amethyst Lot where there is a new park proposed – would be a good location. Points out that Maine was connected with the West Indies slave trade, the park is where the wharves used to be. Might be an opportunity to connect with history

Merita – the Abyssinian meeting house and freedom trail are there. Makes sense.

Regina – Would like to see a map of the City. When the 2008 committee met the trail was not yet developed but there were hopes.

Merita – Is the Amethyst lot the same situation, something off the beaten track that may not happen?

George Rheault (member of the public) – lots of construction happening now. That is why the City is supporting a park. Likelihood of the park being built is high..

Merita – It is an active place, people feel safe there.

Dawud – Should be on the undeveloped side to bring attention to the poor. Is looking for a discussion of King's work and how it would have an impact on the City.

Councilor Ali – charge is to figure out a place to name after King. The S&T committee can accept recommendation or not. 2008 property is on the table, we are looking at other locations, too.

Regina – parking lot things – criteria, how to continue our work. Looking at the list presented by Herb, not clear from visiting the streets that they are named after the individuals. Maybe there should be a marker to identify

Councilor Ali – maybe look at this in future work. Recap what we agreed on:

Possibilities include: Congress Square, Bayside Trail as referred to in 2008 site, Amethyst Lot. Bring a map for the next meeting

Merita – there must be other places we haven't thought of. The visibility of the Amethyst Lot is high. People have a reason to go there.

Dawud – if there were a kiosk or some attraction that might attract people. Expressed concerned about the development on the waterfront

Merita – is very interested in the waterfront park to preserve public access.



Dawud – Once there was a proposal to have rental bikes on the trail to attract more activity. On the Bayside Trail there would be a need to invest money. The Amethyst Lot is ready to go because of the recent investment.

Matt – Thinking that it would be helpful to do some homework. Pick would the top three reasons to select a space to recognize and individual .

Councilor Ali – Can we meet at the Amethyst Lot – also bring flip chart and markers. Would like to have the meeting begin at 3:30, on the waterfront

Adjourn.