

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"

"Gordon, Heather" <heather.gordon@vancouver.ca>

Date: 2/4/2020 4:43:47 PM

Subject: Memo - Request to name a civic asset in honour of the Komagata Maru

Attachments: Memo - Naming asset - Komagata Maru.pdf

Greetings Mayor & Council,

Please find attached a memo regarding the request to name a civic asset in honour of the Komagata Maru, as well as information on the City's civic asset naming process.

- The Civic Asset Naming Committee stands by its original recommendation to place the name on the Civic Asset Name Reserve List for an asset in Downtown close to Burrard Inlet until such time as an appropriate asset becomes available.
- The Committee acknowledges that one solution may be to use the name as a secondary or honorary name for a portion of a street, but recommends this not be revisited until the policy framework is in place to equitably address requests for secondary or honorary street naming.
- Staff have identified this as a gap in the existing asset naming policy, and will incorporate it into a future review of the policy.

Should you have any questions, please contact Heather Gordon, City Archivist and Staff Liaison to the Civic Asset Naming Committee at 604.829-4266 / heather.gordon@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Sadhu

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Pronouns: he, him, his



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

MEMORANDUM

February 4, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Lon LaClaire, General Manager, Engineering Services
Heather Gordon, City Archivist and Staff Liaison, Civic Asset Naming Committee
David Parkin, City Surveyor

FROM: Katrina Leckovic
City Clerk

SUBJECT: Naming of a Civic Asset in Honour of the Komagata Maru

PURPOSE

The purpose of this memo is to provide information on the civic asset naming process and to provide an update regarding a request from the public to name a civic asset in honour of the Komagata Maru.

BACKGROUND

Until 2012, names for City-owned streets were recommended to Council by a committee comprised of City staff from Engineering, Planning, Vancouver Fire & Rescue Services and the City Clerk's Office. In 2012, to improve public input into the naming of civic assets, City Council established and subsequently re-established in 2014 the Civic Asset Naming Committee (the Committee). The Committee dissolved on November 5, 2018, as per section 160 of the Vancouver Charter and was re-established on March 6, 2019. The Committee is comprised of nine voting members, all appointed by City Council, with five appointed from the community and one from each of:

- Vancouver Historical Society
- Vancouver Public Space Network
- Racial and Ethno-Cultural Equity Advisory Committee

- Urban Indigenous Peoples' Advisory Committee

The Committee also has two City Council liaisons, one Park Board liaison, one School Board liaison and a staff liaison. The Committee's mandate is to review names submitted by the public for inclusion on the Civic Asset Name Reserve List and to recommend to Council names for new civic assets of all types. It does not name assets that are under the jurisdiction of the Vancouver Park Board, the Vancouver Public Library, or the Vancouver School Board, or assets owned by the private sector or other levels of government. The Committee holds regular meetings approximately six times per year and informal working sessions as needed.

The process for naming civic assets is as follows:

1. Submission of Names by the Public and Initial Review

Following submission of names by the public, the City Archivist, who serves as the Committee's staff liaison, reviews the name to ensure it does not present any public safety or other concerns, and then presents the name to the Committee. The Committee weighs the name against the following criteria:

- Names that commemorate persons must reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of Vancouver and honour individuals who:
 - are no longer living;
 - were exceptionally dedicated or demonstrated excellence in service in ways that made a significant contribution to the community, city of Vancouver, province of British Columbia, or Canada;
 - volunteered and gave extraordinary help or care to individuals, families, or groups, or support to the community; or
 - risked their life to save or protect others.
- Names that commemorate local history, places, events, or culture must reflect something of significance to the city of Vancouver, the Lower Mainland, British Columbia, or Canada.
- Names that celebrate the diversity of Vancouver should reflect the name of an event or community contributing significantly to the multicultural diversity of Vancouver.
- Names that recognize native wildlife, flora, fauna, or natural features should be a geographical or topographical feature in the local area.

After the Committee weighs the name against these criteria, they decide whether or not it should be added to the Civic Asset Name Reserve List, which requires an affirmative vote of the Committee members at a regular Committee meeting.

2. Naming Unnamed Assets

When an unnamed asset is identified by staff, usually a publicly-owned street in a new development area, the Committee consults the Civic Asset Name Reserve List for appropriate names. If the members determine no names on the list fit the asset or the site, they discuss

ideas for other names using the same pre-set criteria used in evaluating public submissions. The Committee then provides a recommendation to Council in the form of a Report to Council. If the asset is a street, a by-law to amend Street Name By-law No. 4054 is also brought forward to Council, usually at the same meeting as the report or the next regular meeting.

Note that in the case of street naming, every name considered by the Committee is vetted with E-Comm through Vancouver Fire Rescue Services to ensure the name is not duplicated elsewhere in the Lower Mainland and does not present a risk to public safety or the safety of emergency responders. Emergency dispatchers, receiving a majority of their calls from cell phones, most often do not have a caller's location displayed to them. They must then rely on a drop-down list of addresses based on the information relayed by the caller. As callers are often in distress, understanding them can be very difficult. For this reason VFRS will not support names, particularly for streets, that present any risk of the location being misunderstood in an emergency situation.

3. Re-naming Civic Assets

In July 2018, Council initiated and approved a policy for re-naming civic assets. This policy states that members of the public may submit proposals for re-naming, but these proposals must include, at a minimum:

- The rationale for changing the name and significance of the proposed name;
- The relevance of the proposed name to the asset;
- Documented support, including but not limited to petitions and support letters, from at least 75 percent of property owners that abut the street, place or building;
- A map or an illustration, including major intersections of a street to be renamed; and
- Proposed names that portray indigenous significance or are after an indigenous individual, organization or event will require consultation with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh band councils, or their designates, and adherence to appropriate indigenous practices or protocols.

For public safety reasons, emergency response staff will not support the re-naming of a portion of a street.

The Civic Asset Naming Committee did not play a role in the formulation of this policy.

4. Commemorative Naming Policy Review

During the course of the Committee's work in 2018, staff identified some issues and gaps in regard to the City's current Commemorative Naming Policy, including the lack of a framework for a secondary or honorary street name and signage program. Some preliminary work was done in 2019 to gather further information, and staff plan to meet in March 2020 to scope out a process for formally reviewing the policy.

NAMING OF CITY ASSET IN HONOUR OF KOMAGATA MARU

In 2018, the Civic Asset Naming Committee received a request from the Descendants of the Komagata Maru Society to name a park or street near Waterfront Station, or the station itself, in honour of the Komagata Maru. The Committee considered the request at its June 25, 2018 regular meeting and decided to place the name on the Civic Asset Name Reserve List for a future asset in the Downtown core close to the Burrard Inlet. At the time, the Committee determined there were no suitable unnamed assets near the site of the Komagata Maru incident and noted Waterfront Station was not within the City's jurisdiction to name.

The Committee did not meet again before its dissolution on November 5, 2018. It was reconstituted on March 6, 2019 and members appointed on May 14, 2019.

In the interim, on March 13, 2019, Council approved a member's motion directing City staff to work with Park Board staff and with the Civic Asset Naming Committee and the Descendants of the Komagata Maru Society to try to find an asset to name.

In response, the newly reconstituted Committee reviewed the request at its first meeting on June 24, 2019. Since that time, the Committee has proposed a number of potential assets to name but none of these options has proven tenable: the asset was either part of the existing named road network and therefore not available for re-naming, it was not under City jurisdiction, or it was part of on-going consultation regarding Indigenous place naming.

Commemorative secondary or honorary street signage was suggested by the public for all or a portion of Main Street and was rejected by the Committee on the grounds that the City's current Commemorative Naming Policy does not address the design of such signage and the circumstances under which honorary names are approved. Also, the Committee believes approving such a request would be unfair to other organizations that have been turned down for similar requests in the past, on the grounds that an appropriate policy framework does not exist.

It is worth noting that, in 2018, the portion of Ross Street between Marine Drive and East 57th Avenue received the honorary name of Khalsa Diwan Road. This was part of an initiative of Council to name 15 civic assets in the summer of 2018. The original intent was to officially re-name the portion of Ross Street, but in response to emergency response staff's public safety concerns regarding re-naming only a portion of the street, Council directed the addition of secondary or honorary signage instead. The Civic Asset Naming Committee was not involved in this initiative.

The Committee also considered that the Komagata Maru incident has been commemorated in a number of ways, including a plaque commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Komagata Maru incident in Portal Park and the Komagata Maru monument in Harbour Green Park, a Komagata Maru mural located at 125 East 10th Avenue, and Komagata Maru Way in Surrey. Additionally, the Komagata Maru incident has been identified as an Event of National Historic Significance honored with a plaque in 2016, and the Park Board is finalizing the placement of a new plaque sponsored by Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada to accompany the monument in Harbour Green Park.

In absence of an appropriate asset and the considerable commemoration of the incident already in place, the Committee has reaffirmed its view that the name should remain on the Civic Asset Name Reserve List until a suitable asset becomes available or the policy framework is in place to equitably address requests for secondary or honorary street naming.

The Committee has also encouraged the Society to approach various asset holders including Cadillac Fairview for the Plaza at 200 Granville Street and the Port of Vancouver regarding the overpass at the north end of Main Street. Both these assets were identified as suitable options, but neither are owned by the City.

CONCLUSION

After much deliberation of this request to name an asset in honour of the Komagata Maru, the Civic Asset Naming Committee reaffirms that the name be listed on the Civic Asset Name Reserve List for an asset in Downtown close to Burrard Inlet until such time as an appropriate asset becomes available or the policy framework is in place to equitably address requests for secondary or honorary street naming.

Should you have questions or concerns please contact the undersigned or the Committee's staff liaison, Heather Gordon, City Archivist, at heather.gordon@vancouver.ca or 604.829.4266.

Yours truly,



Katrina Leckovic
City Clerk

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