

COUNCIL MEMBERS' MOTION

10. Naming a Street After the Komagata Maru

Submitted by: Councillor Swanson

WHEREAS

1. On May 23, 1914, three hundred and seventy-six British Subjects from India of Sikh, Muslim and Hindu origin arrived in Vancouver Harbour aboard the Komagata Maru, seeking to enter Canada;
2. On July 23, 1914, the Komagata Maru was forced to leave as a result of a discriminatory act by the Government of Canada, without allowing the passengers to disembark;
3. On a request by the Descendants of the Komagata Maru Society, the BC Government apologized in 2008, and the Government of Canada apologized in 2016 for this act of discrimination, with both these governments committing to learn from the mistakes of the past to ensure they would never be repeated;
4. On June 10, 2020, at the request of the Descendants of the Komagata Maru Society, the City of Vancouver apologized for its role in the 1914 Komagata Maru incident and declared May 23 as Komagata Maru Remembrance Day in the City of Vancouver;
5. The City of Vancouver is committed to protecting British Columbians from hate, racism, and discrimination through legislation, education, and example;
6. The City of Vancouver is home to many diverse cultures where individuals can practice their beliefs and customs while respecting and learning from other traditions;
7. The City of Vancouver promotes multiculturalism and the full and free participation of all individuals in society;
8. The Komagata Maru is an important part of South Asian Community history and the City of Vancouver and the Province of BC history, and the struggles of its passengers should be officially recognized somewhere in Vancouver;
9. Punjabi and other South Asian Community businesses are on Main Street, and the April Baisakhi Parade is enjoyed by over 200,000 spectators every year on Main Street;
10. The Civic Assets Naming Committee supports secondary / supplemental street signage commemorating the Komagata Maru Incident near the Punjabi Market;

11. Raj Singh Toor, grandson of Baba Puran Singh Janetpura, a passenger on the Komagata Maru, gives witness to the healing power of governments admitting to past injustices, and then moving forward through education and reflection in order to reduce intolerance and prejudice in our community, and;
12. The Descendants of the Komagata Maru Society sees the commemoration of the Komagata Maru as an important step towards building a more compassionate and just community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Council add “Komagata Maru Street” or “Komagata Maru Road” as a secondary name to Main Street, from Marine Drive to 49th Avenue;

FURTHER THAT additional naming be permanently installed by May 23, 2021, the 107th anniversary of the Komagata Maru’s entry into Vancouver Harbour.

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