



# Chicago Park District

## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 15-2257-0311, **Version:** 1

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### **REQUEST TO OFFICIALLY RENAME NAME THE FIELD HOUSE, A FEATURE IN PING TOM MEMORIAL PARK, IN HONOR OF LEONARD M. LOUIE**

To the Honorable Board of Commissioners of the Chicago Park District

#### **I. Recommendation**

It is recommended that an order be entered authorizing the General Superintendent or his designee to officially name the Field House- a feature in Ping Tom Memorial Park- in honor of Leonard M. Louie.

#### **II. Park Naming Information**

Feature: Ping Tom Memorial Park Field House

Location: 1700 S. Wentworth Avenue, Chicago 60616

Community Area: 33 - Near South

Ward: 25

Proposed Name: Leonard M. Louie Field House

#### **III. Park Naming Procedures**

Pursuant to Chapter VII, Section E (1) of the Code of the Chicago Park District, this request to name a feature in Ping Tom Memorial Park was forwarded to the Secretary of the Chicago Park District, who filed a copy of this request with the Committee on Programs and Recreation and initiated a notice period to solicit public input. Notices were posted in parks and sent to advisory councils located within a one-mile radius of the park site. Elected officials were also notified of the proposal, including the alderman of the ward in which the park is located.

The notice period of forty-five (45) days soliciting public input regarding the naming proposal was initiated on January 21, 2015. This proposal received positive support from 25<sup>th</sup> Ward Alderman Daniel Solis, the American and Asian Association, Chicago Chinatown Special Events, Chinatown American Legion Post 1003, Chinatown Parking Corporation, Chinese American Civic Council, Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, Chicago Chinatown Chamber of Commerce, Chicago Dragons Athletic Assoc., Chinatown Museum Foundation, Chinese American Assoc. of Greater Chicago, Chinese American Service League, Coalition for a Better Chinese American Community, Pui Tak Center- C.C.U.C., St. Therese Church and School and dozens of individuals. Staff recommends that the Board approve the request to name the field house in Ping Tom Memorial Park as the Leonard M. Louie Field House.

#### **IV. Explanation**

A tireless Chinatown civic leader, Leonard M. Louie (1934 - 2013) devoted his life to his community and most notably to making Ping Tom Memorial Park and its field house a reality. Born in a small village in China, Louie immigrated to America with his family as a young child. They settled in Chicago's Chinatown community and he attended private and public schools. He graduated from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with a degree in electrical engineering.

Louie became active in community affairs in Chinatown in the late 1950s. Later, he served on the Chinese American Service League, board of the Chinatown Museum, as well as member and two term president of the Chinese American Civic Council of Chicago. He was one of four founding members of the Chinese American Development Corporation which transformed a large area of old rail yards into Chinatown Square.

For decades, Chinatown suffered from a deficit of open space and other recreational amenities. Along with Ping Tom, Louie advocated for the creation of a substantial new park to serve the community. After the Chicago Park District acquired vacant railroad property that became the first part of Ping Tom Memorial Park in the early 1990s, he helped guide the development of Ping Tom Memorial Park. He was a founding member of the park's advisory council. Louie rallied for the park's expansion and for the construction of its 30,000-square foot field house. Leonard M. Louie participated in the dedication of the Ping Tom Memorial Park Field House in 2012, and was recognized by Mayor Emanuel and other public officials for his long term commitment to the park and his role in the development of the facility. Naming this feature in his honor is a fitting tribute to Louie and his many contributions to Chinatown.