



Chicago Park District

Legislation Text

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REQUEST TO INITIATE 45-DAY NOTICE PERIOD TO 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 initiate a 45-day notice period to solicit public input to name the Field House in Ping Tom Memorial Park in honor of Leonard M. Louie.

Proposed 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

II. Explanation

The Chicago Park District naming and renaming procedures allow for the naming of features in parks, including playgrounds and buildings. The Ping Tom Park Advisory Council has requested that the Chicago Park District Board of Commissioners name the field house in Ping Tom Memorial Park in honor of Leonard M. Louie. This proposal has support of the 25th 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.

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.

III. Park Naming Procedures

Chapter VII, Section E of the Code of the Chicago Park District, (the Naming Ordinance), which governs the naming and renaming of parks and park features, states that if a proposed name honors a person, the (i) person shall have been deceased for a least one (1) year prior to consideration; and (ii) the person shall have demonstrated a continued commitment and made an extraordinary contribution to civic betterment, locally, nationally or internationally.

Pursuant to the Naming Ordinance, this request to rename and name parks have been forwarded to the Secretary of the Chicago Park District, who shall (i) file a copy of this request with the Board of Commissioners (or appropriate Committee); and (ii) initiate a notice period of at least 45 days to provide notice and solicit public input. Such notice shall be posted at the respective subject park field house (or for any park without a field house, at the nearest field house) and it shall be sent to advisory councils located within a one (1) mile radius of the subject park. At the conclusion of the notice period, the General Superintendent or his designee may in his discretion recommend to the Board that it approve the requested renames and names.