



A Place for All People - Established 1968

PO Box 8474
Madison, WI 53708

Eric Knepp, Parks Superintendent
Madison Parks Department
210 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. #104
Madison, WI 53703

June 21, 2020

Dear Mr. Knepp,

In 2018, the Marquette Neighborhood Association joined the chorus of community voices in requesting newly established Central Park be renamed “McPike Park” to honor the longtime contribution of East High School principal, Milton McPike. This gesture recognized the significant inspiration Principal McPike made in the lives of so many of his students and fellow educators. We are proud to have been a part of the renaming request and to have McPike Park as the central gem of our district.

In the same spirit, in December of 2021 the Marquette district lost a neighbor and friend who also inspired so many with the loss of Richard “Dick” Wagner.

Please consider this letter our formal request to rename the park currently known as Kerr-McGee Triangle Park to “R. Richard Wagner Park.” We believe this action will assist other Madisonians in recognizing the vast contribution of Mr. Wagner.

Dick Wagner was a devoted advocate for the parks system. For over three decades he served on the Olbrich Botanical Society Board of Directors helping to shape it into the premier destination it is now. Kerr-McGee Triangle Park itself was in part founded by Mr. Wagner in protest to overdevelopment. As a nearby homeowner to the park, he diligently maintained its beds and, in the end, it became the place of his passing.

Mr. Wagner also demonstrated what a civic champion looked like. It was his zeal for historic preservation in the city he loved that made him the Chair of the Madison Landmarks Commission, Plan Commission, and Urban Design Commission. Our neighbor Dick served for 14 years on the Dane County Board of Supervisors.

Finally, we cannot overlook the unprecedented advocacy work Mr. Wagner made for LGBTQ people on a national level. He worked alongside Senator Tammy Baldwin in establishing a national conference for elected LGBTQ officials. He formed the New Harvest Foundation, an organization devoted to funding charitable donations to organizations working toward equality. He is often remembered as the reason Orton park once was home to controversial sculpture, “Gay Liberation.”

We offer our sincerest appreciation for the opportunity to share our request with you. We wish for future Marquette residents and all Madisonians to know of the beautiful legacy of our forever neighbor, Richard “Dick” Wagner.

Thank You,

Marquette Neighborhood Association

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