



THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

6611 Kenilworth Avenue • Riverdale, Maryland 20737

M-NCPPC
RESOLUTION NO. 20-13
June 17, 2020

**DECLARATION OF SOLIDARITY WITH THE NATIONAL
MOVEMENT TO END INJUSTICE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST
AFRICAN AMERICANS**

WHEREAS, in 1619, colonists purchased the first enslaved people of Africa and held them captive in what has now become the United States of America; and

WHEREAS, the enslavement of people who derive from Africa evolved into a system of abject psychological and physical oppression marked by unyielding violence perpetrated against Black* bodies, souls, families and communities on the basis of their race; and

WHEREAS, chattel slavery became a repugnant social institution that was indispensable to our nation's nascent economic survival, its later political independence from colonial rule and the eventual Antebellum prosperity; and

WHEREAS, even after legal enslavement ended, more than two centuries after it started on our soil, neither the Emancipation nor the First Reconstruction honored the constitutional promise to vest African Americans with the fundamental rights that inhere in our imperfect democracy; instead, the gross deprivation of those fundamental rights – to personal safety, vote, receive a fair trial, speak freely, petition government, travel, associate with others, practice religion freely, own property, and generally pursue happiness and liberty – persisted without abatement for nearly another century hence; and

* This resolution employs the terms “Black” and “African American” interchangeably. See Bowman, Cynthia Grant; Roberts, Dorothy E.; and Rubinowitz, Leonard S., "Race and Gender in the Law Review" (2006), Faculty Scholarship at Penn Law 577 at n. 7 (“[The term] ‘Black’ is capitalized whenever it refers to Black people, in order to indicate that Blacks, or African Americans, are a specific cultural group with its own history, traditions, experience, and identity—not just people of a particular color. Using the uppercase letter signifies recognition of the culture, as it does with Latinos, Asian Americans, or Native Americans.”) (Citations omitted.)

WHEREAS, during the indelible era of Jim Crow, the privations for Black people continued and were enforced through evil campaigns of terrorism, by lynching and other bloody acts of violence, the corrupt imprisonment of African American men to assemble chain gangs and fuel private wealth, and by state officials committed to bring about the lawless defeasance of Black citizens' rights to vote or hold public office; and

WHEREAS, despite the blood tribute paid by more than a million African Americans who fought for our republic during the Revolutionary War, Civil War, World War I, World War II, the Korean and Viet Nam wars, and every extended military conflict since its founding, the nation dishonored those mortal investments by following a perverted fiction that justice may tolerate a lie that "separate" can be "equal"; and

WHEREAS, even though the seeds of hope that broke ground in a Second Reconstruction which yielded the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and a panoply of other enactments at every level of government to equalize opportunities for Black Americans and ameliorate certain historic inequities, nevertheless, the scourge of racial indifference, intolerance, discrimination, and even violent animus, continues to blight our national body politic even today; and

WHEREAS, last month, on Memorial Day, May 25, 2020, a police officer wantonly killed an African American, George Perry Floyd, Jr., by kneeling on his neck for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, even while he was handcuffed, laid prostrate and begged, "I can't breathe," on an asphalt street in Minneapolis, Minnesota; and

WHEREAS, the senseless killing of George Perry Floyd, Jr., stands as a horrific capstone in a series of countless episodes where the lives of Black people have been senselessly stolen by police, armed vigilantes or white supremacists who targeted them on the basis of race; and

WHEREAS, the senseless killing of George Perry Floyd, Jr., has ignited a national movement of peaceful protests marshalled by people of every race, hue, ethnicity, sexual orientation and identity, national origin and means – all of whom are demanding in unison that our nation cease and desist the systemic oppression and racist violence that has been trained by police and others in power upon Black people throughout our checkered history; and

WHEREAS, the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (the "Commission") is an agency of the State of Maryland, established in 1927 and responsible to contribute to the quality of civic life within the Maryland-Washington Metropolitan District and the Maryland-Washington Regional District situated within Montgomery County and Prince George's County, Maryland; and

WHEREAS, the Commission serves a multifaceted, diverse community and, pursuant to Resolution Nos. 00-12 and 07-07, the Commission formally celebrates diversity and inclusion of people from every race, color, ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation or ability, and, further, has expressly adopted diversity as one of its "core

values,” and remains committed to “[achieve] an organizational culture that further respects, nurtures, and promotes diversity in our workforce and the communities we serve”; and

WHEREAS, the Commission has taken due notice of the impact of the senseless killing of George Perry Floyd, Jr., within the communities it serves, and the growing aspiration among the Commission’s constituencies that his death will mark the beginning of a profound national journey to achieve understanding, enlightenment and a more perfect union; and

WHEREAS, the Commission’s Executive Director Asuntha Chiang-Smith, Secretary-Treasurer Joseph C. Zimmerman, General Counsel Adrian Robert Gardner, Director M. Andree Green-Checkley (Prince George’s County Planning Department), Director Michael Riley (Montgomery County Parks Department), Director Bill Tyler (Prince George’s County Department of Parks and Recreation), and Director Gwen Wright (Montgomery County Planning Department), comprising each of the Commission’s incumbent officers and department directors, have endorsed the purpose and terms of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Commission does hereby declare and affirm that the agency stands in solidarity with the peaceful principles and ideals of the current movement to end systemic racism, oppression, injustice and violence against African Americans; and


BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission also hereby declares and affirms that it squarely subscribes to the indisputable principle that Black lives do matter, and they must matter, in all civic endeavors in order for our agency and our nation to achieve the cardinal promises of our government – that ALL people will be treated fairly and equally; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Commission commends the people of the Maryland-National Capital Park Police working in both counties for their strict adherence to their mission – “In Partnership With the Community” – and, further, the Commission charges them to continue and redouble their solemn duty to serve our communities by remaining an integral part of those communities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the appropriate Commission officers, managers and employees are hereby commended, subject to the prevailing health requirements applicable for social distancing, to take every step practicable to facilitate and support the communities we serve as they may protest peacefully to support the principles espoused herein.

CERTIFICATE

By our signatures below, this certificate signifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of Resolution 20-13, adopted by the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission at its regular meeting held on June 17, 2020, via digital video conference on the motion in favor by Vice-Chair Hewlett, a proper second made by Commissioner Doerner, with the unanimous vote in favor by Chair Anderson, Vice-Chair Hewlett, and Commissioners Bailey, Cichy, Doerner, Fani-Gonzalez, Geraldo and Patterson, with Commissioners Verma and Washington being absent for the vote but acknowledged and in support.

 _____ Chair Casey Anderson	 _____ Vice-Chair Elizabeth M. Hewlett
 _____ Commissioner Dorothy F. Bailey	 _____ Commissioner Gerald R. Cichy
 _____ Commissioner William M. Doerner	 _____ Commissioner Natali Fani-Gonzalez
 _____ Commissioner Manuel R. Geraldo	 _____ Commissioner Tina Patterson
 _____ Commissioner Partap Verma	 _____ Commissioner A. Shuanise Washington
	 _____ Asuntha Chiang-Smith, Executive Director

APPROVED FOR LEGAL SUFFICIENCY



Debra S. Borden
Deputy General Counsel