

Oct. 15, 2019

My name is Sandra L. Combs, P.O. Box 2686, State University.

I was a member of the Unity Coalition Advisory Committee, charged with making a recommendation about naming a street in honor of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the slain civil rights leader who wanted justice for all people regardless of race, creed, religion, class, gender, politics, education, financial status and more.

I was and still am a strong supporter of naming a Jonesboro street in Dr. King's honor.

Initially, I supported renaming Johnson Avenue for King but there was so much hostility, hatred, bigotry, name calling, racism, and threats of a recall election by an anonymous few that I succumbed to the pressure of going in another direction.

During our last Unity Coalition Advisory Committee, I favored Aggie Road, especially after talking to A-State officials and faculty, but I voted for Commerce Road because I thought, just like Johnson Avenue, the few ^{cloaked} ~~cloaked~~ anonymous opponents would start an institutional warfare and I didn't have the resolution erroneously taken as an ordinance on my side. I could not win.

So, I thought Commerce Road was a good compromise. Then I read that the ordinance approved by the Public Works Committee wasn't what we voted on and I felt lied to. I felt hoodwinked. I felt swindled. I voted for Commerce Road. I didn't vote for a memorial road on Commerce Road. I felt cheated. I felt disrespected. I felt played for a fool. I felt that I wasted my time trying to compromise and listen to people who already had decided not to name a street in Jonesboro after Dr. King, holding tight to a resolution that is not and never has been law. A resolution is not an ordinance.

Then I asked myself, "Why have an advisory committee when their recommendations are ignored?" My answer was because I live in Jonesboro and the ^{cloaked} ~~anonymous covered~~ few have the power.

Nevertheless, I am ashamed that I participated in this farce of a process. I'm ashamed that there aren't enough people brave enough to say, a resolution is not an ordinance, not a law. I am ashamed that there aren't enough people brave enough to say right is right and that changing an address is ~~less~~ ^{enough to honor} important than honoring a man who wanted Justice for All.

The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. can have a national holiday in this great nation. He can have a U.S. postage stamp in his honor. He can have world history record that he won a Nobel Peace Prize. But he can not, will not, shall not have one whole street named after him in Jonesboro, Arkansas. I am ashamed.

Sincerely,

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