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Sully District

Board Matter

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Statement on Sully District Name

In March of 2022 the Redistricting Advisory committee recommended that the Board of Supervisors change the name of the Sully and Lee magisterial districts. Today there is an administrative item to advertise a public hearing to rename the Lee District. I would like to share the process we have had in the Sully District and explain our path forward.

After the RAC made their recommendation, my staff reached out to get information about the Sully Historic site and the origins of the Sully District. Once we had this information, we held two virtual town halls to have a community discussion about the name. I received emails and had conversations with community members. As you can imagine, I heard differing viewpoints about changing the name of the Sully District. The most important thing I heard in these conversations was the need to heal our community. The best way to do this is to work on ways to tell the true story of our sometimes complicated and misunderstood history and that of the Sully District specifically.

One way to do this is to educate the public about how land was developed, who benefitted and who was marginalized in the process. This includes historically black neighborhoods that were eliminated as the county expanded to the west. This process could be like that being used with the Gum Springs Community in Mt. Vernon.

Another opportunity for healing and educating the public is to reimagine some of the narratives around the Sully Historic Site. This site has a 225-year-old house, 120 acres of park, gardens, out buildings and slave quarters. We can do more with this site and be creative in providing enriching and meaningful experiences for all visitors to learn about the history of slavery at the site as well as the county through immersive, educational, experiential, and reflective programming and interpretation.

I have learned a lot during this process from the conversations I am having with community members and county staff. What I've realized is that there is so much that we don't know about our past.

Therefore, I believe that the best step forward at this time is to retain the name of Sully District, learn more about the impact our history has on us today- to enable us to move forward and embrace One Fairfax for all. In working on a path forward I am actively talking with the NAACP, the County's Equity Officer and the FCPA Executive Director about ways we can have a more honest conversation about the history of our Country, County, and the Sully District.