
NEW GUM SPRINGS CIVIC ASSOCIATION

February 15, 2021

TO: Mount Vernon Council of Citizens' Associations (MVCCA) Board of Directors via email
Subject: Gum Springs Opposition to Holland Court aka Holland Court Property Owners Association

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the Gum Springs community is officially represented by the New Gum Springs Civic Association (Civic Association).

Although the Civic Association has encouraged residents to participate in their community association through various means such as a community newsletter and electronic notices not all residents do so. This is not unusual as it is the norm in most communities.

However, for a street within a community to sever their identity verbally and visually from a community that has been in existence for more than 188 years and claim residential segregation is unconscionable. The 11-homeowners on Holland Court aka Holland Court Property Owners Association (HCPOA) decided to exercise an aged old practice of white privilege known as residential segregation approximately 2-years ago.

By exercising such white privilege in a historic African American community, HCPOA has racially motivated its 11-homeowners to identify themselves as a separate community. As a result, Gum Springs is the only community in the Mount Vernon Magisterial District and/or perhaps in Fairfax County that has a community within a community by using residential segregation. It has been duly noted that the MVCCA has acknowledged and supports such action. We are not saying MVCCA should cast out HCPOA, we are saying "look at what you are doing." MVCCA has exacerbated the situation. Gum Springs has worked far too long and hard to have HCPOA or MVCCA to usurp its accomplishments and take us backwards.

Gum Springs has been one community since 1833 and representation should be as such. ***Gum Springs is not a community separated by race.***

The Civic Association has exhausted its options for HCPOA to be a part of the Gum Springs community and the Civic Association. The last invitation extended to HCPOA was during 2020 for any member of HCPOA to represent the entire Gum Springs community through the established community organization and not just Holland Court like "normal" communities represent its residents and to not separate the community by race.

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***Things Get Solved...
When You Get Involved!***

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HCPOA declined the invitation with a response that they were “**content with the status we currently have.**” Part of that “status” is being recognized by the MVCCA. Do not say HCPOA can be a member. The question is just because HCPOA may be a member, how does the MVCCA resolve the official community organization representing the Gum Springs community? If HCPOA is not representing Gum Springs, who exactly is HCPOA representing? How do you separate the Civic Association that represents an entire community from HCPOA that represents 11-property owners on a street that is a part of the Gum Springs community?

As a result of the residential segregation implemented by HCPOA, its voice is non-existent when it comes to matters within Gum Springs boundaries.

It is unfortunate that HCPOA decided to exercise residential segregation during this climate of racial disparity and contrary to One Fairfax in order to promote its white privilege in an African American community. However, should HCPOA decide to re-visit its position of being a separate community of 11 with limited authority and contact and join the community organization that represents the entire Gum Springs community, they will be welcomed! The ball is now in their court.

Gum Springs legacy is well known and has a special place in Fairfax County as having a direct connection to our first U.S. president and being the oldest African American community in Fairfax County. We are also seeking a historic designation and will not allow HCPOA or MVCCA to divide this historic community or affect our survey for historic designation or use its legacy to create a privilege or benefit HCPOA or MVCCA does not deserve.

In summary, now that the Civic Association is fully aware that HCPOA is using residential segregation in the Gum Springs community to exercise its white privilege, we are officially notifying the MVCCA that the 11-property owners on Holland Court aka HCPOA does not speak on behalf of or represent the views and positions of the Gum Springs community. HCPOA can only officially address matters that are within their Articles of Incorporation, which are *specific to their property lots*.

Although Gum Springs may not be present during certain meetings and discussions, which is not uncommon for MVCCA members, we are requesting that any matter, regardless of intentions that may affect Gum Springs such as transportation, public safety, zoning, education, etc., that Gum Springs be informed to avoid embarrassment and/or public display of racial segregation in the Mount Vernon Magisterial District.



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