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Dec. 18, 2020

Alderman Brendon Reilly
325 W. Huron St.
Chicago, IL 60654

Alderman Brian Hopkins
1400 N. Ashland Ave.
Chicago, IL 60622

Dear Alderman Reilly and Alderman Hopkins,

The Streeterville Organization of Active Residents (SOAR) objects to the proposed renaming of Lake Shore Drive (LSD). We all agree that Jean Baptiste Point du Sable was a major figure in the settling and transformation of Chicago as the first nonnative settler. As an important historical person, he does deserve the recognition he has received with the naming of du Sable High School, du Sable Museum of African Art. parks, du Sable harbors, du Sable Bridge etc. He should be honored with more recognition by educating all of our citizens so they recognized his name as much as the names of Daley, Jordon, Burnham etc.

The name Lake Shore Drive, not only appropriately represents the magnificent 17-mile roadway but has been iconic since it began as a walkway in the 1800's. It is one of the few roads which stretch from the northern to the southern borders of the City and affords users of the magnificent views of our natural resource, Lake Michigan, and the build environment of our amazing skyline.

We appreciate that Alderman David Moore has clearly indicated that the renaming would only relate to the outer drive; we believe that like other iconic buildings, roadways etc., no name change will erase the original names, i.e. Hancock Center, Sears Tower, etc. The resulting two names of the roadway may create confusion for emergency vehicles, residents and visitors.

While there have been many suggestions for places to be renamed in honor of du Sable, we would like to remind everyone that there will be a redeveloped du Sable Park at the peninsula at 400 Lake Shore Drive. This redeveloped park will be another major honor for du Sable and hopefully enjoyed by many residents and tourists using the waterways, Riverwalk and Navy Pier. The City could expedite that redevelopment which would be a true honor for du Sable.

SOAR is honored that Streeterville has the du Sable Bridge (Michigan Avenue bridge); the Founders Trail, which is the Riverwalk east of Michigan Ave.; the bronze bust on Michigan Ave. in honor of Jean Baptiste Point du Sable; and will have a redeveloped Du Sable Park at 400 Lake Shore Drive. We would welcome additional support and education so more Chicagoans are aware of these important opportunities to honor a Chicago icon. However, we do not support renaming Lake Shore Drive and would hope that Alderman Moore and the City can find other ways to honor Jean Baptiste Point du Sable, a true Chicago hero deserving of honor and recognition.

Sincerely,

Deborah Gershbein
President SOAR

cc: SOAR Board of Directors *via email*